

Pedagogical Contexts 2020, No. 1(14)
www.kontekstypedagogiczne.pl
ISSN 2300-6471
pp. 103-123
<https://doi.org/10.19265/kp.2020.1.14.246>



ORIGINAL PAPER

Received: 2.12.2019
Accepted: 24.01.2020



Małgorzata Zaborniak-Sobczak

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0262-4787>

University of Rzeszow

gosiadz@ur.edu.pl

DEAF PARENTS' COMMUNICATION WITH THEIR HEARING CHILDREN (EVERYDAY PROBLEMS)

KOMUNIKACJA NIESŁYSZĄCYCH RODZICÓW ZE SŁYSZĄCYMI DZIEĆMI (PROBLEMY W RELACJACH CODZIENNYCH)

Keywords:
deaf parents,
communication
in the family, sign
language

Summary: The article is a pedagogical and sociological study. The author's intention was to show problems related to everyday language communication experienced by deaf parents bringing up one or more hearing children. During the research – in the field of qualitative research methodology – I conducted narrative interviews with members of five families with deaf parents. They do not always feel confident in contacts with their hearing children and sometimes need confirmation that sign language is a full-fledged means of communication in the family. Deaf parents are aware of the fact that the language education of a hearing child is burdened with difficulties regarding, among others, the choice of language in everyday communication. These parents are aware that if their children do not use sign language, their mutual contacts will be limited and they try to adapt messages to the child's perceptive capabilities. On the one hand, they are conscious of the fact that for a child to develop verbal speech, they must speak, and on the other, the choice of sign language is natural.

Słowa kluczowe:
niesłyszący rodzice,
komunikacja w rodzinie,
język migowy

Streszczenie: Artykuł ma charakter studium pedagogiczno-socjologicznego. Zamierzeniem autorki było ukazanie problemów związanych z codzienną komunikacją językową, jakich doświadczają niesłyszący rodzice wychowujący słyszące dziecko lub dzieci. Podczas badań – w nurcie metodologii badań jakościowych – przeprowadziłam wywiady narracyjne z członkami pięciu rodzin Głuchych. Niesłyszący rodzice nie zawsze czują się pewnie w kontaktach ze słyszącymi dziećmi, potrzebują niekiedy potwierdzenia, że język migowy jest pełnowartościowym środkiem komunikowania się w rodzinie. Niesłyszący rodzice zdają sobie sprawę z tego, że wychowanie językowe słyszącego dziecka obciążone jest trudnościami dotyczącymi między innymi wyboru języka w codziennej komunikacji. Rodzice mają świadomość tego, że gdy dzieci nie będą migać, wówczas ich wzajemne kontakty będą ograniczone. Rodzice z jednej strony starają się dostosować komunikaty do możliwości percepcyjnych dziecka, mają świadomość tego, że aby dziecko rozwinęło mowę w formie werbalnej, musi mówić, z drugiej zaś naturalny jest wybór języka migowego.

Introduction

Hearing children whose parents are deaf live between two language and cultural communities. Sometimes, as in other bilingual families, parents make choices about the language they use when interacting with their hearing children (Pizer, 2008). These choices condition the development of the children's communication and language skills. The purpose of this article is to present some of the results of research carried out under the "Deaf" parenting research project. *Selected psychopedagogical aspects of the functioning of hearing-impaired people as parents*, implemented in the field of statutory research – development of research potential (507) of the Faculty of Pedagogy at the University of Rzeszów in 2015/2016, 2016/2017. The research focused primarily on the analysis of statements from deaf parents of hearing children related to language preferences in everyday family communication.

The level of knowledge about the functioning of adults with auditory disabilities as parents is low in our country. To date, many specialists, educators, psychologists and speech therapists have undertaken research on various aspects

of the psychosocial functioning of deaf people. Rarely, however, has the experience of parenthood from the perspective of deaf people been the subject of scientific research; the problems of hearing parents bringing up children with damaged hearing organs has relatively more often been the topic of scientific exploration (cf. *inter alia*: Baran, 2012; Bartnikowska, 2004; Bieńkowska & Woźniak, 2016; Bieńkowska & Zaborniak-Sobczak, 2014; Borowicz, 2012; Kobosko, 2009a; 2009b; 2011; Kobosko & Zalewska, 2011; Kornas-Biela, 2000; Krakowiak, 2006; Plutecka, 2017).

Learning about and describing selected psychopedagogical aspects of the functioning of deaf parents of hearing children will not only bring us closer to specific and common problems in everyday family communication, but it also, in the longer perspective, will enable the creation of an educational environment for young deaf people so as to help prepare an adolescent generation of hearing impaired people to take on a responsible role as mother/father. Educators, psychologists and social workers can be helped in supporting adult deaf people preparing for, or being in, a parental role.

The research was primarily aimed at identifying, interpreting and attempting to explain phenomena related to the shaping of the language environment by deaf parents of hearing children. Social changes regarding the understanding of disability, the consequences of impairments, ways of correcting and compensating for them in the rehabilitation process, the possibilities of psychosocial integration and normalisation of life, cause modifications in the recognition of the role of disabled people and life tasks undertaken by them. The departure from the medical model of the perception of auditory disability towards a social paradigm, including a cultural approach to deafness, understood in the context of a language minority, implies changes in the perception of this group of people with disabilities. Deafness determines one's belonging to a specific social group communicating in a different language – sign language. Culturally deaf people (in the literature, a person with a hearing disability is referred to as Deaf – with an uppercase D) include people who prefer visual language in communication – sign language – regardless of the degree and extent of their hearing loss, the possibility of prosthesis and rehabilitation. These people identify with the values and cultural achievements of the Deaf community (Lane, 1996; Łozińska & Rutkowski, 2017; Padden & Humphries, 1988). Although they often come from hearing families, it is also natural for most deaf people to identify with Deaf culture and socialise with and usually marry other deaf people. This is how sign language is transmitted.

It should be emphasised that in these relationships, hearing children are often born – and then they become natural users of their parents' language – sign language. It is estimated that only 4.4% of children born to deaf parents are also deaf, which means that over 90% of children born to deaf parents can hear (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004). These children are usually bilingual (cf. parallel bilingualism, Kurcz, 2005). They use sign language and/or audio language, at the same time they are also bimodal (cf. Emmorey, Borinstein & Thompson, 2005) – in the process of receiving and transmitting language messages they use auditory-voice modality and/or visual-gesture modality, which may also enforce biculturalism – identification with the hearing community and shaping the identity of a hearing person or/and identification with the deaf/Deaf community and shaping the identity of a deaf/Deaf person (cf. Bartnikowska, 2010; Toohey, 2010; Zaborniak-Sobczak & Perenc, 2017).

I conducted my own research in accordance with the assumptions of qualitative research in a constructivist-interpretative,¹ participatory paradigm, which means that I have found that the deaf parents of hearing children who I have studied are the best experts in their personal experience, and I can learn about them using the narrative interview method. The issues that became the subject of my research concern the modelling of communication between deaf parents in interpersonal contacts with hearing children. I was interested in how and whether deaf parents modify their language preferences in relation to the appearance in the immediate family of (their own) hearing offspring. I assumed that the study of communication in such families is a phenomenon that I can learn about only in direct relation with deaf parents of hearing children using a narrative interview.

Selected problems of communication in the family

According to Maria Braun-Gałkowska (1987), a family is a group of people connected by close, authentic and direct bonds for a long part of their lives. The quality of the family is determined by the nature of these bonds, which, in turn, are determined by the relationship between spouses and, in time, also

¹ The constructive-interpretative paradigm (i.e., the set of beliefs that guide action) adopts a relativistic ontology: it assumes the multiplicity of reality, subjective epistemology – the cognisor and the people under study co-create understanding – and a naturalistic set of research and methodological procedures – the research takes place in the natural environment of the people under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009, p. 52).

between parents and children. The influence of these bonds is especially strong in the family. The family is not just a group of people who constitute it, but a whole. To describe it, you need to get to know all the people who are part of the whole, the interactions between them and the changes that occur in these interactions. The author has distinguished different types of interaction in the family: marital (between husband and wife), parental (between parents and children), fraternal (between children), contacts with the older generation (contact between the spouse and their own parents and with the parents of the spouse and contacts between children and grandparents).

Systemic concepts of the family emphasise that intra-family relationships exert so much influence on the behaviour of each person that it is impossible to properly understand and forecast the behaviour of an individual in isolation from other family members (Gurba, 2013; Krok, 2010; Radochoński, 1998). In the family system, interpersonal communication (i.e., the process of exchanging verbal and non-verbal signals in order to achieve a better level of cooperation, Harwas-Napierała, 2008, after Nęcki, 1996) is located in the wider context of relationships between all family members and constitutes a very important element of the system (cf. Figure 1).

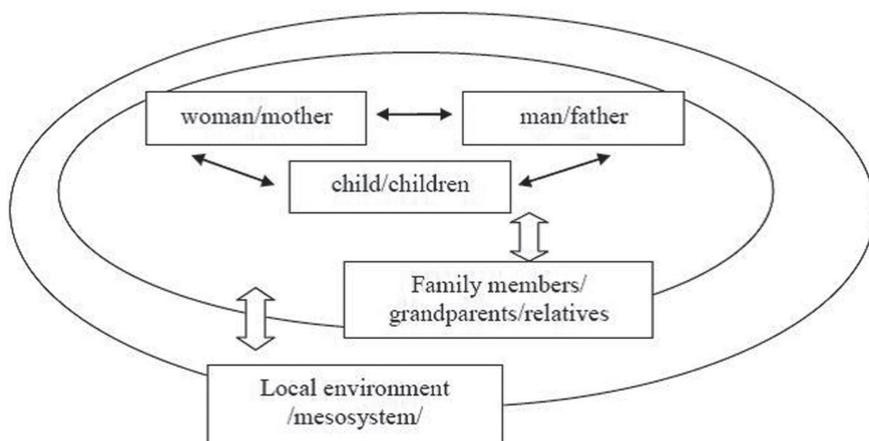


Figure 1.

The system-based family.

Source: own study.

Treated systemically, a family is a system of elements connected with complicated bonds. Each family system functions dynamically, and the relationships between individual elements have different intensities and configurations (see Figure 2). In the family system, interpersonal communication conditions and at the same time fulfils the function of an indicator of the relationships between family members and affects their quality, determines words, gestures, emotions and feelings experienced, as well as specific behaviours.

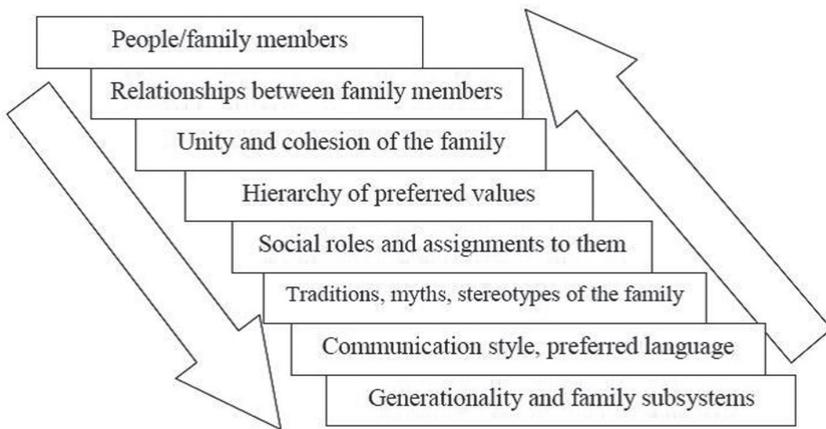


Figure 2.
Elements of the family system.
Source: own study.

In the family system, interpersonal communication is located in the wider context of relationships between all family members, and these relationships and communication are mutually conditioning. Communication in a family is characterised by a special intensity of personal interactions which results from the high frequency of contacts related to living together and being together every day. The importance of family communication processes is evidenced by the fact that many problems and difficulties find a positive solution based on mature and constructive patterns of communication between family members (Harwas-Napierała, 2008; Krok, 2010; Wach, 2016). Processes that disturb family communication, communication barriers, were described in detail by Barbara Harwas-Napierała (2008, pp. 109–119), stating therein that “Each family is characterised by specific communication features (even an apparent

lack of communication, long-lasting silence is a form of communication). The large variety of factors determining communication means that there are no two identically communicating family systems" (Harwas-Napierała, 2008, p. 21).

In my own research, I was particularly interested in issues related to one aspect of communication, namely language. Teaching a child a language usually takes place in the family environment. Parents, siblings and the close family are the first to be in contact with a small child. The interaction of an adult with a child is an element of linguistic communication in the family. This language has specific features: directness, spontaneity and an unofficial type of contact. Communication with a small child usually takes place in repetitive, everyday situations related to care, play and eating food; it has the character of stereotypical behaviour (Bouvet, 1996; Milewski, 2011; Rocławski, 1991). Specialists of various scientific disciplines, usually linguists, have dealt with the issue of linguistic contacts between adults and the youngest family members. The problem of otherness and the specificity of language addressed to a small child has been recognised in Polish scientific literature for over 100 years (Milewski, 2011). The language of adults towards a child, variously labelled in the literature (nanny language, speaking in a childlike way – Milewski's analysis, 2011, p. 20), is characterised by, among others, a greater number of diminutive forms, caressing pronunciation, and the use of reduplicated forms such as "wash, wash", expressiveness of intonation with emphasis on the meaning of some words, special selection of lexical means and a slower pace of speaking, and it has mainly been the domain of women (mothers, grandmothers, nannies) (Milewski, 2011). Psychologists and speech therapists agree that the development of a child's speech and language depends on the quality of communication with the child from the earliest years of life.

During our lives, the shaping of each person's speech and language takes place in the most natural conditions possible, which is the essence of language education. The style of communication in the family, including the language used, has basic socialisation and culture-forming significance; it serves to convey content that directs existence and operationalises current activities, stimulates cognitive activity, is important in children's cognitive development, is a carrier of emotions, can maintain family ties, is a source of knowledge about the family and intra-family relationships; the words, gestures and signs used in the family are passed on intergenerationally, although they change over time (Wach, 2016). Michael Tomasello (2002), emphasising the role of imitation in language learning, shows how much a child is dependent

on their social environment, how important the interaction of an adult and a child is in the process of language and speech (see Zaborniak-Sobczak & Perenc, 2017). At the same time, hearing children of deaf parents acquire speech and language in an unusual language environment,² and the description and attempt to interpret language education in this environment have become the subject of research. In the context of theoretical findings, I asked the deaf parents I interviewed how they perceive their role in shaping the language of a hearing child.

Language preferences in the intra-family communication of deaf parents with hearing children in our own research. Methodological assumptions

Aims of the study. The main goal of the research project was to learn about, describe and understand the process of the language education of a hearing child raised by deaf parents. I wanted to identify – in the subjective perspective of deaf parents – problems related to the daily language communication of the deaf parent (or both parents) with a hearing child (or children).

Course of research. Study group. I conducted my own research among five families from the Małopolska voivodship selected with the help of Mrs Beata Ziarkowska-Kubiak, representing the Gallaudet Club in Krakow. The purpose of this organisation is the popularisation of sign language and Deaf culture in the environment of hearing people and to provide professional support to deaf people. It was assumed that the participants of the study would be deaf adults with a certified deafness disability (03-L) bringing up hearing offspring from 2 to 18 years of age. After selecting the families and a preliminary conversation with each of them (via Mrs Ziarkowska-Kubiak) during which the purpose of the study was presented, verbal consents were obtained for meetings and interviews and dates set. Interviews were conducted in January (one interview), February (three interviews) and March (one interview) 2017. Each interview lasted an average of two to three hours. Three meetings were

² The problems of the specificity of the language environment and its importance in the process of the speech and language development of hearing children of deaf parents were dealt with, among others, in: Allsop & Kyle, 1997; Brackenbury, Ryan & Messenheimer, 2006; Johnson, Watkins & Rice, 1992; Jones & Quigley, 1979; Kanto, Huttunen & Laakso, 2013; Kotowicz, 2015; Możdżyńska, 2019; Murphy & Slorach, 1983; Pizer, 2008; Sachs, Bard & Johnson, 1981; Schiff & Ventry, 1976; Schiff-Myers & Klein, 1985; Singleton & Tittle, 2000; Toohey, 2010; Zaorska, 1996.

held in the family homes of the respondents and two parents (deaf spouses) participated in these meetings; the other two meetings were only with deaf mothers – at the headquarters of the Gallaudet Club. All of the respondents were asked to agree to an audio recording of the interview. Unfortunately, in most cases, the interviewees did not agree to the recordings, explaining that they were uncomfortable with this. I personally conducted and took notes for each interview, with the participation of a qualified and experienced sign language interpreter employed on the basis of a relevant contract. The author of this material and researcher also uses “SJM” sign language (Signed Polish), which she employed during the interviews. The collected research material (imperfect due to translation) was then analysed.³

³ B. Temple and A. Young write about the difficulties of research conducted in languages other than those spoken by respondents on a daily basis. In an extremely interesting article, *Qualitative research and translation dilemmas*, its authors analyse the difficulties of qualitative research conducted in various languages, including sign language. They wonder, among other things, how much consideration should be given to the participation of the interpreter in the analyses, how translation during the research process potentially makes the assessment subjective, and how to ensure agreement on the translation of the source data. At the same time, they emphasise that despite the difficulties, researchers publishing texts should inform the readers about the procedures related to translation if the language of communication of the respondents is different from the language of the researcher. In the case of my own research, I am also dealing with the translation of statements formulated in Polish sign language, which, like other visual languages, does not have a written version; simultaneous translation (word for word) is not possible, nor is an exact transcription of the qualitative data obtained due to the completely different grammar structure of the sign language. In the case of such translation, the interpreter must constantly make decisions about the cultural meanings that sign language carries. As a result, it seemed unjustified to use one of the programs for interpreting qualitative research. Thus, the record of the statements was as follows: a question was asked in Polish (with simultaneous translation into “SJM” – Signed Polish – the author of the study), when the respondent did not understand the content of a question, the “PJM” – Polish Sign Language – interpreter translated the content into something more understandable. The respondent attempted to answer the questions, which were then translated by the sign language interpreter (into Polish), while the researcher (the author of the article) wrote down the content, noting her comments and observations on the expression of statements (this is expressed by facial expressions, visual orientation, movement, location in space). In a sign language with a subject – commentary + expression structure, it is possible to express oneself in a complex way, despite the use of a relatively short signage expression (Ladd, 2003). The narrative data obtained, which were the statements of the respondents (more or less developed in relation to the adopted research problem), were interpreted in accordance with the assumptions for the interpretation of narrative (Kos, 2013). **I am fully aware that the empirical (linguistic) material obtained in this way has more practical than epistemological significance.**

Table 1
Characteristics of the people studied

No.	Respondents (age)	Degree of hearing loss	Education	Number of children (age)
1.	A. (40) B. (45)	profound profound	secondary professional	1 (B. 13)
2.	C. (>51)	profound	secondary	1 (G. 17)
3.	D. (36)	severe	professional	1 (G. 12)
4.	E. (42) F. (47)	moderate profound	secondary secondary	2 (G. 8, B. 5)
5.	G. (35) H. (40)	severe profound	professional secondary	2 (G. 10, G. 5)

Legend: G. – girl, B. – boy.

The names of the respondents were changed in such a way that they were each replaced with an initial using successive letters of the alphabet in order to protect the data of the persons studied.

Research Method. The presented research uses the narrative interview method because it assumes (according to its creator – Fritz Schütz) that social reality is a process in which the individual shapes their behaviour in the course of their relationships with the environment (the environment and social reality are variable, therefore, people are changeable); some of these behaviours and activities of the individual are consciously constructed (actions) and some controlled by factors independent of the person, which is often associated with a loss of control over one's own life (experience, suffering). It is important to assume that there is agreement (homology) between the narrative about life and its real course – the respondent, in their narrative, maps what they have in their memory. The narrative interview understood in this way allows questions to be answered about how the respondents experience social reality and how they are involved in it. The narrative allows us to get to know the course of an individual's life – the whole (complete narrative) or fragments (thematic narrative); in addition to the reconstruction of past events (direct dimension of the narrative), the narrative allows one to understand one's own situation, its interpretation and can reveal the motives for conduct and emotions (the allegorical dimension) (Kos, 2013). In summary, narrative interviews focus on the stories told by the respondents, and "narration is a subjective report on the life of an individual. It is a cognitive representation of reality in which an individual retrospectively

organises experience, presents himself, his world and events as stories” (Kvale, 2012; Kos, 2013, p. 96, after: Krzyzewski, 2003, p. 212).

In the research process, I followed methodological guidelines (Kos, 2013). The **first phase** was establishing contact with the studied families (deaf parents of hearing children), arranging dates of meetings and indicating research issues. During the meetings, I encouraged the respondents to give an interview, briefly talking about myself and the motives for undertaking study of such research issues. Then, in the **main story phase**, I asked the respondents to comment on their experiences in communication with a hearing child. The statements I received from the respondents were more or less developed. Some respondents needed specific, sometimes guiding or supplementary questions (this is the **internal and external questions phase**). Examples of questions I asked related to various issues of interest to me: How did you react to the information that the child is hearing? What are your everyday experiences of communicating with a hearing child? Are there any problems in this communication (and what are they) – does the child understand you, respond to commands, requests or willingly establish contact with you – in what language (signed or spoken)? Has anyone helped you communicate with your child (if so, who)? What is this communication like now: do you observe progress in this communication: does your child understand you better, do you understand the messages of the child better and better? (Kos, 2013; Kvale, 2012).

Daily language communication of deaf parents with hearing children in the narratives of the respondents

The responding parents have a certain degree of knowledge (intuitive) about the importance of communication in the development of a child's speech and language; they try to activate this process as much as they can. They are characterised by statements emphasising a willingness to adapt the message to the perception capabilities of a small hearing child, for example:

In communication, when D. was small, I talked, I did not sign to the child – I spoke in simple words, sentences, until my son learned to speak. I said, “be careful”, dangerous. Then he asked a lot [of questions], I spoke and I signed, Dad was only signing, he doesn't like to speak. He asks a lot, and I try to explain. He also speaks and signs when he asks, if he can't sign, he just speaks [A.'s statement].

When P. [daughter of D.] was a baby, I spoke to her in simple words, for example, when she was crying [D.'s statement].

The parents also did not give up, at least initially, on signing to the child, and the children themselves are able to adapt the communication tool (sign language vs phonic language) to the capabilities of the recipient and the situation, which testifies to their mental communication (pragmatic) and linguistic competence (see Kurcz, 2005).

When she was small, she would look at me for a long time and caught on in that way [c. 1 year old] and she learned to sign colours. I look and she knows how to sign, I was very happy when she was small, she was signing a lot, now she isn't [D.'s statement].

She [W., daughter of C.] was one year old and starting to walk and she let me know, nudged me to give her [something] to drink, for example [C.'s statement].

K. [son of E. and F.] if he wanted something, he would take you by the hand, walk and show you. He signs more willingly than the daughter, she's lazy, doesn't want to sign. K. began to speak, but in kindergarten he clammed up and now he goes to a speech therapist [F.'s statement].

O. [daughter of G. and H.] sometimes signs childishly, then I don't know what it means, I can't understand [H.'s statement].

The responding parents are well aware of the need to communicate with their own child, they are also aware of the difficulties they face in this communication. On the one hand, they understand the need for children to use spoken language: "he is hearing, it's normal for him to speak" [A.'s statement], on the other hand, they want to communicate in their preferred sign language, they often feel regret that this skill is not always accepted by their social group, including relatives.

My daughter, when she was little, asked me why I spoke poorly, I explained that I could not hear. P. [daughter of D.] is now ashamed of signing – children tease her, so she is ashamed, but at home we sign. I wanted my daughter to learn how to sign, so that the family would see that a hearing child can sign, because neither my mother-in-law nor my mother can sign [D.'s statement].

My daughter speaks quickly, I do not understand, to dad she must sign or speak clearly, when K. [daughter of E.] was three years old, she began to sign single words, now she has forgotten a lot [E.'s statement].

It is important that she signs, that there is contact with her parents, sometimes help is also needed, but the most important thing is contact [statement by F. – husband of E.].

For me it is difficult if they want to talk about what happened at school, she wants to tell me, and I do not understand, I do not know how to teach them, for example, English. I can help her in mathematics. The children get annoyed when they want to explain something to us, and we don't understand it. I would like to talk more together [H's statement].

The children need their parents to talk. When the girls argue or I argue with them, they can say something rude to me, and I don't understand it. D. [daughter of G. and H.] tells me that I speak badly and it is very sad for me. If my daughters argue, I can't help them; decide who is right. It's sad for me too. It's the same when they want something; it is difficult for me to explain what is good, for example, they want to watch TV, and I do not know if it is good for them or not, I do not know what they are saying on TV [statement by G. – wife of H.].

There is a thread (not found in all respondents) of children being reluctant to sign and treat this language as meaningful, since it is too visible.

D. [daughter of G. and H.] sometimes rebels, she does not want to sign and for me it is sad. I explain to her that sign language is important, but she wonders, asks why [G's statement].

My daughter, when she was small, asked me why I spoke poorly. I explained that I could not hear. P. [daughter of D.] is now ashamed of signing – children tease her, so she is ashamed, but at home we sign. Once her teacher at school showed the finger alphabet and P. knew how, she showed; she was proud, the children received it well, they were happy, the teacher praised her. But it was only once [D.'s statement].

W. [daughter of C.] is not ashamed to sign, for example, on the street with me, but in a larger group she is [C's statement].

I was also interested in how deaf parents reacted to the fact that their child could hear. Did the respondents have any expectations in this matter? As it

turns out, for the deaf parents I studied, it was not an indifferent matter. This thread was present in conversations between parents.

We were pleased, no matter if he could hear or not, we wanted him to be healthy and to enjoy having a child. If he were deaf, he would be the same as us and if he could hear, he would grow up, maybe he would help us. Maybe with a deaf child it would be easier for us, easier communication, but it would be as difficult for him as it was for us before, and he can hear, so maybe he will help when he grows up [A.'s statement].

I tried to deepen this topic of speech as much as possible, asking for justification.

Hearing parents find it easier to raise a hearing child, and hearing people behave differently. It is harder for deaf people to raise a hearing child differently. If a deaf child is born, it is good, normal. In the beginning, it was like a stranger with a hearing child, although we quickly got used to this situation; now it is normal. From the beginning, we had to watch out for noises – doors, household appliances – which we were not used to or prepared for. For example, when the baby was sick, a neighbour helped. Hearing people have information all around, they know everything, and the deaf have no information [A.'s statement].

I was in the hospital, and the doctor told me that she had to go for a hearing test, I wanted her to be hearing. I was a little nervous, she could be deaf; my son was hearing, but I was nervous, then these tests and the doctor said she was hearing, and I was very pleased [C.'s statement].

The doctor said the child could hear. The whole family was happy that the child is hearing, I love my daughter very much. I was hoping that when she grew up, she would help me; first I would show her the world, and then she'd help me [D.'s statement].

And finally, a thread confirmed in the literature on the subject – the desire to get help from a child in a translation situation (see Bartnikowska, 2010, pp. 108–116).

It is important for W. [daughter of C.] to sign, to speak, so the parents and children would understand each other. For example, if I do not understand what is on TV, W. can sign for me [C's statement].

We were glad that the children were hearing, because when they grow up, they will help us [E's statement].

E's husband speaks in a slightly different tone.

It is important that the child be able to sign, that there is contact with parents, sometimes you need help, for example, in a telephone conversation, but the most important thing is that there is mutual contact [F's statement].

Some parents are aware that the role of an interpreter can be too responsible and overwhelming for a small child.

D. [son of A. and B.] sometimes helps me in the shop, I don't quite know how to say it, but I want him to be able to sign because it makes it easier for me to communicate with him. If I do not know what he is saying, I do not always understand and then ask him to sign. D. is not ashamed to sign on the street, we sign together in public places. But I don't take him as an interpreter, I don't want to, these are not matters for him [A's statement].

Conclusions

The above analyses, although carried out on rather modest research material, indicate that the language education of the hearing children of deaf parents takes place in a specific environment. On the one hand, the parents try to adapt messages to the child's perceptive abilities – they are aware that for a child to develop speech in verbal and phonic form, the child must speak (they also try to speak, although they encounter difficulties and criticism, including sometimes from adolescent children); on the other hand, it is natural to choose a way of communication that is effective and relatively easy to use – in the case of deaf parents, this is sign language. The use of this means of communication, while preferred by deaf parents, can be problematic for hearing children, especially when they have negative social attitudes towards this language. A huge role in shaping a positive attitude towards a language, in this case a minority one, is played by third parties and significant people – for example relatives, above all the parents of deaf parents, i.e., usually hearing grandparents of hearing grandchildren (but with deaf parents). Their role in the language education of hearing children of deaf parents is undeniable, but to build strong family ties, they must also be wise, accepting the way of communication of disabled people.⁴

⁴ These issues will be discussed in my next article, as one of several research objectives of the project was also to determine the importance of social support in the

The study of daily communication in deaf families bringing up hearing offspring was qualitative in nature. By definition, the goal of such research (in the humanities) is “to understand the studied phenomena in their uniqueness, to understand experience [...], this understanding is therefore impossible without a holistic approach that takes into account each and every context in which the studied individuals are located, because sympathising and empathising play a huge role in understanding, therefore, the importance of subjective approaches is emphasised” (Zaręba, 1998, p. 44). Research conducted in the environment of deaf people is at risk of error due to communication difficulties, language barriers – sign language to a small extent reflects the subtleties of language, e.g., indicating emotional states. During the research, considerable difficulties in perceiving the content of some questions and statements were observed – it is very difficult to convey in sign language (Polish Sign Language, natural) the subtleties of meaning of particular words and expressions, e.g., impatience, nervousness. Many of the questions to which respondents had to respond were illustrated by examples from everyday life, which could thus suggest the narrative content.

The narratives presented show that deaf parents are well aware of the fact that the language education of a hearing child is burdened with difficulties concerning even the choice of language in everyday communication. Parents are aware of the fact that if their children do not sign, their mutual contact will be limited. These parents sometimes need confirmation that sign language is an important means of communication in the family and can be successfully used to build satisfying relationships with their children, but it must be used consistently in everyday communication so that it develops like any other language. In the deaf parents' statements, there is a thread that hearing children sometimes act as interpreters, explaining unclear communication and language situations in which their deaf parents find themselves. Here, parents should be informed that the child cannot mediate in such communication situations that they cannot understand due to their young age and lack of emotional maturity.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank all of the participants who agreed to host me in their homes and told me their stories with such kindness and commitment. I also thank Beata Ziarkowska-Kubiak for help in implementing

development of language communication of hearing children in the narratives of deaf parents.

the project. This research would not have taken place if it had not been for everyday professional experience, also my own, including meetings with deaf parents who are bringing up hearing children. Ewelina P. and Anna M. – my colleagues who are bringing up hearing children – thank you for sharing some of your everyday life with me, inspiring me to carry out this research.

References

- Allsop, L. & Kyle, J. (1997). *Deaf Parents and their Hearing Children. A Research Report*. Bristol: Deaf Studies Trust.
- Baran, J. (2012). *Problemy i konteksty wychowania dzieci z uszkodzonym słuchem w przekazach ich słyszających matek [Problems and contexts of raising children with hearing impairment in the messages of their hearing mothers]*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego.
- Bartnikowska, U. (2004). *Małżeństwa mieszane (osoba z uszkodzonym słuchem – osoba słyszająca) [Mixed marriages (a person with hearing impairment – and a hearing person)]*. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.
- Bartnikowska, U. (2010). *Sytuacja społeczna i rodzinna słyszających dzieci niesłyszających rodziców [The social and family situation of hearing children of deaf parents]*. Toruń: Akapit.
- Bieńkowska, K. & Woźniak, A. (2016). Language Behaviours in Children with Hearing Impairment vs. the Social Functioning of their Mothers – Comparative Surveys. *The New Educational Review*, 46(4), 189–199. DOI: 10.15804/tner.2016.46.4.16.
- Bieńkowska, K. & Zaborniak-Sobczak, M. (2014). Wsparcie społeczne i jego związek z kształtowaniem się postaw rodzicielskich wobec dzieci z wadą słuchu [Social support and its relationship with the formation of parental attitudes towards children with hearing impairment]. *Niepełnosprawność. Półrocznik naukowy*, 13, 135–153.
- Borowicz, A. (2012). Stres rodziców wychowujących dzieci z niepełnosprawnością słuchową [Stress among parents raising children with hearing disabilities]. *Niepełnosprawność – zagadnienia, problemy, rozwiązania*, 2(3), 55–80.
- Bouvet, D. (1996). *Mowa dziecka. Wychowanie dwujęzyczne dziecka niesłyszącego [The voice of the child. Bilingual education of the deaf child]*, transl. R. Gałkowski. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne.
- Brackenbury, T., Ryan, T. & Messenheimer, T. (2006). Incidental Word Learning in a Hearing Child of Deaf Adults. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 11(1), 76–93, <http://jdsde.oxfordjournals.org/> [accessed: 21.01.2016].
- Braun-Gałkowska, M. (1987). *Psychologia domowa [Home psychology]*. Olsztyn: Warmińskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne.

- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2009). Wprowadzenie. Dziedzina i praktyka badań jakościowych [Introduction. The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research]. In: N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Metody badań jakościowych [The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research]* (pp. 19–76), Vol. 1, transl. K. Podemski. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Emmorey, K., Borinstein, H.B. & Thompson, R. (2005). Bimodal Bilingualism: Code-blending between Spoken English and American Sign Language. In: J. Cohen, K.T. McAlister, K. Rolstad & J. MacSwan (eds.), *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (pp. 663–673). Somerville: Cascadilla Press.
- Garba, E. (2013). *Nieporozumienia z dorastającymi dziećmi w rodzinie. Uwarunkowania i wspomaganie [Misunderstandings with adolescent children in the family. Conditioning and support]*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Harwas-Napierała, B. (2008). *Komunikacja interpersonalna w rodzinie [Interpersonal communication in the family]*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM.
- Johnson, J.M., Watkins, R.V. & Rice, M.L. (1992). Bimodal bilingual language development in a hearing child of deaf parents. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 13(1), 31–52. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716400005415>.
- Jones, M.L. & Quigley, S.P. (1979). The Acquisition of Question Formation in Spoken English and American Sign Language by Two Hearing Children of Deaf Parents. *Journal of Speech Language, and Hearing Research*, 44(2), 196–208.
- Kanto, L., Huttunen, K. & Laakso, M.L. (2013). Relationship Between the Linguistic Environments and Early Bilingual Language Development of Hearing Children in Deaf-parented Families. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 18(2), 242–260. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/ens071>.
- Kobosko, J. (2009a). Relacja matka–dziecko a zaburzenia rozwoju językowego [The mother-child relationship and language development disorders]. *Przegląd Psychologiczny*, 52(3), 327–342.
- Kobosko, J. (2009b). *Młodzież głucha i słabo słyszająca w rodzinie i otaczającym świecie. Dla terapeutów, nauczycieli, wychowawców i rodziców [Young deaf and hard of hearing people in the family and the surrounding world. For therapists, teachers, educators and parents]*. Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Rodziców i Przyjaciół Dzieci i Młodzieży z Wadą Słuchu “Usłyszeć Świat”.
- Kobosko, J. (2011). Wybór języka dla dziecka głuchego – język foniczny lub/i język migowy. Współczesna perspektywa psychologiczna [Language selection for deaf children – audio language and/or sign language. Contemporary psychological perspective]. In: B. Antoszevska & C. Kosakowski (eds.), *Dyskurs pedagogiki specjalnej. Uwarunkowania i kierunki rozwoju pedagogiki specjalnej [Special education discourse. Conditions and directions of development of special education]* (pp. 111–121). Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.

- Kobosko, J. & Zalewska, M. (2011). Maternal Identity of Hearing Mothers of Deaf Adolescents. Empirical Studies – an Interpersonal Approach. *The Volta Review*, 111(1), 39–59.
- Kornas-Biela, D. (2000). Rodzice wobec diagnozy uszkodzenia słuchu u dziecka. Doświadczenia rodziców, pomoc profesjonalistów [Parents in the diagnosis of hearing impairment in a child. Parents' experience, professional help]. In: D. Kornas-Biela (ed.), *Rodzina: źródła życia i szkoła miłości [Family: source of life and school of love]* (pp. 459–477). Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL.
- Kos, E. (2013). Wywiad narracyjny jako metoda badań empirycznych [Narrative interview as a method of empirical research]. In: D. Urbanik-Zajac & E. Kos (eds.), *Badania jakościowe w pedagogice [Qualitative research in pedagogy]* (pp. 91–116). Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Kotowicz, J. (2015). Nabywanie języka migowego – dyskusja stanowisk [The acquisition of sign language – discussion of positions]. *General and Professional Education*, 1, 26–36.
- Krakowiak, K. (2006). *Studia i szkice o wychowaniu dzieci z uszkodzeniami słuchu [Studies and sketches on raising children with hearing impairment]*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.
- Krok, D. (2010). Systemowe ujęcie rodziny w badaniach dobrostanu psychicznego jej członków [A systemic approach to the family in the study of the psychological well-being of its members]. In: D. Krok & P. Landwójtowicz (eds.), *Rodzina w nurcie współczesnych przemian [The family in the current of contemporary changes]* (pp. 359–368). Opole: Redakcja Wydawnictw Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Opolskiego.
- Krzyżewski, K. (2003). *Doświadczenie indywidualne [Individual experience]*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Kurcz, I., (2005). *Psychologia języka i komunikacji [Psychology of language and communication]*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Kvale, S. (2012). *Prowadzenie wywiadów [Doing interviews]*, transl. A. Dziuban. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Ladd, P. (2003). *Understanding Deaf Culture*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Lane, H. (1996). *Maska dobroczynności. Deprecjacja społeczności głuchych [The mask of benevolence. Disabling the deaf community]*, transl. T. Gałkowski & J. Kobosko. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne.
- Łozińska, S. & Rutkowski, P. (2017). Język migowy źródłem pamięci społecznej Głuchych [Sign language as a source of deaf social memory]. *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 16(38), 91–108. DOI: 10.17399/HW.2017.163806.
- Milewski, S. (2011). *Mowa dorosłych kierowana do niemowląt. Studium fonostatystyczno-fonotaktyczne [Adult Speech directed to infants. A phonostatic and phonotactic study]*. Gdańsk: Harmonia Universalis.

- Mitchell, R.E. & Karchmer, M.A. (2004). Chasing the mythical ten percent: Parental hearing status of deaf and hard of hearing students in the United States. *Sign Language Studies*, 4(2), 138–163.
- Możdżyńska, M. (2019). *Codziennosc słyszących dzieci niesłyszących rodziców* [*The everyday life of hearing children of deaf parents*], <https://repozytorium.uni.wroc.pl/dlibra/publication/84075/edition/79646/content?&action=ChangeMetaLangAction&lang=en> [accessed: 10.11.2019].
- Murphy, J. & Slorach, N. (1983). The Language Development of Pre-Preschool Hearing Children of Deaf Parents. *British Journal of Disorders of Communication*, 18(2), 118–127.
- Nęcki, Z. (1996). *Komunikacja międzyludzka* [*Interpersonal communication*]. Kraków: Antykwa.
- Padden, C. & Humphries, T. (1988). *Deaf in America: Voices from a culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Pizer, G.B. (2008). *Sign and Speech in Family Interaction: Language Choices of Deaf Parents and their Hearing Children*, <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/17720> [accessed: 10.11.2019].
- Plutecka, K. (2017). Stres i radzenie sobie z nim przez rodziców dzieci niesłyszących [Stress and ways of coping with it among parents of deaf children]. *Spoleczeństwo i Rodzina*, 50(1), 58–69.
- Radochoński, M. (1998). Wybrane zagadnienia psychopatologii w ujęciu systemowej koncepcji rodziny [Selected issues of psychopathology in the systemic concept of the family]. *Roczniki Socjologii Rodziny*, 10, 91–109.
- Rocławski, B. (1991). *Opieka logopedyczna od poczęcia* [*Speech therapy from conception*]. Gdańsk: GlottisPol.
- Sachs, J., Bard, B. & Johnson, M.L. (1981). Language learning with restricted input: Case studies of two hearing children of deaf parents. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 2(1), 33–54. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716400000643>.
- Schiff, N.B. & Ventry, I.M. (1976). Communication problems in hearing children of deaf parents. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 41(3), 348–358.
- Schiff-Myers, N.B. & Klein, H. (1985). Some phonological characteristics of the speech of normal hearing children of Deaf parents. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research*, 28(4), 466–474.
- Singleton, J.L. & Tittle, M.D. (2000). Deaf Parents and Their Hearing Children. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 5(3), 221–236.
- Temple, B. & Young, A. (2004). Qualitative research and translation dilemmas. *Qualitative Research*, 4(2), 161–178.
- Tomasello, M. (2002). *Kulturowe źródła ludzkiego poznania* [*The cultural origins of human cognition*], transl. J. Rączaszek. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy.

- Toohy, E.N. (2010). *Phonological Development in Hearing Children of Deaf Parents, Honors Scholar Theses*. Paper 153, http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/srhonors_theses/153 [accessed: 10.11.2019].
- Wach, T. (2016). Pedagogiczna racjonalizacja transgeneracyjnych kodów socjokulturowych w rodzinach zagrożonych demoralizacją [Pedagogical rationalisation of transgenerational sociocultural codes in families at risk of demoralisation]. In: E. Domagała-Zyśk, A. Borowicz & R. Kołodziejczyk (eds.), *Język i wychowanie. Księga Jubileuszowa z okazji 45-lecia pracy naukowej Profesora Kazimiera Krakowiak* [Language and education. Commemorative publication on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the scientific work Professor Kazimiera Krakowiak] (pp. 639–652). Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.
- Zaborniak-Sobczak, M. & Perenc, L. (2017). Wiedza językowa słyszących dzieci niesłyszących rodziców. Studium przypadku [The language knowledge of hearing children of deaf parents. Case study]. *Logopedia*, 46, 337–353.
- Zaorska, M. (1996). Sprawność językowa słyszących dzieci niesłyszących rodziców [Language proficiency of hearing children of deaf parents]. *Roczniki Pedagogiki Specjalnej*, 7, 444–455.
- Zaręba, E. (1998). Badania empiryczne ilościowe i jakościowe w pedagogice [Quantitative and qualitative empirical research in pedagogy]. In: S. Palka (ed.), *Orientacje w metodologii badań pedagogicznych* [Directions in the methodology of pedagogical research] (pp. 43–54). Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.