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**Theory and Practice  
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## Contents

Preface ( <i>Danuta Gabryś-Barker, Adam Wojtaszek</i> ) . . . . .	5
<b>Mirosław Pawlak</b>	
Another Look at the L2 Motivational Self System of Polish Students Majoring in English: Insights from Interview Data . . . . .	9
<b>Ingrid Bello-Rodzeń</b>	
Multilingual Upbringing as Portrayed in the Blogosphere: On Parent-Bloggers' Profile . . . . .	27
<b>Anna Turula</b>	
Between New Technologies and New Paradigms in Academic Education. A Non-Reductionist Approach . . . . .	47
<b>Lindsey R. Leacox, Margarita Meza, Tammy Gregersen</b>	
When Language Anxiety and Selective Mutism Meet in the Bilingual Child: Interventions from Positive Psychology . . . . .	61
<b>Aleksandra Szymańska-Tworek</b>	
Teaching Materials and the ELF Methodology – Attitudes of Pre-Service Teachers . . . . .	83
<b>Grzegorz Cebrat</b>	
How to Write an American Death Notice: Some Guidelines for Novice Obituarists . . . . .	101



## Preface

We resolved to start publishing this journal thinking that despite the fact that Poland has a strong position in second language acquisition research and that quite a large number of monographic publications in this area come out every year—often published abroad with Multilingual Matters or Springer, among others—yet there is no academic research-oriented journal devoted to the theory and practice of SLA which would be widely available to Polish academia. The other existing journal, *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* published by Adam Mickiewicz University (Kalisz-Poznań), emphasizes the role of classroom-oriented research, and so its particular focus complements this new journal by presenting foreign language pedagogy and its classroom applications. The origins of our journal also lie in the success of the *International Conference on Second/ Foreign Language Acquisition* which has been organized for almost thirty years by the Institute of English at the University of Silesia. It gathers together each year many Polish and foreign academics and focuses on often un-researched issues and fairly new trends in SLA. Papers falling within the leading theme of each conference are usually edited and published in the form of a monograph, but there are also many studies presented in research areas not directly related to the main theme. Since many of these are of a high academic standard, we resolved to open a channel for their publication, alongside other original articles and submissions. We believe that our new journal will serve an important need in projecting new and interesting research in SLA.

This is the third issue of our journal, which is published bi-annually and consists of articles submitted to us directly or solicited (by invitation). Each text is peer-reviewed in a double blind referring process by referees of the Editorial Board and beyond. The Editorial Board consists of both Polish scholars and foreign experts in the area, and represents the wide range of research interests of its members. All updated information on the journal is available on its new website at [www.journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/TAPSLA](http://www.journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/TAPSLA). Like the previous issue,

which was published in the first part of 2016, this issue of the journal is also available in electronic form.

We hope that this journal to some extent fills a gap in the Polish journal publishing market and that it will be of interest to researchers working in the field of second language acquisition. We would like to invite Polish and foreign academics to share their scholarly research with us by submitting their work to the *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* journal, which is published by the prestigious Polish academic publisher, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego (University of Silesia Press).

The present issue consists of articles in various areas of SLA and also research in multilingualism, supplemented with two papers strictly related to aspects of foreign language teaching.

In the incessant quest for recognition of the true role of motivation in foreign language learning, Mirosław Pawlak offers another interesting perspective, viewing the motivational system as encompassing a vital component of integrativeness, which is analyzed relative to three dimensions: an ideal self, an ought-to self, and L2 learning experiences. This intriguing insight, which results from a qualitative study, reveals a number of additional factors which take part in the shaping of motivational background.

Ingrid Bello-Rodzeń recognizes the role of new technologies and the development of the blogosphere as increasingly important factors in promoting and shaping multilingualism, not just in the bloggers themselves, but in their children, whose multilingual development often becomes the main theme of their narratives.

The theme of modern technologies used in communication is also addressed in the paper by Anna Turula, who focuses on the application of IT devices to the teaching of a foreign language. As the text reveals, a new realm of opportunities, but also problems, emerges at the meeting point between the digital and the real worlds.

In a world of massive migrations, problems encountered by migrant children deserve special attention. One such problem is selective mutism, which affects a much bigger proportion of immigrant children than was initially assumed. The longitudinal case study by Lindsey R. Leacox, Margarita Meza, and Tammy Gregersen demonstrates the positive outcomes of pet-assisted therapy, against the background of music therapy and laughter therapy, offering some interesting implications and conclusions.

In the context of changing views on the significance of the native-speaker as a language model, influenced by English as a lingua franca methodology, the study by Aleksandra Szymańska-Tworek confronts the recent methodological trends with the opinions of pre-service teachers of English. It turns out that while they are ready to embrace multicultural diversity, they are quite reluctant to accept too much linguistic variability in the teaching materials.

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We can never predict exactly where our second language skills are going to prove useful. Sometimes a unique ability or proficiency in a rarely practiced genre can boost our value as a much sought-after employee. Several interesting hints on how to develop the uncommon skill of composing obituaries English are offered by Grzegorz Cebrat, who decided to translate the results of his in-depth discourse analytic study into a practical teaching procedure.

We hope that this issue of our journal will generate interest in its readers for the variety it offers as well as innovative topics presented by the contributors.

*Danuta Gabryś-Barker*  
*Adam Wojtaszek*





**Mirosław Pawlak**

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## **Another Look at the L2 Motivational Self System of Polish Students Majoring in English: Insights from Interview Data**

### **Abstract**

One of the most recent theoretical developments when it comes to the role of motivation in second language learning is the theory of the L2 Motivational Self System (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005). It has been proposed in recognition of the fact that: (1) learning a foreign language does not only involve acquiring a new communicative code, but also affects the personality of an individual, (2) the difficulties involved in applying Gardner's (1985) concept of integrativeness to foreign language contexts, and (3) the mounting empirical evidence (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002), demonstrating that key components of motivation, such as integrativeness, instrumentality, attitudes towards L2 speakers or manifestations of motivated learning behavior are intricately interrelated. As a result, the notion of integrativeness has been reinterpreted as the L2-specific aspect of an individual's ideal self and the motivational system is believed to comprise the following three dimensions: (a) ideal L2 self, which is related to the abilities and skills that learners envisage themselves possessing, which may trigger a desire to reduce the distance between their actual and ideal selves, (b) ought-to L2 self, which is connected with the attributes that the learners believe are important in the eyes of significant others, and (c) L2 learning experiences, which is a context-related factor reflecting the nature of the immediate learning environment and learning experiences. This framework was applied in a qualitative study, the participants of which were 28 English majors in the last year of a three-year BA program who were interviewed about their motives for learning the target language. The analysis revealed that although motivational influences which have traditionally been regarded as important do play a role, there are a number of factors, such as family influence, instrumentality, knowledge orientation or international posture, that are also of vital importance.

*Keywords:* motivation; theory of L2 Motivational Self System, ideal L2 self, ought-to self, English majors

## Preliminary Considerations

Research into motivation to learn second or foreign languages has never lost its popularity since the publication of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) seminal study which provided evidence that learners, at least those in second language contexts having ample opportunities for contacts with native speakers, are driven by integrative or instrumental motives, with the former superseding the latter. This should hardly come as a surprise in view of the fact that, to quote Dörnyei (2005, pp. 65–67), motivation “provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent.” In effect, following new theoretical developments, second language (L2) learning motivation research has gone through different phases over the last several decades, moving from the social psychological period, dominated by Gardner's (1985) theory, through the cognitive-situated period, underpinned by motivational theories proposed within the field of educational psychology, such as attribution theory (Weiner, 1992) or self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and also emphasizing the need to explore motivation in specific contexts, to the process-oriented period, where the main focus has been on exploring temporal variation in learners' motives and intensity of their engagement in the learning task (cf. Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Most of the current research is representative of the latter phase and a process-oriented perspective is very likely to continue to shape research into L2 motivation in the years to come. This, however, should by no means be interpreted as indicating that empirical studies striving to offer insights into learners' motivation at a particular point in time are no longer viable and should be abandoned.

Perhaps the most prominent and influential theoretical position that has emerged within the process-oriented approach to the study of L2 motivation is the theory of L2 Motivational Self System that has been put forward by Dörnyei (2005, 2009a, 2014) with a view to bringing the concept of integrativeness closer to the realities of foreign language contexts in which, despite increasing opportunities for foreign travel or technological advances, access to the TL still often remains extremely scarce. Drawing on the concept of possible selves and future self guides stemming from personality psychology (Markus & Nurius, 1986), conceptualizations of motivation proposed by Noels (2003) and Ushioda (2001), as well as his own research findings (e.g., Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002), he describes the construct of second language learning motivation in terms of three dimensions, namely: (1) *ideal L2 self*, which is related to the vision of themselves as target language (TL) users that learners hold, (2) *ought-to L2 self*, which concerns the need to

live up to the expectations of significant others, often to ward off unfavorable consequences, and (3) *L2 learning experience*, which pertains in the main to the nature of the environment in which learning takes place. As Ushioda and Dörnyei (2014, p. 400) explain, the key tenet on which the theory is predicated “is that if proficiency in the target language is integral to one’s *ideal* or *ought-to* self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between current and future self states” (emphasis original). On the one hand, in line with the claims of the process-oriented paradigm, the three components are assumed to be in a state of constant flux as possible selves can be revised upwards or downwards in response to evidence of progress being made, or modified as a result of interaction with other self-concepts (cf. Henry, 2015). On the other hand, the adoption of this theoretical stance allows the analysis of L2 motivational self systems at a given point in time, thereby offering a snapshot of the intensity and structure of motivation to study the TL in a specific group of learners (see many of the chapters included in Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Csizér & Magid, 2014). It is the latter interpretation that provided the rationale for the study reported in this paper which sought to explore the intensity and nature of the motives underlying English majors’ efforts to learn the TL. In the first part, a brief overview of selected studies adopting the ideal L2 self perceptive will be presented, and, in the second, the aims, design, and findings of the research project will be discussed, which will then offer a basis for a consideration of future research directions and pedagogical implications in the conclusion to the paper.<sup>1</sup>

## **Review of Previous Studies into L2 Motivational Self System**

Since the number of studies adopting L2 Motivational Self System as the theoretical framework has grown exponentially in recent years, not least because this framework has to some extent assumed the status of a default one in exploring motivational dynamics, a detailed overview of such empirical investigations falls outside the scope of the present paper. In addition, the bulk of this research has been quantitative in nature, seeking, first, to validate the model and explore its facets in different contexts (e.g., Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009; Yashima, 2009), and, second, to shed light on the links between its different components, learners’ attainment (e.g., Lamb, 2012) and

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to express his gratitude to his colleagues, Dr. Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Dr. Jakub Bielak, for their considerable assistance in collecting and analyzing the data employed for the purpose of the present study.

a number of attributes believed to mediate the success of L2 learning, such as autonomy (e.g., Csizér & Kormas, 2014), anxiety and self-efficacy (e.g., Piniel & Csizér, 2015). However, in view of the fact that the research project reported below was qualitative in nature, the focus of the present section will be on a succinct description of several representative studies embodying this research paradigm with the purpose of illustrating the methodological choices made and the nature of insights that empirical investigations of this kind can be expected to yield.

One qualitative study which embraced the ideal L2 self perspective was the longitudinal empirical investigation undertaken by Lamb (2009), in which this theoretical stance was combined with situated learning theory (Wenger, 1998) and social theory (Bourdieu, 1991). The aim was to explore over the period of two years the motivational trajectories of two Indonesian learners who manifested what Higgins (1996) has termed a promotion and prevention regulatory focus in learning English, thus epitomizing to some extent ideal and ought-to L2 selves. The analysis of the data collected in the course of a series of interviews demonstrated that the two constructs can indeed be useful in accounting for differences in approaching the research situation, opportunities for self-regulated learning or classroom experiences. More recent research has attempted to apply L2 motivational system to the study of individual difference variables, as evident in the studies carried out by Miyahara (2014) and Yue (2014). The former, yet again bringing together the concept of the ideal L2 self, situated learning and imagined communities, focused upon the emotions exhibited by six Japanese learners in the first year of a two-year English curriculum. The data collected by means of a series of interviews, conducted over the period of about a year and complemented by the participants' regular reflections and e-mail exchanges during the six-week study abroad component of the program, were subjected to a combination of thematic and structural analysis which allowed identification of two distinct patterns for the formation of the ideal L2 selves and the contribution of emotions to this process. The latter was a case study of a Chinese university student learning English and zoomed in on the role that the discrepancy between learners' self-concept and their possible selves might play in triggering willingness to communicate in a second language (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). Thematic analysis of the data obtained from a life story interview, classroom observation, and stimulated recall sessions led the author to conclude that "the learner's L2 WTC is more likely to be initiated in the L2 communicative situation when the language learner can visualize specific L2 possible selves and realize that the discrepancy between the current self and future possible selves is possible to be reduced by following specific feasible L2 action plans." Magid (2014), in turn, conducted an intervention study in which 31 Chinese students enrolled in a variety of courses at a British university had the benefit of a training

program, based on the use of scripted imagery, which was aimed at enhancing their vision of ideal L2 selves as well as honing abilities indispensable for the attainment of this vision, such as setting clearly-defined goals and devising realistic action plans. One of the measures of success were interviews held at the beginning and at the end of the program, which demonstrated that the vision of the participants' ideal L2 selves can be considerably enhanced, indicating that the application of imagery can be harnessed as a useful motivational strategy. Particularly interesting is the study undertaken by Waninge (2015), who applied a dynamic systems perspective to investigating the changing nature of L2 learning experience, which is the least known component of the motivational self system, approaching it in terms of affective-cognitive-motivational conglomerates (Dörnyei, 2009b) and identifying four recurring attractor states in the language classroom, that is engagement, interest, anxiety, and boredom. The data collected during semi-structured interviews showed, among others, that interest can indeed be affected by a combination of cognitive, motivational, affective, and contextual factors, a finding that testified to the validity of the adopted theoretical framework. Finally, Lyons (2014) set out to explore the evolution of the L2 self-concept of 39 Korean students who had chosen English-related majors over the period of six months. The data gathered through four interviews, one focus group and three follow-up individual ones, enabled the identification of a number of influences on the development of L2 self-concept, such as the ability to come up with a more tangible vision of a future possible self, to monitor the progress being made towards future self-guides, and to attribute successes and failures to the magnitude of one's own commitment. The study reported in the following section contributes to this line of inquiry by providing valuable insights into the motivated learning behavior of Polish students majoring in English and the factors that conspire to create their specific motivational profiles.

## **The Study**

### **Rationale, Aims, and Research Questions**

As emphasized by Pawlak (2016), present-day Polish students majoring in English constitute a very different group from those of, say, a decade or two decades ago. This can be attributed, among others, to the fact that being admitted into English Departments is much easier now than it used to be, the accompanying lower levels of proficiency of the candidates and lower levels of ultimate attainment, as well as the growing perception of such programs as

intensive courses in English rather than opportunities to become acquainted with issues in linguistics, literature, culture or foreign language methodology. Consequently, it is fully warranted to conduct studies that shed light on the motives that drive English majors in their efforts to improve their mastery of the target language, not least because it can help administrators, program coordinators and university teachers to better adjust instructional content and activities to students' needs without having to sacrifice too much of what is universally considered the core of BA and MA programs in English philology. After all, most of those involved in running such programs or teaching the multitude of subjects they comprise would undoubtedly attest that their aims should be much more ambitious than just giving students an opportunity to gain greater control over TL skills and subsystems with a view to developing superior communicative abilities.

It was such a rationale that prompted Pawlak (2016) to conduct a questionnaire study of 220 Polish BA students majoring in English, which was aimed to examine the level and structure of their motivation to learn English and adopted as the analytical framework the theory of L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). The main findings were that the motivation of the participants was quite strong and that they were in the main driven by such motives as a positive vision of themselves as highly advanced users of the TL at some time in the future, their interest in and fascination with the English language as such, their positive predisposition to the way in which English classes are conducted and their respect for and also to some extent at least, their willingness to get familiarized with other cultures and ways of life. On the other hand, although differences were revealed for the specific items included in the subscales, the contribution of instrumental motives, international vocation or activities, or the encouragement from parents and significant others proved to be of much smaller significance, with such factors as the perceived threat that the TL posed to the mother tongue or anxiety exhibited in classroom and real-world situations exerting a clearly negative influence. The study reported in the present paper can be regarded as a follow-up to this initial research project in that it was also intended to provide insights into English majors' motives for learning the TL from the perspective of the theory of the ideal second language self. The crucial difference, however, lay in the fact that it drew upon qualitative data, thus allowing more in-depth analysis of the nature of participants' motivation and at the same time rectifying some of the flaws singled out in the above-mentioned study. Nevertheless, the research questions addressed were identical and they were as follows:

1. What is the participants' overall level of motivation to learn English?
2. Which of the factors believed to comprise the L2 ideal self-system contribute the most to shaping the participants' motivation?

## Participants

The participants were 28 English majors in the last year of a three-year BA program, all of whom had also taken part in the previous study undertaken by Pawlak (2016) and had volunteered to be included in the present empirical investigation. They were on average 22 years of age and at the time of data collection they had been learning English for an average of 12.5 years, typically having started formal instruction in elementary school. Their English proficiency oscillated between B2 and C1 in terms of the levels specified in the *Common European Framework*, but it should be emphasized that there was considerable individual variation in this respect among the participants, both in general and with reference to different TL skills and subsystems. Similarly to other BA programs in English across Poland, the students had the benefit of an intensive course in the target language which required them to attend separate classes dedicated to pronunciation, grammar, speaking, writing, and integrated skills, with the foci being shifted somewhat in each of the three years, as well as to obtain credits in a number of content classes in issues in language acquisition and use, linguistics, literature, history, culture, and foreign language pedagogy, most of which were taught in English. It should also be noted that in the second part of the last year in the program, the period during which the data were collected, the students were predominantly concerned with working on their diploma papers, the completion of which was the necessary condition for being allowed to take the diploma exam and obtaining the BA degree.

## Data Collection and Analysis

The requisite data were collected by means of individual, semi-structured interviews that were conducted outside of regular class time and lasted approximately 10 minutes. In each case, following one or two warm-up questions, the participants were requested to answer a number of queries related to different aspects of the L2 motivational self system which have often been tapped in research undertaken within this framework, mirroring to a great extent issues tackled by the subscales included in the tool employed by Pawlak (2016). The facets under investigation were as follows: *motivated learning behavior* (i.e., effort and persistence in L2 learning), *ideal L2 self* (i.e., learners' perceptions of themselves as successful users of English), *ought-to L2 self* (i.e., the impact of significant others), *family influence* (i.e., the parents' role in motivating students to learn English), *L2 learning experience* (i.e., the extent to which learners enjoy the process of learning inside and outside the classroom), *instrumentality* (i.e., the significance of pragmatic gains), *knowledge orientation* (i.e., learners' desire to expand their knowledge about the world), *international posture* (i.e., students'



readiness to engage in communication with foreigners in a variety of contexts), *self-confidence* (i.e., the degree to which anxiety is likely to be manifested in different situations requiring TL use), and *fear of assimilation* (i.e., concerns about the impact of the TL on the mother tongue and the culture it represents). The specific questions that were directed at the students with the purpose of shedding light on these facets touched on such issues as the prospect of getting a job abroad, the use of English in professional and personal lives, the envisaged purposes of using English in the future, aspirations regarding the ultimate levels of attainment, the role of parents in the participants' learning of English, the relationship between English and its culture, the extent of the students' involvement in learning the TL, the importance of grades as a motivating factor, the amount of anxiety involved in using English in various situations, the threat that the TL posed to the mother tongue, the culture it represents and national identity, the attitude towards English as a foreign language, as well as the participants' approach to the study of English. The students were given a choice as to the language in which they preferred to be interviewed, but all of them either chose their mother tongue from the very start or switched to Polish when answering some of the questions. The data gathered in this way were audio-recorded, transcribed, and subjected to qualitative analysis which consisted in identifying recurring patterns, taking as a point of reference the aspects of the L2 motivational self system mentioned above.

## Findings and Discussion

At the very outset of this section, two important comments are in order: first, for the sake of clarity, the findings of the study will be presented in the same order in which the different facets of L2 motivational self system were listed in the preceding section, and, second, in light of the nature of the data, a decision has been made to combine the presentation of the results with the discussion thereof, mainly adopting as yardstick the results of the study conducted by Pawlak (2016) which targeted a similar, albeit larger, group of participants.

When it comes to motivated learning behavior, it turned out that the students were indeed willing to invest a lot of effort in learning English, which is evident in the fact that, when asked to evaluate their commitment, determination, and involvement in this respect on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), the vast majority opted for nine, a value that can be regarded as highly positive. This finding is consistent with the outcome reported by Pawlak (2016) and testifies to quite strong motivation on the part of the English majors, which should perhaps not come as a surprise given the high standards that have to be met to successfully complete the BA program, not only in terms of achieving the required level of TL proficiency but also mastering the demanding content

for which ample mastery of English is clearly indispensable. What has to be borne in mind though is that the participants were volunteers who might be inherently more motivated than their peers, and that their reported commitment and effort might be underpinned by rather disparate motives which will be considered in some detail below. The analysis of the responses also revealed that the interviewees were on the whole experienced language learners, quite aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they were able to successfully employ a wide array of language learning strategies and they manifested a high degree of autonomy, as visible, for example, in their capacity for detecting TL areas that posed problems but also for seeking out effective solutions to the difficulties they encountered. The following excerpts illustrate some of these points.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) I am very involved in learning English. After classes at the university I teach children and I give private lessons. That is why in my free time I read books for pleasure or watch movies without subtitles. I am trying to improve my English all the time.
- (2) I prefer to learn on my own because in a group there is always someone who is distracting me. I like to learn vocabulary, phrasal verbs or idioms. I like to visualize what I am learning or to use different kinds of associations.
- (3) I am doing my best to improve my English. I have made friends with people from the USA and other countries to have more practice opportunities. This allows me to practice my pronunciation and to find out a lot of things about culture.
- (4) I am an introvert so I like to learn on my own but sometimes it is useful to exchange observations with someone else. I have always liked to learn practical things. I know that pronunciation is important but it is difficult to master. Grammar is even more difficult.

Moving on to the ideal L2 self, most of the participants stated that they saw themselves in the future as highly proficient users of English in different situations, often making references to the *Common European Framework* and describing their envisioned level as C1 or C2. While they were at the same time fully cognizant that attaining superior mastery of the TL, let alone approximating the kind of communicative competence that is manifested by native speakers, is in all likelihood an unachievable goal, they were still determined to pursue it as this endeavor was surely a worthwhile undertaking. Another component of their imagined selves was related to their professional lives since most of them envisioned themselves as having careers in which they would use

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<sup>2</sup> The participants' responses cited throughout the paper have been translated from Polish into English by the present author.

English on a daily basis as teachers, translators, interpreters, or employees of international companies in which the use of English is the norm rather than an exception. What should be noted, however, is that the responses frequently reflected very different agendas, both with respect to the mastery of specific skills of aspirations for the future. These trends are also in line with the findings reported by Pawlak (2016) and they are illustrated in the following comments which appeared in the course of the interviews:

- (5) I would very much like to achieve the C2 level and I am confident that I can do it if I apply myself.
- (6) I am considering working as a teacher but also getting a job requiring the use of English. If I become a teacher, I will pass on my knowledge to others, and if I work for some company or find some other job connected with English, this will probably involve translating and interpreting.
- (7) At the moment I am seriously contemplating becoming a teacher because I got to like this job after my teaching practice and this is what I would very much like to do. I would like to achieve as high a level of proficiency as possible but I am aware that my speaking skills will always lag behind writing or grammar.
- (8) Yes, I would like to translate books and perhaps movies, and maybe promote our culture abroad. I think that I will be able to achieve a level of proficiency which will enable me to communicate with foreigners. There may be a discrepancy between my command of speaking and writing as I would probably be better in speaking.

Perhaps as a corollary of the nature of the questions posed, the ought-to self was mainly associated with the impact of evaluation on the motivation to learn English. As transpires from the analysis, the students tended to agree that grades played a significant role in encouraging them to study hard, both those they were given on regular achievement tests in different courses, and in particular those they received on their final examinations since they determined whether or not they completed a particular level in the program. Some of them also indicated that grades helped them identify the areas that were in need of improvement, which resulted in decisions about the focus of their future efforts. On the other hand, the participants expressed the opinion that grades often failed to reflect their real skills and abilities, either because the format of the tests precluded them from demonstrating their mastery of the target language, a situation which is suggestive of inadequate face validity of the assessment measures used, or because the stress they experienced caused them to underperform. These were, in their view, the main reasons for the blatant lack of correspondence between semester grades, which derived from their day-to-day

performance in a particular course, and the grades received on examinations administered at the end of the academic year. Relevant excerpts follow:

- (9) Grades are important to me as they show what I still have to improve.
- (10) Grades influence motivation because, apart from causing irritation and frustration, they bring about motivation to work harder and learn more intensively.
- (11) Grades often do not reflect out true abilities. There is also stress and difficulty in coming up with ideas.
- (12) Grades in practical English often do not give justice to what we know since sometimes there is a problem with a particular topic. Besides, not everyone is so concerned with grammar, but they want to speak. For others, grammar is more important and they know it well but they find it hard to communicate. So the grade gives you an idea about a specific area but not the whole mastery.

Somewhat in contrast to the findings reported by Pawlak (2016), family influence proved to be an important factor in affecting the participants' motivation to learn English, particularly with respect to parental encouragement. As is evident from the students' responses during the interviews, it was in most cases their parents who could be credited with starting their adventure with English, for example by arranging and funding private tutoring, offered constant support throughout process, and, in some cases influenced the students' decisions to choose English as their major at the university. There were also some instances, though, when parents were skeptical about the choice of English studies, mainly out of concern about the prospects of securing a job as a teacher, but this did not dissuade students from pursuing this course of study, a decision that was later not contested. The following excerpts illustrate some of these points:

- (13) My father motivated me since I was a child and my mother enrolled me in my first language course. They have always been supportive and happy with my successes. In fact, it was my mother who encouraged me to study here.
- (14) My parents sent me to English lessons when I was very young. They have supported me all the time, financially as well, and I have always felt their encouragement. They believe it is a good thing that I am studying English. They approve of whatever I do if they can see I enjoy it. It is a family tradition because my mom is a teacher and my grandma used to teach French.
- (15) My parents do not interfere with my life and they can see that I am studying what I really want. My mother has doubts about English because there are so many teachers around and she is afraid that I might

not get a job in the future. But she knows that this is what I want to do and she respects my decision.

As was the case in the much larger sample investigated by Pawlak (2016), the analysis of the interview responses also indicated that the experience of learning English played a positive role in enhancing the participants' motivation. For one thing, such sentiments stemmed from the favorable attitude to English as a foreign language as such since many students confessed that they simply liked the sound of English and were positively predisposed to achieving high levels of proficiency in that language. What should also be emphasized is that the interviewees opted for British or American English as the model they would like to aspire to, expressing little appreciation for international English due to its perceived violation of the TL norms. Secondly, despite some voices of dissent, the participants were on the whole contented with the kind of instruction that was offered in the program, in most cases heaping praise on their teachers and the instructional practices they routinely employed. Such sentiments are visible in the following comments:

- (16) The sound, I love the British accent, it is so beautiful ... in songs and in programs and films. I just like listening to it.
- (17) I like the sounds of words and the opportunity to use phrases that do not exist in Polish. Idioms are also interesting.
- (18) What I particularly enjoy about my classes is group work which is often used by some teachers and they also use tasks planned in such a way that I can exchange my opinions with my peers, in particular with respect to texts that describe different walks of life. I have to admit though that I do not like some aspects of grammar such as syntax.

With respect to instrumental motives, they turned out to be of much more significance than in the case of the study conducted by Pawlak (2016), but the focus on professional issues was similar. In fact, all of the students seemed to be driven by instrumental goals that were primarily related to enhancing the chances of getting a good job in the future, such that would, on the one hand, be satisfying and, on the other, at the very least secure, if not well-paid. While the majority of the participants were unanimous in the conviction that they would like to be teachers of English, with some of them even specifying the age group they would like to work with, a few others were adamant in the claim that they would never join the teaching profession, making it plain that they were planning to get other qualifications and that they just perceived a good command of English as an asset which they will take advantage of in their professional lives. Sentiments of this kind are exemplified in the following excerpts:

- (19) I hope to become a respected teacher who can use English similarly to native speakers.
- (20) I am very much aware of the problems with jobs for teachers but I hope there will be some opportunity for me. I cannot imagine myself doing something else. I just want to teach kids.
- (21) My dream is working for an international company. I would be happy to work in film production or something like that. I would definitely not like to be a teacher. This job is too hard.
- (22) I do not know exactly what I will be doing but it will be connected with English for sure.

As regards international posture and knowledge orientation, facets that are very closely related to each other, the students were quite willing to communicate with foreigners in various situations, thanks to which they were more likely to expand their knowledge about the world. This, however, was not in most instances tantamount to expressing a willingness to immigrate, but, rather, indicative of their readiness to spend some time in an English-speaking country with a view to gaining greater mastery of the target language. At the same time, however, some of the students did not exclude the possibility of staying abroad permanently, particularly when a propitious opportunity arose. Additionally, most of the participants stated that they wanted to get familiarized with the American or British culture before visiting the relevant countries as this would facilitate communication with the native speakers but there were also such who were convinced that the knowledge of culture was irrelevant when international contacts with people coming from a variety of different countries were the goal. The following comments illustrate some of these trends:

- (23) I might go abroad for a couple of years but not permanently. The main goal would be to improve my English, to make it more natural. I could also get some qualifications. When we collect enough money, we will go to see the States... as tourists, not to work there. But if I get an interesting offer, who knows? I know I might have to go abroad because there are hardly any prospects for young people here.
- (24) I thought that after I graduate I might go abroad for a year to improve my English and then come back. I could find a job there although I do not know what job this would be, but this would have to be in Great Britain. However, I would like to have contact with native speakers because you are usually surrounded by Poles.
- (25) I am surely considering immigration although I would like to avoid such a situation. Still, such a thought crosses your mind from time to time.

As regards self-confidence in using English and the effect of anxiety in this respect, the results mirrored to a large extent those reported by Pawlak (2016), with the caveat that feelings of self-efficacy, self-confidence or apprehension were a function of the situation in which TL use was expected to occur. This is evident in the fact that whereas some participants regarded interaction with native speakers as extremely stress-inducing, pointing to the danger that they will be able to pin down all the errors and inconsistencies, others were much less apprehensive of such a prospect, arguing that native speakers will point out what is wrong, correct their errors and be able to better understand the sources of their linguistic problems. Similar ambivalence was voiced with respect to the instructional setting since, according to the students, some tasks, activities or exam circumstances were inherently more likely to generate anxiety than others, with much hinging on the attitude of the teacher or peers. The following excerpts are illustrative of such sentiments:

- (26) Native speakers are OK as they concentrate on the message and we are good enough to express the intended meaning. By contrast, non-natives, particularly my teachers, will be more focused on errors and are likely to notice tiniest problems. I am also afraid that the students in my group will laugh at me and I get very anxious during oral exams.
- (27) I feel stressed out when I use English in the presence of native speakers because they are better than me and they can notice the errors I make. But when I talk to someone who is not a native speaker, this is not a problem and I am not anxious because I know that I will be understood and my errors will go unnoticed.
- (28) Stress? This depends on the members of the examination board. When I was taking my make-up exam, there was no anxiety at all. It was like a conversation with old friends.

The analysis of the data demonstrated that the participants were not afraid of the negative impact of English on their mother tongue, their identity and way of life, a finding that stands in contrast to the results of Pawlak's (2016) study. In fact, some of them expressed satisfaction with the omnipresence of English, hoping that adopting some elements of the TL culture could trigger changes in the Polish ways of life which clearly failed to live up to their expectations. Others saw the impact of English as a natural phenomenon that should not be labeled as good or bad, but which could in fact allow foreigners to become familiarized with the Polish culture. Others yet were reluctant to favor one style of life over another, stating that this is a distinctive feature of a particular society that should simply be respected or even held in high esteem. Representative excerpts from the interviews are the following:



- (29) There are many borrowings and English words are used by the young every day but it is not a real danger. Perhaps, thanks to English people from abroad will learn more about the Polish culture.
- (30) The Polish way of life is different but not better or worse than others, just different. Each nationality has its own way of dealing with problems.
- (31) People there are more relaxed and friendly, more optimistic. We are very serious, we do not smile very often.
- (32) The English way of life is perhaps not better but if I were to choose, I would rather pursue the American rather than Polish dream. A typical Pole will always complain. We surely have reasons to complain but the American way of life is more appealing to me.

## **Conclusions and Implications**

As can be seen from the foregoing discussion, the results of this qualitative study are to a large extent consistent with the findings of the quantitative research project undertaken by Pawlak (2016) with a similar, but much more sizable, group of participants. In particular, it turned out, somewhat contrary to the claims of those lamenting the falling standards of English studies and the lack of commitment on the part of students in foreign language departments, that the English majors were quite strongly motivated to study the TL and to invest considerable time and effort in the task. The most important motives underlying their involvement included a clear vision of themselves as proficient language users in different walks of life, favorable attitudes to the target language and the ways in which it was taught in the program, as well as readiness to get to know other cultures and ways of life. Surprisingly, to some extent in contrast to the findings of the previous study, external influences in the form of evaluation and parental encouragement or tangible support turned out to play a much greater part in affecting their motivation whereas anxiety and fear of assimilation proved to be much less detrimental in this respect, with their perceived influence hinging upon a specific situation. Despite such overall positive findings, there is still a clear need to aid learners in creating vivid but also realistic visions of themselves as TL users, assist them in coming up with feasible plans that would enable them to accomplish their imagined goals and convince them to attribute their successes and failures to their own efforts rather than forces outside their control. It also appears warranted to provide students with some form of intercultural training, properly tailored to their needs, with a view to making them more sensitive to other cultures, customs and ways of



life, and take steps intended to boost their self-confidence and self-efficacy, at the same time reducing the anxiety they might be paralyzed by when communicating in English. Obviously, before such practices are implemented, further research is indispensable that would, first, corroborate the underlying structure of English majors' L2 motivational self system in similar contexts, and, second, pinpoint the most effective ways in which such instructional goals can be attained. As the present author has elucidated elsewhere, the results of such studies are bound to provide important signposts for all of those involved in designing, implementing, and assessing BA and MA programs in English, both in Poland and other, similar educational contexts.

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Mirosław Pawlak

### **Noch ein Blick für Motivationssystem im Fremdsprachenunterricht von Anglistikstudenten. Befragungsschlüsse**

#### Zusammenfassung

Der vorliegende Beitrag präsentiert Ergebnisse der empirischen Forschung über Motivation beim Fremdsprachenunterricht, die nach der im Jahre 2009 von Dörnyei entwickelten Motivationssystemtheorie in einer Fremdsprache durchgeführt wurde. Das System besteht aus drei Elementen, d.i.: dem idealen sprachlichen „Ich“, also der Vorstellung des Lernenden als eines künftigen Zielsprachenutzers; dem sprachlichen „Ich“, das den Erwartungen anderer für den Lernenden wichtigen Personen entspricht und meistens auch negative Folgen der unerfüllten Erwartungen widerspiegelt; den Erfahrungen im Fremdsprachenunterricht, die mit der Lernsituation eng verbunden sind. An der Forschung nahmen 28 Studenten der englischen Philologie teil, welche in teilweise strukturierten Interviews befragt die Fragen über verschiedene Aspekte der besagten Theorie beantworteten. Die Qualitätsanalyse hat eindeutig gezeigt, dass die Studenten zum Englischunterricht sehr motiviert sind. Die entscheidende Rolle spielen dabei: ihre Vorstellung von sich selbst als fortgeschrittenen Benutzern des Englischen für Berufszwecke, positive Einstellung zur englischen Sprache und zur Methode deren Erlernung und die Bereitschaft, andere Kulturen und Lebensweisen kennenzulernen. Wichtige Rolle spielt hier auch die Elternhilfe und erhaltene Zensuren, die jedoch die Fähigkeiten der Studenten nicht immer richtig widerspiegeln.

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## **Multilingual Upbringing as Portrayed in the Blogosphere: On Parent-Bloggers' Profile**

### *Abstract*

This article presents the results of an online survey completed by an international group of parents who write about their multilingual upbringing experience on personal blogs. As the first stage in a multi-case study that aims at characterizing multilingual parenting styles and strategies, the web questionnaire was designed to build the profile of the participants based on their demographic and linguistic background, their blogging practices, and their family's linguistic situation. The literature review discusses the prevalence of multilingual child rearing and endorses parent-blogging both as a genre and as a potential research data source. The methodology, on the other hand, introduces the participants, as well as the survey design procedure. Results derive from the identification of salient themes, summarized in two preliminary categories: parents' views on being bi-/multilingual and parental insights on multilingual upbringing strategies. The descriptive-interpretive analysis of the responses indicates that parents' understanding of multilingualism influences their self-concept as language users and their being bloggers. Moreover, parents' capacity to adopt and adapt communication strategies is deemed an important factor for successful early multilingualism. In general, the findings are treated as the starting point to examine the role of parent-blogging in promoting multilingualism and delve into multilingual parenting styles.

*Keywords:* multilingual upbringing, parent-blogging, online surveys, multilingualism research

### **Introduction**

Multilingual families thrive as global mobility and the Internet enhance cross-linguistic encounters and bring people from all corners of the world together. Every day, parents of different nationalities with distinct educational

backgrounds and levels of expertise in multilingual upbringing discuss their family language practices over the web. Although the reasons to participate in online exchanges may vary from one parent to another, the will to promote multilingualism in their household prompts them to join a growing virtual community that encourages its members to exchange experiences, share concerns, and meet like-minded people.

While many parents search the web to find information and explanations, others decide to contribute their own stories in the form of narratives and reflections posted on personal weblogs. Their entries are not only a form of personal expression but a type of text meant to trigger discussion and opinion exchange among potential readers, including other bloggers and parents in a similar linguistic situation. This initiative has turned the blogosphere into a space where it is possible to learn about the multilingual upbringing experience of families around the world just by reading their e-journals, which can be easily found by any internet user with the help of some query keywords.

Blogs of this kind have been chosen for an ongoing study on multilingual upbringing. They offer first-person accounts on the communication practices of several families, an overview of their language plan (Rosenback, 2014), and a non-intrusive look into their multicultural lives. From a research perspective, such blogs represent access to personal narratives written without any conditioning or externally-imposed purpose in mind. Before looking at the texts, however, the study has focused on their writers. Consequently, the main purpose of the present article is to introduce the parent-bloggers (PBs) whose online journal entries will be examined to shed light on parenting styles in the multilingual family context.

The profile presented here has been built on the data gathered through an online survey completed by an international group of parent-bloggers who, firstly, fulfilled the participant selection criteria and, secondly, granted consent for their posts to be analyzed for research purposes. While the findings discussed henceforward are limited in scope and need to be expanded with the subsequent analysis of the blogs, they acknowledge the existence of a pro-multilingualism virtual community and set the ground to explore a new research avenue in the study of child-rearing practices in multilingual households.

## **Multilingual Upbringing: An Exception to the Norm?**

In most societies, multilingualism has been the norm throughout the ages (Lamza, 2007), thus “the majority of peoples in the world are multilingual, not mono- or even bilingual” (Bagga-Gupta, 2013, p. 36). On a global scale, pure

monolingual societies and individuals who exclusively speak one language are hard to find. The coexistence of several languages within a community is not atypical, and neither is the case of couples with different native languages who adopt a lingua franca to be able to communicate. As distances shrink and cultural encounters happen, interracial, multicultural, and multilingual families flourish worldwide.

Being the first “educational environment where the culture forming process takes place” (Majorczyk, 2010, p. 23), the family plays a key role in promoting values such as mutual respect, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. It is within the household that the next generation of world citizens, with high interpersonal skills and the ability to understand themselves in relation to the other, are being formed. From this perspective, the potential individual and social benefits for children being raised in such environment become evident: advanced communication skills, intercultural awareness and, in general, understanding and respect for the other.

Despite the advantages it may have, multilingual/multicultural families seem to make a bigger effort to achieve what is often taken for granted in the “traditional” ones. Passing on their languages, values, and traditions to their offspring requires conscious decision-making and collaborative work from the parents. Not only are they obliged to create a favorable environment that guarantees exposure to several languages, but also to actively get involved in the process. As a result, the efficiency of language acquisition in multilingual upbringing by parents of different nationalities is viewed as a current and complex research issue (Paradowski, Bator, & Michałowska, 2016).

In order to succeed in their endeavor, parents may even require some external support from relationships, professionals, and other families in the same situation, especially when they have no prior experience to rely on. According to Rosenback (2014), the seven central principles of multilingual parenting or what she refers to as “the seven Cs” are: communication, confidence, commitment, consistency, creativity, culture, and celebration. Each one of them refers to both a challenge and a goal for parents to pursue in order to foster the knowledge of languages, which is the key that opens the door to other cultures.

As demanding as it may be, multilingual upbringing is not a rare practice occurring in isolation or just recently. The ubiquity of multilingualism becomes apparent on weblogs featuring families composed of parents and children with different nationalities, who communicate in several languages and, in some cases, reside in a place none of them is originally from. What conditions favor or hinder their success and what factors influence their decisions might give us some hints on the principles of multilingual parenting, as well as on issues that need careful consideration when examining and/or promoting early multilingualism.

Even though “[t]here are more people in the world who use more than one language in their everyday lives than people who spend their whole lives using only one language” (Cruz-Ferreira, 2010, p. 5), much is yet to be learned about the conditions in which multilinguals develop. In order to determine whether there is a correlation or a gap between the existing theory about multilingual upbringing and the practices conducted at home, a bridge between them both needs to be built. Given their nature and scope of interest, the logs kept by the parents may well be scrutinized from a research perspective to establish that connection.

### **Parent-Blogging as a Genre**

Weblogs, or blogs in short, are frequently updated websites consisting of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order, which are typically published by individuals in a personal and informal style (Walker, 2005). Unlike personal webpages with fairly static formats, blogs present original and constantly changing content. They have been considered “an important social tool” (Ferreira et al., 2013, p. 1177) that encourages “self-motivated” users (Chen, 2014) to share ideas, individual experiences, and opinions in order to meet a/the need for self-expression and community development (Morrison, 2010).

Three main styles of blogging have been identified: personal or diary-style blogging, filterblogging, and topic-driven blogging (Walker Rettberg, 2008). Personal blogs are used as a diary deliberately open to the public. Although not limited to a predefined topic, they present pieces of information about the author’s life and interests. The second type of blogs, as their name indicates, is used to filter the Web from the bloggers’ own point of view. Instead of documenting their offline life, bloggers record their experiences and finds on the Web. Finally, on topic-driven blogs authors share newly discovered ideas and information with their readers about a specific subject. Unlike the previous ones, these blogs are often run collaboratively by a group of contributors.

In order to research multilingual upbringing from the parents’ perspective, the scope of the research study is limited to personal weblogs. As explained by Walker Rettberg (2008), these blogs let their writers’ individual voices be heard and disclose information purposefully shared with potential readers and, consequently, they are marked by wit and introspection. While filter blogs offer information about a subject matter without engaging in “partisan advocacy” (Webb & Wang, 2013, p. 206) and topic-driven blogs act more like websites, personal weblogs have “an intimate, sometimes confessional, style where the



author provides the readers with subjective representations and reflections on the topic discussed” (Lomborg, 2009, n.p.).

Most of the personal weblogs that discuss childrearing can be categorized as ‘mommy blogs,’ a genre that features personal online logs whose primary topic is motherhood. Morrison (2010) considers mommy blogging “a form of autobiography in real time” (n.p.). Her definition stresses the introspective, personal and time-bound character of this genre. She characterizes these writing practices as purposive, creative, and interpersonal to distinguish them from private diaries or public websites. The mommy blogger network is strongly interconnected and highly diverse, so it allows parents to build a community in which they talk to others and get feedback on their ideas (Stansberry, 2011; Webb & Lee, 2011).

Compared to other weblogs, mommy blogs share the same technical affordances, but they can be significantly different in terms of audience reach and degree of reciprocity (Morrison, 2010). Some of these blogs are externally-oriented (Scheidt, 2008), written for a broad audience, in a more professional but less intimate tone. Other are confessional personal accounts, or “confessional online diaries” (Walker, 2005), written to meet a personal need rather than attract audience. As opposed to the first group, a third type of blogs is treated as newsletters for far-away relatives and friends, where authors are more concerned about strengthening bonds and sharing materials than about having a fine or creative writing style.

Despite the efforts to endorse mommy blogging as a genre, it is argued that the term itself “reinforces women’s hegemonic normative roles as nurturers, thrusting women who blog about their children into a form of digital domesticity in the blogosphere” (Masullo Chen, 2013, p. 510). Likewise, “this label may disrespect other aspects of bloggers’ identities including worker, wife, friend, and daughter” (Webb & Lee, 2011, p. 245). Opinions are divided among bloggers, as well. Some people support the idea of mommy blogging as “a radical act” (cjo9, 2012), while others prefer to distinguish between Mom blogging—mothers who blog but do not necessarily or exclusively write about their family lives—and mommy blogging—a genre that features blogs about mom-centric topics (Piersall, 2011).

Noticeably, a change in usage of the term can be observed by conducting the Google search mentioned by Friedman & Calixte (2009). The authors report that the search for the term “mommy blogging” offered 80,000 hits, ten times more than that for “mom blogger.” Unlike the significant difference they account for, a more recent Google verbatim search—conducted in June 2016—offers only 54,000 matches for “mommy blogging” and more than 44,800 for “mom blogging.” This variation in the results can be interpreted either as an increase in the amount of mothers who blog, following Piersall’s (2011) distinction, or as



a decline in popularity and, allegedly, in the number of bloggers who embrace the first term.

Given both the controversy over the name of the genre and the fact that the participants of this study include mothers and fathers who blog, the terms “parent-blogging” and “parent-bloggers” are deemed to be more accurate and inclusive. Parent-blogging (on multilingual upbringing) is viewed here as a dynamic, interactive and introspective form of online writing in which parents offer chronological records of their family’s efforts to pass on and maintain three or more languages in their household. The uniqueness of this genre makes it a valuable data source for studies on multilingual language acquisition (MLA) from a parental perspective.

### **Parents’ Blogs as Data in Multilingualism Research**

The analysis of parent-blogging is founded on the notion of multilingualism as “the new linguistic dispensation” (Aronin & Singleton, 2008, 2012), that is, a systemic phenomenon with an evolving status that “embraces the current reality of language ideologies and policies, and language education in all its aspects” (Aronin, 2015, p. 5). From that perspective, “languages are seen as complex and dynamic systems which are in constant interaction” (Safont Jordà & Portolés Falomir, 2015, p. viii) and the relationship user-environment-language is deemed essential to understand current linguistic realities (Aronin & Singleton, 2008).

As suggested by Cruz-Ferreira, the approach taken in this paper—and in the whole study—distances itself from the “clinical” view of multilingualism that examines what knowing several languages “does” to people and, rather, focuses on what people are able to do with several languages in order to support learning and acquisition processes. The analysis of the selected cases is an attempt to inquire into the multilingual reality of families located on different parts of the world who use and/or are exposed to three or more languages on a daily basis.

Bloggng confers authorship and endorses personalized content production and presentation, hence weblog entries reflect the writer’s topics of interest and opinions (Scheidt, 2008). Posts about parenting, for example, may reveal attitudes and beliefs held, as well factors on which some of the decisions regarding child rearing are grounded. Although the emphasis added on language acquisition and the frequency with which this topic is discussed varies from one blogger to another, the existing parent-blogging archives contain significant episodes in the multilingual journey of the authors and their families.

Morrison (2010) asserts that parent-blogging responds to an expressed need to create and/or deliberately join a community that understands and recognizes parenthood as a subjective experience. “Bloggers assign meaning to the stages and cycles of life that may otherwise be missed in their busy existence, if not chronicled” (Webb & Lee, 2011, p. 246). Regarding multilingual upbringing, parents’ chronicles may unveil what they consider significant moments, gains, fears, and challenges in this endeavor. Moreover, the posts can be examined to analyze parental attitudes, beliefs and, in general, an array of field data that could otherwise be lost, unavailable or much harder to gather.

The reason to inquire about multilingual upbringing from the parental perspective by means of blog entries is twofold. On the one hand, parent-blogging on multilingualism is an introspective, dynamic, and socially-oriented phenomenon which is, as such, under-researched. On the other hand, this practice evidences parents’ widespread need and efforts to promote several languages in their household. If multilingual upbringing is a complex and demanding process that requires persistence and dedication from the parents in order to be successful (Paradowski et al., 2016), then it is worth researching how parents strive for it by looking at the narrative introspections they so readily share online.

To some extent, parent-bloggers can be viewed as ethnographers willing to share their participant observations and field notes with anyone interested in their findings. Drawing on the literature, it is assumed that: a) the online exchanges that occur in the blogosphere are beneficial because they encourage parents to discuss ideas, share concerns, and meet like-minded people; b) as a result of their interactions, a growing virtual community of practice that endorses multilingualism exists; c) the information shared by parent-bloggers offers valuable insights into the dynamics of language acquisition and use in diverse sociocultural settings, which could not be easily reached, or would simply remain unknown otherwise.

## The Online Survey

### Participants: The Parents behind the Blogs

The study employs a multiple-case study design, in which each parent-blogger ( $n = 13$ ) is conceptualized as a “case” and a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2003) is conducted to find similarities amongst all participants. In total, 12 female and 1 male participants, whose ages range between 20–29 (1), 30–39 (9), and 40–49 (3) years old, completed the survey. A code (PB#) was assigned to identify each parent—the number was given according to the order in which

the answers were automatically saved on the online spreadsheet. Additionally, participants chose to be addressed as “First name, author of (name of blog)” when excerpts from their blogs were to be cited throughout the study.

Table 1

*Parent-bloggers’ demographic and linguistic background*

PB# – Place of origin	Current place of residence	Family languages	No. of children: year, (country) of birth
Latvia	Germany	ENG – LTV – GER	2: 2014, 2016 (Germany)
Spain	Bulgaria	SPA – BUL	2: 2008, 2013 (Spain)
Sweden	Germany	SPA – SWE – GER	2: 2005, 2008 (Germany)
Poland	USA	POL – SPA – ENG – ASL	1: 2013 (USA)
Poland	Canada	FRE – POL – ENG	2: 2011, 2014 (Canada)
Scotland	Germany	ENG – HUN – GER	2: 2012, 2014 (Germany)
Poland	Germany	SPA – POL	1: 2013 (Germany)
Venezuela	Hungary	SPA – ENG – HUN	1: 2012 (Hungary)
Germany	Italy	ITA – ENG – GER	2: 2008, 2010 (Italy)
Russia	Italy	ENG – RUS – ITA	2: 2009, 2011 (Italy)
Singapore	Malaysia	ENG – CHI – GER	1: 2011 (Singapore)
Ecuador	Norway	ENG – NOR – SPA	1: 2013 (Norway)
USA	France	FRE – ENG – SPA	4: 2001, 2003 (USA); 2006, 2012 (France)

Table 1 shows that the participants come from Europe (9), South America (2), North America (1) and Asia (1) and that none of them lives in their birth-place at present. Noticeably, seven PBs reside in their partner/spouse’s country of origin, whereas the rest are based in a “third” country, namely Germany (4), the USA (1), and Malaysia (1). Most people (11) have been living in their current place of residence for more than five years and expect to stay there permanently. Regarding the number of children, seven couples have two, five have one, and one couple has four kids. In total, there are 23 children (13 girls, 10 boys), out of whom 13 are toddlers/preschoolers (2–5 y/o). Only in two cases (PB3 & PB9) the children’s age range is a bit higher.

By number of families in which they are spoken/used, the languages (FamLang) listed by the participants include: English (10), Spanish (7), German (5), Polish (3), French (2), Hungarian (2), Italian (1), Bulgarian (1), Chinese (1), Latvian (1), Norwegian (1), Swedish (1), and American Sign Language (1). While English was found to be the most common language between couples (10 cases), it is used between one or both parents and their children only in four families. Spanish was the second most popular “couple language” (5/13 cases), with one of the parents being a native speaker. It was listed as a FamLang in 5 cases.

Even though most parent-bloggers (PBs) are not native speakers of English and two families did not include it as a FamLang, nine people in the group

use English to write most of the content of their blogs. Two other respondents write in Spanish, one in Polish, and another one mostly in Swedish with occasional posts in English or Spanish. English can therefore be seen as the means for self-expression and the lingua franca among the majority of these parents.

### **Method: Web Survey Design & Implementation**

Surveys administered online are used to address a wide variety of language-related issues. They have gained popularity and are extensively employed in social research, for they have been found to be economical, fast to create and deploy, and convenient to reach out to a representative group of potential participants (Sue & Ritter, 2012; Wilson & Dewaele, 2010). According to Dörnyei and Csizér (2012), survey studies in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) can inform us about people's intended language behavior, their background information and biodata, their knowledge of certain issues in SLA and, in general, their opinions and attitudes towards the L2.

In large-scale studies, but also in small-scale studies in which face-to-face contact with the participants is complicated or even impossible, questionnaires are administered using different survey software or applications available on the web. That is the case of this study. An online questionnaire was created with the purpose of gathering information to build the profile of an international group of parents. Prior to preparing the online survey, purposive criterion sampling (Palys, 2008) was applied to filter the search results and to define the scope of the study. Moreover, the following five criteria were used to scrutinize and choose the blogs and potential research participants:

- It had to be a personal weblog, not a filter or a topic-driven blog.
- Explicit reference to the use of more than two languages in the family was a must.
- It had to be written in English, Spanish, and/or Polish—the languages of the researcher.
- It had to include posts about multilingual upbringing, early multilingualism and/or any other related topics.
- It had to be a public blog and still active at the moment it was found.

In total, 48 blogs were located between July 2015 and January 2016. An invitation to participate in the study was sent to 32 people whose blogs complied with all the conditions above. Although 11 bloggers never replied, 21 agreed to fill in the online survey and granted consent for their posts to be analyzed for research purposes. The instrument was designed to elicit information about four related topics, namely: general demographic and linguistic background, self-perceived proficiency level in their languages, blogging practices, and multilingual parenting experience.

Preparing the offline version of the questionnaire and a general benefit-cost estimation of different survey software were the initial steps. Once approved and available online, the questionnaire was piloted with two parent-bloggers who, despite meeting the initial selection criteria, differed from the rest of the group because their children are adults already and their entries are not focused on their current family situation. The feedback received served to adjust the wording of a few questions and validate clarity and accuracy of the instrument. The URL was e-mailed to 19 parent-bloggers and the data-analysis began four months later.

Following Gläser and Laudel (2010), the theory and the data analysis were taken into consideration to identify salient themes related to multilingual parenting. Both verbatim quotes taken from the answers of different respondents and a brief description of the theme were used to name the preliminary categories. Excerpts from the survey responses are quoted or paraphrased when a whole statement was given by a specific PB. Verbatim words appear in quotation marks to account for the participants' voice. In other cases, the interpretation of the answers to close-ended questions is provided. Rather than final conclusions, the data gathered offered an array of essential issues to delve into during the blog content analysis phase.

## Results & Discussion

The results presented hereafter correspond to the descriptive-interpretative analysis of the survey questions that specifically addressed issues in multilingualism. As mentioned, this instrument was the means to establish a first contact with the participants in order to learn about their background and ask for certain information that could not have been found just by reading their blogs. Although multilingual upbringing practices were not inquired in detail, most open-ended questions encouraged and/or required the respondents to elaborate on their answers. The findings derive from the analysis of their comments.

### **“Multilingualism is a Lifestyle Choice”: Parents' Views on Being Bi-/Multilingual**

The term *multilingual* is used here to refer to individuals and their families, rather than to societies. Who is considered to be multilingual and what does it take to become one? The answer to those queries is not always clear-cut. “Multilinguals have been called all sort of names, which cast more shadows

than light on what they are” (Cruz-Ferreira, 2010, p. 1). In this study, it is assumed that “a multilingual is neither the sum of three or more monolinguals nor a bilingual with an additional language” (De Angelis & Selinker, 2001, p. 44). In the survey, the participants were asked to identify themselves and their partners as “monolingual, bilingual, multilingual or other” and to elaborate on their choices.

Almost everyone, 12 out of 13 PBs, indicated that they perceive themselves as multilinguals. PB2, who self-identifies as a bilingual and not as a multilingual is, however, a simultaneous bilingual in Spanish and Catalan, who additionally declares being a proficient user of Bulgarian and an independent user of English. The justification for her choice was as follows: “I consider myself bilingual because I can speak 2 languages at a native level. As for the other 2 languages I know, I don’t speak them perfectly well” (Q11, PB2). As Paradowski et al. (2016) state, her answer could indicate that she confines the labels bi/multilingualism to early language acquisition.

Additional data would be needed to know the linguistic biography of the parents in order to better understand their perceptions as language users. Moreover, it could be useful to contrast the results obtained with the blogs to determine what views of multilingualism, if any in particular, parents convey. Yet, the survey showed that they are aware of their linguistic background. Among the reasons for considering themselves multilingual, PBs mentioned their ability to speak three or more languages fluently (PB1), the fact that they use them on a daily basis, for different purposes with specific people (PB5, PB6) and their living abroad experiences (PB9).

For the sake of this study, it is worth mentioning that all the PBs have completed higher levels of education: they hold either bachelor’s (1), master’s (10), or doctoral (2) degrees. In the survey-based study conducted by Paradowski et al. (2016), the authors highlight that the fact that 43.2% (16 out of 37) of their participants had higher linguistic education could have influenced the thoroughness of their observations and answers. Further research will help to determine whether there is a correlation between the parents’ linguistic knowledge and their family language practices. Yet, answers like those quoted below indicate that the participants’ language trajectories are solid and give them the perspective of a native speaker, a FL learner and a language model/teacher—in their role as parents.

I speak and understand Polish and English at a native level, having immigrated to the US at age 8. I studied Spanish for 5 years and am married to a native Spanish speaker. My expressive Spanish is better than my receptive Spanish. I am literate in all three languages. (Q11. PB4)

I use three languages every day (English, German, and Hungarian) and because we spend a lot of time in Romania at my parents-in-law I use basic Romanian while I'm there (3–4 months a year). (Q11. PB6)

English is my native form of communication in work and with my husband, family and friends and in the community where I live. I use Mandarin with my father and some relatives, my friends from China and Taiwan (they are native speakers) and primarily with my son. I switch to German with my in laws. I used French sometimes when I worked in Brussels.” (Q11. PB11)

In addition to assessing themselves, the participants were asked to describe their partner's/spouse's proficiency level. The goal was to build up a broad picture of the couples and, consequently, comprehend the dynamics of their language practices at home. The respondents said their partner/spouse to be multilingual or bilingual in 7 and 5 cases, respectively. In one case, the answer given was “not bilingual [but] able to understand and live bi and multilingual culture and education” (Q.22.5. PB7). “Speaks well/fluent,” “is proficient,” “understands well” or “has near native proficiency” were some of the phrases used to support their choices. No-one chose monolingual as a response and one person did not supply any answer.

Although there are no monolinguals in the group, not everyone is a native user of all the languages they listed as their L1. PB13 self-evaluated as a proficient speaker of Spanish and a native speaker of English. Surprisingly enough, she mentioned that Spanish is the language she uses to communicate with her children almost 100% of the time, while English is her and her French husband's common language. Her case shows efforts to maintain her heritage language, Spanish, despite it not being her stronger language or the majority language in her current place of residence.

Based on their comments, it could be argued that this group of parents concur with Otwinowska (2015), who maintains that being multilingual does not imply knowing several languages perfectly, but being able and trying to use this knowledge and competence in various communicative situations. Beyond the number of languages an individual may know, or the sequence in which those languages were acquired or learned, it is the ability and willingness to use them, not perfectly but effectively, what makes someone multilingual. As PB13 states, “*multilingualism is a lifestyle* [emphasis added]” and not only a label assigned to describe a fixed attribute or some sort of innate talent of people who speak several languages.

The way parents perceive multilingualism has also a direct impact on their being bloggers. Although blogging is not their main occupation, they devote time and effort in keeping their sites updated. 12/13 PBs listed language-related topics when asked about the main topics of their blogs; the person who did



not put it explicitly, mentioned motherhood instead. According to the survey, parents run their blogs “to share [their] experiences raising a multilingual child and sharing [sic] more about [their] expat life (PB1),” as well as “to document [their] kids’ language development” (PB6). PB13’s comment concisely expresses what most participants mentioned as reasons to blog:

Many people close to me were asking me what I thought was the reason why bilingualism worked in some families and not in others. After struggling to answer the question, I decided I would start a blog in a quest to define what factors lead to successful bilingual families. (Q13. PB13)

Even though she only refers to bilingualism in this statement, she explains in another comment that her family moved to a different country and since then she has been passing on two minority languages to her children. As a result, she even renamed her blog “Trilingual Mama.” Parents’ blogs are also the result of a felt need to disseminate multilingualism, for ‘there was very little information around and [they] wanted to share [their own] experience’ (PB9). Parents may not be experts in all multilingual upbringing matters, but they are both willing to share their first-hand experience and eager to spread the word in the blogosphere.

If multilingualism influences the way in which these families live, it is pertinent to observe what influences their language practices and to what extent they pass on their own attitudes to their children. The second salient theme in the analysis of the survey sheds some light on this regard, as it focuses on the decisions made by the PBs and their partners in terms of following a multilingual upbringing “plan.” Their evaluation of the process and the results observed thus far place the parents’ capacity to adjust existing strategies to their specific needs as an important factor for successful early multilingualism.

### **“OPOL Version 2.0”: Parents’ Insights on (In)efficient Multilingual Upbringing Strategies**

Parents may employ different strategies to stimulate the acquisition and use of each language, but “[t]here is no ‘golden rule,’ no single ‘foolproof’ strategy to raise multilingual children successfully: each family decides what suits their needs best, because every family is unique and so is every child” (Cruz-Ferreira, 2010, pp. 60–61). Multilingual families do not simply adopt language-learning strategies; they adapt them to their particular needs and their unique linguistic situation.

For the sake of consistency, terms such as model, method, approach, strategy and/or technique are not used interchangeably here, despite this happening



in the literature. In this article, parenting strategies refer to specific parental behaviors used in the child-rearing process (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). In the same vein, multilingual parenting strategies are understood as practices to pass on and maintain several languages. Terminological consensus could help in describing linguistic environments and interaction patterns more accurately, hence the restricted use of the term here.

As Cruz-Ferreira (2010) suggests, “families who decide to raise their children multilingually are bound to start at once seeking information and advice about what exactly should be done to achieve this purpose successfully” (p. 59). What seems to be natural or taken for granted in other families (e.g., using one’s L1 to talk to a baby) requires deliberate action in multilingual ones because parents fear that their actions may hinder their children’s MLA process. This being so, it is pertinent to analyze what factors influence parental decisions so as to support effective multilingual upbringing practices.

In the web survey, parent-bloggers were asked to mention the strategy or strategies of communication they followed in their family. In order to check whether parents were aware of the characteristics and potential advantages and disadvantages of different strategies, no additional information or major explanation was provided. However, it was assumed that they were quite familiar with the concept, as most of them have written about this topic on their weblogs. In the order they appeared, the options given and the corresponding number of respondents were: “One parent/person, one language—OPOL” (11), “minority language at home—ML@H” (0), “mixed strategy” (1), “time and place” (0), “initial one-language strategy” (0), “other” (1), and “none” (0).

The findings from Paradowski & Michałowska (2016) were helpful to interpret the survey results. In their case, 91% of the respondents said to have followed a specific strategy to raise their children bilingually, but three families had adopted none. In mine, not only did all PBs mention the strategy they employ, but they also provided the links to the posts they have written about this topic for further analysis. This may imply higher awareness of the MLA process from the parents who deal with three or more languages in their households at the same time.

The results proved the popularity of the OPOL strategy in which each parent uses his or her native language to communicate with the child. OPOL has been appointed as a household strategy for natural bilingualism (Pearson, 2010), especially for families in which parents have different nationalities (Paradowski et al., 2016). Parent-bloggers commented that they chose OPOL because “... it is what [they] believed to be most effective for imparting 3 languages” (PB11) and because “it was helpful to pass on [their] L1 as a minority language” (PB5).

In spite of its popularity, the effectiveness of OPOL as a multilingual parenting strategy has been questioned. De Houwer (2007) states that it is “neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition” and Cruz-Ferreira (2010) argues that it

is “a *monolingual*-caregiver norm” because it encourages parents to use only one language to talk with their children, denying the fact that they are also multilinguals. The survey results indicate that most families use what PB13 described as “an adaptation of OPOL” (Q.27), that is, a more suitable and personalized version of this strategy. PB3’s comment below supports this statement:

I call it OPOL version 2.0. In today’s society it is impossible to speak only one language in front of the children, they know that I speak other languages as well. But they also know, that they should speak Swedish with me. (Q.27.1, PB3)

Clearly, PB3 is aware of the ubiquity of multilingualism and argues that limiting oneself to just one language when the children know their parents are multilingual is contradictory. She also makes a point when she mentions that the children know what language they should use with whom. If parents are expected to teach through example, and if they want their children to be able to function in different languages, then they should act accordingly.

Not only did parents explain why following a strategy like OPOL strictly would restrict their everyday interactions, but they also gave an overview of the complex communication patterns that characterize their multilingual lifestyle. In the excerpt below, PB7 and PB8 describe how they switch between languages depending on the context and on their current situation. Their statements demonstrate that their strategies are flexible and prone to be modified.

Before our daughter was born we used to speak only German. Since 2 years we switched to use only Spanish at home between us, because my husband does not spend so much time at home, but I can and love to speak Spanish. Last months I start to use more Polish phrases to him also and he answers when he understands in Spanish. Our child learns [German] through hearing it in kindergarten and in the environment where we live (Q.27.1, PB7).

One parent, one language [Spanish, Hungarian]. English was introduced by chance, when we started going to a playgroup in English. At that time (Elena was 8 months old) I decided to keep English as an alternative language for games, songs and story books (Q.27.1, PB8).

The adoption of multilingual upbringing strategies is key in understanding the dynamics of early MLA. So far the findings suggest that the popularity of certain strategies does not necessarily guarantee their effectiveness. Paradowski et al. (2016) argue that a single strategy of communication seems to be insufficient for most families, so parents use additional aids and methods to make the language acquisition process more efficient. In view of the linguistic

background of the parents, the next step in the ongoing research study will be studying the factors that determine how they plan, follow and change their multilingual communication practices at home.

Although multilingualism might be natural and accessible, especially to people whose parents are of different nationalities (Paradowski et al., 2016), there is still a lot to learn from parents who commit to this endeavor. If willingness and the ability to use several languages for specific purposes in various situations are needed to be considered multilingual, then examining the correlation between parental attitudes and their children's multilingual competence development can shed light into the actions we as researchers may take to endorse multilingual practices in contexts where different cultures and languages coexist.

## Conclusion

Multilingual upbringing is an increasing phenomenon inextricably linked to today's world's unique sociolinguistic situation, hence research in this area is essential to support these practices amongst international families. This article presents an attempt to gain insight into the stories of thirteen multilingual families who share a common goal: bringing up their children to be multilingual. The profile of the participants was built on the interpretation of the data gathered by means of an online questionnaire. The blog mining phase, the survey preparation process, and the preliminary analysis of the information obtained have been summarized.

Multilingualism studies are multilayered and acquisitive in nature, and so there is a promising future for interdisciplinary research in the field (Comanaru & Dewaele, 2015; Aronin & Hufeisen, 2009). Psychological methods have been integrated to broaden the scope of mainstream multilingualism research (see for example Pavlenko, 2004; Dewaele & McCloskey, 2015). In general, there is a call for apposite and emerging methods that consider and explore the inherent properties of contemporary multilingualism, namely complexity, liminality, suffusiveness and, more recently, super diversity (Aronin, 2015; Aronin & Singleton, 2002).

The study in which this paper is framed responds to that call by taking parents' blogs as an alternative road to understanding and visualizing multilingual parenting strategies and styles. Parent-blogging is personal yet public, dynamic but consistent, and introspective though socially-oriented in nature. As a genre, it offers access to archival records containing anecdotal reports and introspective reflections that could be hard to retrieve otherwise. The analysis of blogs

written by parents who chronicle and discuss their family's multilingual journey needs to be conducted taking into consideration the evolving user-environment-language relationship in order to understand their linguistic realities.

Thus far the interpretation of the web survey results has focused on introducing the parents and their family's multilingual environment. As the first stage in the process of exploring parents' blogs from a multilingualism research perspective, it was possible to learn about their personal and linguistic background, their family languages and the strategies they use to enhance multilingualism at home. Existing theory and research on bi/multilingual language acquisition are the lenses used to look at the data with the purpose of understanding how the families strive to maintain their languages.

The survey was also helpful to notice issues that need to be examined at subsequent research phases, such as parental discourses and attitudes towards MLA. In addition to the content of the entries, the scope of the blogging practices needs to be investigated to determine whether and how they promote multilingual child-rearing. The goal is to examine the participants' experiences and strategies from various analytical perspectives to unveil their parenting styles. By the same token, the study seeks to recognize parents' first-hand experience and their enterprise in documenting their children's linguistic developmental process.

If language is the faculty that distinguishes humans from other animals and permits us to organize all forms of social life, then preserving languages should be regarded as a priority for the future of our society. The international family is the setting where languages and cultures meet and flourish. The present article shows that international families, despite being geographically scattered, strive to join efforts and form a community in which multilingual upbringing provides fertile ground for intercultural dialogue, social cohesion, and mutual respect.

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Ingrid Bello-Rodzeń

## **Das Spiegelbild mehrsprachiger Erziehung in der Blogosphäre: zum Profil eines Elternbloggers**

### Zusammenfassung

In dem Beitrag werden Ergebnisse der im Internet durchgeführten Umfrage dargestellt. Der Fragebogen wurde von internationaler Gruppe der ihre Blogs zum Thema mehrsprachige Erziehung führenden und ihre eigenen Erfahrungen dabei ausnutzenden Eltern ausgefüllt. Als erste Stufe der analytischen Forschung (eng.: multi-case study), die bezweckt, verschiedene Erziehungsstile und Erziehungsstrategien zu schildern, wurde ein Internetfragebogen ausgearbeitet, dessen Zweck war es, den Profil von den Forschungsmitgliedern in Bezug auf ihre demografischen und sprachlichen Umstände, ihre Tätigkeit in der Blogosphäre und sprachliche Situation ihrer Familien zu bilden. In dem Literaturüberblick werden betont: die Natürlichkeit der mehrsprachigen Erziehung und große Bedeutung der von den Eltern geführten Blogs (eng.: parent-blogging), sowohl als einer literarischen Gattung, als auch als potentieller Forschungsdatenquelle. Der Beitrag stellt die an der Forschung teilnehmenden Eltern vor und schildert den Prozess der Umfrageanfertigung. Ihre Ergebnisse werden in zwei folgenden Kategorien resümiert: Ansichten der Eltern über Zweisprachigkeit und Mehrsprachigkeit, und ihre Bemerkungen über Strategien der mehrsprachigen Erziehung. Die deskriptiv-interpretatorische Datenanalyse zeigte auf, dass die Betrachtungsweise der Mehrsprachigkeit von den Eltern deren Identität als Sprachbenutzer und Bloggers beeinflussen. Darüber hinaus gilt die Fähigkeit der Eltern, eine Kommunikationsstrategie anzunehmen und anzupassen als unerlässlicher Faktor beim Mehrsprachigkeitserwerb von den Kindern. Im Großen und Ganzen betrachtet man die Ergebnisse der besagten Forschung als ein Ausgangspunkt für Erforschung der Rolle von der Bloggattung bei Verbreitung der Mehrsprachigkeit und als eine Grundlage für Erforschung der Erziehungsstile in mehrsprachigen Familien.



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## **Between New Technologies and New Paradigms in Academic Education A Non-Reductionist Approach**

### Abstract

The article presents an insight into an exploratory study carried out between February and May 2014. The study looked into the process of teacher training enhanced by new technology: an MA CALL seminar facilitated in the blended format as a series of online and offline tutorials. The participants of the class were 9 first-year students of the TEFL MA programme at the Pedagogical University in Cracow, Poland.

The study and its results were described in detail in previous publications (Turula, 2015, Turula, in press). The present article investigates an aspect of the process researched: negotiating between the digital realm, with its different tools and their affordances and a social context of the digital—or blended, as is the case here—education.

*Keywords:* reductionist/non-reductionist approach, affordancing; ICT

### **The Perspective**

When reflecting on the role of the material culture in the 21st century language education, one can hardly avoid considering *the virtual material*. Alongside the decreasing clarity of distinctions between the material and the non-material culture noted in modern research, similar liquefying of borders can be observed between the so-called traditional and digital environments and artefacts, including those typical of language learning and teaching. In fact, when considering the word *material* in its broader sense, including that of *relevant and consequential*, the younger generation may decide that the online and its culture are *more material* than the offline aspects of our life. This is why,



any contemplation on the contemporary language pedagogy need to see both: the two sides of the *material* coin; and their mutual influence and dependencies.

However, in examining the relation between new technologies and different manifestations of social life (including language education), it is easy to get trapped in one of the available deterministic viewpoints. As a result, one may argue that the Internet and its uses dictate the way we act; alternatively, it is often claimed that our social practices and rituals influence our mode of computing. In education, such a reductionist approach will draw a line between those who believe that it is digital tools that determine the shape of schooling and those who subscribe to the approach-first stance. Confronting what is declared on the topic of digital education with the actual status quo, it seems that while words speak for approach-first, common deeds show an inclination towards a certain degree of technocentrism (cf. Kurek & Turula, 2014). In other words, while theoreticians claim that digital tools should always be secondary (in Poland, mainly by Morbitzer, 2009, 2010, among others)—and practitioners assure they are—new technologies per se make their way to the fore of the modern classroom, backgrounding pedagogical issues more frequently than we would like them to.

In an attempt to describe the digital educational reality, which is by far more complex, this article goes beyond the reductionist perspectives into a non-reductionist stance on the relation—or rather multiple relations—between new technologies and university teaching. It starts by clarifying where the followers of the reductionist/non-reductionist positions stand. Then it applies these perspectives to the opportunities new media offer, referring to the NMC Horizon Report 2014, one of the most important publications listing modern technologies which are likely to influence education. Following this is an example of a computer-assisted educational practice implemented at the academia—an EFL teacher training course enhanced by new technology—that has been subject to the author's exploratory research.

## **New Technologies and Education The Perspectives on Mutual Relations**

In his article on the methodology of the Internet-related research, Dahlberg (2004) departs from three different aspects of what he calls the circuit of technology: the uses of the new media, the digital artifacts and the social context in which all this happens. Consequently, he claims, if we choose to adopt a linear, one-direction view of cause-effect relations in this circuit, we have to consider it from the three different angles determined by these aspects. Resulting from

this are three types of determinism. They are discussed, following Dahlberg (2004), below, with a slight change of focus (education) and based on sources which are more contemporary than those cited in the original work.

The first mentioned by Dahlberg is the *uses determinism* which ignores the artifact (seeing it as neutral) and concentrates on the needs of the agents using it. This approach is based on the conviction that “the gratifications sought from the Internet by individuals can predict the use of the medium” (Dahlberg, 2004 p. 5). In other words, the motive/interest/attitude of the user determines the choice of tool and its use. In education it means, for example, that a need for a more controlled learning environment may encourage the teacher to use a Learning Management System (LMS) rather than a more open Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). As for the student motivations and related choices, how they use, for example, social media may determine their attitude to the idea of networking in education. A recent study (Pollara & Zhu, 2011) demonstrates this idea and its implementation generate privacy issues between teachers and students. Such issues seem to result from the fact that learners are occasionally apprehensive of educational contexts being extended to social networking sites (SNSs), which they perceive as related to interacting with friends and not to education (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013). Some uses, as Dahlberg (2004) notes, may surprise the experts, as the applications of technologies may change rapidly with a new generation of users (with their specific needs and motivations) entering the digital market. Such a generation change can be observed in the use of mobile phones, primarily communication devices, now—mainly entertainment centers (cf. Morbitzer, 2009). New motivations resulting in new uses may also lead to abandoning a digital tool previously opted for. Based on nine simultaneous ethnographic studies into the preferences of 16–18-year-olds concerning social media, run in eight countries, Miller et al. (2013) discovered that teenagers are now choosing different social software (Snapchat, WhatsApp) over the so far unbeatable Facebook. Lying at the root of the withdrawal are the new e-motivations and uses, the basic being communicating rapidly, from a mobile rather than a stationary device.

The second type is *technological determinism*, with its claim that the technological shape of the Internet affects its users in a number of ways. First of all, new technologies have impact on the way we communicate: Dahlberg (2004) mentions depersonalisation and disinhibition, both of potential interest in education. The former may affect the rapport between the participants of the learning situation, in a positive or a negative way. The latter may help relieve tensions, especially those associated with oral production, and help alleviate performance anxieties. In online communication there will also be hierarchy flattening and, consequently, new ways of establishing relations of power (Poster, 1997), including those between teachers and learners. If medium is the message, as McLuhan (1964) claims, the very act of communicating

with the teacher via a democratic digital channel paves the way for a more peer-to-peer-like exchange and, inevitably, affects the language and organisation of the communication. Besides, the Internet offers multiple channels of communication. As a result, the new discourse—including learner-learner and teacher-learner exchanges—will be not only more direct but also increasingly multimodal. However, the Internet affects not only the way we communicate but also how we learn. Carr (2011) quotes numerous studies documenting the changes to cognitive functions (attention, memory, higher-order thinking) that are caused by the digital—as opposed to the traditional—exposure to text. Finally, even the concept of human knowledge—now envisioned as a network (Weinberger, 2012)—follows the model of the web structure. All this can be summed up by a very technologically determinist claim made two decades ago: “the Internet, cyberspace, and virtual reality ... are parts of our very selves ... *they are languages ... what they do is structure seeing*. They act on the systems—social, cultural, neurological—by which we make meanings” (Stone, 1995, p. 167).

Finally, *social determinism* focuses on “the way outcomes are affected by social and economic structures and by the social construction of technological artifacts” (Dahlberg, 2004, p. 11); “the way technology is socially embedded and constituted” (12). The present article will leave aside such interpretations and their conclusions to the effect that the way in which new technology develops is determined by who owns and controls the new media, because these issues go beyond the intended scope of the present text. Instead, the author intends to concentrate on the changing social contexts and relations—including those created and maintained online—and the ways in which they affect the perception and use of digital tools in education. Some of the examples given earlier in the text in relation to the uses determinism are equally well interpreted as socially determined. First of all, for both generation-specific uses of the new media (mobile phones and social networking) the important underlying factor is young age and its culture. The escape from Facebook, in addition to uses-determined causes, may equally well be an attempt to bypass the control of the Facebook-using parents or withdrawing from a social network whose culture is becoming increasingly middle-age and thus unattractive. Similarly, the choice of LMS over VLE—made by a teacher based on the intended use—may also be a manifestation of the educational culture this teacher is part of. To finish with, the claim that depersonalization of online contact may have a positive or a negative effect implies factors underlying both effects; factors going beyond artifacts, like the attitudes and preferences of the user, their view on the nature of education, and so on.

The fact that some examples can be used in relation to different deterministic outlooks makes one reconsider the unidirectionality of all the three perspectives presented above, especially that there also are certain reservations

that can be expressed in relation to all three types of determinism. Subscribers to the uses determinism need to consider that “it is a mistake to assume that individual actors are in complete control of media technologies. Such an assumption overlooks the structuring of actions by technological systems and neglects the social embeddedness of these systems and their users” (Dahlberg, 2004, p. 6). As for the technological determinism, the interaction between the medium and the user as well as the power to influence is far from unidirectional. While new technologies shape our lives, it is also true that if and how they are used depends on a number of social factors, including social status, age or education. In relation to the latter, one of the most important determiners may be the level of digital literacy of the user: where on the tech-comfy/tech-savvy (Pegrum, 2009) continuum s/he is. Those who are familiar with new technologies and use them with ease (tech-comfy) but have not yet had time to reflect upon these uses, let alone broaden their repertoire (tech-savvy), may be prone to misaffordancing in their use of digital tools (Kurek & Turula, 2014). Consequently, it is extremely difficult—if not impossible—to find examples in which the influence between involved elements/participants will be simple and unidirectional. A good instance of such complex, multidirectional interactions between uses, tools and the social context is the one coming from Miller et al.’s study. The escape of young people from the popular network is motivated by social factors (belonging to a certain culture determined by their age); but also uses factors—a want for privacy and instantaneous, non-verbal communication. The latter, which makes the younger generation choose applications like Snapchat is, in turn, the outcome of ongoing technological changes, one of which is the growing iconization of online messaging—today anything is a message and non-verbality (audio, video, image, emoji) is gaining in popularity. All in all, it is hard to disagree with Dahlberg when he opts for a non-reductionist perspective on the interplay between users, their motivations, the cultures underlying these motivations and the constantly changing modern technologies.

## **New Technologies, New Tendencies**

### **The NMC Horizon Report**

In order to examine the contemporary network of mutual relations between uses, technologies, and social life it is important to first delineate the *modern*, which, in the case of technology, is an elusive concept, always ahead of the ones trying to understand and describe it. In the fast-changing world of new media, one of the most reliable sources of knowledge about

new technology-related tendencies in education in general and, specifically, in university teaching is the *NMC Horizon Report* (2014, 2015, 2016). It is compiled annually by two non-profit organizations: the international New Media Consortium and the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, an association for the promotion of new media in the academia. The report, which is recognized worldwide, is the work of renowned new technologies experts and practitioners from all over the globe. The panel of Horizon experts works through a communication technique called the Delphi method: each participant, based on extensive reading in the field of new technologies, is asked to cast multiple votes until 18 topics: 6 trends, 6 challenges and 6 important developments in educational technology are agreed upon. The aim of this is two-fold: (1) a description of newly introduced technologies; (2) an evaluation of their educational potential and a prognosis how they are going to influence world education in the five years to come. The diagnoses for the years 2014–2019, in the above-mentioned categories are described below.

When it comes to the most important *trends*, the expert panel emphasizes the growing popularity of social media. What follows is the new model of the Internet use, marked by creation, sharing, and communication, which now go hand in hand with—if not replace—the more passive receptive activities of the past. What follows, as the Horizon panel predict, is an inevitable shift of the educational paradigm towards more participatory pedagogies and collaborative learning, with more emphasis on distance and blended education. In such a context learning will be experiential in the sense that students will be able to rely on their technological expertise, which, almost always, is of out-of-school origin. Besides, and still within the experiential mode, schooling will need refocusing: creation of content in place of mere reception of teacher-generated materials; time and space flexibility with more learner autonomy in their management; connective learning based on communication/networking via the channels of online interaction chosen by the students; etc.

In the part of the report devoted to *challenges*, the experts list a number of problems which need to be tackled if the above-listed trends are to be effectively translated into educational practice. The problems include: (1) low digital literacy of teachers; (2) the lack of training opportunities for the said teachers on the available tools and their affordances; (3) low flexibility of universities as institutions, and (4) the unwillingness of academia to open to groups of low educational culture. In the light of all this, as the Horizon panel predict, universities may soon have to face a serious competitor: Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), offered by renowned universities via platforms such as Coursera, OpenEd, NovEd, and others. Even if MOOCs are still in their infancy and their quality may be difficult to determine, they have two very important advantages: “[they] help prospective students make informed choices about which courses to take ... [and], like any college courses, MOOCs benefit

from critical, independent, and public evaluation from people who don't have a stake in their outcome" (Solomon, 2013, <http://tech.mit.edu/V133/N2/mooc.html>). In other words, the open courses pose a challenge which definitely is not to be ignored, especially in the face of all the deficiencies listed above.

The last part of *NMC Horizon Report* is devoted to *the most important developments* the expert predict in new technologies. Listed below, the innovations are indirectly ((1), (3), (5), (6), (7)) or directly ((2), (4)) connected with education.<sup>1</sup> They include (2014, 2015, 2016):

1. a growing popularity of consumer goods such as 3D video, electronic publishing, mobile devices and apps;
2. new digital strategies: BYOD (= Bring Your Own Device), Flipped Classroom, gamification and others;
3. internet technologies: cloud computing, the Internet of Things, machine translation, semantic applications, etc.;
4. learning technologies: badges, learning analytics, MOOCs, mobile and online learning, open educational resources, PLEs (= Personal Learning Environments), Virtual and Remote Laboratories, etc.;
5. social media technologies: Collaborative Environments, collective intelligence, crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, and others;
6. visualization technologies: 3D printing, augmented reality, information visualization and visual data analysis, volumetric, and holographic displays;
7. enabling technologies: affective computing, machine learning and many, many others.

## **From New Horizon to New Paradigms A Non-Reductionist Approach**

Looking at all three—trends, challenges, and the prognosticated developments—from the non-reductionist perspective, we can say that there will be interplay between all three of them. First of all the trends will be both influenced by and influencing technological development. There will also be a constant tension between these trends and challenges: the more effective the ways of overcoming the problems, the more likely the development as prognosticated. On the other hand, though, consistently low literacy levels as well as the lack of institutional flexibility on the part of the universities may lead to fossilization of technology use—a manifestation of which will be Web 1.0 ways utilized in

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<sup>1</sup> Own categorisation (AT).



the era of Web 2.0/3.0—or misaffordancing, resulting from insufficient digital competence (cf. Kurek & Turula, 2014).

Some examples of the latter state of being can be observed in how developments in educational technology proceed in the academic Poland (or, in fact, worldwide—cf. Peachey, 2014). There is a strong pressure on the more modern—and, consequently, more digital—approach to tertiary education. What follows is a turn towards e-learning, which is carried out at 47% of Polish universities (Hołowiecki, 2014), 84% of which use the Moodle platform to accommodate their distance and blended courses. This open-source learning management system, especially if used with the plugins which make individualization and gamification possible, has the potential to live up to the trends and developments described in the *NMC Horizon Report* (2014, 2015, 2016). However, everyday practice shows that Moodle courses are predominantly traditional, teacher-fronted, students-as-consumers learning environments, in which learning through interaction is rare if not non-existent, and which serve mainly as repositories of handouts. The blame can be laid on the—previously mentioned—insufficient digital literacy on the part of the teachers together with organisational problems at universities (cf. the cited *Report*, the Challenges Section).

However, operating from a non-reductionist perspective and considering the multidirectional interplay between uses, technology, and social factors, one is certain to uncover deeper layers of cause-effect relations in this area. It is true that the trend to turn to e-learning is the result of new technological developments and the choice of how these developments are used is strongly determined by one's digital expertise. However, and equally importantly, the underlying factor of the above-mentioned choices is social/cultural: one's educational philosophy. In other words, the quality of Moodle courses described earlier as prevalently handout-based may very well stem from a belief that knowledge is the result of transmission rather than interaction, that it is acquired rather than constructed, and that its flow is unidirectional, from the know-all teacher to the passive student. The interplay between this belief and new technological developments will very likely result in education which, in spite of the modern medium, is very traditional in the negative sense of this word.

This will obviously re-raise the question of the real meaning of *modern* in education relying on modern technologies; a question that can only be answered if one is operating from the non-reductionist perspective. From this perspective it is easier to see that while new technological developments do have impact on the educational culture and the available (digital) tools and their potential uses, they are also strongly influenced by the educational culture and—together with it, in a cyclical way—determine the choice of digital tools and their affordancing. If this culture is not modern, neither will be its pedagogical practices, even if informed by the latest technological developments.

Consequently, in order to trigger—or simply understand—true paradigm shifts in (academic) education, we need to operate on the level of the complex and multilevel relations between the different aspects of technological developments. Only such a non-reductionist perspective allows for going beyond simplistic unidirectional assumptions as *\*If Horizon experts prognosticate an increased popularity of social media in education, it is necessary to extend learning spaces into the most popular SNSs\**. To make a genuine difference in how we learn and teach, networking for educational purposes—to continue with the same example—needs what Lantz-Andersson et al. (2013) call recurrent negotiation. There is room for such negotiation at the meeting points of the three different aspects of the circuit of technology listed by Dahlberg (2004): uses, tools, and the social context. Within this territory, the reflection on the idea of networking for educational purposes may start with the examination of popular uses of SNSs, abstracting from the tool itself. With such a starting point, the educator is likely to arrive at a model of schooling which is based on interaction, (digital) identity building, creating, sharing, etc. If this observation negotiates well with the educator's own teaching philosophy—participatory and dialogic rather than transmissive—or if the acknowledgement of popular SNS uses motivates the educator to renegotiate his/her current teaching philosophy, s/he arrives at the point where choices are made considering digital tools for implementing the teaching model. This implies going back to the very SNS. However, whether it appears suitable for educational purposes is, again, a matter of negotiation between a given social medium and its social embeddedness. The latter means considering such problematic issues as privacy concerns between teachers and students (cf. the earlier-mentioned Pollara & Zhu, 2011), and may make the educator look for technological options similar to, but other than a given SNS. All this requires a non-reductionist considering and frequent reconsidering of multiple factors.

In conclusion, the whole process of modernizing schools/academia in line with the current trends, complex, and multilayered, needs to be negotiated at the different meeting points of the three aspects of new technologies in education. The next section describes such an attempt. It presents exploratory research on a blended MA seminar taught as a series of on- and offline tutorials. As the complete results of the study have been presented elsewhere (Turula, 2014, 2015) the description and analysis below concentrate on the non-reductionist interplay of uses, tools, and the social context.



## Negotiating between Uses, Tools, and the Social Context An Insight into a Study

The study into the process of teacher training enhanced by new technology was carried out between February and May 2014. It was an exploratory study, carried out as action research into an MA CALL seminar facilitated in the blended format as a series of on- and offline tutorials. The participants of the class were 9 first-year students of the TEFL MA program at the Pedagogical University in Cracow, Poland. Each of the students took part in 4 tutorials scheduled at two-week intervals, 2 face-to-face meetings, and 2 digital classes via Google Drive.

The study and its results were described in detail in previous publications (Turula, 2015, Turula, in press). The present article offers an insight to this study which pertains to the focus of the article: negotiating between the digital realm, with its different tools and their affordances and a social context of the digital—or blended, as is the case here—education.

The starting point of the concept of this class was the teacher's interactive and dialogic educational philosophy. It motivated the choice of the tutorial method, which relies on one-to-one encounters between the teacher and the student. *In practice*, a tutorial revolves around an essay which the student is asked to write for every meeting with the tutor; the essay is then read, discussed, and leads to another written work to be prepared for the following meeting. *In essence*, every such meeting is individualized based on the knowledge the tutor has gained about the student; and student-centered, as the tutor always shifts the focus onto the student, by asking eye-opening questions rather than lecturing.

Based on the teaching philosophy together with the choice of method, the criteria were formulated for the selection of the digital tool to be used in the online part of the blended class. As a result of the negotiation between the social context—understood here as the educational culture that was aimed at together with the students' own preferences concerning the new media—and the necessary uses of the prospective digital tutorial tool(s), the following functions were required: (1) the possibility for the student to share a body of text with the tutor; (2) the possibility for the teacher and the student to comment on this text and respond to comments, synchronously and asynchronously; (3) the availability of the tool to all parties involved. Based on these criteria, Google Drive was used as the medium. The choice complied with all the three requirements above: everybody in the group and the teacher had Gmail accounts granting access to this online drive for storing, sharing, and co-editing documents, presentations, forms, etc., with the comment and chat functions available when collaborating on a given file.

When implemented, the course practicalities were as follows:

- the offline meetings lasted for 30 minutes, and each of them was devoted to essay reading (15 min.) and the following discussion, in which the tutor asked questions concerning the essay and the tutee answered them (15 min.);
- the online meetings were unrestricted in time (but for the two-week time frame within which the student shared the essay online), the tutor asked questions using the *comment* function, the tutee answered the questions (the ask-answer process was usually repeated); occasionally, though infrequently, both the tutor and the tutee met in real time to discuss some aspects of the essay via Google Drive chat.

The whole procedure was subject to negotiation at the meeting points of uses, tools, and the social context (already signaled in the paragraph devoted to the criteria of tool selection). The negotiation became even more complex and multilayered as the class in its blended format was implemented over the two months. Evidence of this negotiation can be found in the data gathered at the end of the course by a survey in which, among other questions asked, enquiries were made about the students' course satisfaction, as well as the perceived advantages and drawbacks of the MA seminar in its blended format.

With the student general contentment with the course ranging quite high (5.33 on a scale 1–6), there is an interesting picture of the whole tuition process emerging from the comments regarding strong and weak points of each mode of the tutor-tutee interaction. While the possibility to dialog with the teacher on the one-to-one basis (9 out of 9 respondents) and the question-not-lecture mode (7/9) are listed as the strong points of both online and offline meetings, the students ascribe different, and mutually complementing, advantages to the two tuition modes. All students (9/9) value face-to-face meetings over the online encounters for the direct one-to-one contact with the tutor. At the same time, however, they admit that the digital tutorials had a definite virtue of enabling the dialog to happen in what one student referred to as *slow motion*: the lack of time constraints resulted in a much deeper level of processing in the tutor-tutee exchanges. Most students (7/9) valued the online format for the time to think before answering the tutor's questions which, as all of them admit, helped them better prepare for the ultimate goal of the class—writing and defending their MA thesis.

The results point to two potential areas of interaction between the three aspects of the digital circuit (Dahlberg, 2004). First of all, in addition to the impact of the teaching philosophy on the choice of methods and tools (described earlier), we observe a reverse influence potential: that of the technological choice impacting the quality of the teaching method in question. As the survey data show, through the use of new technologies, the traditional tutorial method gains yet another advantage: the possibility to strengthen and extend its previous potential for promoting critical thinking and reflexivity in the student. At

the same time, student (dis)satisfaction expressed in the survey quoted above, especially the complains about the depersonalization and lack of immediate contact typical of the digital tutorial mode, are likely to motivate the tutor to rethink course design, which may imply a shift from the ADDIE<sup>2</sup> instructional mode to rapid prototyping, the latter being ongoing and reflection-based. This has the potential to initiate another complex social context / uses / tools / social context negotiation and resulting in modifications in every one of the three aspects of the technology circuit.

## Conclusions

New technologies have already become an integral part of every sphere of life. Education is no exception, and the importance of the new media will grow, expanding, in the years to come, into new territories, potentially beyond those prognosticated in the NMC Horizon Report (2014, 2015, 2016). However, the influence of the digital upon the so-called traditional is by no means straightforward, unilateral, and monoplanary. As demonstrated in the article, to change the ways and paradigms of education—or simply to understand these changes—a non-reductionist perspective need to be applied; a perspective from which one is able to grasp the complex network of mutual interactions between the three aspects of digitally enhanced education: the varied, individual, tech-informed, and socially determined motivations of the user; the tools available and subject to proper affordancing as well as socially embedded; and the social context which, mostly, is both the starting and the end point of all technological change.

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<sup>2</sup> Chronologically: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation.

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Anna Turula

**Zwischen neuen Technologien und neuen Paradigmata  
im Hochschulunterricht. Eine nicht reduktionistische Auffassung**

Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag schildert einen Teil der zwischen Februar und Mai 2014 im Magisterseminar aus dem Bereich der Methodik von Englischunterricht durchgeführten Forschung. Das Seminar wurde mittels einer hybriden Tutormethode geführt: die Teilnehmer ( $N=9$ ) sollten vier Essays schreiben und diese der Verfasserin als routinemäßige Tutorials (zwei Arbeiten) präsentieren oder in Cloud Computing zugänglich machen (Google Drive; zwei Arbeiten). Die besagte Studie und deren Ergebnisse wurden in anderen Publikationen detailliert beschrieben (Turula 2015; Turula wird gerade gedruckt). Der hier dargestellte Forschungsteil konzentriert sich auf die Qualität der Ausbildung von künftigen Lehrern mittels neuer Technologien. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wurde dabei geschenkt dem didaktischen Prozess im Berührungsbereich von zwei Wirklichkeiten: von der Welt der digitalen Werkzeuge und vom gesellschaftlichen, wirklichen und digitalen Kontext, in dem die Lehrer und die Studenten fungieren.

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## **When Language Anxiety and Selective Mutism Meet in the Bilingual Child: Interventions from Positive Psychology**

### **Abstract**

Selective mutism is more common than initially thought and afflicts immigrant language minority children at approximately three times the rate of monolinguals (Toppelberg, Tabors, Coggins, Lum, & Burgers, 2005). Children who have developmental language and/or articulation problems and children who are quiet due to anxiety or concerns about accents and limited fluency can suffer from selective mutism. This case study examines the efficacy of interdisciplinary treatment with three positive psychology interventions to treat an eight-year-old Spanish-English bilingual child with selective mutism. Pet-assistance therapy, music therapy, and laughter therapy were incorporated into the child's speech-language therapy sessions to increase verbal productions across 14 weeks. Results indicated that pet-assisted therapy revealed positive outcomes, with modest gains for music and laughter. Implications of outcomes, collaboration, and conclusions are discussed.

*Keywords:* selective mutism, positive psychology, second language acquisition

### **Introduction**

Afflicting immigrant language minority children at three times the rate of monolinguals, selective mutism (SM) is more widespread than originally believed (Toppelberg, Tabors, Coggins, Lum, & Burgers, 2005). SM is manifest by a recurrent failure to speak in certain milieus. Children with this condition are able to speak, but remain deliberately silent when in the company of

specific people or when interacting in particular settings. Anxiety in the form of a social phobia is presumed to be an underlying feature (Lesser-Katz, 1986; Black & Uhde, 1992, 1995). Because bilingual children of immigrant families are much more prone to it than native-born children, it is believed that one of SM's causes stems from linguistic minority children's concerns about their accents and limited fluency and thus remain silent. Second language acquisition (SLA) researchers who are familiar with the relationship of foreign language anxiety (FLA) and willingness to communicate (WTC) may feel a bit of déjà vu in that they, too, have discovered links between anxiety and one's desire to speak when given the choice.

For example, MacIntyre (1994) proposed that one of the variables most closely related to whether a person will choose to interact in their first language (L1) is communication apprehension (e.g., an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with others). People who experience high levels of fear or anxiety about communicating tend to avoid it—much like children with SM. He based his findings in part on McCroskey and Richmond's (1991) work which contended that communication apprehension is the leading predictor of an individual's WTC and that there is a significant negative correlation between communication apprehension and WTC: the greater the anxiety, the more likely the person will be UN-willing to communicate.

Applied linguists have made a recent foray into positive psychology as a means of attempting to undo the negative effects of debilitating emotions like anxiety. The inclusion of positive psychology (PP) in the context of this study is valuable because PP focuses on positive features and strengths in the human psyche and human experience, not at just the challenging and stressful facets that have long been psychology's focus (Gable & Haidt, 2005). PP, with its attention on well-being, does not disregard human complications, but it addresses them from a position of strength—the factors that make humans resilient rather than what debilitates them. According to Frederickson (2001, 2003, 2004), one of PP's leading researchers on emotion, adverse emotions restrict a person's reactions to those of survival rather than flourishing. Seligman (2011) cautioned that anxiety leads to a fight-or-flight response, a set of behaviors used for continued existence, but not necessarily thriving progress. The reason that PP interventions are considered in this present study is because they are very often designed with the idea of offering resilience to those with issues such as anxiety (Park & Peterson, 2008).

This case study report describes an interdisciplinary response, using the expertise found in applied linguistics, PP, and speech pathology to address the challenge of SM in an English-Spanish bilingual eight-year-old living in the United States, who we will call *Marco*.



## About Selective Mutism

SM is usually noticed in children when they begin school. Its primary indicators include not speaking in particular social situations where speech is expected, like at school, even though the child verbally communicates in other places, like home. A child with SM does not suffer a lack of knowledge of the spoken language but rather studies indicate that it may be a symptom of social anxiety. The condition can have dramatically negative effects on social functioning (Gallagher, 2002). Currently, SM is seen as a condition of severe anxiety or phobia (Anstendig, 1999), although children may have concomitant speech articulation difficulties (Steinhausen & Juzi, 1996). For an SM diagnosis, the refusal to speak must last more than one month and can last anywhere from a few months to several years. The majority of youngsters affected by this condition exhibit timid and anxious behavior in exchanges with unfamiliar people, or in any circumstances in which they perceive themselves as the focus of attention or in which they feel they are being assessed or observed. In many cases, with increased comfort and familiarization with a given social milieu, they are more inclined to speak. Research suggests that such social anxiety is the fundamental source of the disorder. However, speech articulation problems are also partially responsible for SM which makes the disorder of concern to speech pathologists (McInnes, Fung, Manassis, Fiksenbaum, & Tannock, 2004).

Diverse treatment strategies for children with SM have been recommended, but an analysis of published case material (Dow, Sonies, Scheib, Moss, & Leonard, 1996; Wright, Holmes, Cuccaro, & Leonhardt, 1994) reveals that a systematic approach to treatment has not yet been established. According to Gallagher (2002), any effective treatment provided for SM will address the child's high anxiety in social situations and the limited opportunities the child probably has had for interaction with unfamiliar people. While individual psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, and therapies involving play and the family have often been suggested for children with SM and may be important in building greater confidence and a more relaxed orientation in life, there is no evidence to date that these types of treatment are likely to be of substantial benefit. Hence professionals are currently advocating for methods that reduce anxiety and build skills (Gallagher, 2002).

## Selective Mutism and Bilingualism

Applied linguists and language teachers are acquainted with the "silent period" in second language acquisition which refers to a stretch of time in which learners who are unfamiliar with a new language are building up linguistic competence through actively listening and processing the language they hear

(Krashen, 1987). This nonverbal period is a frequent and quite normal stage of a child's second language acquisition process that usually begins when they become aware that their home language is not recognized at school and their second language (L2) proficiency is inadequate or nonexistent, thus causing the learner to stop speaking completely in that setting. The nonverbal period typically is shorter than 6 months (Tabors, 1997) and can be confused with SM in bilingual children, especially when considering that immigrant and language minority children are at a higher risk (by roughly three times) of SM than those that are native born (Bergman, Piacentini, & McCracken, 2002). Because learning an L2 takes a long time, one cannot be certain whether the youngster who meets other criteria for SM has achieved the right level of linguistic knowledge or familiarity to qualify for such diagnosis, because it is hard to ascertain where the silent period ends and SM begins.

When discussing the topic of SM, the pervasive myth that L2 acquisition in children is accomplished easily, quickly, and automatically is detrimental to understanding SM in bilingual children (Snow, 1997). Indeed, acquiring an L2 is a complex process involving elaborate cognitive and social strategies (Wong Fillmore, 1979). Such strategies transport learners from the preliminary nonverbal stage to developing the capacity to communicate in their new language. The usual evolution toward L2 proficiency progresses from silence to repeating words quietly and non-communicatively to practicing words and phrases in the L2, to finally "going public" with the new language (Toppelberg, Tabors, Coggins, Lum & Burger, 2013; Ervin-Tripp, 1974; Samway & Mckeon, 2002; Saville-Troike, 1988; Wong Fillmore, 1979).

Although children progressing through the normal nonverbal period progress uneventfully through the phases described above, those with SM display no progression. They get stuck in either persistent silence or uttering phrases quietly to themselves, refusing to verbalize in circumstances that necessitate "going public." Their mutism is selective, and becomes evident in relatively unfamiliar social situations. The signs may have a tendency to be more evident in the L2, due to its dominance in school—which is the most common unfamiliar venue for youngsters with SM.

Furthermore, individual differences, particularly personality, can be a mitigating factor in a bilingual child's SM (Tabors, 1997). Specific personality features that come into play are those that result in reticent behavior with the unfamiliar (Kagan, 1997). That is to say, timid, apprehensive, and/or reticent children who are put into unfamiliar L2 situations may be more prone to reacting with mutism than children without these personality traits. When a bilingual child's silence is acute and sustained, it merits the diagnosis of SM. For these children, mutism is manifest in both languages, in numerous unfamiliar settings, and for substantial time periods. On the other hand, normal children in the silent period of L2 acquisition typically remain nonverbal in one language, in

one or two settings, and for only a few months. Even when “normal” youngsters are extensively exposed to their L2, most will not feel fully comfortable interacting in that language for six months or so. However, for these children, this discomfort will probably not result in a failure to speak. In sum, the difference between a bilingual child experiencing a typical silent period and a bilingual child with SM is that the selectively mute child has a disproportionately prolonged period of silence even after extensive L2 knowledge and exposure, their silence is evident in both languages and is displayed in conjunction with anxious, shy, and/or reticent behavior. As opposed to the negotiation and acquisition that typifies the usual learner’s silent period, SM is a condition that in part can be caused by severe social anxiety.

### **Positive Psychology Interventions Combat Negative Narrowing Emotion**

Language learning is occasionally considered “a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition” (Guiora, 1983, p. 8). The majority of research concerning the emotion surrounding language learning focuses on negative emotions, especially learner anxiety (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Consequences of anxiety include decreases in cognition, self-confidence, and willingness to communicate (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz & Young, 1991; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002). In contrast, the goal of PP is to support people in their quest for well-being. Rather than taking a mollifying attitude toward pain reduction or coping with disturbing experiences, PP seeks to provide means by which to develop positive emotions and increased engagement (Seligman, 2011). It aims to provide another angle through which to perceive human psychology by creating mechanisms to increase strengths and attributes such as resiliency, happiness, and optimism. Applied linguists in the past rarely addressed the topic of PP even though its application becomes clearly visible when reflecting on the practical human and social aspects of language learning. Sensitive language practitioners are cognizant of the value of humanizing learners’ experiences of language learning by nurturing their motivation, perseverance, and resiliency, in addition to the positive emotions that are crucial for the extensive process of L2 learning. For these reasons, studying the role of PP interventions that explicitly enable the expression and development of strengths represents a valuable addition to current perspectives on L2 learning processes (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014), especially when negative narrowing emotions like anxiety cause a person to resort to specific action tendencies that result in refraining to speak altogether.

Leading the theoretical development in the area of positive emotion is Barbara Fredrickson, whose influential work on the broaden-and-build theory has argued for a clear differentiation between positive and negative emotions

(Fredrickson, 2001, 2003, 2006). According to Fredrickson, specific negative emotions each tend to be associated with a specific action tendency, a compulsion toward a specific type of behavior. For example, anger leads to the urge to destroy obstacles in one's path, fear leads to protective behaviors, and disgust leads to rejection as in quickly spitting out spoiled food. Fredrickson's research proposes that positive emotions produce a different type of response.

The broaden and build theory states that certain discrete positive emotions—including joy, interest, contentment, pride, and love—although phenomenologically distinct, all share the ability to broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources. (Fredrickson, 2003, p. 219)

Positive emotion can help dissipate the lingering effects of negative emotional arousal, helping to promote personal resiliency in the face of difficulties. Positive emotions also facilitate exploration and play, leading to the opportunity to have new experiences and learn in an efficient way; this is the “broaden” side of Fredrickson's theory. The social dimension of positive emotions is closely connected with the “build” side of the theory. Because people tend to be attracted to others with positive emotions, and positivity engenders both goodwill and social bonds, positive emotions help a person build resources that collectively might be considered social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Given the dependence that learners have on speakers of the language (parents, teachers, native speakers, advanced learners, and near peers), the presence of other people offers numerous resources that facilitate learning (Gardner, 1985; Gregersen, MacIntyre & Meza, 2016; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001).

The differentiation of positive emotion from negative emotion in the psychology literature raises the interesting question of the relationship between positive and negative emotions in L2 learning in particular: Are they two sides of the same coin, or are they different notions altogether? MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) argued in favor of the latter position: “Positive emotion has a different function from negative emotion; they are not opposite ends of the same spectrum” (p. 193). They argue that learners' imaginations have positive-broadening power, a perspective that is consistent with Fredrickson's (2001) description of positive emotions as actively promoting health and well-being and not simply being the absence of negativity. With the engendering of positive emotions in mind, we now turn our attention to three PP interventions that hold promise to increasing one's well-being.

### Three Interventions: Pet-assisted, Music, and Laughter Therapies

**Pet therapy.** Research suggests that interventions using pet assisted therapy are effective for achieving the goal of reducing emotional stress and for enhancing mood (Thompson, 2009). Studies demonstrate that children report less pain, want more interaction, and want a pet at home when asked for three wishes after pet assisted therapy (Braun, Stangler, Narveson, & Petteingell, 2009; Kaminski, Pellino, & Wish, 2002). Pets have been reported to alleviate emotional distress through empathy, nurturing connections which foster social skills, providing support for self-efficacy and strengthening one's sense of empowerment. The human-pet interaction helps develop social skills that can be transferred to relationships with people (Wisdom, Green, & Saeide, 2009). The integration of pets into a child's therapy provides an abundance of benefits due to the commonalities they both share: both children and pets are reliant upon and attentive of adults; they live in the present moment and provide honest feedback; their communication is principally nonverbal and concrete; and finally, animals and children know how to play naturally and to give freely (Zimmerman & Russell-Martin, 2008). Given these similarities, it is not difficult to understand that using pets in therapy is mentally advantageous by increasing a child's attention, developing leisure skills, increasing self-esteem, and reducing loneliness. Educationally speaking, pet interventions have been demonstrated to increase vocabulary, increase long and/or short term memory, and improve knowledge of concepts. Finally, in the realm of motivation, children whose therapy is assisted with pets tend to be more willing to be involved in group activities, interact with others more effectively, and to be more willing to stay in treatment.

For the purposes of this study, perhaps one of the most easily observable ways in which pet therapies can be beneficial is the reduction of anxiety. For children with SM or who have an anxiety disorder, one of the greatest challenges for them is to endure a situation where the focus of attention is almost entirely on them. Lamentably, therapeutic settings can provoke the very anxiety that is the root cause of the child's condition. For someone with SM whose silence is triggered by anxiety and/or interpersonal difficulties, the result of being the center of attention during therapy could prove to be paralyzing. Thus, the impact of an unthreatening, undemanding animal could potentially reap positive gains.

**Music therapy.** Music therapy is another PP intervention that could potentially help children with SM. According to researchers, music therapy is a psychoanalytically oriented response to children and adolescents who experience disturbances in perception, behavior, school-related issues, or physical activities. Music therapy provides children with the opportunity to communicate in the context of therapeutic play, helping them increase their expressive

ability and understand their unconscious motivations. Using improvisation of the instrumental, vocal, and movement variety offers experiences with variable tiers of emotional expression. The distinctive value of such improvisations in music therapy lies in their spontaneity and unpredictability. That is to say, even before the child's expression can be verbalized, their reaction is already being expressed through a different medium, which results in the child's increased ability to express feelings that had previously been impossible to verbalize. Although the purpose of treatments using music are often directed at inspiring emotional expression, there can be numerous additional goals like stress or anxiety relief, improvement of emotion and quality of life enhancement for illness sufferers. In experimentation, control group members who participated in music therapy (e.g., listening to a half-hour of soothing music twice daily for two weeks) demonstrated greater reductions in stress, anxiety, and depression than those who did not (Chang, Chen & Huang, 2008).

**Laughter therapy.** One's ability to manage and savor the positive in life is enhanced through humor. As a tool to cope, laughter and humor alleviate anxiety (Kuiper & Martin, 1993; Moran & Massam, 1999; Yovetich, Dale, & Hudak, 1990), thus protecting individuals from the repercussions of stress (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Martin & Dobbin, 1988; Martin & Lefcourt, 2004). Laughter helps to preserve a healthy perspective during difficult times and increases the visible expression of happiness, improving a person's capacity to cope with negative-narrowing experiences (Bryant & Veroff, 2007). Experiments in PP have provided evidence that positive emotions can undo the effects that linger following a negative emotion (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998; Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, 1999). Research suggests that two different positive emotions, contentment and amusement, share the capacity to reverse negative emotional arousal. Moreover, positive emotions may also undo the psychological or cognitive narrowing produced by negative emotions. This is most likely due to the notion that positive emotions broaden an individual's momentary thought—action repertoires in ways that are irreconcilable with the continuance of negative emotion (Fredrickson, 2000). Albeit contentment and amusement do not always result in laughter, when combining the body of literature on laughter we find it convincing enough to examine whether it has positive effects on the anxiety accompanying SM.

This study draws from applied linguistics, PP, and speech pathology. Considering the inverse relationship found in applied linguistics of anxiety and WTC (and in the case of a speech pathology diagnosis of SM—a serious UN-willingness to communicate) and the previous investigations that demonstrate the potential encouraging effects of PP interventions on lowering anxiety and increasing well-being, this study seeks to answer the question as to whether the incorporation of pet, music, and laughter therapies into speech pathology



treatment will increase the WTC of a bilingual selectively mute child and provide him with the courage and resilience to speak in situations in which he currently remains silent.

## Method

### Case Study Participant

Marco, whose family was originally from Mexico and subsequently moved to the U.S., was a 7-year, 8-month-old male at his initial assessment. He had a suspected diagnosis of SM and notable past medical and social history. He only spoke to family members and did not speak at school. Although somewhat withdrawn and rather fearful of social embarrassment, he did not present with social isolation and withdrawal as he was regularly observed nonverbally interacting with children on the playground and in the classroom. At home, Marco's mother and father spoke primarily Spanish to him (80% of the time), and his older Spanish-English bilingual brother spoke primarily English to him. Marco's mother reported she understood English relatively well but was more comfortable speaking in Spanish. However, when Marco chose to communicate, he primarily spoke in English.

Marco's medical history began with a premature birth that required hospitalization and ventilation for three months. Subsequently, he had bouts with otitis media requiring the placement of pressure equalization tubes when he was a year and a half old. He also suffered from asthma. For a club foot, he needed to wear specialized shoes. In terms of Marco's history with speech and language services, Marco began receiving attention at a community clinic around the age of four for difficulties with speech sounds and grammatical constructions, but therapy was discontinued due to adequate progress after a year and a half of weekly therapy. When he started kindergarten, Marco was identified for speech and language services because he was not using verbal communication, although he appeared to have adequate auditory comprehension skills. His mother brought recordings of Marco speaking in English at home to quell the supposition that he did not verbalize at all. After a full evaluation, Marco was diagnosed with SM, a mixed receptive and expressive language delay, and developmental delay by the speech pathology team.

Marco first arrived at the university clinic for an evaluation in the fall of his 1st grade year, where he attended an English-only elementary school in the Midwestern United States. He had repeated kindergarten due to the difficulties encountered by his teachers in assessing his abilities because of the absence of



verbal output. At school, Marco received English speech and language therapy services, focusing on the use of a PODD (Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display) to communicate in the classroom with assistance from a special education para-educator. A PODD is a form of augmentative and alternate communication that provides visual support that permits communication. Marco's mother was most concerned that he was still not speaking at school, and she noted that he had difficulties pronouncing some sounds in English. Marco received three months of therapy at the university clinic with minimal to moderate gains in verbal communication in the therapy setting and at school. During his second semester of treatment, three positive behavior treatments were trialed in conjunction with his speech-language therapy, which is the focus of this study.

## Procedures

Throughout the spring semester at the university speech and hearing clinic (which also is a training site for students in communicative sciences and disorders and provides services for individuals in the community who have communication and swallowing disorders), a graduate student clinician introduced different strategies to facilitate language with Marco. Pet-assistance, music, and laughter were each introduced systematically in conjunction with speech-language interventions to increase Marco's comfort and verbalizations throughout the semester.

Marco participated in a total of 26 one-on-one 50-minute sessions, over a period of three and a half months. Sessions were scheduled for twice a week across 15 weeks. Pet-assistance was introduced in the third week of therapy and incorporated weekly (every Monday), and music and laughter were introduced during the eighth week of therapy and incorporated (every Wednesday) on a rotating basis (e.g., one Wednesday laughter, next Wednesday music). Sessions were designed with 30 minutes of speech-language intervention with 10–20 minutes dedicated to one of the three PP interventions to facilitate communication. Speech-language intervention time focused on remediating Marco's phonological disorder and increasing nonverbal and verbal communication through books, games, and play activities. This was based on the research that up to 50% of children with SM present with concomitant speech and language impairment (Kolvin & Fundudis, 1981; McInnes, Fung, Manassis, Fiksenbaum, & Tannock, 2004; Steinhausen & Juzi, 1996) along with the social anxiety.

**Pet-assisted therapy.** A certified service dog, "Bumper," came with a pet caretaker once a week for 15–20 minutes of speech therapy for eleven sessions. An initial introduction was planned to see if the pet would be an appropriate match for Marco. At the first meeting, Marco was hesitant, but he

continued to participate more each session. Throughout the subsequent weeks, Marco engaged in different activities which required both nonverbal and verbal communication with Bumper and the graduate student clinician. For example, Marco was instructed by his clinician on how to command Bumper to retrieve items by saying "Ok, Bumper" while pointing to an object. He also verbally produced a few target phrases (e.g., "Get vest," "Get leash") to give commands to Bumper and to increase verbalizations. He also participated in book reading activities to increase language and literacy opportunities with Bumper present. See Table 1 for therapy progression.

In the fifteenth and final week of treatment (session 26), the graduate student clinician and supervisor visited Marco's school to participate in a small group activity with Marco and two of his peers, multiple educational support staff (e.g., school SLP, special education teacher, classroom assistant), Bumper, and the certified service dog's owner. A benchmark was met when Marco verbally commanded Bumper to fetch items in front of his peers and educational staff. Peer interaction during this group activity was facilitated, as a same-age peer helped Marco hide an item to be retrieved by Bumper. The team was thrilled when Marco demonstrated generalization of skills learned in the clinic setting to his school environment.

**Music.** Prior to the initiation of treatment, Marco's mother had reported that although Marco did not sing on request, she sometimes heard him singing in his room by himself. For this reason, the team thought that music therapy might potentially produce some positive results. Music was integrated for 10–20 minutes during three separate sessions, alternating weeks with laughter. Music sessions consisted of the clinician and Marco selecting instruments of their choice, and listening to familiar children's songs to facilitate opportunities for language. The graduate clinician initially led the music activities, choosing an instrument and playing it. Later, Marco chose instruments and kept the rhythm to a song (e.g., playing on a toy xylophone). After three sessions, the music activities did not facilitate as much language output as intended but were seen via Marco's enthusiasm and engagement to be affectively advantageous. The music provided opportunities for repetitive verbal scripts where the clinician started a song (e.g., "Old MacDonald had a Farm..."), and Marco verbally finished it (e.g., "e-i-e-i-o"). This was a "cloze" task, where the clinician initiated a verbal prompt and provided wait-time for Marco to fill-in-the-blank. Such cloze tasks were commonly utilized with and without music throughout the intervention. See Table 2 for examples of session content and progress for music and laughter.

**Laughter.** Laughter sessions lasted 10-20 minutes on three separate occasions, alternating weeks with music. Laughter sessions consisted of the clinician

and Marco participating in five yoga poses per session (e.g., sit like a lion and then laugh like a lion, “rawrrrahar”). When Marco first came to the university clinic for speech therapy in the previous fall semester, laughter sessions had not yet been introduced. At that time, his laughter was inaudible; he produced the facial gestures of laughing without producing sound. When laughter was initially introduced, Marco was hesitant to participate and primarily watched the clinician and laughed at the clinician’s silly laughing behavior. After the first session, he was more engaged and helped to select which of the five animal poses to complete. During the laughter sessions, Marco audibly laughed in a much louder manner. He appeared to enjoy these laughter sessions and demonstrated an increase in perceived loudness. See Table 2 below.

## Instruments

To evaluate treatment progress, data were collected using the following: a) weekly clinical progress notes, b) parent questionnaire, and c) anecdotal information from cross-disciplinary collaborations.

**Weekly clinical progress notes.** Documentation for speech-language intervention involved clinical writing known as SOAP notes, which were written after each therapy session to describe **S**ubjective information, **O**bjective data of session goals, **A**ssessment of performance, and **P**lanning for the next session. SOAP notes were written by the graduate student clinician under the supervision of the certified SLP.

**Parent questionnaire.** To measure parent perception of Marco’s communication abilities, a parent questionnaire was provided before and after intervention to broadly quantify pre- and post-treatment changes. Marco’s mother answered 13 Likert-type scaling questions ranging from 1 (always) to 5 (never); questionnaire items focused on the frequency of communication at school (5 items), at home (4 items), and outside of school (4 items). For example, one school scaling question asked, “when called on by his/her teacher, my child would answer” (Letamendi, Chavira, Hitchcock, Roesch, Shipon-Blum, Stein, & Roesch, 2008). Items were from a previous study and translated into Spanish by one of the authors of the present study.

**Cross-disciplinary collaboration.** Cross-disciplinary collaboration included the communication between Marco’s graduate student clinician, Marco’s school SLP (via email correspondence), and updates from his mother. Only documented comments (i.e., SOAP notes, archived e-mails) were included to describe case progress.

## Results

Triangulating both qualitative and quantitative measures, this case study focuses on describing the procedures and results of three PP interventions: pet-assistance, music, and laughter. Table 1 and Table 2 provide examples of treatment session content and outcomes collected from the weekly clinical SOAP notes. There were four absences (two missed sessions for the academic calendar's spring break; one clinician absence and one client absence for illness).

Table 1

*Pet-Assistance: Example Session Content and Results from Clinical Writing SOAP Notes*

Pet-assistance	
Session	Findings
<b>Week 3</b> (session 4)	Marco was excited to discover that a dog would be present during the tx (i.e., treatment) session. Marco was hesitant at first but quickly warmed up to Bumper. Marco indicated he would enjoy tx, if Bumper continues to come. Marco instructed Bumper to perform four tricks (i.e., fetch leash, fetch vest, fetch treat, shake) for five individuals.
<b>Week 5</b> (session 8)	When prompted from clinician (i.e., "Say it a little louder"), Marco used a louder voice and repeated the task. Marco was hesitant to command Bumper to "Get Leash" and "Get Vest" but did so hesitantly. Marco used his soft voice (a loudness rating of 2) to introduce Bumper to a new friend (i.e., another graduate student clinician). Marco verbally communicated in 5 out of 5 opportunities and used his voice (rated at a loudness rating of a 3) to ask a question. After one model (i.e., "Say bye"), Marco said "bye" to the clinician at the end of the session.
<b>Week 8</b> (session 13)	Marco was hesitant to command the dog.  Marco required multiple verbal cues while commanding Bumper. Marco produced words to finish cloze tasks during the book activity through verbal and visual prompts (e.g., clinician looked at Marco with puzzled face). Marco greeted the clinician at the beginning and end of tx session but required an elicitation (e.g., "what do you say?").
<b>Week 13</b> (session 21)	Mom reported that Marco has a best friend at school, who he says 'hello' to everyday. Mom reported Marco has asked for a dog. Marco participated in pet therapy and commanded Bumper to fetch by saying "Ok, Bumper." Marco also completed a book activity, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear." Marco produced an 8-word sentence to the graduate student clinician (i.e., "red bird, red bird, what do you see?") when completing a repetitive book activity with Bumper during speech therapy.

Table 2

*Laughter & Music: Example Session Content & Results from Clinical Writing SOAP Notes*

	<b>Laughter</b>		<b>Music</b>
Early <b>Week 8</b> (session 14)	Marco was hesitant to engage in the yoga activity but participated more once he felt comfortable. Marco showed great emotion (laughing, rolling on floor, etc.) during the yoga activity. Marco also presented with balance [difficulties] during 3 out of the 5 yoga poses (Plane, Lion, Turtle, Giraffe, Lady Bug).	Early <b>Week 10</b> (session 16)	The clinician began playing the first song during music therapy and arranged the instruments.  The clinician gave no instructions and began playing an instrument of her choice. Marco began playing with the clinician and continued throughout the whole activity.
Middle <b>Week 11</b> (session 18)	Marco displayed enjoyment and increased laughter during laughter therapy.  Mom reported that Marco approached and said "hi" to one child on the playground during recess. She reported being very happy with the progress Marco has made.	Middle <b>Week 12</b> (session 20)	The clinician implemented the use of a "loud" and "soft" column to increase the loudness of Marco's verbalizations when conversing with unfamiliar listeners. This acted as motivation for Marco to get more checkmarks in the loud column.  Marco enjoyed the music therapy and required to prompting to play with the instruments.
Late <b>Week 13</b> (session 22)	Marco displayed enjoyment and increased laughter during laughter therapy.	Late <b>Week 14</b> (session 24)	Marco participated in music.  Marco used his quiet voice to say "hi" to the supervisor for the first time.

**Parent Questionnaire**

Table 3 presents pretest to post-test changes on the parent questionnaire. Overall, maternal perception (from total questionnaire items) resulted in significant changes from average Likert scale scores of 4.15 to 3.46 ( $p < 0.01$ ). Differences were noted between the three areas of school, home and family, as well as outside of school.

Table 3

*Parent Questionnaire Pre- and Post-test Likert Scales*

Scale Areas	PreTest (Jan 2015)	PostTest (May 2015)	Delayed PostTest (Feb 2016)	Delayed PostTest (May 2016)
<b>Total Items</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>2.54</b>
School	4.6	3.8	3.4	3.0
Home & Family	2.75	2.0	2.75	1.0
Outside of School	5.0	4.5	4.5	3.5

*Note.* A school item example was, “when called on by his/her teacher, my child would answer.” The client’s mother responded on scale of 1 (always) to 5 (never). Question items were adapted from Letamendi, Chavira, Hitchcock, Roesch, Shipon-Blum, Stein, & Roesch, 2008 and translated into Spanish by one of the authors.

### Cross-disciplinary Collaboration

After the first pet-assistance session, Marco’s mother had the annual IEP (individualized educational plan) meeting with the team at his school to review his progress. The following is an excerpt from the bilingual SLP supervising Marco’s graduate student clinician (and author):

The school reported he is talking more but not yet to the teacher or in a large group (but to his 1-on-1 assistant, as well as the 2 other boys who receive special education services). Mom shared with the school team how we trialed bringing the dog into therapy and that he spoke in a louder voice and spoke also with unfamiliar speakers, which he normally wouldn’t do. The school said they’d be open to having the dog come – yay! (but teased that maybe the dog would have to come every day then).

The school SLP reported positive gains (e.g., Marco was observed to quietly say “hi” to a peer at school on the playground during Week 11 of treatment). Marco’s willingness to communicate more in depth with the school personnel outside of the university clinic is one indication of progress. Additionally, the school and school district’s cooperation to permit a visit with Bumper demonstrated the value of this experience.

### Discussion

Results show that pet-assistance therapy facilitated the most gains, which may be due to the increased intensity (every week for additional minutes) in

comparison to the music and laughter. Although music demonstrated some added enjoyment, music did not appear to have the same positive changes in verbal communication as the other two positive psychology interventions. Laughter facilitated gains in the nonverbal domain by inciting voiced and audible laughter, as compared to previous inaudible laughter. To compare dosage intensity, pet-assistance included eleven, 15–20 minute sessions, while laughter and music only included three, 10–20 minute sessions each.

An important “side product” variable that transcended the interventions that may have contributed to Marco’s advancing progress was the positive rapport that the graduate student clinician was able to establish with Marco, as evidenced by the favorable comments by Marco’s mother. She saw the positive relationship built with the graduate student clinician as a key contributor to his progress and motivation in therapy. Research suggests that in fluency therapy for clients who stutter, the client-clinician therapeutic relationship contributes to 30% of change, 40% from the client and his/her environment, and only 15% from the selected fluency technique. The remaining 15% contribution of change comes from hope and expectancy (Asay & Lambert, 2004; Zebrowski & Arenas, 2011). A clinician’s attributes of empathy, warmth, and genuineness are valuable as well (Guitar, 2014). Gregersen, MacIntyre, and Meza (2016) address issues of PP in L2 learning and attribute the development of rapport in the form of social capital as one of the main contributing factors to the success of their study’s participants. In fact, they suggest that the effects of the PP exercises in their study were secondary to the effects of the relationships that were built.

### **One Year Follow-up**

Marco continued with speech language therapy to address his speech sound disorder and continued limitations in verbal communication outside of the home setting. However, he continued to make waxing and waning gains. Due to the training setting of the university clinic, Marco had a new graduate student clinician in the fall semester after the inclusion of the three PP interventions. The change in clinician led to some initial regression in verbal communication at therapy. Over time and re-establishing client-clinician rapport, Marco began to make progress again. Therapy included stimulus fading, which consisted of gradually increased exposure to Marco’s fear-evoking stimuli, combined with differential reinforcement (Muris & Ollendick, 2015) and the creation of a difficulty hierarchy of verbal and nonverbal communication. Marco began recording short verbal messages on his mother’s cell phone at home and sending these messages to his graduate student clinician. This is notable progress as Marco recorded these messages with his ‘full’ voice in place of a whisper.



Also, one year post trial of the three positive behavior treatments, Marco's mother requested another session with Bumper.

## Conclusion

Parallels can be drawn between the inverse relationship that applied linguists have found between language anxiety and WTC in an L2 and the social anxiety that often times serves as the catalyst for a child's SM. Moreover, positive psychologists have recommended interventions that are meant to increase a person's well-being and self-esteem. Among them are exercises that include pets, music, and laughter. In this inter-disciplinary case study, we reported the results of a selectively mute youngster whose speech pathology therapy included these three elements. In triangulating weekly clinical SOAP notes, the responses from a parental questionnaire and correspondence from the cross-disciplinary collaborative team, we could ascertain that positive steps had been made in increasing Marco's verbal output in those social milieus that had previously left him mute. We conclude that from a clinical perspective, pet-assistance, music, and laughter therapy may be clinical tools underutilized by speech language pathologists, as these therapeutic strategies are not typically within the scope and practice of that discipline. However, given the underlying anxiety children with SM may have, these resources may be incorporated as part of the inter-disciplinary team approach that is recommended for service provision (Giddan, Ross, Sechler, & Becker, 1997).

## Epilogue

Marco's mother reported that an opportunity arose for Marco to adopt a dog of his own, which he was very excited about. Marco's mother also reported he will be attending a science camp in the summer, indicating his desire to participate despite his communication and social challenges.

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### **Die Sprechangst und selektiver Mutismus bei einem zweisprachigen Kind – die der positiven Psychologie entnommenen Behandlungsmethoden**

#### **Zusammenfassung**

Selektiver Mutismus ist ein Phänomen, das häufiger als man früher vermutete auftritt, und die Kinder der Immigranten etwa dreimal häufiger als einsprachige Kinder betrifft (Toppelberg, Tabors, Coggins, Lum & Burgers, 2005). Am selektiven Mutismus können leiden: Kinder mit Sprechstörungen und/oder Aussprachefehlern und die aus Furcht vor unrichtigem Akzent oder ärmlichem Wortschatz wortkargen Kinder. Die vorliegende Fallstudie untersucht die Wirksamkeit der interdisziplinären Behandlung eines achtjährigen Kindes mit Anwendung von den drei in positiver Psychologie angewandten Behandlungsverfahren. Logopädische therapeutische Sitzungen, an den der Patient 14 Wochen hindurch teilnahm, wurden um tiergestützte Therapie, Musiktherapie und Gelotologie erweitert. Ihre Ergebnisse zeigen, dass tiergestützte Therapie positive Resultate brachten, während Musiktherapie und Gelotologie nur ansatzweise dazu beitrugen, das Behandlungsziel zu erreichen. In dem Beitrag werden auch erörtert: Forschungsfolgen, Möglichkeiten weiterer Zusammenarbeit und Schlussfolgerungen.



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## **Teaching Materials and the ELF Methodology – Attitudes of Pre-Service Teachers**

### **Abstract**

The central argument voiced in the present paper is that the English language classroom should be influenced by the English as a lingua franca (ELF) methodology. What we mean under the notion of ELF methodology is a set of assumptions and tenets advanced by a number of scholars (e.g., Jenkins, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2011), who advocate rejecting the hegemony of a native-speaker language model and embracing a more egalitarian perspective that promotes the linguistic and cultural diversity of the English-using world. The ELF methodology is one of the recent developments in ELT. An abundant literature (e.g., Spichtinger, 2001; McKenzie, 2008) recommends that learners of English are exposed to as many different varieties of English as possible. A further recommendation (e.g., Matsuda, 2012) is that the cultural content presented to pupils in the ELT classroom should be drawn from multiple sources. The present paper aims to contribute to the debate concerning the implications that the ELF methodology carries for coursebooks and teaching materials. The study explores pre-service teachers' views on the following questions: (1) How many and which varieties of English should appear in the CD recordings that accompany coursebooks? (2) Cultures of which countries should constitute the content of teaching materials? The data obtained from 170 pre-service teachers majoring in English indicate that most of them are far more willing to embrace the cultural rather than linguistic diversity in their own teaching practice.

*Keywords:* English as a lingua franca, teaching materials, teacher trainees

## **Language Ideology in Teaching Materials**

As far back as 1980, Spradley argued that culture encompasses three aspects of human experience: cultural behavior (i.e., what people do), cultural knowl-



edge (what people know) and cultural artefacts (objects that people produce). The analysis of why, when, and how these artefacts were created, often paves the way for gaining an insight into cultural norms and values that function in a given society. The artefacts can collectively be described as material culture. One of the most conspicuous examples of material culture found in ELT classrooms are educational materials such as coursebooks, reference works, grammars, dictionaries, and other language-learning aids. These texts are highly influenced by sociocultural practices and specific cultural values professed by people who write and produce them. Instructional materials promote ideologies, perspectives, and positions which reach out far beyond the classroom context and impinge on the way the English language is conceptualized by the general public. When dogmas upon which the materials base are ripe for revision, certain practices are reformulated or eschewed, whereas a new set of assumptions, tailored to the needs of learners, gains currency and affects mass schooling. An example of the ideology embodied in ELT materials, significant in the context of the present paper, is the extent to which teaching materials are Anglo-centric or the extent to which they encourage students to behave in accordance with certain norms and conventions. In the course of this article, we attempt to emphasize that the changed role of English should have a bearing on the content of ELT coursebooks and other educational materials.

The unceasing spread of English and the emergence of English as a *lingua franca* (hereafter ELF) carry numerous implications for the English language classroom. An accumulating body of research (e.g., Seidlhofer 1997; McKay 2012) points to the need for a reconsideration of the subject “English as a Foreign Language” on the school curriculum. Teaching English should not resemble teaching other languages because the status of English is unique. However, the ELF methodology stands little chance of being adopted even by teachers who understand its tenets unless it is validated through inclusion in coursebooks and teaching materials (Jenkins, 2005, p. 541). Matsuda (2002, p. 184) points out that teaching materials are an important component of the ELT classroom and are likely to play a crucial role in forming students’ perceptions of the English language. For this reason, it is important that materials used in the classroom reflect the most recent developments in ELT, the case in point being the ELF perspective. The present paper aims to contribute to the debate concerning the implications that the emergence of ELF has for teaching materials by discussing two features of coursebooks that strongly reflect the dominant language ideology: the content of audio materials that accompany coursebooks and the cultural content.

## The Inclusion of Native and Non-Native English in Audio Materials

One of the implications that the ELF methodology carries for classroom materials is the inclusion of as many different varieties of English as possible. CD recordings accompanying coursebooks should expose pupils to a wide selection of inner, outer, and expanding circle varieties of English.<sup>1</sup> Depriving schoolchildren of this exposure is likely to make learners think that there is only one 'correct' variety of the language that they need to conform to. The belief that there exists only one variety of English is a dangerous illusion that can mislead learners and be a source of misunderstandings (Sharma, 2008, p. 127). Sadly, research shows that this misconception is reflected in the way many students think. Friedrich (2002, p. 442) reports on his study, in which learners of English from expanding circle countries were asked to name varieties of English that they were aware of. Regrettably, only British English and American English were enumerated. The participants of the study were not even aware of other inner circle varieties of English like Australian or Canadian English. It seems that learners need to be explicitly taught about the varietal diversification of English in the course of their English language education.

Needless to say, pupils must not be expected to imitate all the varieties they are provided with. As far as production is concerned, it is advisable that children are exposed to one particular model they are asked to follow. However, listening training is believed to be more effective when a much wider range of different varieties is provided. Although the selection of British or American English as an instructional model is understandable, students need to be informed that it is not the only variety of English (Matsuda, 2012, p. 173).

As pithily put by McKenzie (2008, p. 79), "it seems unreasonable to impose a single or, indeed, a restricted range of pedagogical models for English language classrooms. This seems as unrealistic as exposing learners only to male speakers, or speakers over a certain age." The English language classrooms have traditionally imposed one or two varieties on learners: British English and/or American English. The faith that British English is aesthetically superior to other varieties, well-suited for education, social life, and the workplace has

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<sup>1</sup> These terms refer to a model introduced by Kachru (1985) that distinguishes between three circles of English (inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle) which represent three different contexts of the use of English. The inner circle comprises countries where English is used mainly as a native language (e.g., the UK, Canada). The outer circle includes countries which are former colonies of the inner circle countries and which have developed their own indigenous varieties of English (e.g., Nigeria, India). The expanding circle represents countries, where English is learnt as a foreign language and used primarily for international, rather than intranational purposes (e.g., Poland, Argentina).

long dominated traditional ELT methodology (Modiano, 2010, p. 72). It has been recognized that students who have been exposed exclusively to no more than two varieties may be shocked by varieties that differ from native-speaker English and regard them as deficient (Matsuda, 2012, p. 171). Instead of focusing on inner circle English, learners need to be presented with a multiplicity of language samples, produced by both native and non-native users of the language. Spichtinger (2001, p. 52) points to a number of benefits of exposing learners to a rich selection of native and non-native models of English. Firstly, learners' awareness of the richness of the English language and the linguistic diversification of the English-speaking world is raised. Secondly, providing schoolchildren with multiple examples of inner, outer, and expanding circle English is likely to contribute to the development of cross-cultural understanding and tolerance. Thirdly, the classroom that exposes learners to English produced by both native and non-native speakers helps to prepare them for communication with interlocutors from a variety of L1 backgrounds.

However, despite recommendations advanced by ELF scholars, research shows that the status quo of the ELT classroom has remained unchanged. The English language classroom does not seem to mirror the rationales presented in ELF research. A study conducted by Matsuda (2002) presents an analysis of seven coursebooks used in the first year of junior high school in Japan. According to the study, the use of English among non-native speakers is significantly under-represented in all the examined coursebooks. The study reveals that textbooks used in Japanese schools focus almost exclusively on the language of the US and the UK, which reinforces the idea that Americans and Britons are the prototype of English speakers. As already indicated, although it is reasonable for a textbook to focus predominantly on one variety of English as a model for production, it needs to expose students to a number of different varieties so that learners understand that the variety they study is one of many (Matsuda 2012, p. 173). As pointed out by Levis (2005, p. 371), although most native speakers speak neither Received Pronunciation nor General American, teaching materials rely on these prestige models, "giving a skewed view of pronunciation that may not serve learners' communicative needs." These two accents have long dominated the ELT profession and so they seem 'natural' to most teachers and learners (Matsuda, 2012, p. 171). It is also stated by Jenkins (2002, p. 100) that in most language classrooms the only accent students are likely to hear is that of RP- and GA-accented speakers on audio materials. She recommends that materials producers need to develop audio recordings that provide students with a wide range of non-native accents. One of the recommended resources for use in the classroom is Walker (2010). This publication includes a CD with a wide range of recordings of speakers from Argentina, China, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Malaysia, Poland, Russia, and other countries.

## The Cultural Content of Teaching Materials

Teaching a foreign language has always been strictly connected with raising students' awareness of target language culture. However, for the vast majority of learners, English has long ceased to be a foreign language. Since English has assumed the role of a lingua franca, it can no longer be associated exclusively with inner circle culture. As put by Brutt-Griffler (2002, p. 6), a language can only become internationalized once it loses its identification solely with one culture. However, despite the fact that English has become de-anglicized, it is far from being de-culturalized (Matsuda, 2012, p. 176). The phenomenal spread of English has infused and enriched the language with cultures of all those who use it as a shared resource. Importantly for our study, the shift in the use of English carries implications for the cultural content of English classes.

A very useful framework for teaching culture is introduced by Matsuda (2012, p. 176), who states that cultural content of English classes must be drawn from multiple sources. Firstly, teachers need to draw students' attention to global culture, which involves exposing them to topics that cut across national boundaries, such as world peace or environmental protection. This recommendation is very much in line with other studies (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002, p. 453) which state that English has lost its national cultural base, but has gained association with global culture. Secondly, learners need to be made familiar with the culture of their prospective interlocutors. As the number of non-native speakers of English has long outgrown the number of native speakers of this language, it is likely that most learners will use English more often in communication with non-native speakers. This assumption carries implications for English language education. Teachers need to diversify the cultural content of their classes to include countries and regions that represent various parts of the world. Pupils must be given a chance to reflect on cultures which originate in all the three Kachruvian circles. Restricting the cultural content of English lessons to inner circle countries deprives learners of the opportunity to get to know the cultural diversification of the English-speaking world. Thirdly, pupils must be encouraged to discuss their own culture in English. This way they learn to express their ideas and cultural values and explain them to their future interlocutors. The ability to talk about one's home culture is an important skill that is likely to prevent or clear up many unfortunate misunderstandings that may arise in the course of intercultural communication.

The three elements discussed by Matsuda are considered to be a core basis of every coursebook that is intended to teach English in the present-day world. However, research indicates that most materials writers have still not embraced this multicultural perspective. Seidlhofer (2011, p. 13) argues that an analysis of textbooks and reference materials shows that native-speaker ideology remains

firmly entrenched. Most coursebooks contain culturally biased content that strongly privileges inner circle countries. Prodromou (1988, p. 79) states that the majority of textbooks “project an Anglo-centric, male-dominated, middle-class utopia of one kind or another.” An example of a study that examines the extent to which coursebooks inform about inner, outer, and expanding circle cultures is Yuen (2011), who analyzed how foreign cultures are represented in two textbook series (*Longman Elect* and *Treasure Plus*) used in secondary schools in Hong Kong. The results show that the representation clearly favored the cultures of Anglophone countries, while the cultures of Africa and Asia were under-represented. The study reveals that although both textbook series contain ample cultural content, there is a distinct imbalance in representation of cultures from different regions (Yuen, 2011, p. 462). Textbook materials focus almost exclusively on the cultures of English-speaking countries, while the cultures of Africa and Asia are neglected. The author of the study concludes by stating that increasing the amount of coverage on the cultures of non-Anglophone countries in textbooks is sought after as it would help develop students’ appreciation of a wider range of foreign cultures.

As observed by Cook (1999, p. 185), “language teaching would benefit by paying attention to the L2 user rather than concentrating primarily on the native speaker.” This shift of attention carries important implications for materials writers, who are asked to consider that only a relatively small number of learners will use English in predominantly native-speaker contexts. For this reason, teaching manuals should concentrate more on presenting international settings and non-native contexts of language use. Teaching materials need to focus more on interaction between non-native speakers and less on embedding English in an Anglo-American context (Spichtinger 2001, p. 53). Coursebooks that present exclusively Anglophone cultural norms and values prepare learners to discuss foreign culture rather than their own.

Deterding (2010, p. 13) talks about a shortage of ELF-based teaching materials and expresses the need for such materials to be developed in the near future. Their role is considered crucial because few teachers have a rich enough knowledge to introduce their students to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the English-speaking world (Matsuda, 2012, p. 169). For this purpose, teachers need to rely on appropriately-designed instructional materials.

## The Study

This paper reports on part of a larger research project that examines the attitudes that pre-service teachers of English exhibit towards the subject of their

study. The project constitutes a PhD proposal that is currently being written by the present author at the Institute of English of the University of Silesia, Katowice. Data for the study are collected by means of an extensive questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire is intended to gather data concerning the respondents' awareness of the ELF terminology, their attitudes towards native and non-native English, and attitudes towards the way English is presented and taught in the classroom context. We hope to gain an understanding of whether pre-service teachers of English are aware of the implications that the emergence of ELF carries for ELT practices and, if so, whether they are willing to embrace them as part of their own teaching routine. The present paper reports on the section of the questionnaire concerning the kind of instructional materials the respondents recognize as appropriate and desirable for the classroom use. Our questions concentrated on two aspects of teaching manuals that reflect the dominant language ideology: the audio materials that accompany textbooks and the cultural content. The study was conducted in January-March 2014 at the Institute of English of the University of Silesia. The questionnaire gathered both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzed by identifying emerging patterns, recurring topics, and ambiguous answers.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study presented in this paper is to examine the attitudes held by pre-service teachers of English towards two topics expressed in the following questions:

(1) How many and which varieties of English should appear in the CD recordings that accompany coursebooks and other teaching materials? (2) Cultures of which countries should constitute the content of instructional materials?

### **The Participants**

Respondents who took part in the present research were 170 majors of English, enrolled in years 1 and 2 of the MA teacher education program at the Institute of English of the University of Silesia. The studied population comprised 40 part-time (extramural) and 130 full-time students, of whom 84.7% were female and 15.3% male. The respondents had elected to take the teacher education module as part of their degree and for this reason the present paper refers to them as pre-service teachers of English. However, despite being referred to as 'pre-service,' all of the informants have some teaching experience, gained either through practicum, which is an obligatory part of the teacher preparatory training they attend, or through their professional career as part-

time or full-time teachers. Initially, the practicum requires students to observe classes conducted by regular teachers, then the students are asked to run classes on their own. At the point of administering the questionnaire, the respondents had spent on average 90 hours observing other teachers and approximately 110 hours actively teaching. The students exempt from the practicum on the basis of their professional career as teachers had spent in the classroom at least the same number of hours, although in most cases they had accumulated a far more extensive teaching experience. The teaching practice was one of the two reasons for which we decided to carry out the study among this particular group of respondents. A number of questions included in the questionnaire require informants to relate to their own classroom practices and responding to these questions would be more difficult for freshman or sophomore students. The second reason why the study involved this group of informants was because of their extensive knowledge of methodology of English language teaching. As part of their teacher education program, students attend a considerable number of TEFL courses, such as ELT methodology, pedagogy, didactics, applied linguistics, and psychology. It is believed that this intense theoretical preparation combined with equally intensive hands-on classroom experience make our respondents knowledgeable classroom practitioners with an increased awareness of the most recent developments in ELT, such as the ELF perspective.

## **Data Presentation and Discussion**

The following is a presentation and discussion of data concerning the use of coursebooks and other teaching materials in the ELT classroom obtained in the questionnaire study. A question that will serve as a baseline for further analysis of the findings asked the respondents to make a prediction regarding their pupils' future use of English (see Figure 1).

As many as 50.6% of the subjects believe school leavers will use English more often in communication with non-native speakers. Twenty-five point nine percent predict that their pupils will engage in communication with native and non-native speakers equally often. Only 11.8% of the informants predict that their pupils will use English more often with native speakers of English. Bearing this position in mind, we proceed to present and discuss other findings obtained in the study. As will become clear during the paper, most respondents assume their pupils will use English more often with non-native speakers, but this prediction seems to have little impact on the respondents' attitudes towards what happens in the classroom.

**Pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of native and non-native English in audio materials.** The ELF methodology prescribes the



promotion of as many inner, outer, and expanding circle varieties as possible. In order to examine pre-service teachers' views on this subject matter, our respondents were asked about the number of English varieties that should appear in the CD recordings that accompany coursebooks (see Figure 2).

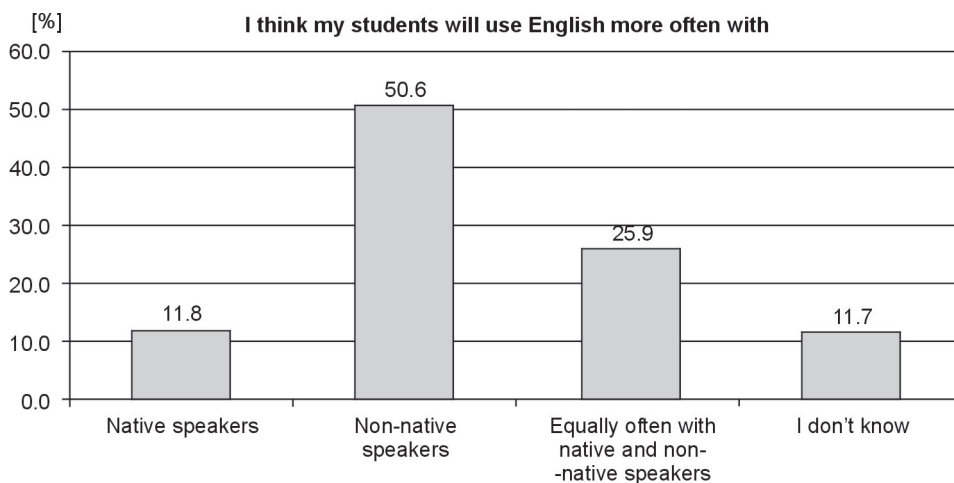


Figure 1. The respondents' prediction of their pupils' future use of English.

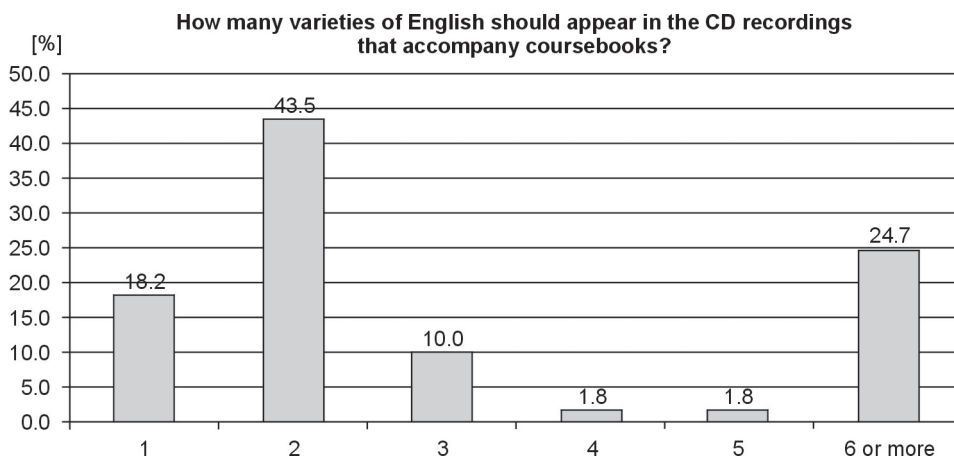


Figure 2. The respondents' views on the number of varieties that should be included in the CD recordings that accompany coursebooks.

As many as 61.7% of the sampled group believe CD recordings need to include only one or two English varieties. A counterperspective is offered by 26.5% who think that the English language classroom should expose pupils to five, six or more varieties of English. The following discussion is an analysis

of reasons given by the respondents to explain their choice. Owing to space constraints, we present the responses produced by the two most numerous groups of informants.

Forty-three point five percent of respondents believe coursebooks need to include two varieties of English. All of the responses point to British and American English as the two appropriate ones. The analysis of the comments obtained from the students allowed for the identification of the following reasons:

- 54% of the test population believe pupils must be provided with British and American English because these are the most popular, 'common' or 'important' varieties of English.
- 18% claim that learners would be confused if provided with more than two varieties.
- 14% believe that the number of varieties is so great that exposing children to all of them is impossible.
- 5% observe that most instructional materials used in schools present British and American English and for this reason CD recordings should also provide only these two varieties.
- A further 5% point out that pupils must be exposed to two varieties because British is better, superior, more beautiful or more educated, whereas American is more common or popular.
- 3% declare pupils will not be prepared for international communication if exposed to only one variety of English.
- A handful of the respondents (about 1%) remark that pupils should be exposed to two English varieties, but occasionally they can be provided with a non-standard variety that could break the monotony of regular classroom practices.

This part of the paper constitutes a discussion of the most common responses provided by the students. All of the quotations provided throughout the present paper are intended to represent strands of opinion, rather than individual voices.

A large group of the respondents (54%) claim CD recordings should provide learners with two varieties of English because British and American English are the most popular, common or important varieties of English. This sentiment is reflected in the citations presented below:

- (1) These are two which are the most popular and useful.
- (2) These are the most popular varieties.
- (3) Students should be exposed to those varieties because they are the most common and widespread.
- (4) I think that those two varieties of English are the most crucial and important. They are also well-known in comparison to other less known dialects.

- (5) British and American English are simply the most important varieties of English in the world and children should be familiar with them.

Worth noting is that the comparison between varieties of English includes an element of evaluation that prioritizes some varieties as more important. The respondents are pre-service teachers and their views on English are likely to shape the way their pupils think about this language. Promoting certain varieties as more important or educated suggests that some other varieties are somehow deficient. Such classroom practices could potentially lead to negative stereotyping.

A further claim advocated by some students is that exposing learners to more than two varieties would make them confused. This belief is exemplified by the following statements:

- (6) The increase of the amount of varieties would be confusing and misleading for the students.
- (7) In my opinion there is no point in exposing students to more than two varieties because they would feel lost and confused. What's more, students only need to master one variety and being exposed to a few of them would make them go off the track.
- (8) Exposing students to more varieties would make them confused which to choose and learn and they would mix all varieties in speaking and writing.
- (9) If children hear too many varieties they won't know which variety to follow. This would be very messy and could even discourage children from learning.

This group of respondents seems inattentive to the fact that outside of the classroom pupils are likely to encounter a wide selection of different English varieties. The lack of preparation for this linguistic diversification is likely to bring two negative results. Firstly, pupils may experience considerable problems in understanding different varieties. Secondly, they may recognize some varieties as incorrect, deformed or deficient forms of native-speaker English and their users as uneducated or uncultured. When put in any communication situation, pupils find themselves surrounded by a multitude of inner, outer, and expanding circle varieties. If the English language classroom does not prepare learners for this phenomenal diversity, they will experience sudden shock and confusion that may inhibit their communication skills.

On a separate note, it is possible that at least some respondents perceive exposing pupils to certain varieties as commensurate with teaching of these varieties. Some informants assume that all varieties which learners are provided with constitute a role model for pupils to imitate and follow. Needless to say, this

is not the case. The intention of the questionnaire was to ask about a number of varieties that pupils need to be exposed to, not trained in.

A group of respondents suggest that the number of English varieties is so great that exposing pupils to all of them is impossible. The following quotations reflect this strand of opinion:

- (10) Presenting more than two varieties to students is a waste of time. There are many varieties of English and students will never hear all of them.
- (11) My opinion is that British and American are enough. Every nation speaks English with a different accent, but it is unnecessary that children at school are familiar with all of them.
- (12) There isn't enough time to analyze all the possible varieties. And I think that most teachers are familiar (can use) only these two varieties properly.

The above reflections are based on an assumption that it is impossible or unneeded for pupils to be exposed to all varieties of English and thus it is sufficient for them to be provided with just two. Of course, it is indeed impossible for the English language classroom to provide learners with recordings of all English varieties, but it does not mean that the sample must be restricted to only two of them.

As already indicated, the present paper discusses the findings to the question about a number of varieties obtained from the two most numerous groups of respondents (see Figure 2). Forty-three point five percent claim audio materials need to include two varieties of English. Contrastingly, the second most numerous group of the subjects (24.7%) recommend that coursebooks promote six or more varieties of English. The responses gathered from this group of the participants revealed the following sets of reasons:

- Pupils should be exposed to different varieties because this will prepare them for using English in international situations with both native and non-native speakers of English.
- Pupils must be aware of the linguistic diversity of the English-speaking world.
- Providing learners with as many different varieties as possible in the classroom alleviates the shock of being exposed to them when abroad.
- Exposing learners to many different varieties of English is entertaining and makes them interested in the language.

Some of the comments provided by the students echo recommendations advanced by ELF researchers:

- (13) Students should be aware of other varieties because they will rather speak with non-native speakers of English. I hadn't heard any other

- English varieties before I went to England and it was very hard for me to understand other non-native varieties of English.
- (14) There is a big chance that our students will face non-native speakers and it is important to know/understand their varieties. The number of non-native speakers in, for example, England is increasing steadily.
  - (15) The reality is that RP is not enough! Being familiar with Scottish and Irish may save you some great disappointment. They speak so differently! American English is needed because it's taking over and because of the films and TV series more and more people resort to American vocabulary. Indian (Pakistani etc.) accents should also be taken into consideration because half of London uses them.
  - (16) Non-native speakers of English are one of the biggest groups among which communication takes place! Teachers should prepare children for communication with people from all corners of the world!
  - (17) People usually learn English to communicate with others, not necessarily to live in England. They should be exposed to natural conversations between non-native speakers.
  - (18) Sometimes students are not aware that English in different countries may sound different. I'd like to give them some samples to show them how different English is.

All of the above quotations show that at least some of our informants are receptive to the ELF perspective that advocates the promotion of as many inner, outer, and expanding circle varieties as possible. The respondents acknowledge that the presentation of a multiplicity of varieties gives the language classroom an international flavor and creates favorable conditions for the development of communication skills. These informants want to prepare pupils for international communication and reject the British/American-centric view of language.

**Pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the cultural content of teaching materials.** As many as 84.2% of the subjects think developing learners' cultural awareness is an important aspect of teaching English. This statistic is optimistic, but hardly surprising as the notion of culture has long gained a foothold in ELT. Many researchers (e.g., Valdes, 1986, p. 121) claim that teaching a language without teaching the culture of its native speakers is simply impossible. The more recent developments in the ELT methodology have drawn our attention to the fact that the emergence of ELF deprives inner circle culture of its privileged status in the classroom. The English language is no longer bound to Anglo-American culture exclusively and the relationship between language and culture should be reconsidered (Horibe, 2008, p. 243). ELF theorists (e.g., Matsuda, 2012, p. 176) propose that the cultural content of English classes need

to be drawn from a multitude of sources. This part of the paper attempts to shed light on the sentiments exhibited by pre-service teachers of English concerning the cultural content of coursebooks. The questionnaire asked the respondents to take a stance on the appropriateness of including inner circle and non-inner circle cultures in textbooks and audio-visual materials. More specifically, we followed Matsuda's (2012) framework of reference and asked the informants about the inclusion of cultures of English- and non-English-speaking countries, pupils' home culture (which in our case is Polish culture) and global culture. In addition, the questionnaire asked the participants of the study about their own primary and secondary English education, that is, to what or whose culture they were exposed to by their own teachers.

Twenty-eight point eight percent of the studied population agree with the statement that coursebooks used in schools need to inform students *only* about culture of English-speaking countries. This traditional approach to teaching English promotes dependency on a native-speaker framework and does little to raise learners' intercultural awareness. Forty-four point seven percent of the subjects are of the opinion that textbook materials should provide learners with information on various cultures of non-inner circle countries. Whereas more than a half of the informants (56.5%) learnt about inner circle during their own primary and secondary education, only 21.2% of the studied population were provided with information about outer and expanding circle countries. The latter statistic leads to an observation that the respondents are far more open to embracing the approach promoting a variety of different cultures than their own teachers of English. This greater receptiveness to culture-related tenets of the ELF methodology is likely to be connected with the respondents' increased awareness of the worldwide shift in the contexts of use of English. It seems that pre-service teachers of English find it easier to accept the cultural rather than linguistic diversity of the English-speaking world and embrace it as part and parcel of English language instruction.

Forty-four point seven percent of the participants want textbook materials to provide learners with information on various cultures of non-English-speaking countries. Even more respondents, 49.4% believe that instructional materials used in Polish schools need to present students with information on Polish culture. This statistic can be contrasted with the fact that only 28.8% of the studied population were exposed to this kind of information in the course of their own schooling. Once again, also in this respect the subjects seem to be more open than their own teachers of English. However, 25.9% do not recognize this need, whereas the remaining 24.7% find it difficult to decide. These two groups of respondents represent standard language ideology that acknowledges the privileged status of ENL countries in the classroom.

Finally, the last question discussed in this paper asked the studied population about global culture. A large group of respondents (78.8%) want coursebooks

to include topics that concern the global society, for example, world peace or environment conservation. This statistic is attributable to the fact that global culture has already found its way onto the pages of many popular textbook series that promote the idea of global citizenry.

Summarily, 44.7% of the studied population think coursebooks need to provide learners with information on various cultures of non-English-speaking countries. Forty-nine point four percent of the respondents want coursebooks used in Polish schools to present aspects of Polish culture, whereas as many as 78.8% of the informants believe coursebooks should include texts concerning global culture. A half of the respondents (50.6%) do not acknowledge the need for Polish culture to be discussed in ELT. More accurately, 25.9% of the subjects oppose this idea, while 24.7% do not know how to answer the question. This relatively high number of "I don't know" answers may indicate that the respondents had never reflected on the topic in question. Teacher preparatory program made them realize the importance of developing pupils' cultural awareness, but might have never indicated that cultures outside inner circle should be included in discussions offered to students by the ELT classroom. However, it seems that pre-service teachers' general reception of teaching materials including information on various cultures of English and non-English-speaking countries is more positive than their reception of instructional materials containing references to different varieties of English.

## Conclusion

The data show that pre-service teachers are far more willing to embrace the cultural rather than linguistic diversity of the English-speaking world. This attitude is largely attributable to the fact that many coursebooks and supplementary materials available on the Polish market already contain texts and discussion prompts that relate to cultures of various non-English-speaking countries. Even those teachers who have never reflected on the function of such varied cultural content, may react favorably to this idea because they have got used to it in their teaching practice. These same teachers take less kindly to the idea of exposing students to a wide selection of English varieties because fewer teaching materials contain audio materials that make this practice possible. Generally stated, it seems that the subjects undervalue the practice of providing learners with a rich selection of different varieties, despite the fact that the majority of them predict their pupils will have more contact with non-native speakers of English. Only 24.7% of the sampled group understands that their prediction carries consequences for the way



English is presented in the classroom and postulate that coursebooks need to include six or more English varieties.

The new role of English in the world carries a number of implications for language classroom practices. However, the results show that many pre-service teachers still think in terms of native-speaker reference norms. What seems to be needed for teachers to be more receptive towards the ELF methodology is re-consideration and re-formulation of teacher training program (Sifakis, 2007, p. 357). The major change that is advocated is the inclusion of the concept of ELF in teacher education courses so that prospective teachers are educated about the concept in question. Seidlhofer (1997, p. 60), who advocated the need for a reappraisal of teacher preparatory programs nearly two decades ago, argues that no far-reaching change can be discernible in the classroom unless teacher education is “carefully re-evaluated, re-thought, and re-formed.”

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### **Didaktisches Material vs. ELF-Paradigma – Einstellungen der künftigen Lehrer**

#### Zusammenfassung

Das ELF-Paradigma (English as a lingua franca, dt.: Englisch als Verkehrssprache), der von einer Wissenschaftlergruppe (z.B.: Jenkins, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2011) gebildete Begriff umfasst eine ganze Reihe von Prämissen und Forderungen, die bezwecken, die Rolle des sog. Muttersprachlers im Englischunterricht zu beschränken, und sprachliche und kulturelle Verschiedenheit der englischsprachigen Welt aus weiterer Perspektive zu betrachten. Eine der Richtlinien des Paradigmas (z.B.: Spichtinger, 2001; Mc Kenzie, 2008) lautet, die Schüler mit zahlreichen einheimischen und nicht einheimischen Varianten der englischen Sprache bekanntzumachen. Eine andere Empfehlung der Wissenschaftler (z.B.: Matsuda, 2012) heißt, im Englischunterricht die von angelsächsischer und nicht angelsächsischer Tradition abstammenden Kulturen darzustellen. Die im vorliegenden Beitrag geschilderte Forschung sollte Einstellungen der künftigen Lehrer zu Implikationen des ELF-Paradigmas für den Inhalt von Lehrbüchern und anderen didaktischen Hilfsmitteln untersuchen. Die von 170 Befragten gewonnenen Ergebnisse ließen Folgendes erkennen: obwohl sich die über verschiedene Aspekte

der Kulturen von nicht angelsächsischen Ländern handelnden Lehrwerke großer Beliebtheit erfreuen, sind die meisten Befragten der Meinung, dass didaktische Hilfsmittel keine nicht einheimischen Varianten des Englischen verbreiten sollten.

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## **How to Write an American Death Notice: Some Guidelines for Novice Obituarists**

### **Abstract**

The article aims at helping non-native speakers of English to write death notices, following the requirements of American tradition of the genre. It is based on the theoretical research into the genre, carried out by its author, who analyzed 1076 contemporary New York Times notices, according to Moves and Steps model of genre analysis by J. Swales and V. Bhatia. Having distinguished the death notice from the obituary, the author presents the communicative functions of the genre and its structure, consisting of seven moves, each made up of one to seven steps. Their presentation and brief analysis is accompanied by 100 patterns and templates, which allows intermediate (B1–B2) students of English to create their own texts successfully step by step.

*Keywords:* American obituary, death notice, genre analysis

### **Aims of the Project, Methodology, and Resources**

In the modern, globalized world, the issue of commemorating the dead worldwide has become significant: the rise of specialized websites, such as Legacy.com, dedicated to hosting obituaries and death notices has enabled anyone that is willing to commemorate the deceased that they loved, admired or respected, to create their own text, submit it to the online edition of a British, American, Canadian or Australian newspaper, or upload it to a memorial site. Therefore, it seems important that a non-native speaker of English should be able to write a short text that will comply with the standards of the genre, which is deeply rooted in British or American funeral tradition. It is not only the language competence, but first and foremost, cultural competence and

genre awareness that are required from a novice obituary or death notice writer (henceforward called an obituarist) so that his/her text could fulfill all fundamental requirements of the genre, since breaking the rules and principles, author's negligence, improper register and style, incorrect or misleading information may offend or hurt the feelings of the decedent's family, and meet with negative response of the community the deceased lived in.

Our article will concentrate solely on some basic communicative and linguistic aspects of the informative death notice, as we believe that, in comparison to that of the obituary, a text representing this genre is not only easier to prepare and write for a non-native speaker of English, but also more likely to be applied in a real life situation. Furthermore, we expect an average student of English at the intermediate level (B1–B2) to be able to create their own text, following the templates, patterns, and lexicon provided in our article.

The analysis is based on a larger project: the research into the contemporary American death notice (Cebzat, 2016), in which the author carried out the genre analysis of a corpus of 1843 texts, including 1076 informative death notices (the remaining texts represent other subgenres: anniversary, condolence, and farewell notices) by following two analytical frameworks: John Swales's (1990) rhetorical Move/Step analysis, and Vijay Bhatia's (1993) procedure for analyzing genres, and implementing the typology of the death notice, as proposed by Jacek Kolbuszewski (1997). The corpus contains all death notices published in *The New York Times* in the period October 1–December 31, 2012, and downloaded from Legacy.com website, the major provider of American obituaries and death notices. It should be remembered that all the structures, patterns, and templates proposed in The Moves and Steps Structure of the Informative Death Notice Section below, were implemented in authentic texts, and thus, they represent the real state of the American death notice. It is strongly recommended that the teachers who are willing to practice writing death notices should invite their students to download some authentic notices from Legacy.com and analyze their content, form, and function.

However, before proceeding to the analysis, we have to define the genre of the death notice.

### **Obituary vs. Death Notice—Confusable Terms**

In our analysis it is important not to confuse two related press genres: the obituary and the death notice (also known as the death announcement). Major traditional comprehensive dictionaries define the former as “a record or announcement of death or deaths, especially in a newspaper, usually compris-

ing a brief biographical sketch of the deceased” (‘obituary’ in *Oxford English Dictionary*) or “notice of the death of a person, published in a newspaper or other periodical, accompanied by a biographical sketch which may be brief or extended” (‘obituary’ in *Webster’s New International Dictionary*); however, surprisingly, they lack any definition of the latter. Only recently have the editors of the recent edition of OED Online altered their definition, stating: “A record or announcement of a death, esp. in a newspaper or similar publication; (in later use) (also) *spec.* an appreciation appearing in a newspaper or news broadcast, of an eminent or well-known person who has recently died, typically including a brief biography” (‘obituary’ in *OED Online*): its first part can roughly refer to the concept of the death notice, whereas the second might correspond to lengthy texts, written by professional obituarists. That distinction is clearly manifested in specialist dictionaries and encyclopedias; for instance, *Encyclopedia of Death and Dying* states that an obituary “...can be described as a published notice of the details of a person’s death together with a biography cataloguing his or her life” (p. 334); whereas death notices “...are inserted in local newspapers by family and friends and are also known as paid obituaries” (p. 334). Nigel Starck, an obituarist and researcher into obituary practices in press, emphasizes that difference arguing that “this is particularly the case in the United States, where paid obituaries—in effect, lengthy death notices often incorporating a detailed life history—are common... that classified advertising headed Obituaries or Paid Obituaries is often applied to what are, in reality, death notices” (Starck, 2006, pp. 32–33). Therefore, for most British and American newspapers, the term ‘obituary’ has been reserved for staff-written texts, which can be seen as news items telling something of the deceased’s life story rather than simply supplying biographic information; on the other hand, death notices or death announcements are treated as paid advertisements, and are used to refer to short texts written by families, friends or colleagues of the deceased (or funeral directors); they usually provide very basic information about him or her.

## **Preliminary Considerations—Aims of Writing a Death Notice**

What an aspiring obituarist has to remember while setting about to write an informative death notice is the set of its crucial communicative functions, which involve:

1. Informing the reading audience about a person’s death, its causes and circumstances, major facts concerning his/her biography, and his/her predeceased and survivors.

2. Informing possible participants about the time, date and venue of services, donations and contributions.
3. Honoring the deceased by highlighting his/her most highly valued and memorable traits as well as the most significant accomplishments.

Yet, such a notice does not only provide the information about the deceased and his/her postmortem celebrations, but also may help its author(s) express feelings of loss and grief resulting from death and provide psychological closure by the actual process of writing a death notice. Furthermore, its publication establishes a community, which helps the bereaved family feel connected to other people that the deceased was related to, and if it is hosted online, at specialized websites, for example Legacy.com, other mourners are invited to share their memories of the deceased (e.g., by contributing to a memorial book dedicated to him/her. Optionally, its author(s) may thank particular community members (e.g., healthcare professionals, hospice staff, and friends) who might have helped in the terminal period of the life of the deceased. Finally, a death notice can perform other important social functions: educate the community about facts concerning the deceased that may be unknown to, respected and highly regarded by its members, and last but not least, create historical or public record of death for further scholarly or private research, and, consequently, be stored in family records and help future genealogical research.

Having established the communicative purposes of the notice we can now proceed to the presentation of its structure and contents.

## **The Moves and Steps Structure of the Informative Death Notice**

A great majority of analyzed informative notices consist of seven moves, of which only Move 1 and Move 2 should be regarded as obligatory; the remaining ones are typical yet optional; thus, they may be omitted: for example, Move 5 or/and Move 6, if an obituarist wishes to economize, or Move 7, if the funeral arrangements are unknown, unspecified, or the funeral has already taken place. Likewise, it is not necessary to include all the steps that each move is realized with: the only obligatory step in Move 1 (Identification Component) is Step 1 (the name of the deceased), as no notice can commemorate an anonymous person, other steps of that Move only provide additional identification of the deceased; similarly, the content of Move 4 (Biographical Component) depends on the person's biography, and, obviously, the obituarist's awareness of facts and details concerning his/her life.



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**Move 1: Identifying the Deceased: Name, Age, Occupation, and Place of Residence: The Identification Component (IC)**

**Step 1: The name of the deceased.** As Alana Baranick et al. (2005, p. 36) argue, the primary function of any obituary (and it can be added here, of any death notice) is to identify the deceased to a wide audience of readers through biographical information. It can be stated that generally it is a person's name that can differentiate him/her from or confuse him/her with another person—presenting a reader with a regrettable situation that all obituarists wish to avoid. The majority of newspapers or websites require a notice to begin with the surname of the deceased, followed by his/her first and middle names, and optionally, by his/her professional or academic title:

(1) Doe—John David, PhD

In the case of a married woman, her maiden name can be given in parenthesis, preceded with the term 'nee':

(2) Doe—Jane Mary (nee Wilson)

Additionally, if the person was commonly called with his nickname or the diminutive form of his/her given, it can be mentioned in quotation marks:

(3) Smith—Joseph, known as “Little Joe”

**Step 2: Age at death.** The simplest way of informing about the age of the deceased is to follow the conventional press patterns of following a person name with digits within commas (optionally preceded by 'aged'), or with the dates of birth and death given in parentheses:

(4) Doe—John David, 87, or Doe—John David, aged 87,

(5) Doe—Jane Mary (Oct. 23, 1935—May 15, 2016)

Alternatively, the information may conclude the first sentence of the notice (Move 2) by means of the phrases 'at ... years of age' or 'at the age of...'" (see (8)).

**Steps 3 and 4: Occupation or profession, the recent place of residence.** Since a person may be well-known for his professional achievements, position or status, this information also helps identify him/her; it predominantly follows his name and age (and place of residence, if named):

- (6) Doe—John David, PhD, 87, Professor of English at Harvard University,

The final piece of information to help readers of a notice identify the deceased is his/her place of residence; it follows the pattern: the name of the city and the abbreviated name of the state if s/he lived in the USA, or county (Britain); it seems advisable to provide the name of a voivodship if s/he lived in Poland. To sum up, Move 1 can be summarized as the following sequence (optional components are parenthesized):

- (7) Surname + Given name(s) + (Professional title) + (Maiden name/  
Nickname/Diminutive) + (Age) + of + (Place of Residence) + (Occupation)

## **Move 2: Providing Information Concerning Death Circumstances (DC) The Choice of Verb**

It has been observed that obituarists notify readers about the death of a person by providing a set of details: predominantly, its date and/or day (93.2%), and less frequently its place (33.6%), cause (17.7%), and a manner a person died (21.4%) (Cebzat, 2016, p. 174). Customarily, the information is disclosed in a simple affirmative sentence (commonly the initial sentence of a notice), whose subject performs the identifying function, presented above as Move 1; its adverbials contain more or less detailed information when, where, from what, and how a person died. The analysis has also revealed that the commonest verbs are ‘died’ (44%) and, its euphemistic synonym, ‘passed away’ (26%); very few obituarists (only 2%) decided to use other euphemistic expressions: ‘departed this world,’ ‘left,’ ‘expired,’ ‘went to/entered eternal rest,’ or ‘was called to rest.’ In the case of notices for clergymen or devout Christians, it can be written that the deceased ‘was promoted to Glory,’ ‘began new life in the Kingdom of Heaven,’ or ‘passed into Life Eternal’ (Cebzat, 2016, pp. 175–179).

In almost every third notice the verb has been entirely omitted; however, such ellipsis does not hinder the correct interpretation of a text, and, since it is published in the obituary section of a newspaper or memorial website, the meaning of the sentence can be properly deduced (see pattern (11)).

**Steps 1 and 2: The date and place of death.** It is a common practice to provide readers with the full date of death, although the year can be omitted, as it is clearly evident, since an informative notice is customarily published within few days or weeks after death. The day of week can be added; yet rarely is the more precise information about the time of death necessary; it is sufficient to write: ‘on the morning of Wednesday, November 21.’ On the other hand, some obituarists tend to state only the day of the week, for instance,

‘died last Monday,’ as they assume that readers, knowing the date of publication, will calculate the date of death. We believe that such a practice may be highly inconvenient, particularly if the notice is to be hosted online, and might be read in the subsequent months or even years.

The information concerning the place of death is usually provided if a person died in a city or town different from his/her place of residence (see (11)). However, an obituarist may specify it, by stating ‘at home,’ ‘at his/her home,’ ‘at his Greenwich Village home’ (especially, if the deceased had more than one place of residence), ‘at Mount Sinai Hospital’; moreover, it can be combined with the information on the manner and cause of death (the latter is usually mentioned if a person died in hospital; see Step 3 and 4: The cause and the manner of death subsection below).

Thus, taking into consideration Move 1 and 2, we suggest that the initial sentence of a death notice might follow one of basic patterns exemplified below:

- (8) Doe—John David, PhD, Professor of English at Harvard University, passed away on June 5, 2016 at the age of 87.
- (9) Doe—John, 87, went to eternal rest on Sunday, June 5, 2016.
- (10) Doe—Jane Mary (Oct. 23, 1935 – May 15, 2016), a native New Yorker, died in Seattle WA.
- (11) Doe—Jane Mary, 81, of New York, on May 15, 2016 in Seattle WA.

**Steps 3 and 4: The cause and manner of death.** Presenting the cause of death remains a controversial issue, and a substantial number of obituarists decide either to omit it or deal with it in a most vague manner (Cebrat, 2016, p. 182). We should not expect to find in any notice that a person died from diseases regarded as “unmentionable,” such as AIDS or syphilis, or his/her death resulted from drugs or alcohol abuse. If an obituarist wishes not to mention the specific cause of death, or does not know it, s/he can refer to it with a vague euphemistic phrase: ‘after a brief/short illness,’ which might be interpreted as heart attack, stroke or cardiac arrest, or ‘after a long illness,’ which should be understood as a synonym of cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, or other chronic illnesses. An elderly person may die from ‘natural causes’ or ‘declining health.’ However, if s/he does want to state it, s/he can either write about it in a straightforward manner, for example: ‘died of/from complications related to pneumonia,’ ‘passed away on October 4th as a result of a sudden massive stroke,’ ‘suffered from heart attack and died,’ or more euphemistically, ‘succumbed to complications of cancer.’ In the case of cancer and other prolonged or chronic diseases, an obituarist may employ the metaphor ILLNESS IS WAR. A person lost his/her war and was defeated by death; nevertheless, an obituarist can emphasize the length of the disease (see (12)) or his/her perseverance, courage, and patience displayed while coping with the terminal disease s/he had to

endure, by means of a verb phrase ‘lost his/her battle/‘fight/struggle’; the noun can be additionally premodified with an adjective ‘brave,’ ‘brief,’ ‘courageous,’ ‘hard,’ ‘heroic,’ ‘long,’ ‘noble,’ or ‘valiant’ (see (13)):

- (12) Doe—Jane Mary, 81, of New York, on May 15, 2016, after a seven year battle with ovarian cancer.
- (13) Doe—John David, died at home on June 5, 2016, after a valiant, graceful, and dignified battle against the cancer.
- (14) Doe—Jane Mary (Oct. 23, 1935—May 15, 2016) lost her courageous fight with ovarian cancer.

If death resulted from a fatal accident, an obituarist may provide readers with more detailed information on its causes and circumstances. We argue that it seems to be the matter of the utmost importance, particularly if the deceased was a young person as his/her death is regarded as premature, unfair, and unjustified. Therefore, notice readers expect obituarists to provide them with more detailed information on its causes and circumstances:

- (15) Smith—Tom, aged 26, died on December 11, 2015 of injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident in Yonkers, NY.

The way a person died can be expressed by means of an adverb, for instance ‘suddenly,’ ‘unexpectedly,’ ‘peacefully,’ or ‘quietly’: the first two terms may suggest that death resulted from heart attack or stroke, and can be regarded as a synonym of the phrase ‘after a short illness’; whereas the last two can be interpreted as euphemistic synonyms of a dying person being unconscious, asleep or comatose. Alternatively, a brief prepositional phrase can be used: ‘with dignity,’ ‘at/in peace,’ ‘in his/her sleep,’ ‘with clarity and vigor,’ or a clause, providing additional information that would account for unsuspected and unpredictable death: ‘s/he died suddenly on October 10th while preparing to go to work.’ If that is a case, an obituarist can emphasize the fact that death occurred in presence of a person’s family ‘in the company of his/her loving family,’ ‘surrounded by his/her family,’ ‘surrounded by family and friends,’ ‘with family at/by his/her side.’ Thus, pattern (13) can be extended into (16):

- (16) Doe—John David, died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family, on June 5, 2016, after a valiant, graceful, and dignified battle against the cancer.

Finally, to avoid a lengthy and clumsy statement, Move 1 and 2 can be expressed in two sentences, for instance, combining (6) and (16).

- (17) Doe—John David, PhD, Professor of English at Harvard University, passed away on June 5, 2016, at the age of 87. He died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family, after a valiant, graceful, and dignified battle against the cancer.

We strongly advise novice obituarists to avoid the collocation ‘died tragically,’ being literal translation of Polish ‘zmarł(a) tragicznie,’ and suggesting that death did not result from natural causes. In fact, death of each person is always a tragic experience for survivors.

### **Move 3: Presenting the Predeceased and Survivors: The Family Component (FC)**

Comparing obituary practices in the USA, Britain, and Australia, Nigel Starck comments on special attention paid by American professional obituarists to the concluding section of staff-edited obituaries, which is devoted to the family of the deceased: “The closing stages of American obituaries are magnanimous in terms of devoting space to surviving family. Offspring, and their home towns, are named; siblings are accorded similar recognition; grandchildren are enumerated” (Stark, 2006, p. 228).

This observation is shared by Isabel Marzol, who argues that the ‘Family stage,’ as she calls the FC, usually takes up one or two paragraphs, and comprises two pieces of information: “the trajectory of the deceased in family terms (marriages, divorces, offspring, and deceased members) and the surviving members” (Marzol, 2006, p. 70). We have observed that, contrary to that in staff-edited obituaries, the position of the Family Component in death notices is not fixed, and the FC hardly ever concludes them, as the common practice is to finish the notice with Move 7. If shorter texts (up to about a hundred and fifty words) are considered, the FC occupies a more prominent position and immediately follows Moves 1 and 2; however, in longer texts, in which obituarists concentrate on presenting and evaluating the life of the deceased, it is usually placed after Moves 5 and 6.

The survivors’ list may begin with the phrase: ‘S/he is survived by...,’ which can be reduced to ‘Survived by...’; or deleted entirely. Survivors are customarily enumerated in the order of importance: spouse, children (in order of date of birth, and their spouses), grandchildren, great-grandchildren, parents, grandparents (if alive), siblings, and other relatives. The list can be concluded with the names of friends—and pets. Dead family members are listed separately; in that case the sentence begins with the phrase: ‘S/he was predeceased by...,’ ‘S/he was preceded in death by...’ or ‘Predeceased by,’ or his/her name is preceded by the term ‘late.’ Each listed relative is presented with a phrase

denoting the relationship of the decedent to him/her; optionally, the place of survivor's residence can follow his/her name, according to the formula below:

- (18) Adjective/adjectives + kinship term + of + relative's/relatives' name(s)  
+ of + place of residence

It can be exemplified by the following imaginary example:

- (19) John is survived by his beloved wife Mary, dear son Frank of Washington, DC, adoring daughter Susan Smith of Chicago, IL. He was predeceased by his loving parents, William and Susan Doe of Houston, TX. He also leaves behind his beloved cat, Seymour.

If the survivors' list immediately follows the initial sentence, it can commence with 'S/he was...', which tends to be omitted; in that case, death notice readers do not have to be informed that the list contains survivors' names only; however, if obituarists wish to list the predeceased relatives, the phrase 'predeceased by' is obligatory to avoid confusion:

- (20) Beloved husband of Betsy. Devoted father of Sam and Nora. Cherished son of Shirley and A.J. Loving brother of Holly and Richard. Predeceased by sister Muriel.

If obituarists wish to include the names of present or former spouses of decedent's relatives or any additional information, they can insert them within parenthesis immediately after the relatives' names; additionally, in the case of the decedent's spouse, the period (in years) of their marriage can be stated as well. In the case of a complex network of family relationships, the survivors' list can be split into two or more sentences for the sake of clarity, as in the following example:

...Ellie is survived by her loving husband of 67 years Irving Lazaroff; her beloved children Daniel, Barbara and William; adored grandsons Cameron and Byron Lazaroff-Puck, (Barbara and former spouse Wolfgang Puck's sons) and Benjamin and Timothy Lazaroff, (William and daughter-in law Irene's sons); and John Hanwell, Barbara's loyal partner. Other surviving family members include sister-in-law Sylvia Berkowitz, (widow of Ellie's brother Harold), and their sons Barry Berkowitz, Ellie's godchild, (his wife Linda), and brother Douglas Berkowitz, (his wife Marleta); Diane Weiss Schildkraut and Edward Weiss (his wife Renee) children of her beloved late sister Jean and late brother-in-law Michael Weiss; dear first cousin Selma Solomon and her darling second cousins Robert Berke and wife Sheila,

along with many great nieces, nephews and cousins.... (Death Notice for Ellie Lazaroff, published in *The New York Times* on Oct. 4, 2012)

American obituaries and death notices share a tradition of modifying a kinship term with an appropriately selected adjective that subjectively appraises the relationship between the deceased and the survivors/predeceased. The set of adjectives used in the sub-corpus is limited: the commonest adjective, 'beloved' is predominantly used to refer the bond that, in the opinion of obituarists, was the most important and strongest, hence 'beloved wife/husband,' 'beloved mother/father' or 'beloved grandmother/grandfather'; 'loving' as well as 'cherished' are used more widely and can appear in a collocation with any kinship term. On the contrary, the use of other adjectives tends to be limited to representatives of particular generations, for example 'adoring,' 'adored,' 'proud,' or 'doting' are predominantly used while referring to parental and grandparental generations (including aunts and uncles), whereas 'dear' is mainly used to value relatives of the same generation (brothers, sisters, cousins) and friends. Likewise, the use of 'devoted' is generally limited to the closest relatives (wives, parents and children, in particular), 'caring' to the closest female relatives (mother, wife or sister), and 'loyal' to wives, brothers, friends, and partners (see Cebrat, 2016, p. 198, for the frequency of adjectives used in the FC).

#### **Move 4: Presenting the Deceased: The Biographical Component (BC)**

The Biographical Component either precedes or follows the Family Component (Move 3). The BC can comprise seven steps that highlight consecutive periods of a person's life, beginning with his/her birth and family background, through periods of education, military service, employment to retirement; and regard both his/her professional and private life; however, they are not necessarily sequenced in the chronological order.

**Step 1: Date and place of birth; Step 2: Parents and family background.** Presence or absence of particular steps depends entirely on obituarists' choices and preferences; they can focus on some and omit others, rearrange their order so as to emphasize those moments or aspects of a decedent's life, activities or achievements that, in their opinion, are worth commemorating. However, it is essential that obituarists collect and analyze all the necessary data before they set out to create that component of a notice so as to make the story of the decedent's life accurate, lively, and memorable.

If a person's biography follows a traditional chronological pattern, the information concerning the date and place of his/her birth, parents and (and, optionally, remote ancestors) should definitely begin the BC:



- (21) S/he was born + in + place on + date + to + parents' names
- (22) S/he was born in + place + on + date. His/her parents were....

**Step 3: Childhood, education and marriage.** Information about education involves listing schools, colleges, and universities that the deceased attended, as well as diplomas and certificates s/he was awarded, and degrees s/he held. It may be limited to enumeration of names of schools, faculties, and degrees earned in each:

- (23) She graduated from SCHOOL/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY in YEAR with a degree in + FIELD.
- (24) He was a graduate of the public school system in CITY, he went on to earn his BA in from COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY, and his MA in FIELD from COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY. He also pursued doctoral work at UNIVERSITY.

Alternatively, it may emphasize exceptional achievements in sports and education, as well as membership in college sports teams and honor societies, such as Phi Beta Kappa or Sigma Chi:

- (25) He excelled in both SPORT and SPORT, and was an exceptional student. A graduate of HIGH SCHOOL in 1981, he then matriculated to UNIVERSITY, where he received undergraduate and graduate degrees in FIELD, graduating Summa Cum Laude and elected to HONOR SOCIETY.

To make a more vivid picture of the deceased an obituarist can also recall some memorable or joyful events from decedent's childhood:

- (26) She had fond childhood memories of going to ... with her mother, visits with her grandparents, swimming in ... River when visiting her uncle Samuel.
- (27) He spent his childhood in ... where his paternal grandfather was a.... His summers were spent at the home of his maternal grandparents in.... There, he spent his days biking miles around the lake, fishing, and boating with his many cousins.

Finally, an obituarist can refer to the decedent's marital status, providing information on the name(s) of his/her spouse, date of their wedding or the length of their marriage, and the names of their children.

- (28) S/he married NAME, his/her high school sweetheart in YEAR. They had NUMBER children/sons/daughters: NAMES. They divorced in YEAR. S/he remarried in YEAR. Her/his late second husband/wife NAME died in.... S/he is survived by her/his third husband NAME.

This section of the BC can be reduced or omitted entirely if an obituarist intends to create an extended Family Component to be filled in with relevant information.

**Step 4: Military service, awarded medals and decorations.** If the deceased was a veteran, his military service and its details, such as its length and type, the dates of entry and separation, the dates of overseas service, the unit with which he served, the attained rank, as well as earned medals and decorations, should be included in the BC. That information can be expressed briefly in one or two sentences chosen from the following set:

- (29) During WWII, he served as Major in the United States Army.  
(30) During WWII, he was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the United States Army Corps of Engineers and promoted to First Lieutenant.  
(31) His military service was a source of pride.  
(32) He was proud of his service in the United States Navy. He served from YEAR to YEAR and was Honorably Discharged.  
(33) He was stationed in France with the UNIT NUMBER/NAME.  
(34) He was wounded in the Battle of NAME on DATE and spent YEARS recuperating in Army Hospitals.  
(35) He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze and Silver Stars.  
(36) He served in the US Army; earning the Purple Heart.

**Step 5: Employment, accomplishments, awards, honors and other recognition, retirement.** What follows the information about decedent's education and/or military service is the chronological presentation of his/her professional career, and/or government or church service. The amount of information varies, depending on the type of job, and number of places of employment, promotions, posts, and positions. As a minimum it contains the type of job and/or position, name of place, and period of employment, which can be presented in one or two sentences:

- (37) After moving to LOCATION in YEAR, s/he began working for COMPANY as a POSITION. S/he retired in YEAR.

Yet, if s/he held more positions, his BC may resemble his/her CV, emphasizing his/her promotions and accomplishments in professional career; if applicable, awards and other forms of recognition should be enumerated. The set of the following five templates is by no means comprehensive, and is up to the obituarist in charge to select which facts of the decedent's professional biography ought to be highlighted:

- (38) S/he enjoyed a long career as PROFESSION/OCCUPATION. Beginning in YEAR as POSITION, he worked his/her way into and up the FIELD. That was truly his professional passion and calling. He served as a POSITION, and was promoted to POSITION in YEAR. After NUMBER years, he became POSITION, retiring in YEAR. Marty was QUALITIES and was awarded with NAME OF AWARD.
- (39) His/her professional life began with POSITION in COMPANY NAME. He worked for COMPANY NAME before accepting a position as a POSITION with COMPANY NAME in YEAR. At COMPANY NAME, he successfully rose from POSITION (YEAR) to POSITION (YEAR) and, finally, to POSITION (YEAR).
- (40) After COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY his/her professional career included positions rising from instructor to full professor and chair of the Department of FACULTY at UNIVERSITY in YEARS, and dean of COLLEGE/FACULTY at the UNIVERSITY in YEARS.
- (41) Following the war, he joined the COMPANY NAME as a POSITION. After numerous positions, including time as POSITION at COMPANY NAME, he became Chairman and CEO of COMPANY NAME in YEAR, and held that position for NUMBER years before retirement. He was a director of COMPANY NAME. He served as Chairman of the NAME Board. In addition, he worked tirelessly for numerous civic organizations. He received an honorary TITLE from UNIVERSITY in YEAR.

Having completed the presentation of the decedent's professional career, an obituarist can proceed to describing his/her life after retirement:

- (42) After his/her retirement s/he served on the board of ORGANIZATION/CLUB/CHARITY.
- (43) After his/her retirement, s/he spent winters in Florida and travelled extensively visiting countries around the world.
- (44) After NUMBER years of outstanding contributions to the success of COMPANY NAME s/he and SPOUSE' NAME moved to their retirement residence in LOCATION, in YEAR.

- (45) S/he retired in the YEAR devoting his/her later years to travels around the world with his wife/her husband, including enjoying time at their second home in LOCATION.

**Steps 6: Voluntary work; Step 7: Private life: hobbies, sports, and/or special interests, activities, passions, and other enjoyment.** Apart from professional career obituarists may emphasize the importance of voluntary work, and decedent's membership in charities and other non-profit organizations: religious, fraternal, political, as well as his/her other affiliations, and the positions s/he held, both in employment and retirement period:

- (46) S/he began the first of many volunteer positions with ORGANIZATION  
(47) S/he continued her volunteer career at....  
(48) S/he was a founding member/trustee of....  
(49) S/he served in executive leadership or board member positions to many organizations.  
(50) S/he was honored to have served in....  
(51) S/he was a generous and anonymous patron/supporter of INSTITUTION(S) and countless local charities and foundations.  
(52) S/he often contributed his time and skills to....  
(53) S/he was always available to offer a helping hand to....

It is the best idea to conclude the Biographical Component by presenting the less formal yet more intimate picture of decedent's life: his hobbies, sports, activities, and passions that might have been unknown to general public. Obituarists may tell a funny anecdote, quote his/her favorite words or phrases, recall memorable events or speeches, interests or pastimes they shared. It has to be remembered that the style of treatment the private life of the deceased and his/her activities in a notice seems to reflect the attitude of its authors to him/her and the relationship between them; it may range from the solemn style of the notice written by decedent's co-workers or subordinates to intimate and heartfelt memories of the closest friends. Death notices can be a way to show their authors' unique perspective on decedent's life and to share a sense of humor. This is, perhaps, the most difficult and demanding component of a notice, requiring originality and imagination—therefore we do not suggest any fixed patterns or templates to imitate.

### **Move 5: Evaluating Life and Achievements of the Deceased by Presenting his/her Personal Qualities and Attributes: Evaluative Component (EC)**

Personal qualities and attributes of the deceased are listed after the presentation of the private life of the deceased; thus his/her BC may be concluded with a statement summarizing his/her personal traits, and evaluating his life and accomplishments in a single sentence:

(54) S/he was a(n) ADJECTIVE(S) man/woman.

Yet, obituarists are advised to provide readers with more detailed evaluation, by enriching their list of qualities and attributes with scenes of the decedent's life or anecdotes that will illustrate or exemplify the traits they have presented. They can emphasize the lasting and profound positive impact of the deceased, his/her life and attributes on the society s/he lived in, particularly on their families, colleagues and friends—and the obituarists themselves. They can also point at the decedent's unique qualities while referring to feelings of overwhelming grief and irreplaceable loss:

(55) S/he was beloved by friends for his/her...

(56) S/he leaves scores of relatives and friends who benefitted from his/her...

(57) Everyone s/he met was struck by his/her...

(58) His/her ... was remarkable and he made a positive impact on many lives.

(59) S/he was a profoundly spiritual person whose qualities were evident to all who knew her.

### **Move 6: Expressing Survivors' Emotions: The Farewell Message Component (FMC)**

The purpose of the Farewell Message Component (FMC) is to express emotions caused by a person's death (Step 1), promise to keep him/her in obituarist's memories (Step 2), and wish him/her eternal peace (Step 3). It is the only component of the entire text in which its author(s) can address the deceased, who is regarded here as a virtual reader of the notice, in contrast to real addressees, that is, living members of the community.

**Step 1: Expressing the loss caused by death.** The declaration of loss is expressed with active or passive structures with the verb 'miss,' optionally

preceded by an adverb ‘deeply,’ ‘greatly,’ or ‘sorely.’ It is either the whole person that is missed or his/her particular qualities; in the latter case Move 5 is either optional or can be combined with Move 6, so as to avoid repeating the decedent’s attributes and qualities. It is also worth remembering that this declaration is the only component within the notice that may reveal its authorship, since informative death notices remain, by convention, unsigned. Therefore, obituarists may optionally insert either their own names (i.e., survivors’ names; see templates below) or a collective term denoting the mourners’ group (e.g., business partners, colleagues, neighbors, friends, etc.) that submitted or uploaded the notice:

- (60) John Doe/You will be (deeply/greatly/sorely) missed (by SURVIVORS’ NAMES /TERM DENOTING THE MOURNERS’ GROUP).
- (61) Jane Doe was/You were a(n) ATTRIBUTE(S) person/woman who will be (deeply/greatly/sorely) missed (by SURVIVORS’ NAMES /TERM DENOTING THE MOURNERS’ GROUP).
- (62) John’s/Jane’s/Your PERSONAL QUALITIES will be (deeply/greatly/sorely) missed (by SURVIVORS’ NAMES /TERM DENOTING THE MOURNERS’ GROUP).
- (63) TERM DENOTING THE MOURNERS’ GROUP will miss your/his/her PERSONAL QUALITIES.

**Step 2: Promising remembrance.** Additionally, obituarists may declare that they will remember the deceased and/or his/her qualities; Steps 1 and 2 can also be joined into a single pattern, as in (64):

- (64) John Doe/You will be (deeply/greatly/sorely) missed and (always/forever) remembered (for PERSONAL QUALITIES) (by SURVIVORS’ NAMES /TERM DENOTING THE MOURNERS’ GROUP).
- (65) Jane Doe/You will be (always/forever) remembered.

**Step 3: Wishing the deceased eternal peace.** Optionally, the FMC, is concluded with a traditional religious expression, characteristic of inscriptions that appear on headstones and tombs (R.I.P.), wishing the deceased eternal rest and peace:

- (66) May s/he rest in peace
- (67) May you rest in peace
- (68) Rest in peace

Either of the abovementioned sentences can conclude the entire text of the notice if its author does not know the details of, or does not intend to inform its readers about the funeral arrangements.

### **Move 7: Informing about Funeral Arrangements: Funeral Information Component (FIC)**

Obituarists have to attach utmost importance to detailed and precise information concerning funeral arrangements, for, by publishing it, a decedent's family and/or other mourners invite notice readers participate in all or some ceremonies, inform them that they have already taken place or are to be held in unspecified time in the future, or, on the contrary, their participation in the funeral or other ceremonies is restricted, and only presence of certain categories of mourners is requested.

**Step 1: Providing information concerning the funeral and other ceremonies and attendance restrictions.** Funeral Information Component (FIC) is required to be highly informative, accurate, and detailed: notice readers are expected to find out the time and venue of the funeral service/mass, reception, the date and place of interment. Additionally, it may contain information about the persons, for instance, the name of an officiating priest. If the ceremonies are to take place, the structures should contain a verb in the future tense:

- (69) A memorial service/funeral will be held on DATE at TIME at VENUE.
- (70) Funeral on DATE at TIME from the ... Funeral Home, ADDRESS, followed by a Mass of Christian burial at ... Church, ADDRESS at TIME. Burial will be at ... Cemetery, ADDRESS at TIME.
- (71) Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on DATE at TIME at ... Church, ADDRESS by PRIEST'S NAME.
- (72) PRIEST'S NAME will officiate.
- (73) A special gathering to remember and celebrate the life of John Doe will be held on DATE at TIME at VENUE.

If deceased or his/her family demanded the funeral service be attended by the closest relatives only or there is no service at all, their wish is expressed directly in the FIC; in such a case, obviously neither time nor place of the ceremony is specified in a notice:

- (74) Services will be private for immediate family only.
- (75) In accordance with Jane Doe's wishes, there will be a graveside service for immediate family/ there will be no funeral service.



- (76) Burial/Interment private.
- (77) As John wished, his body will be cremated and there will be no funeral service.

In some cases the deceased expressed their special wish concerning the way their bodies should be dealt with, which provides the reason for the not holding funeral ceremony:

- (78) His/her body has been donated to Yale Medical School.
- (79) His/her ashes are to be placed at sea according to his/her wish.

If the ceremonies have already taken place, they should be referred to in the past tense and do not have to be so detailed:

- (80) His/her ashes were put to final rest in PLACE on DATE.
- (81) Services were held in PLACE, where he was laid to rest on DATE.

Finally, if the details of any ceremony has not been determined yet, such information should also be included:

- (82) A memorial service will be held in June, contact the family for location and time.
- (83) A memorial service/mass will be held at VENUE on a date to be determined.

**Step 2: Providing information regarding funeral home in charge.** The FIC may contain specific information concerning the funeral home that is to provide (or provided) funeral services for the deceased. Since contemporary funeral homes provide a wide range of on-line services, their directors inform the public about the possibilities their on-line services offer, for instance, webcasting of a funeral service, posting on-line tributes or condolences, sharing memories in a memorial guest book, accessing a full obituary, uploading photos and stories, etc. In such a case, the funeral parlor in charge provides the information about its services and e-mail address:

- (84) Services will be handled/made by...
- (85) Complete obituary, funeral details and online guest register are available at....
- (86) Please visit ... to sign the online guestbook.
- (87) For additional information or to watch a webcast of the service, visit....

**Step 3: Providing family/friends contact information.** Optionally, the decedent's relatives or friends provide their phone numbers or e-mail address in case notice readers have any inquiries about the funeral celebrations. They can also inform them about a possibility of sharing their recollections, memories or thoughts of the deceased, or request to have condolences addressed directly to them and not via a funeral parlor:

- (88) Any questions regarding the service please call/email....
- (89) Please email/call ... for details or celebration.
- (90) Remembrances can be sent to....
- (91) Thoughts, testimonials and condolences may be emailed to....

**Step 4: Suggesting donation.** In the final step of the FIC obituarists or the decedent's family can suggest a charity or a list of charities to receive donations, or suggest sponsoring a charity of decedent's own choice; thus, instead of purchasing flowers, mourners are expected to contribute unspecified amount of money to honor him/her. Their request should include the contact information (name, address, telephone number, email address, link to a webpage or a bank account):

- (92) In lieu of flowers, donations in his/her memory may be made to....
- (93) His/her family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to....
- (94) To honor him/her, the family would appreciate donations be sent to....

Obituarists may additionally explain why a particular charity was chosen by the decedent or his/her family:

- (95) Contributions may be made in his/her honor to.... It was a cause dear to DECEDENT'S NAME heart.

Alternatively, mourners are free to contribute to a charity of their choice:

- (96) Contributions in DECEDENT'S NAME memory can be made to any of the causes s/he served and loved, and are much appreciated by his/her family.

Finally, they may suggest another, uncommon or original, manner of commemoration:

- (97) To honor DECEDENT'S NAME, please plant a tree in....

## Optional Constituents

Obituarists may include other non-standard components, for instance religious or literary quotations, or the decedent's expressions of gratitude to individuals (relatives, friends, physicians, nurses or caregivers) or communities (hospital or hospice staff) that cared for the decedent and helped them cope with his/her terminal decease; it can be inserted between Moves 5 and 6 or 6 and 7:

- (98) Special thanks (from his/her family) to ... /go to ... (for ...)
- (99) The family is very/eternally/deeply grateful to ... (for ...)
- (100) The family wishes/would like to thank ... /express/extend/their appreciation/gratitude to....

A quote may commence or conclude a notice; the choice of an appropriate text depends on the preferences of the obituarist or the decedent's family, and may range from a mourning psalm to lyrics of his/her favorite song.

## Some Conclusive Advice

We wish to conclude our analysis by providing a novice death notice writer with some final advice. While reading our article s/he should have noticed that this is a complex genre, as it combines a notice of a death, a story of a life, a record of the decedent's extended family, information about a funeral service, a request for memorial donations, and many more. Thus, s/he should remember that all the information must be covered, accurately and completely; s/he should check whether no important information is omitted, forgotten, or incorrect, and no names are misspelled. Thus, checking and proofreading before submitting or uploading the text is obligatory. It is also worth remembering that a death notice ought to comply with the classic requirement *de mortuis nil nisi bene*, and should not contain any negative aspects of the decedent's life, his/her failures, or disappointments. Nevertheless, it should not be boring, but compelling to read, so as to help its readers to find more about the decedent's life. For many deceased, their death notice might be the only text ever written about them in their whole life, which, moreover, will be stored in family archives for future generations. The final advice is aimed at teachers, who should always keep in mind that the topic of death and the practice of reading and writing death notices is a delicate matter: it may unleash in some students emotions that they may find difficult to cope with (for instance, we would strongly discourage teachers from making students write notices of each other—it is safer

to choose a fictitious character or historical figure). Additionally, it might be worth considering to precede those activities with discussion concerning emotions evoked by death and loss, and ways to cope with them, which include writing a death notice.

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Grzegorz Cebat

### **Wie schreibt man eine private Todesanzeige im amerikanischen Stil – einige Hinweise für angehende Autoren**

#### Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag ist ein kurzer und bündiger Ratgeber für diejenigen, die aus verschiedenen Gründen eine solche Todesanzeige schreiben wollen, die den amerikanischen Anforderungen für diese Gattung entsprechen wird. In seinen theoretischen Voraussetzungen beruht er auf die von dem Verfasser im Rahmen seiner Dissertation durchgeführten Untersuchungen zu dieser Gattung in gegenwärtigen amerikanischen Zeitungen. Mit Hilfe des von J. Swales und V. Bhatia entwickelten Forschungsmodells von Bewegungen und Schritten (eng.: Moves and Steps) hat der Verfasser 1076 in der Tageszeitung The New York Times veröffentlichten Todesanzeigen analysiert. Er nennt solche Eigenschaften der Gattung, die sie von ei-

ner Traueranzeige (eng.: obituary) unterscheiden: die Kommunikationszwecke und die sieben Bewegungen umfassende und aus 1–7 Schritten bestehende Struktur. Der Analyse liegen 100 Modelle von Strukturen und Mustern zur Ergänzung bei, die dem Schüler der Mittelstufe im Englischen (Niveau B1 – B2) erlauben, seinen eigenen originellen Text zu schreiben.

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