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Preface

We resolved to start publishing *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* 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. However, there was no academic research-oriented journal devoted to the theory and practice of SLA which would be widely available to Polish academia. Following the publication of the first issue, however, it became clear that its scope would attract submissions from not only Polish scholars but also international academics. Thus far, *TAPSLA* has featured articles by such renowned contributors as David Singleton, Larissa Aronin, Jean-Marc Dewaele—and many other scholars representing innovative movements in SLA research worldwide. The journal has become a venue for the exchange of ideas for academics at home and abroad, focusing on often unresearched issues and fairly new developments in SLA studies. The Editorial Board consists of both Polish 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 the University of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of English webpage at www.ija.us.edu.pl (via a special link) and the journal webpage at http://www.journal.us.edu.pl/index.php/TAPSLA.

The present issue opens with an article by Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel "The Role of Social Support Systems in Adolescent Foreign Language Learning," the main focus of which is on the role family, teachers, and peers play in the academic success of adolescent FL learners. Research on social support, though not very extensive, unanimously demonstrates that social support influences learners' resilience to the stress generated by FL learning situations. It contributes to the adolescent's development of self-esteem, autonomy, and building social competence, among many other effects. The article overviews theoretical assumptions and selected studies on social support. Also, Anna Bąk-Średnicka,

in her text "Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes Related to Family Involvement in Light of Their School Placement Experience," focuses on social support issues in relation to partnership between teachers and parents. The author reports on an empirical study conducted among pre-service EFL teachers on the effects of their collaboration with their learners' parents and its visible effectiveness and impact on their learners' success. The author stresses that despite the ministerial guidance for teacher training programmes, hardly any time is devoted to developing trainees' awareness of this issue, thus more emphasis should be put on it in teacher training curricula. The main concern of the article by Małgorzata Szupica-Pyrzanowska and Katarzyna Malesa, entitled "Are They Part of the Equation? – Foreign Language Teachers vs. Language Attrition. A Diagnostic Study," touches upon the problem of language competence deterioration in the case of foreign language teachers. The pilot study carried out in a group of MA students working as primary school EFL teachers revealed the plethora of factors contributing to the stagnation and even regression in their language competences. The authors, aware of the pilot nature of their study, suggest ways of researching the issue more thoroughly. The next article by Ewa Cieślicka and Arkadiusz Rojczyk, "Self-reported vs. Self-rated Pronunciation in a Non-native Language," also focuses on non-native FL competence and, more precisely, on a non-native accent. In their empirical study, the authors observed that there were no visible differences between the way advanced students of English assessed their accent in English in general and, later on, how they rated it on the basis of their own recorded performance. The authors conclude that one's self-image as expressed by the subjects of the study is a fairly stable characteristic. Konrad Szcześniak, in his article "Benefits of L1–L3 Similarities. The Case of the Dative Case," discusses the influence of structural similarities between the Polish (L1) of a speaker and Portuguese (his/her L3). The author observes that the students are aware of similarities between L1 Polish and L3 Portuguese dative constructions and, indeed, positive transfer does occur in their performance. At the same time, it is not as frequent and widespread as might have been expected due to existing similarities in the dative case constructions of these two languages. The author discusses the reasons of this phenomenon.

The present issue of the journal inaugurates a new Reviews section with two recommendations. The first book review included is by Larissa Aronin. She fully endorses the value of Kurt Braunmüller and Christoph Gabriel's (2012) edited volume *Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies* published by John Benjamins, which is an interesting collection of twenty-five articles on multilingualism as described from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and recommends it as a valuable source for researchers in the field of multilingualism. The other book review included in this issue is by Danuta Gabryś-Barker. It presents a very recent volume by Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Mirosław Pawlak (2017), entitled *Willingness to Communicate*

in Instructed Second Language Acquisition. Combining a Macro- and Micro-Perspective and published by Multilingual Matters. This monographic volume focuses on individual learner differences, contextual factors, and their impact on FL learners' willingness to communicate. It is an important publication for both SLA researchers and FL classroom practitioners.

We hope that this issue of the journal 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, published by the prestigious Polish academic publisher, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego (University of Silesia Press).

Danuta Gabryś-Barker
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Articles

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The Role of Social Support Systems in Adolescent Foreign Language Learning

Abstract

In adolescents the main groups of social support are their family, peers, and teachers with whom they interact most frequently. They play a buffering role between stress and psychological well-being by helping to cope with adverse challenges, and by providing social integration. Consequently, it is believed that in the situation of stress caused by the necessity to learn a foreign language (FL) as a compulsory subject, social support can be viewed as an important factor that may positively influence learners' academic achievement, exposing the role of the perceived availability of significant others' help in achieving FL success. To date, in spite of the call for research on the general functioning of the language learner as a member of the society, the study on the role of social support in the process of foreign language learning is still scarce. The existing research has though proved that perceived social support significantly predicts resilience in foreign language learning. The feelings of closeness and support the learners receive from the support network protect them from stressors, and they validate the feelings of self-esteem, competence, and personal control in the face of stressful situations. The three main support groups (parents, teachers, and peers) help learners develop their social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of purpose.

Keywords: social support, parental support, teacher support, peer support, foreign language

Introduction

Humans are social by nature. Their sociability complex enables them to create social structures and systems whose purpose is to express values, rituals, and ideas (Levy Martin, 2009). These social networks are made up of many cooperating and competing groups whose role is to help individuals establish and sustain their bonds with others. Although personal resources are the first

line of defense in response to stress, it appears that turning to others for sup-
port, especially when one's resources are depleted, protects the individual from
social isolation (Reblin & Uchino, 2008). In adolescents the main groups of
social support are their family, peers, and teachers with whom they interact
most frequently (Camara, Bacigalupe, and Padilla, 2017). They play a buffer-
ing role between stress and psychological well-being by helping to cope with
adverse challenges, and by providing social integration (Torres and Solberg,
2001). They also provide opportunities of expression of and support for ap-
propriate social identities. Consequently, it is believed that in the situation of
stress caused by the necessity to learn a foreign language (FL) as a compulsory
subject (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008), social support appears to be an important
factor that may influence learners' FL academic achievement. To date, in spite
of the call for research on the language learner as a member of the society
(Ushioda, 2009), the study on the role of social support in the process of foreign
language learning is still scarce.

The aim of this paper is to present an overview of the general research on
social support carried out in the field in general human functioning, in educa-
tion, and also in the field of foreign language learning. First, the basic defini-
tions, typologies, and role of social support is presented. In the next step the
support received from the main support groups in adolescence (parents, teach-
ers, and peers) is outlined. Then the main findings from empirical research on
social support in the sphere of foreign language learning follow. The concluding
section is devoted to the presentation of possible research directions on social
support in the foreign language learning field.

Social Support: Definitions and Role

There are varying approaches to the concept of *social support*. It can be
broadly defined as the "process of interaction in relationships which improves
coping, esteem, belonging, and competence through actual or perceived ex-
changes of physical or psychosocial resources" (Gottlieb, 2000, p. 29). This
comprehensive definition stresses the importance of communication stemming
from interactions, as well as supportive outcomes it creates; that is an improve-
ment of one's functioning in key areas, induced by exchanges of resources of
different kinds. Other definitions of the term underlie the significance of one's
ability to take advantage of "social assets, social resources, or social networks
that people can use when they are in need of aid, advice, help, assistance, ap-
proval, comfort, protection, or backing" (Vedder, Boekaerts, & Seegers, 2005,
p. 269). Overall, it can be stipulated that social support is the perceived notion

that one is cared for, valued, understood, able to gain the assistance, and evaluation of significant others, and will be aided whenever in need.

There are several overlapping typologies of social support, the basic one connected with the perception and reception of support. *Perceived* social support can be understood as "an individual's subjective appraisal that people in their social network care for them and are willing to provide assistance when needed" (Ciarrochi, Morin, Sahdra, Litalien, & Parker, 2017, p. 1155). This highly subjective judgment can be opposed to *actual* or *received* social support. In this case the support actually performed in terms of communication, physical objects or favors is taken into consideration. Its beneficial effects are crucial when the individual's attempts to cope with stresses fail. However, perceptions of social support appear to be more influential in comparison to actual support because they reduce one's feelings of helplessness, leading to perceiving stressful situations as less stressful (Chu, Saucier, & Hafner, 2010). On these grounds, it can be proposed that social support is well defined as a measure of "social embeddedness (e.g., indicators assessing the frequency of contact with others), received support (e.g., measures of the amount of tangible help actually provided by social network members), and perceived support (subjective evaluations of supportive exchanges)" (Dalal & Ray, 2005, p. 227). In a similar vein, social support consists in "an individual's perceptions of general support or specific supportive behaviors (available or enacted upon) from people in their social network, which enhances their functioning and/or may buffer them from adverse outcomes" (Malecki & Demary, 2002, p. 2). From this point of view, social support is presented as a factor indispensable for one's successful functioning in the society.

The construct of social support can also be conceptualized on the basis of five different dimensions of support, as proposed by Tardy (1985). *Direction* defines whether social support is being given or received, as well as who gives and who receives. The dimension of *disposition* refers to the availability of social support (available or enacted). When accessible, it provides a sense of security in an unfamiliar situation, especially when one perceives being supported. The feature of *description/evaluation* is connected with an individual describing or assessing their social support experience. *Network* refers to the sources of an individual's support network, or people responsible for providing support. Finally, the dimension of *content* is connected with the emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal aspects of support. The first type (emotional) comprises perceptions of love, trust, empathy, and belonging (Demaray, Malecki, Jenkins, & Cunningham, 2012). Instrumental support includes the provision of tangible resources, such as money, skills, or time that help someone in need. The information category refers to providing guidance or advice that aids in solving a problem. The last type of support (*appraisal*) deals with offering evaluative feedback that can be either the critical assessment of one's performance and/

or instructions concerning its improvement. In this way information relevant to self-evaluation can be obtained (Cutrona & Russell, 1990).

The individual's need for attachment, care, and attention can be fulfilled by an optimal support system, which can enhance one's sense of trust and life direction (Kleinke, 1998). On the one hand, it reduces the effect of negative events happening, while on the other, with its buffering effect it changes the interpretation of events, promoting one's health and well-being (Cranford, 2004). Accordingly, two main models of the action of social support have been hypothesised: the main effect model and the stress-buffering effect model. *The main/direct effect model* proposes that social support has a positive influence on the individual's well-being, and function at all the time, irrespective of the individual's exposure to a stress (House, Landis, and Umberson, 1988). In view of its strong version, an increase in social support is related to a rise in well-being, independently from the current level of support (Cohen and Wills, 1985). Alternatively, *the stress-buffering model* posits that social support plays a role only when the individual is exposed to a stressful situation (Melrose, Brown, & Wood, 2015), while in the absence of stress, the effects of great or small social support are similar (Hashimoto, Kurita, Haratani, Fujii, & Ishibashi, 1999). Both models are supported empirically with conflicting evidence, mostly proving that direct effects of social support occur consistently (Aneshensel & Stone, 1982), and the buffering effect appears inconsistent or weak (Alloway & Bebbington, 1987).

In general, social support plays a beneficial role in the individual's life. Understandably, it helps to cope with adverse challenges, prevent stress, expand problem solving abilities, develop beneficial actions, and augment one's well-being (Tang, 2009). It also develops resilience – the ability to adapt successfully to difficult and hostile situations (Ozbay et al., 2007). It satisfies one's need for attachment, care and attention (Hale, Hannum, & Espelage, 2005), providing companionship needed for one's well-being. Importantly, it predicts high positive affect, low negative affect, as well as high satisfaction with life (Steptoe, Dockray, and Wardle, 2009). Last but not least, social support increases happiness and makes one's life better in general (Diener & Seligman, 2002).

What is more, social support also plays a role in education – it enhances overall school achievement and academic competence, such as grades and test performance (e.g., Ahmed, Minnaert, Werf, & Kuyper, 2010). Aside from that, there is a positive relationship between social support and school adjustment, the sense of school coherence and the ability to handle daily school hassles (Danielsen, Wiium, Wilhelmsen, & Wold, 2010). However, it is not quite clear how social support operates on school outcomes. It is though argued that this influence can be explained by means of uncertainty reduction (Rosenfeld, Richman, and Bowen, 2000). When circumstances are stressful, such as the ones accompanying the educational process, the individual wants to develop

a sense of perceived control by means of reducing ambiguity and unpredict-ability. Supportive communication from significant others may boost feelings of control, and help the individual recognize realistic alternatives, and develop skills needed for the learning process. More importantly, classroom atmosphere that is nurturing and encouraging at the time when social support and under-standing is of utmost importance plays a significant role (Harter, 2015)

Social Support in Adolescence

The primary sources of social support are usually related to work and non-work related contexts (Adams, King, & King, 1996). Work-related sources of social support refer to supervisors and co-workers, while non-work related sources refer to spouse, family, relatives, and friends. In the adolescent's life the basic groups of social support can be identified in relation to their family, peers, and teachers, with whom they interact most frequently (Essau et al., 2011). In most cases for adolescents' parents are sources of affection, instru-mental assistance, reliable help, and appraisal to enhance feelings of value (emotional and information support), while teachers are perceived as sources of guidance (informational support), with friends being the source of companion-ship (emotional support) (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). It has been established that among adolescents, the extent of a social support network has a tendency to remain constant over time, but its composition may change due to varying needs for healthy functioning and adjustment (Cairns et al., 1995). For this reason, at this specific period a decrease in family support (Nickerson & Nagle, 2005), accompanied by an increase in support from friends is observed (Cheng & Chan, 2004). It can be attributed to the fact that the adolescents' attempts to establish more mature and balanced relationships with their parents often lead to stress and conflict, frequently buffered by more intimate friendships and group acceptance (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2013). However, the research on these types of support is inconsistent, demonstrating that teenagers may turn to friends for assistance only when their parents are out of reach (Cicognani, 2011). It has not yet been established exactly why such a modification occurs; nevertheless, it can be strictly connected with adolescents' changing roles (del Valle, Bravo, & López, 2010). Prompted by biological influences, such as hormonal fluctuations and resulting physical alteration, teens also undergo intense psychological transition. At the same time, environmental influences of academic and social nature lay the groundwork for their attaining future stable adult roles. From this point of view the crucial role of social support in adolescence stems from the significance of the environmental impact, whereby

adolescents' successful development demands "trusting and caring relationships and autonomous self-expression, choice, and decision making" (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000, p. 459). Consequently, as human development is entwined in important social contexts, adolescents' formative changes are influenced by their interactions with significant others in these contexts. In the case of family, parents and siblings are regarded most influential, while the school environment comprises teachers, but also peers who interact within a larger adolescents' network (Chen, 2005). These three support systems simultaneously influence students' academic outcomes and general well-being of teens. Thus, if adolescents are not able to identify opportunities for such relationships, a mismatch between developmental needs and unfavorable context will make them suffer from psychological and academic maladjustment.

Parental support can be understood as "gestures or acts of caring, acceptance, and assistance that are expressed by a parent toward a child" (Shaw, Krause, Chatters, Connell, & Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004, p. 4). The main role of parents is to provide a secure home for their children. As primary caregivers, they are also the main providers of social support for their children's needs. At the same time, they impart cognitive representations and models of social relationships to their children. In this way parent-adolescent relationships are generalized, constituting the basis of adolescents' social competence (Parke, Buriel, & de Haan, 2007). This type of support induces a more outgoing social disposition that will help children seek relationships with friends, and adjust to higher educational institutions (Holahan, Valentiner, & Moos, 1994). It has also been established that good relationships with parents are significant for positive self-esteem, as well as lower levels of emotional problems in adolescence, proving to be a good indicator of positive development (Helsen, Vollebergh, & Meeus, 2000). All in all, research suggests that parents appear to be a crucial source of social support during the transition to adulthood. Their support is also valuable in reference to school-related problems. Stimulating and responsive parenting practices have been found to constitute important influences on a child's academic development (Topor, Keane, Shelton, & Calkins, 2010). There are two mechanisms responsible for this phenomenon: parents deeply engaged with their child increase the offspring's self-perception of cognitive competence, and parents engaged with the teacher and school endorse a stronger and more positive student-teacher relationship. Hence, parents' positive attitudes and interest in school can impart encouragement and help, and render assistance in their child's school work (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009). Obviously, not all parents are able to help their children with a specific content matter or skill, but they can boost their children's feelings of competence and control, together with positive attitudes towards teachers (Grolnick, Friendly, & Bellas, 2009). "[W]hen parents believe in children's competence and have high expectations for them, provide the resources that children need to feel connected to

others, and facilitate a sense of autonomy by supporting children's initiations and problem-solving, children's motivation is most likely to thrive" (p. 295). Parental involvement can induce a stimulating learning environment at home, in effect leading to the development of their children's feelings of competence, direction, interest, and positive attitudes to teachers.

As far as *teacher support* is concerned, its role is also vital due to the fact that adolescents spend much of their time at school in the company of teachers and classmates; hence, it is apparent that both parties significantly influence their development (Bokhorst, Sumter, & Westenberg, 2010). It follows that teachers are important sources of perceived social support within the educational context as significant others identified in this part of the student's social network. Teacher support has been defined as the degree to which students feel supported, esteemed, and appreciated by their teacher (Doll, Brehm, & Zucker, 2004). Students' perceptions regarding whether their teacher cares about them and will help them when necessary underline their successful functioning in the academic domain. In general, teachers provide knowledge, but also a positive classroom climate (Ahnert, Harwardt-Heinecke, Kappler, Eckstein-Madry, & Milatz, 2012). Understandably then, the teachers' role is not only vital in respect to achieving academic goals, but also with regard to the regulation of emotional and social processes (Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014) because students learn better when they perceive their classroom environment positively. Supportive teacher-student relationships help maintain students' academic interests and more positive peer relationships (Wentzel, 1998), leading to higher achievement (Marchand & Skinner, 2007). The link between teacher support and student success has also been recognized in empirical research set in different cultures and school levels (Jia et al., 2009). Whereas the majority of research investigating teacher support has mainly concentrated on academic outcomes, it has also been proved to be a significant contributor to mental health. It has been found to correlate negatively with depression, and positively with self-esteem and social skills (Murberg & Bru, 2009). Positive perceptions of teacher support can endorse psychological wellness, such as higher levels of life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Suldo, Shaunessy, & Hardesty, 2008).

While maturing, young people also focus on their relationships with friends, which means that they tend to look for social support outside their family (Levitt et al., 2005). Aside from being companions in leisure activities, peers are sources of instrumental and emotional support, helping the adolescent cope with everyday stressors, and overseeing adherence to behavioral norms (Wentzel, 2003). *Peer support* then, seen as the individual's general support or specific support behaviors from friends or peers, which enhances their functioning and buffers them from adverse outcomes, is also an important predictor of emotional well-being or emotional distress (Wentzel, Barry, & Cauldwell, 2004). Actually, this type of support happens to be the most sought after source of aid

and backing by individuals in this specific age group. The adolescent's social development can easily be boosted by the mutual sharing of personal, social, or ethical ideas by peers (Turner, 1999). Aside from that, peer support can provide a form of substitute for insufficient parental support (Halpenny, Greene, & Hogan, 2008). In this way friends can compensate for the missing support by providing instrumental aid in the educational context: they can form study groups, share notes and experiences, and give advice about classes to take and strategies to use. These might be types of activities that parents may not provide (Dennis, Phinney, & Chuateco, 2005). Although students may differ in the levels of their personal motivation, perceptions of the learning environment, as well as their own personal characteristics, their in- and out-of-class interaction with friends, and cooperation can induce effective support of learning (Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006). As another factor contributing to students' satisfaction with school, peer support may nurture their needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005). For this reason, students with high levels of peer support experience higher levels of school engagement (Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010). Consequently, this factor may be viewed as both academic and social in nature (Kiefer, Alley, & Ellerbrock, 2015).

Social Support in Foreign Language Learning

The foreign language learning process may be a cause for serious problems of various types with its extraordinary requirements that are not easily met by every student. Aside from a regular study of the subject's content matter, it requires using the language that has not been fully mastered, exposing the learners' insufficient knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or aspects of culture. Consequently, the specific language learning situation is permeated by ambiguity and its inherent characteristics: novelty, complexity, and contradiction (Ehrman, 1999). As a result, the learner is likely to experience a limited sense of control, leading to increasing helplessness over the (perceived) danger (Furnham & Marks, 2013). The consequences of this cognitive and affective entanglement can be quite serious; starting from growing stress levels to avoidance, delay, suppression or denial, manifesting as low attainment. For this reason, social support can be viewed as an important factor that may positively influence learners' academic achievement, exposing the role of the perceived availability of significant others' help in achieving FL success (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008).

However, within the domain of foreign language learning social support has received little attention on the part of researchers, in spite of a growing need to

focus on "the language learner as an active self-reflective agent of an interaction with the social context" (Taylor, 2013, p. 34). Hence, the research on the role of social support in the process of foreign language learning is still scarce. It has though been proved that perceived social support significantly predicts resilience in foreign language learning. More specifically, social support from teachers, family, and friends provides FL learners with effective coping skills manifested as resilience in confrontation with unwelcoming stressful tasks and challenges in the process of language learning (Rahimi, Bigdeli, & Rouhollah, 2014). The feelings of closeness and support the learners receive from their support network protect them from stressors and validate feelings of self-esteem, competence, and personal control in the face of stressful situations. These are aided by the growing perception of one's social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and sense of purpose (Nguyen, Stanley, Stanley, & Wang, 2015). Social support in language learning is also important for developing the student's willingness to communicate in that language (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001), that is currently viewed as a foundation for foreign language success (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). Aside from that, positive effects of social support on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be observed among Iranian (Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014) and Polish FL learners (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2013).

As far as parental support for adolescents learning a foreign language is concerned, its positive relation to educational outcomes has already been established. More specifically, parental advice at home is positively associated with an improved sense of self-efficacy towards English as a foreign language, intrinsic motivation in English and academic engagement (Weihua & Williams, 2010). The beneficial role of parents in the foreign language learning process is also confirmed in Polish students. Parental support, though modestly correlated with final grades, turns out to be the most important source of social support (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2013). That finding can be attributed to the character of Polish culture, where parents still play a very important role in the life of adolescents, thereby eliminating ambiguity. Similarly, in the Iranian sample, parental support stimulates L2 learners to have both integrative and instrumental motivation towards learning a foreign language (Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014). This result is also established in the Indian educational context (Olusiji, 2016), as well as in Albanian, where parental support is an important correlate of final grades (Softa, 2016). However, the role of parents' support in their children's FL learning is found to be more complex, as parents can send mixed messages in terms of the usefulness of the foreign language (Csizér & Lukács, 2010). Hence, there are contradictory findings pertaining to the role of this type of support in this specific area. For example, in Chinese studies parents play the least role in affecting students' FL motivation; mostly, as the author speculates, due to their low social and economic status, alongside with low income

(Wong, 2007). Ostensibly, the role of parents in the foreign language learning process of their teenaged offspring is quite pronounced, affecting their child's functioning in various contexts—social, educational, and private.

It seems clear that teachers are the most valid source of direct support within the educational context, their role in foreign language learning appears of greatest importance due to the specificity of the process itself and the perils it generates. It is expected that in the FL classroom teachers are able to help students achieve success through their perceived strong support. Better support, meanwhile, is expected to lead to more safety in the FL classroom and lower levels of negative emotions, such as anxiety (Abu-Rabia, 2004). Also, in studies on Taiwanese English-language learners, teacher academic support turns out to be the most pervasive variable in relation to language-learning anxiety (Huang, Eslami, & Hu, 2010). The teacher who shows understanding, empathy, and consistency in behavior helps pupils start forming an identity that will assist them in coping with stress and anxiety (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008). Hence, students' positive relationships with teachers correlate with their language acquisition (Wong, 2007). Supported learners also experience lower language anxiety levels, evaluate their language abilities highly, and receive better final grades (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011). Moreover, it has also been established that foreign language learners' feelings of alienation from school and forms of cooperative learning are negatively correlated with teacher support, significantly influencing academic achievement (Ghaith, 2002). Thus, it can be deduced that the FL teacher's support is generally limited to the educational context.

Social support received from friends allows for the extension of the student's social network by including new friends from another cultural context (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001). It offers students the opportunity to use the L2 for authentic communication, especially outside the classroom. Moreover, learning from each other's experiences appears a vital effect of peer support (Kobayashi, 2003). Another useful peer support behavior is the sharing of workload between group members (Hue Nguyen, 2013). By that token, learners are able to scaffold their language development in a more understandable way. Thanks to peer support advice and feedback can be provided (Hyland, 2016), facilitating the language learning experience and offering opportunities for academic collaboration. It is enforced by the fact that learners can share very similar experiences and more easily offer peer support when challenges arise (Mompoint-Gaillard, 2011). Then student-student interactions enable the learners jointly to construct a scaffold that allows them to successfully complete the activity and co-construct their own system of making meaning through words in a language they have not yet mastered (Li, 2011). Aside from that, peer support has been found to be positively correlated with desire to learn English in the Polish educational context where English is perceived as a dominant language (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2016). However, research results on the role of peer support

in foreign language learning are not quite conclusive. From being the most influential of the three main support groups in adolescence (Wong, 2007), it may be believed to have no significant direct or indirect relationship to student FL achievement (Chen, 2008). It also turns influential only when peers are highly motivated (Chang, 2010). All in all, peer support, though primarily rooted in the educational context, can also permeate the wider, social context of the FL learner, especially when peers come from another background.

Conclusion

Due to the growing need for understanding how individuals operate in the society, the issue of social support still remains a developing research area. However, in the field of foreign language learning it yet demands more fine-tuned and thorough studies, investigating the value of specific support types, perceived and enacted, of various character: emotional, esteem, network, informational or tangible. Though the role of parental support appears decisive in shaping the learners' social dispositions responsible for their future attitudes to support, little is known about the parents' background (education, socio-economic status, family structure, to mention a few) that might shape their parental behaviors. Moreover, the factor that may play a role in their support is the attitude to the language their children learn or their proficiency with it. As far as teachers are concerned, the value of their informational and emotional support is stressed; however, it seems worthwhile to investigate the impact of teacher support on the learner's out-of-school behaviors, such as self-esteem and social, mostly soft skills. Also, the role of peer support requires greater clarification. Again, little is known about the specificity of the support coming from classmates, and from neighborhood friends. It can be expected that these influences may differ, bringing about pronounced discrepancies that may result in variable language attainment.

More importantly, to date, isolated support groups have been investigated, so it is still unclear how their between-group cooperation may influence the foreign language learner's attitudes and behavior. Few attempts to analyze the mutual influence of support groups in the general context (e.g., Li, Albert, and Dwelle, 2014) have given a promising insight into a deeper understanding of social support. However, the foreign language learning behaviors and perceptions viewed from a larger, social perspective still demand a more in-depth analysis.

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Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel

Die Rolle der Systeme gesellschaftlicher Unterstützung im Prozess der Aneignung von Fremdsprachen bei Jugendlichen

Z u s a m m e n f a s s u n g

In der Pubertät bilden die Familie, die Lehrer und die Kollegen die wichtigsten Unterstützungsgruppen mit denen die Jugendlichen oft in Kontakt kommen. Diese Gruppen spielen die Rolle eines Buffers zwischen dem Stress und dem psychologischen Wohlbefinden, indem sie bei dem Zurechtkommen mit den Widrigkeiten des Schicksals helfen und die Integration in die Gesellschaft gewährleisten. Man kann also annehmen, dass in der mit dem obligatorischen Fremdsprachenunterricht verbundenen Stresssituation die gesellschaftliche Unterstützung seitens der als wichtige Personen im Leben des Schülers wahrgenommenen

Menschen, einen positiven Einfluss auf den Lernerfolg ausüben kann. Obwohl es erforderlich ist, den eine Fremdsprache lernenden Schüler als ein gesellschaftliches Wesen zu erforschen, wurden solche Forschungen bis jetzt nur sehr selten durchgeführt. Bisherige Untersuchungen beweisen jedoch, dass die vom Schüler wahrgenommene Unterstützung eine wesentliche Vorhersage der Widerstandsfähigkeit des Schülers im Prozess der Fremdspracherlernung ist. Das Bewusstsein, dass er gefördert wird, schützt den Schüler vor Stress, erhöht sein Selbstwertgefühl und hilft, in der Stresssituation nicht die Kontrolle zu verlieren. Die drei wichtigsten Unterstützungsgruppen helfen den Schülern, ihre gesellschaftlichen Kompetenzen, ihre Fähigkeiten Probleme zu lösen, ihre Autonomie und Zielbewusstsein zu entfalten.

Schlüsselwörter: gesellschaftliche Unterstützung, Elternunterstützung, Lehrerunterstützung, Kollegenunterstützung

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Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes Related to Family Involvement in Light of Their School Placement Experience

Abstract

This paper addresses the issue of building a broader level of partnership between teachers and parents as early as in pre-service teacher education. The Ministry of Higher Education in Poland has formally acknowledged that prospective teachers should have knowledge about parents as sites of pedagogical activities, as well as acquire the skills to cooperate with them (Journal of Laws, 2012). In practice, however, preservice teachers' plans to keep parents of their future pupils at a distance have been well documented. This may be partly due to the fact that *school placements specific requirements* in Module 2 referring to 30 hours of peda-gogical practice and Module 3 referring to 120 hours of didactic practice do not assume that trainee teachers have any (in)direct contacts with parents during their practicum (Journal of Laws, 2012). Consequently, the cases of contacts with parents during school placements are accidental, isolated, and sporadic. Likewise, we doubt that the approach of dictating school mentors as to the types of family-school contacts trainee teachers are likely to experience can be effective, despite the fact that some school mentors do expect that they are told what to do. The paper describes a qualitative study which reveals that there is a statistically sig-nificant amount of evidence of an association between ex-trainee teachers' personal contacts with parents and their high opinion about collaboration with parents as regards supporting children in: doing homework, recognizing and developing children's talents, as well as tack-ling at home those learning problems which occur during lessons. In the paper we suggest that in order to improve the situation in the area of contacts with parents, teacher educators ought to develop training programs that emphasize teacher trainees' varied and active role in parent interactions.

Keywords: foreign language teacher trainees, field experiences, parental involvement

Introduction

This article is about partnership. In the words of Epstein,

[i]n partnership, educators, families, and community members work together
to share information, guide students, solve problems, and celebrate success.
Partnerships recognize the shared responsibilities of home, school, and
community for children's learning and development. Students are central to
successful partnerships. They are active learners in all three contexts—at
home, at school, and in the community. They link members of these groups
to each other. Students are not bystanders but contributors to and actors in
the communications, activities, investments, decisions, and other connec-
tions that schools, families, and communities conduct to promote children's
learning. (2011, p. 4)

The paper draws attention to the unquestionable fact that teaching practice
should give trainee teachers many opportunities for direct contacts with parents.
In this article we make an assumption that the importance of parental involve-
ment has been well recognized by schools, however, at the level of pre-service
teacher education it still needs some improvement. The first part presents
a literature review which uncovers that pre-service teachers create various
cultural stereotypes and misconceptions about the types of parental involve-
ment. The roles of parents are usually limited to being "distant assistants" and
"chaperones" as well as the types of relationships are mainly characterized by
"conflict and criticism." Graue and Brown (2003, p. 721) explain that this is
due to "cultural scripts" which are the notions, ideas and memories that pre-
service teachers stick to and which lead to given patterns of behavior. If not
challenged, lowered and distorted expectations concerning parents can act as
a self-fulfilling prophecy (Nowosad, 2014, pp. 53–56). That is why the paper
emphasizes the unquestionable role of teaching practice in giving trainees op-
portunities for initiating contacts with parents on a more direct level, therefore,
challenging their stereotypes and misconceptions. We are of the opinion that
school placements, when compared with learning through role-playing activi-
ties and observations, can provide pre-service teachers with many opportunities
to analyze real-life problems by means of "case-based teaching and learning."
These types of firsthand experiences can foster the development of critical re-
flection skills (Gabryś-Barker, 2012). Consequently, the second part of the paper
presents a study conducted on a sample of 28 English ex-trainee teachers whose
aim was to find out whether there are any statistically significant associations
between their opinions about the eight types of family involvement (Epstein,
2011, p. 46; Śliwerski, 2001, p. 174) and their direct and indirect contacts with

parents during their teaching practice. The study reveals that there are no sta-tistically significant associations when it comes to their *indirect* contacts with parents and their opinions in question. There are, however, statistically signifi-cant associations as regards their *direct* contacts with parents and their opinions about the most important type of parental involvement. This may point to the conclusion that since pre-service teachers' direct contacts with parents during teaching practice are beneficial in shaping their opinions about parents, teacher training programs and programs of training should take the fact into account. In this respect, in the first part of the paper we also refer to analyses of such documents in departments of pre-primary and primary teacher education at selected Polish universities. The findings reveal that higher education schools neglect the area of preservice teacher-parent cooperation.

Theoretical Background

The Polish education reform of 1999 increased school autonomy and laid down a set of guidelines for family-school collaboration. Parents are entitled to be members of school councils and have set up parents' councils; moreover, they have full access to such school documents as school statutes specifying the school-family collaboration, school educational programs, and school-based assessment (internal assessment). In particular, school statutes specify "organi-sation and forms of collaboration between parents (legal caretakers) and schools as regards teaching, education and prevention" (Journal of Laws, 2001).

Banasiak (2013) conducted a study in May 2007 in light of the Polish education reform of 1999. The central research purpose was concerned with primary school principals', teachers' and parents' knowledge of the principles of the reform in the area of family-school collaboration, their opinions of the effectiveness of the implementation of the reform, as well as whether the reform is reflected in school documents. In the study, the data were gathered from surveys, school statutes, and Journal of Laws 1999, and further analyzed with reference to the size and system of the schools under investigation. The analysis of the school statutes revealed that they define the role of parents' councils, but only one-third has a subsection devoted to family-school collaboration (Banasiak, 2013, p. 76). The following types of relationships were mentioned: consultations with teachers and specialists, parent-teacher conferences, home visits by teachers, letters, phone calls, parents volunteering to support the school and pupils' activities and participating in workshops (Banasiak, 2013, p. 75). The most popular types of contacts are parent-teacher conferences, devoted to those pupils who experience various problems at school, and consultations,

whereas the least popular types of contacts are home visits by teachers, parents observing lessons and parent-teacher conferences devoted to post-primary education (Banasiak, 2013, pp. 90, 106, 112). Interestingly, most teachers from bigger educational centers assume responsibility for building a deeper level of partnership with parents, whereas teachers from smaller centers shift the responsibility onto parents (Banasiak, 2013, p. 101). While school principals and teachers are of the opinion that the reform increased parental rights, parents declare that they have a limited role in decision making at school and, surprisingly, that they find the limited role satisfactory; the findings raise a question whether parents avoid greater involvement in primary education on purpose or whether it is due to their unawareness of their rights (Banasiak, 2013, pp. 77, 108, 112–113, 143). Banasiak concluded that without introducing changes in the first cycle of education when prospective teachers can challenge cultural stereotypes, learn the psychology of communication and the practical skills on how to establish and develop school-family partnerships, the benefits of the reform may be unsatisfactory. Likewise, the growing body of research delineating the benefits of family involvement in early childhood education for children, parents, teachers, and schools has contributed to the growing importance of teaching practice. There is an ongoing debate on effective systemic and conceptual solutions to make the teaching practice function as "a real source of teachers' competences, i.e. the knowledge about learning determinants and mechanisms, practical and cognitive skills used in the process of professional practice, abilities of autonomic and responsible performance of undertaken tasks and reflective self-evaluation" (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2012, p. 22). Current approaches to preservice teacher education assume concepts of reflection-in-action and learning through practice, forwarded by Schön (1983, 1987) and Fish (1989) and based on the Deweyian theory of learning by doing (Dewey, 1910). They refer to developing personal and professional judgment through solving practical problems by the application of critical reflection rather than routine. As stated by Fish, while this view is demanding and complex in comparison to traditional views, "it offers student and mentor a learning adventure in which each can contribute to the growth of the other in an infinite variety of ways" (1995, p. xi). A future teacher's professional development goes beyond classroom practice and also involves a social context which assists trainees in "the process of developing a philosophy of teaching" (Bartlett, 1990, qtd. in Crookes, 2003, pp. 181, 183).

Overall, the area of teacher-parent collaboration is one of several areas of concern whose limitless potential seems not to have been exploited to the full. The following studies focus on teacher training programs and programs of training in departments of pre-primary and primary teacher education at selected Polish universities.

Studies on Teacher-Parent Collaboration in Selected Polish Universities

The Ministry of Higher Education in Poland general and specific require-ments as regards teacher training are laid down in the Journal of Laws 2012. During the first cycle of education, the basic teacher training program prepares prospective teachers for teaching one subject at the pre-primary and primary level. It covers three modules: subject-related training (Module 1), training in pedagogy and psychology (Module 2), and didactic training (Module 3). Module 2 requires 30 hours of pedagogical practice and Module 3 requires 120 hours of didactic practice. Polish universities are given considerable autonomy as regards the programs of pedagogical and didactic trainings.

Pre-primary and primary teacher education: teacher training programs and programs of pedagogical training. Nowosad and Pietrań (2015) analyzed teacher training programs and programs of pedagogical training in state, higher education schools in 2010–2011 and 2012–2013 academic years. The aim of the analysis was to find out whether the Polish education system reform introduced in 1999 resulted in covering in the programs the topic of family-school coopera-tion. The analysis revealed that during the 2010–2011 academic year only six universities (University of Warsaw, University of Łódź, University of Szczecin, University of Silesia in Katowice, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, and Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz) offered a course in parent in-volvement to pre-service teachers as obligatory in departments of pre-primary and primary education. The analysis of teacher training programs of the selected universities in the academic year 2012–2013 revealed that only 20% of the high-er education institutions under investigation (University of Warsaw, University of Łódź, University of Szczecin, and The Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) offered an obligatory course on parent involvement (Nowosad & Pietrań, 2015, p. 139). Nowosad and Pietrań (2015, p. 140) concluded that in the majority of the state higher education schools the course on parent involvement is unac-counted for, which is a disturbing fact. In the case of the programs of peda-gogical trainings in academic year 2010–2011, only six universities (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, University of Silesia in Katowice, and Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce) required trainee teachers to have contact with parents during their pedagogical practice. In the academic year 2012–2013 students of only four universities (Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, and Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) were obliged to have con-tacts with parents during their pedagogical practice (Nowosad & Pietrań, 2015, p. 142). Nowosad and Pietrań noted that the findings do not overlap with the

obligatory course on parent involvement offered by the higher schools, because only Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń offered a course in question and actually obliged future teachers to have contacts with parents by means of participating in parent-teacher conferences, Teacher Council meetings and School Council meetings as passive observers (Nowosad & Pietrań, 2015, p. 141).

Błaszczyk (2014) analyzed programs of pedagogical training in departments of eight Polish universities educating foreign language teachers. The aim of the analysis was to find out whether the documents cover such areas of pedagogical practice as (1) counseling and educational, (2) organizational, (3) diagnostic, and (4) professional. The analysis of pedagogical practicum regulations reveals that in five universities (Faculty of English at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, German Studies Institute at University of Gdańsk and German Studies Institute at University of Opole, Centrum Edukacji Nauczycielskiej at University of Wrocław, and The Pedagogical University of Kraków) practicum rules and procedures strictly follow the ministerial requirements and consequently cover all the abovementioned areas, whereas in three universities (Faculty of Modern Languages at University of Warsaw, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin) pedagogical training also cover the didactic area (i.e., Module 3 referring to 120 hours of didactic training). Programs of pedagogical training of only four universities (Centrum Edukacji Nauczycielskiej at University of Wrocław, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, The Pedagogical University of Kraków, and Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) devoted special attention to building family-school partnership during pedagogical practice. It seems, as Błaszczyk concluded, that the issue of family-school collaboration, which belongs to the counseling and educational area of ministerial requirements, needs more attention on the part of the authors of programs of pedagogical training.

Pre-primary and primary foreign language teacher education: didactic training. Mihułka (2016) presented the results of a small scale cross-sectional study carried out among German student-teachers at the Institute of German Philology, University of Rzeszów. The overall aim was to evaluate their teaching practice in the academic year 2015–2016 so that its new editions could be improved. The studied population comprised 38 student-teachers aged 22–25. Twenty-one of them were students of the first cycle of education and 17 were students of the second cycle of education. Data for the study were collected by means of a questionnaire which consisted of 21 mostly open-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into three areas: the organization, planning, and running of German lessons as well as the role of a German teacher in the glotto-didactic process (Mihułka, 2016, p. 54). When asked about the activities that they were involved in during their practicum, student-teachers listed: completing (e-)register books (60.5%), getting familiar with school statutes

(21%), writing reports in pupils' daily records (18.4%), correcting pupils' tests and written works (13.1%), checking pupils' knowledge and skills (7.9%), doing break duty on school corridors (5.2%), and participating in parent-teachers conferences (5.2%) (Mihułka, 2016, p. 54). Thus, only two German student-teachers reported participation in parent-teacher conferences. However, it is not specified whether those were student of the first- or second-cycle education. The study revealed that teaching practice allowed trainee teachers to reflect on their level of linguistic skills since more than half of first cycle trainees (57.1%) admitted that they should improve their pronunciation competence and lexical competence (Mihułka, 2016, p. 55).

Similarly, Karolczuk (2013b, p. 140) evaluated teaching practice of Russian student-teachers at the Institute of Russian Philology at the University in Białystok in the academic year 2009–2010. It was discovered that out of 89 trainees who undertook teaching practice in lower secondary schools only 14 (16%) observed parent-teacher conferences. In the case of a study evaluating teaching practice in primary schools (Karolczuk, 2013c, p. 54), with a sample of 99 trainees only 12 (12%) participated in parent-teacher conferences. Karolczuk (2013a, p. 101) is of the opinion that the professional success of teachers of Russian, which is a second foreign language, is conditioned by their skills to maintain good contacts with pupils and parents. As a consequence, Karolczuk (2013a, p. 101) believes that all trainees should have a chance to participate in parent-teacher conferences in order to critically analyze school mentors' interpersonal skills as well as conduct "case studies" based on interviews with teachers, pupils, and parents.

Derenowski (2015) analyzed the influence of teaching practice on English student-teachers' awareness concerning their future teaching career. The subjects were 46 third-year English Philology students in the Faculty of Philology at State University of Applied Sciences in Konin. Data for the study were collected by means of a questionnaire which consisted of three open-closed questions in Polish plus comments, as well as interviews with trainees divided into four groups when the participants were encouraged to express their opinions (Derenowski, 2015, pp. 33, 34). Question one referred to the role of the practicum in trainees' perception of the teaching profession; in question two they were asked to decide whether they wanted to become teachers, and in question three they were asked to decide about the importance of such aspects of teaching as: teacher-students contact, discipline, lesson plan, L1, didactic aids, various forms of teaching, testing, feedback, correction as well as school documents (Derenowski, 2015, p. 33). More than two-thirds of trainees (78%) claimed that teaching practice allowed them to realize that they wanted to be teachers (Derenowski, 2015, p. 34). Teaching practice resulted mainly in trainees' new perception of teacher-pupils contacts (Derenowski, 2015, p. 34). Most trainees believed that the teacher training program should not be changed (Derenowski,

2015, p. 35). However, the overall author's opinion is that trainees expect that teaching practice should be more pragmatic and based on exchanging experience and viewpoints with other trainees and mentors (Derenowski, 2015, p. 38).

The abovementioned findings can be brought into line with international research on the impact of school placements on future teachers' opinions about parent involvement, briefly presented below.

Family Involvement Versus School Placements in Research Literature

Parent involvement at home or at school can be (un)conscious, active or teacher-induced, spontaneous or planned, (in)direct as well as (in)formal. Moreover, it can be enhanced by involving members of the (extended) family to collaborate with (class) teachers as counselors and experts as well as by involving them in school policy planning and decision making processes. In short, family involvement can be defined in terms of Epstein's Framework of six categories: Type 1—Parenting, Type 2—Communicating, Type 3—Volunteering, Type 4—Learning at Home, Type 5—Decision Making, and Type 6—Collaborating with the Community (Epstein, 2011, p. 46).

McBride (1991) adapted Epstein's model of family involvement to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes toward parental involvement as well as their underlying causes. The adapted version of the instrument developed by Epstein (Epstein & Dauber, 1988) was used to finally construct six scales (types 5 and 6 of Epstein's Framework were merged into one category), where the sixth scale referred to the subjects' general attitudes toward family involvement (McBride, 1991, p. 8). The sample, 271 subjects, studied early childhood teacher education at a university in the United States. The sample combined a group of 82 students who were doing their teaching practice placements while participating in the study (McBride, 1991, p. 7). McBride (1991, p. 9) concluded that all the subjects, regardless of their demographic and background characteristics, had a high opinion of all types of parental involvement; they were of the highest opinion about Type 2—Communicating and they had the lowest opinion about Type—3 Volunteering. Further study on correlations between subjects' attitudes regarding the six scales of parental involvement and their classroom experience revealed that there were considerable differences in Type 1—Parenting, Type 2—Communicating, Type 3—Volunteering, and Type 4—Learning at home. In particular, as McBride (1991, p. 11) concluded, participants who had already enrolled in teaching practice placements had a greater "awareness of the importance of parental involvement" than those who lacked any classroom

experience. Besides, the subjects expressed stereotypical views on the role of parents envisioned as mothers of young children "volunteering to help out on field trips or in the classrooms" (McBride, 1991, p. 15). To sum up, the subjects were favorable to family involvement despite their minimal preparation in the area of parent involvement strategies.

Uluag (2006) in her PhD dissertation examined primary pre-service teachers' opinions and experiences regarding parental involvement. Uluag (2006, p. 7) reasons that since research shows that "preservice teachers who feel more confident with parents are more likely to involve parents, […] it would seem logical that teacher education programs would have a responsibility to help future teachers gain confidence in the area of parental involvement." The data for the study were collected by means of interviews with 223 preservice teachers, six in-service teachers and five university supervisors, a survey questionnaire with pre-service teachers as well as an analysis of the teacher training program with respect to courses on parent involvement (Uluag, 2016, p. 30). Additionally, 12 individual interviews were conducted with fourth-year student teachers who had completed their field experiences. The parent involvement survey questionnaire was adapted from McBride (1991) and it was based on Epstein's six Types of parental involvement. The study showed that the respondents had a high opinion about all types of involvement but they reported the highest opinion on Type 2—Communication and the lowest opinion on Type 5—Decision making (Uluag, 2006, p. 46). Similarly to McBride's study (1991), fourth-year student teachers who completed their teaching practice scored higher when compared to the groups beginning the teacher training programme (Uluag, 2006, p. 53). In particular, they scored higher than the other groups with reference to Type 5—Decision making (Uluag, 2006, p. 61).

Similarly, Baum and McMurray-Schwarz (2004) analyzed pre-service teachers' beliefs about family involvement. They concluded that pre-service teachers have two specific concerns regarding the quality of the teacher-family relationship. More precisely, they asserted that the relationship was mainly "characterized by conflict and criticism" and that they would have to cater to children's basic needs which otherwise should have been met at home (2004, pp. 58, 59). Similarly to McBride (1991), Baum and McMurray-Schwarz revealed preservice teachers' misconceptions about the role of parents in education. Mainly, they "recognize the importance of parent involvement in the classroom, but from the perspective that the parents' presence can aid the teacher in managing his or her classroom responsibilities" (2004, p. 60). When it comes to teacher education, the authors recommend "incorporating family involvement across the early childhood teacher education curriculum," that is, "to include a class devoted to parent involvement and education," or to offer "a course devoted entirely to the topic of communication," or to allow students "to role-play a variety of possible situations in which they need to use appropriate communication and/or conflict

resolution strategies" within "the existing frameworks of teacher preparation programmes" (2004, pp. 57–60). Moreover, Baum and McMurray-Schwarz (2004, pp. 60, 61) emphasize the role of introducing students to research on "the benefits of parent involvement," they also express the need to rethink the role of field placements in order "to fully address the issue of parent involvement." All in all, field placements should give students ample opportunities "to take a more active role in parent interactions," "to be involved with parents on a more direct level," or even "to initiate contact with parents, write newsletters or other forms of correspondence, plan and implement a family activity, develop a family handbook, and/or participate in parent-teacher conferences" (2004, p. 61). The authors emphasize the role of collaboration between student, cooperating teacher, and teacher educator in the process.

Tomczyk (2009) in her PhD dissertation focused on prospective teachers' conceptualizations of hands-on parent-teacher conference experiences gathered during their internship. The data were gathered by means of online surveys and in-depth interviews conducted among 22 fifth-year prospective teachers from a Midwestern university in the United States and interpreted through the constructs of Figured Worlds by Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) as well as of impression management by Goffman (1959). The in-depth interviews were carried out with eight out of 22 interns. Despite the fact that, as pointed out by Tomczyk (2009, p. 38), the participants were not "representative of all elementary teaching candidates," the findings allowed for singling out three types of figured worlds of parent-teacher conferences, namely: collaboration centered, instruction centered, and impression centered. Thus, the interns assumed that their role was either to collaborate with parents, instruct, or impress them. Tomczyk (2009, p. 161) concluded that the socially and culturally driven patterns of behavior can be modified and improved on condition that prospective teachers have a full awareness and a complete understanding of their own experiences of parent-teacher conferences.

In line with this, Foote et al. (2013, pp. 126, 127) noted that teacher educators have to have knowledge about the various orientations that prospective teachers hold about a child's family, culture, and community in order to help them recognize and reorient their perspectives into something more "positive and productive." In the case of Foote et al.'s study, the data were gathered by means of in-depth interviews with 20 prospective teachers who took a mathematics methods course in three universities in the United States. The researchers managed to single out three themes that refer to prospective teachers' beliefs about a child's family, culture, and community, namely: Influence, Relationship, and Resources. In other words, the future teachers hold different opinions as regards pupils' family and community; learning Math is strongly influenced either by the quality of family support, the quality of home-school communication or the availability of family and community resources for teachers.

In summary, the above brief literature review reveals that there is a gap in teacher education as regards courses on family-school partnership as well as more direct contacts with parents during teaching practice. What follows is a report from a small scale study which contributes to the ongoing debate: how to increase preservice teachers' awareness and understanding of the importance of building a broader level of partnership with parents.

Ex-trainee Teachers' Attitudes Related to Family Involvement in Light of Their (Student) Teaching Experience—A Report from the Study

The aim of the study is to find out whether there are any statistically significant associations between ex-trainee teachers' opinions about the eight types of family involvement (Epstein, 2011, p. 46; Śliwerski, 2001, p. 174) and their declared direct and indirect contacts with parents during their teaching practice.

Research questions:

(1) What are ex-trainee teachers' opinions about the eight types of family-school involvement?
(2) Which types of parent-teacher collaboration did ex-trainee teachers observe during their pedagogic and didactic practice (indirect contact with parents)?
(3) Which types of parent-teacher collaboration were they engaged in during their pedagogic and didactic practice (direct contact with parents)?
(3) Are there any statistically relevant associations between the types of parent-teacher collaboration ex-trainee teachers observed and their opinions about the most important types of family-school involvement?
(5) Are there any statistically relevant associations between the types of parent-teacher collaboration ex-trainee teachers were engaged in and their opinions about the most important types of family-school involvement?

Subjects

Subjects for the study were 28 ex-trainee teachers (24 females and four males) aged 24–35 at The State School of Higher Education in Sandomierz (now the branch campus of Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce). They completed their teaching placements from 2013 to 2017. It is assumed that their opinions

about the eight types of family-school involvement were formed both by their student teaching experience, as well as any other forms of teaching which they undertook from 2013–2017. Three female students were exempt from teaching practice because during their studies they were already practicing teachers.

Procedures

Subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire (in Polish) which consisted of two parts. Part one was a slightly modified version of Epstein's Framework of six types of family involvement (Epstein 2011). Part two consisted of two open-ended questions which referred to trainees' experience as regards their contacts with parents during their pedagogical and didactic practicum. The questionnaires were distributed mainly through emails during the 2016–2017 academic year.

Measures

Part one of the questionnaire was constructed around eight types of school-family collaboration: Type 1—Parenting ("helping all families understand child and adolescent development and establishing home environments that support children as students"), Type 2 —Communicating ("designing and concluding effective forms of two-way communication about school programs and children's progress"), Type 3—Volunteering ("recruiting and organizing help and support at school, home, or in other locations to support the school and student's activities"), Type 4—Learning at home ("providing information and ideas for families about how to help students with homework, and curriculum-related activities and decisions"), Type 5—Decision making ("having parents from all backgrounds serve as representatives and leaders on school committees and obtaining input from all parents on school decisions"), Type 6—Collaborating with the community ("identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen and support schools, students, and their families, and organizing activities to benefit the community and increase students' learning opportunities") (Epstein, 2011, p. 46); Type 7—Parents observing lessons, and Type 8—Home visits by teachers (Śliwerski, 2001, p. 174). Subjects were asked about their opinions regarding the importance of the eight types of collaboration using the four-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, agree, to strongly agree.

In part two, the subjects were asked to respond to two open-ended questions: (1) Which types of parent-teacher collaboration did you observe during your pedagogic and didactic practice? (2) Did you have any direct contact with

parents during your pedagogic and didactic practice. If yes, briefly describe what kind of contact you had. The narrative form of the responses allowed for the collection and further analysis of the respondents' thoughts and opinions as presented in the section. The three female students who had been exempt from teaching practice did not fill out this part of the questionnaire.

In order to check whether there existed any statistically significant relationship between the opinions of the most and least important types of parent-teacher collaboration and the subjects' indirect and direct contacts with parents, Pearson's chi-square (χ^2) test was used. The strength of one statistically significant association that was revealed using Pearson's χ^2 test, was measured using Cramer's V.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Part one of the questionnaire
The specifications below present the respondents' answers in frequency and percentages as regards their opinions about the importance of the eight types of family-school involvement.
Type 1—Parenting: 25 (89.2%) respondents agree (16 / 57.1%) and strongly agree (9 / 32.1%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 2—Communicating: 27 (96.4%) respondents agree (4 / 14.3%) and strongly agree (23 / 82.1%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 3—Volunteering: 22 (78.5%) respondents agree (10 / 35.7%) and strongly agree (12 / 42.8%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 4—Learning at home: 27 (96.4%) respondents agree (15 / 53.6%) and strongly agree (12 / 42.8%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 5—Decision making: 24 (85.7%) respondents agree (16 / 57.1%) and strongly agree (8 / 28.6%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 6—Collaborating with the community: 17 (60.7%) respondents agree (11 / 39.3%) and strongly agree (6 / 21.4%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 7—Parents observing lessons: 12 (42.8%) respondents agree (10 / 35.7%) and strongly agree (2 / 7.2%) that this type of relationship is important.
Type 8—Home visits by teachers: 11 (39.2%) respondents agree (9 / 32.1%) and strongly agree (2 / 7.2%) that this type of relationship is important.
The analysis of the data suggests that the majority of subjects had a high opinion of Types 1–6 of parent involvement. They were of the highest opinion about Type 2—Communicating, (answers 'strongly agree'). They had the lowest

opinion about Type 7—Parents observing lessons, and Type 8—Home visits by teachers (answers 'strongly agree').
Part two of the questionnaire

    (1) Which types of parent-teacher collaboration did you observe during your pedagogic and didactic practice?

The specification below presents the respondents' answers in frequency and percentages as regards the types of family-school involvement that they observed during their teaching practice (they had indirect contacts with parents).
Type 1—Parenting: 2 (7.2%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 2—Communicating: 18 (64.3%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 3—Volunteering: 11 (39.3%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 4—Learning at home: 6 (21.4%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 5—Decision making: 3 (10.7%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 6—Collaborating with the community: 4 (14.3%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
Type 7—Parents observing lessons: 0%.
Type 8—Home visits by teachers: 2 (7.2%) respondents observed this type of involvement.
The analysis of the data suggests that Type 2—Communicating was the most often observed type of collaboration, whereas none of subjects observed Type 7—Parents observing lessons.

    (2) Did you have any direct contact with parents during your pedagogic and didactic practice? If yes, briefly describe what kind of contact you had.

Nine subjects (32.1%) had direct contact with parents which was Type 2—Communicating. Four pre-service teacher-parent contacts were consultations devoted to pupils who experienced various problems at school (trainees reported to parents acts of misbehavior). Four contacts were devoted to informing parents about their children's progress. One parent contacted a trainee to excuse his child from school. One of ex-trainees who did not have any contacts with parents had asked his mentor whether he could participate in a parent-teacher conference, but his mentor told him that "the school does not arrange this type of trainees' participation in school practice."

Pearson's chi-square (χ^2) test

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the respondents' opinions about the importance of the types of parent involvement and the types of involvement that they actually observed during their teaching practice (their indirect contacts with parents), Pearson's χ^2 test was used. The results of the analyses are presented below.

Type 1—Parenting: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 0.46$; p = 0.793).

Type 2—Communicating: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 2.0$; p = 0.366).

Type 3—Volunteering: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 2.36$; p = 0.502).

Type 4—Learning at home: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 1.87$; p = 0.393).

Type 5—Decision making: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 0.56$; p = 0.906).

Type 6—Collaborating with the community: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 0.69$; p = 0.877).

Type 8—Home visits by teachers: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 4.55$; p = 0.208).

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the respondents' opinions about the importance of the types of parent involvement and their direct contacts with parents of Type 2—Communicating, Pearson's χ-square test was used.

Type 2—Communicating: there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 2.24$; p = 0.327).

There is no significant association between subjects' opinions about the types of parent-teacher relationships and the types of relationships that they observed during their teaching placements.

In order to find out whether there are statistically significant associations between respondents' direct contacts with parents of Type 2—Communicating and their opinions about the types of parent involvement, Pearson's χ^2 test was used. The analysis reveals that there is a statistically significant relationship between respondents' direct contacts with parents of Type 2—Communicating and their high opinion about Type 4—Learning at home ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 6.68$; $p = 0.035$). Cramer's V is 0.49 out of a possible maximum value of 1. This represents a medium association between subjects who had direct contact with parents during their teaching placements and their high opinion about collaboration with parents as regards supporting children in: doing homework, recognizing and developing children's talents, as well as tackling at home those problems which occur during lessons. There is also a difference between respondents

with and without direct contact with parents as regards answer 'agree' ($z = 2.3$; $p < 0,001$) and 'strongly agree' ($z = –2.6$; $p < 0.001$). Respondents who had direct contact with parents during their practicum are much often of the opinion that Type 4—Learning at home is a very significant type of family-school collaboration (answer "strongly agree") when compared to those who did not experience such contacts. There is a reversed interrelation when it comes to answer 'agree.' There is no significant relationship between direct contact of Type 2 Communicating and: Type 1—Parenting ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 1.64$; $p = 0.441$), Type 2—Communicating ($\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 2.24$; $p = 0.327$), Type 3—Volunteering ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 1.33$; $p = 0.722$), Type 5—Decision making ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 3.07$; $p = 0.381$), Type 6—Collaborating with the community ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 4.61$; $p = 0.203$), Type 7—Parents observing lessons ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 1.26$; $p = 0.740$) and Type 8—Home visits by teachers ($\chi^2_{(df=3)} = 1.77$; $p = 0.623$).

Conclusions

The research results in the present study seem to relate to those referred to in the second part of the paper. The subjects in the research studies by McBride (1991) and Uluag (2006) had the highest opinion of Type 2—Communicating, which was confirmed in the present study. The awareness of the importance of parent involvement was greater in those subjects who had already enrolled in teaching practice (McBride, 1991) and completed it (Uluag, 2006). In the case of this study all ex-teacher trainers had completed teaching practice and must have undertaken other forms of informal and formal teaching as well as had contacts with educational centers as parents. The present study provided deeper insight into the impact of direct contacts with parents during (student) teaching experience on the subjects' opinions related to family involvement. In this way it provides a new perspective on the problem of how to raise trainees' awareness and understanding of the importance of building a broader level of partnership with parents. It does not allow for drawing far-reaching conclusions since the subjects were not a representative group. Despite this fact, however, the present study shows that the type of school and family relationships that the subjects experienced during their school placements, that is, communication, is positively associated with one type of the relationship, that is, learning at home. Thus, those ex-trainees who experienced direct contact with parents strongly agree that parents have an important role to play in supporting their children at home. Contrary to the above, no such positive associations were found when it comes to the ex-trainee teachers who just observed parent-teacher contacts while doing their placements. It goes without saying that "of all types of pa-

rental involvement, supervision of learning activities at home may be the most educationally significant" (Uluag, 2006, p. 15). Also, parents are more willing to work with their child at home "when teachers nurture the teacher parent relationship" (Uluag, 2006, p. 18). The international research studies on teacher trainees' beliefs as well as their awareness of the importance of home-school collaboration shows the supporting role of teacher educators. The development of critical reflectivity by means of solving practical problems should go hand in hand with equipping teacher trainees with communicative skills and cooperative strategies tailored to particular educational and social contexts. A case in point is a teaching practice which should "fully address the issue of parent involvement" (Baum & McMurray-Schwarz, 2004, pp. 60, 61). In particular, trainees should have opportunities for contacts with parents "on a more direct level" (Baum & McMurray-Schwarz, 2004, p. 61). Therefore, it seems obvious that one of the priorities for preparing pre-service teachers is to help them realize that "partnerships recognize the shared responsibilities of home, school, and community for children's learning and development" (Epstein, 2011, p. 4). As noticed by Foster and Lovel, it can be achieved by "placing students in field experiences where they can interact with families of varying socioeconomic levels and ethnic backgrounds" (1992, qtd. in Katz & Bauch, 1999, p. 202). Concluding, we are of the opinion that the first step to improve the situation in the area of contacts with parents is to develop programs of training that emphasize teacher trainees' varied and active role in parent interactions.

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Die Einstellung der zukünftigen Lehrer zu den mit der Zusammenarbeit zwischen Familie und Schule verbundenen Fragen nach den Erfahrungen aus der Lehrerpraxis

Zusammenfassung

In ihrem Artikel erörtert die Verfasserin das Problem der zukünftigen Lehrer, die sich nicht im Klaren sind, dass sie mit den Eltern ihrer Schüler unbedingt eine engere Zusammenarbeit aufnehmen müssen, die weit über solche typische Formen des Kontaktes wie z. B.: Elternabende oder Telefongespräche hinausgehen wird. Den durch das Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Hochschulbildung (Gesetzblatt 2012; Pos. 131) erlassenen Richtlinien zufolge, sollte die Lehrerausbildung sowohl die Kenntnisse über die Eltern als Subjekte der pädagogischen Tätigkeit, als auch die Fähigkeit zur Zusammenarbeit mit ihnen umfassen. In der Wirklichkeit aber, was die Forschungen zeigen, distanzieren sich zukünftige Lehrer von den Eltern ihrer künftigen Schüler. Die Ursache dafür liegt wahrscheinlich darin, dass es in den die pädagogische und didaktische Praxis bestimmenden Bildungsmodulen Nr. 1 u. 2 die Voraussetzung fehlt, die Referendaren können in einen indirekten, direkten, formellen oder informellen Kontakt mit den Eltern treten (Gesetzblatt 2012; Pos. 131). Im Resultat sind diese Kontakte während der Lehrerpraxis eigentlich zufällig und sporadisch. Andererseits aber ist es schwer zu erwarten, dass die pädagogischen Betreuer der Referendaren solche Treffen mit den Eltern von der Schule beauftragt sozusagen „auf Wunsch" veranstalten werden, obwohl manche von ihnen klargestellte Anforderungen bevorzugen. Der zweite Teil des Artikels beinhaltet die Ergebnisse der unter den Absolventen des Lehramtsstudiums des ersten Grades durchgeführten qualitativen Sozialforschung. Die Befragten sollten sich dafür entscheiden, welcher von den 8 Typen des Elternengagements zur Förderung ihrer Kinder ihrer Meinung nach am wichtigsten und welcher am belanglosesten sei (nach: J. Epstein 2014 u. B. Śliwerski 2001). Sie sollten auch ihre Kontakte mit den Eltern während ihres Referendariats schildern. Die Forschung sollte veranschaulichen, ob es statistisch gesehen eine wesentliche Wechselbeziehung zwischen den von den Befragten bevorzugten Typen des Engagements und ihren wirklichen Kontakten mit den Eltern gibt, und ihre Ergebnisse haben das bestätigt. Die Referendaren welche einen direkten Kontakt mit den Eltern aufgenommen haben, sind häufiger bereit, die Hauslehre (Typ 4) als ein wichtiges Element der Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Schule und den Eltern zu beurteilen.

Schlüsselwörter: persönliche Gesinnung der Referendaren, die während des Referendariats gesammelten Erfahrungen, Elternengagement, Partnerschaft

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Are They Part of the Equation?
Foreign Language Teachers vs. Language Attrition
A Diagnostic Study

Abstract

Non-pathological language attrition has been thoroughly investigated in the context of first as well as second language (for review, see Bardovi-Harlig & Stringer, 2010; Schmid & Mehotcheva, 2012). However, still not enough is known about language attrition in a different population. Foreign language teachers, who often fight an uphill battle trying to prevent their learners' lack of progress, may also face a different challenge. Namely, their own linguistic skills may regress as well. Therefore, the inquiry should be extended so as to include this population. As a result, in the present study we aim to investigate the extent to which FL teachers are aware of the phenomenon of language attrition. The diagnostic study was motivated by anecdotal evidence and frequent interactions with foreign language teachers. Our observations rested on the assumption that FL teachers may experience stagnation in the language they teach or may even be on the verge of language regression. Twenty-one primary school non-native foreign language teachers (mean age 29) representing both rural and urban areas participated in the study. All participants had a B.A. in elementary education and were pursuing their M.A. in language teaching. In our pilot study, they were asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire including both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The preliminary analysis reveals factors contributing to language loss among foreign language teachers and suggests future research directions.

Keywords: foreign language acquisition, language attrition, FL teacher

Rationale for the Study

Language teachers are essential components of the learning process. They create and develop language syllabi. They supervise the implementation of

language curricula. They are an integral part in the development of the educational process anywhere in the world (Harmer, 2007). Finally, they are a liaison between the language they teach with its corresponding culture and their students. Hence, they are expected to be competent not only methodologically but linguistically as well. We distinguish between language (or linguistic) competence and professional (or methodological) competence and make the former the scope of the present inquiry. The term linguistic (language) competence is understood here as relating to an adequate level of language appropriateness and correctness including: one's level of lexical knowledge, syntactic flexibility, a repertoire of registers, pragmatic understanding, the knowledge of the corresponding culture acquired while visiting the countries where the language is spoken natively. Language competence is contrasted with the notion of professional (or methodological) competence which relates to one's knowledge of methodology and pedagogy acquired in the course of studies and/or through participation in professional development initiatives such as workshops, methodological conferences, webinars, seminars, round tables where one is able to expand the scope of knowledge and ultimately gain more experience in teaching languages.

We state at the outset of the paper that maintaining linguistic competence of a foreign language teacher requires constant effort, diligence, and perseverance. The present study was motivated by our observations of extramural M.A. students at the University of Warsaw who already worked as elementary school foreign language teachers. The anecdotal evidence collected over the course of two years has shown that they constitute an increasingly diverse population. The foreign language teachers whom we observed not only represent different parts of Poland but also different levels of English proficiency and acquisition paths. In their language production, both spontaneous and rehearsed, they tend to make a wide range of errors some of which may have already fossilized (e.g., the inconsistent use of English inflection, non-target syntactic structures, erroneous lexical choices). The anecdotal evidence of their non-target production, which prompted us to pursue the matter further, was collected through frequent writing assignments and numerous in-class discussions.

Our observations coincided with the results of the European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC, 2015). Fourteen European countries participated in the study in which three skills were assessed: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing. Poland was the only country where, additionally, speaking skills were evaluated. As many as 499 Polish 3rd-year junior high school students were tested in 37 schools throughout the country. The results indicated that 41% of the Polish students were at the A1 level. Every third student was at A2, while every fourth student represented the B1 level. The outcome was alarming considering that the participating students were nine years post-onset. While the learners in this comprehensive study were

examined thoroughly, no parallel study was conducted in Poland to investigate the language competences of teachers.

In contrast to the survey, a thorough assessment of EFL teacher competence was done in the context of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) implementation in Italy (Di Martino & Di Sabato, 2012). The authors intended to gain insights into EFL teachers' methodological/linguistic competence and needs. The report presents and analyzes criteria for the assessment of foreign language teacher competence (e.g., the Ministry only accepts certifications recognized by the governments of countries where the foreign languages to be certified are spoken natively, the list of recognized certifications is periodically updated, additional methodological training is available to those teachers whose language competence represents the C1 level of the CEF). Italian researchers and policy makers are in the process of gathering information regarding the exact number of teachers representing different levels of FL competence per region and stress the importance to investigate whether the level of competence teachers have self-assessed actually corresponds to real competence. They address, as well, critical issues such as the fact that most FL teachers in Italy never studied the language they teach in a systematic way or "the scarce professionalism" of some FL teachers. Lastly, Di Martino & Di Sabato recommend the Ministry of Education carry out a strict assessment of the teachers' foreign language competence.

Moreover, in Australia, special purpose tests have been designed to select overseas-qualified immigrants who apply for teacher education programs (the Diploma of Education, Oral Interview Test of English, Viete, 1998) or to assess language proficiency of, for instance, Italian and Japanese foreign language teachers (Elder, 1994; Elder et al., 1995). Prospective non-native language teachers are also observed and given feedback during a classroom language assessment scheduled to detect the English language problems faced by them during their teaching practice (Elder, 1993b). In the pursuit of creating adequate means of measurement and assessment, Elder (2001) evaluated the tests in terms of their authenticity, usefulness, practicality, and the environment in which they are administered. Still, more reliable and systematic studies on the assessment of foreign language teacher linguistic competences are needed.

Being a non-native language teacher is by no means a disadvantage. It is an asset. Previous research shows that native and non-native language teachers are easily distinguishable, independent groups, each with its unique characteristics. Benke and Medgyes (2005) asked 422 Hungarian FL learners of English to assess native and non-native language teachers. Native language teachers were praised for their conversational skills and their abilities to conduct dynamic and lively lessons. They were perceived as having friendly personalities and being linguistic role models. In contrast, non-native language teachers were deemed to be better equipped to explain grammar-related concepts and to supply the

exact lexical items needed by the learners who either did not know them or were unable to retrieve the words from their mental dictionary. Undoubtedly, both groups enrich the learning experience, in an identifiably different way though (similar results were obtained by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) in the Basque Country).

To our knowledge, no such tests assessing foreign language teacher linguistic, not methodological, competences, have been created, implemented, and presented in Poland. The report prepared by the Institute of Educational Studies (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, IBE) included only a description of teacher competences, not their actual assessment whereas the IBE quality control of language teaching was based on the monitoring of the teachers' work. In practice, it predominantly involved the evaluation of syllabi, teachers' self-assessment, and their declaration of hours worked. This is all the more important in the current FL context where teaching is done mostly by non-native speaker teachers (over 80% as per Canagarajah, 1999). Without a doubt, the number is higher in the context of foreign language teaching in Poland where less than 5% of English teachers are native speakers (Personal communication, 2017). Nicholas (1993) maintains that, in general, the training received by future non-native foreign language teachers in the course of their undergraduate studies is neither sufficient nor appropriate. Consequently, they are not satisfactorily prepared for classroom interaction and often fall short of students' expectations. Likewise, the training they undergo does not equip them with relevant pragmatic and discourse competences. We argue that this insufficient training deprives them of being linguistically competent right from the start, sets the tone for their professional career and, ultimately, may be one of the prerequisites for language attrition. Undeniably, there are numerous factors crucial in maintaining a desirable linguistic outcome. For the purpose of the present study we turn to an under-researched area and examine language attrition as an element contributing to the deterioration of FL teacher linguistic competences.

Language Attrition

By nature, languages are intuitively associated with the processes of acquisition, learning, speech production or linguistic use. In other words, there is a strong tendency to associate languages with a gain and with managing rather than maintaining linguistic resources in different contexts. Therefore, it seems less intuitive to think of them in terms of breakdown, loss or attrition. Unrightfully so, as language attrition is very much a linguistic reality (Szupica-

Pyrzanowska, 2016). In the present study attrition is understood as longstanding loss rather than temporary losses of linguistic material (Brown, 1994) which is triggered by "disuse, lack of input or reduced input" (Bardovi-Harlig & Stringer, 2010) and characterized by, but not limited to, the following features: shrinking phonetic inventories, simpler phonetic rules, lack of grammatical flexibility, smaller lexical repertoires (Holmes, 2008).

Likewise, in our definition of attrition we assume the loss of the linguistic material that was previously possessed by language teachers and we argue for the absence of the linguistic knowledge that was once present, tangible and can no longer compete with the other, more frequently used linguistic system, in this case the L1. Attrition relates to a gradual change in one's linguistic behavior triggered by a lack of contact with a community in which the language is spoken natively. The severed or less frequent contact with the community results in one's inability to maintain fluency or in a loss of language fluency and its proficient use. This is fuel for the argument that in order to be maintained, languages have to be constantly supplied with linguistic material. Otherwise, they erode (Szupica-Pyrzanowska, 2016).

As in the case of language acquisition, language attrition is a dynamic and non-linear process (Schmid, Köpke, & de Bot, 2013) consisting of different transitional phases. We propose the following intermediate stages along the continuum from acquisition to attrition, or from knowing a language to knowing it less. The first stage, stagnation, is distinguished in terms of language inertia triggered by a lack of regular contact with language or its infrequent use. At this stage most foreign language users let their skills lapse. If prolonged, stagnation may lead to a phase of little variation where no new linguistic material is introduced to the speaker's repertoire. Consequently, FL users reach a plateau and cease further development. An extended plateau, in turn, may trigger language regression which, if sustained, could be a prerequisite to language attrition. Considering the FL circumstances, non-pathological language attrition should never result in no knowledge at all. Instead, it is rather likely to lead to the so called critical threshold, a level beyond which knowledge will resist further deterioration and will be stored in "permastore" understood as extremely long-term or lasting memory (Neisser, 1984). Hitherto, in the literature there is no consensus regarding the exact trajectory of the forgetting curve. On the one hand, the forgetting curve begins with a plateau during which language competence is unaffected (Weltens & Cohen, 1989). Proponents of a different view state that lack of contact with language triggers forgetting which quickly becomes fixed and stabilizes (Bahrick, 1984).

Thus far, the following three attrition scenarios predominated:

1. An immigrant who is a speaker of the language not spoken natively in the new country of residence and who slowly loses his native language.

2. A speaker of a language who lives in a place where a different language is considered more prestigious or sought-after.

3. A learner who studied a language at school and who loses the language owing to the lack of opportunity to practice it outside classroom (Reilly, 1988).

The aforementioned examples, however, do not include foreign language teachers. Following Cook (2015), we relate to foreign language teachers as foreign language users. A non-native speaker teacher is a foreign language user who has acquired another language. Hence, the non-native speaker teacher is looked up to and revered by the students. After all, "he learned the language by a similar route to the students" (Cook, 2015) and can resort to the students' L1 whenever necessary and just like his students, the non-native speaker teacher has to make an effort so as to maintain his foreign language skills (Llurda, 2005; Macaro, 2005). Although FL teachers are not a homogenous population, they, nevertheless, share certain features. For instance, they may rarely, if ever, go beyond the curriculum, they may have a restricted contact with the FL community, they may not use the language they teach on a regular basis, their language may be reduced to a metalinguistic jargon, they may speak their L1 in FL classes, they may represent similar acquisition paths. In their case "a break with a previously established linguistic tradition [that] leads to reduction in linguistic form and the creation of gaps in the individual's linguistic repertoire in that language" (Andersen, 1982, p. 87) is not as spectacular as that in the case of emigrants whose linguistic contact is often abruptly severed. Non-pathological attrition may not be immediately obvious and easy to detect because speakers can use different compensatory strategies to veil its appearance (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Even though paths leading to attrition are different in FL teachers and emigrants, the outcome and the consequences of the process are similar**.**

Despite the fact that literature on the assessment of foreign language teacher competence is emergent, the literature on non-native teacher language attrition is scarce. Włosowicz (2016) investigated 39 L1 Polish foreign language teachers of English who were asked to complete a grammar test and fill out a questionnaire in which they reflected on their ways to prevent attrition and presented their attitudes towards correctness. Analysis of the results indicated that the vocabulary part of the test was done the most successfully, while articles and reported speech were the most difficult. The results obtained from the grammar test were not compatible with the participants' assessment of the task difficulty. For instance, reported speech was not regarded as challenging despite the high error rate on sentences including this syntactic structure. Włosowicz concluded by stating that, even though it seems counterintuitive, teaching a foreign language could be a source of language attrition among language teachers. The reasons for the loss of language in the formal context are twofold, a regular contact with students' errors and the need to adjust language to the learners' level.

Finally, in the present study we propose a three-way paradigm shift.
1. Pathological attrition (aphasia) → non-pathological attrition (healthy language users).
2. L1/L2 → FL.
3. Learner's language attrition → teacher's language attrition.

The Present Study

Aim

The overall aim of the present study was to investigate and assess the level of awareness of language attrition among FL teachers of English in Polish primary schools. Specifically, we intended to inquire about the respondents' beliefs, views, opinions on issues related to language attrition. Also, we queried whether FL teachers relate the phenomenon in question to their own language competence.

Method

In our diagnostic study, the participants were requested to complete a survey in pen-and-paper format. The anonymous questionnaire was given in Polish and included seven open- and closed-ended questions. The survey was not applied during lessons. Two dates were offered to participate in the study. The questionnaire was administered during two different testing sessions given on two different days arranged to meet everyone's schedule. The participants voluntarily signed up for the date of their choice. No specific time was allotted to complete the questionnaire, so the participants took as much time as they needed to address the questions.

Population

Twenty-one elementary school teachers (mean age 29 years) were included in the study. All were females. All had a B.A. in elementary education and were pursuing their M.A. degree in language teaching. They were second-year extramural students of the University of Warsaw. On average, all had at least 7 years of teaching experience. They represented different regions of Poland, both urban and rural.

Results

Question 1

Is knowledge of foreign languages susceptible to loss? (see Figure 1).
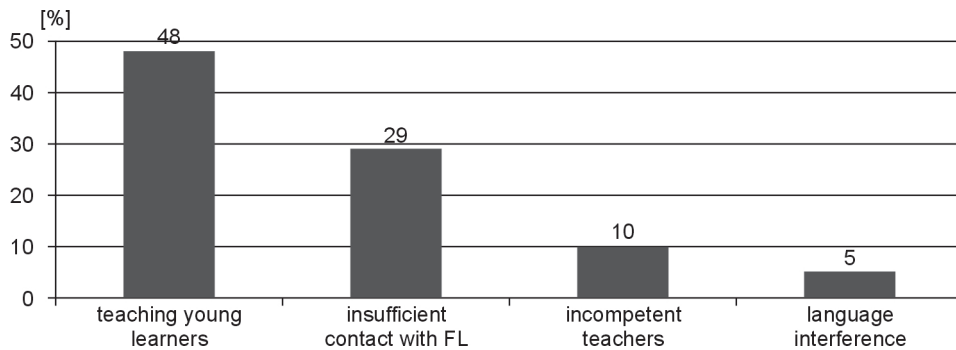
Figure 1. Reasons for language loss.

All 21 teachers confirmed that the knowledge of a foreign language is undoubtedly susceptible to loss. The following issues were identified as potential reasons for attrition: teaching young children (48%), insufficient contact with the foreign language (29%), incompetent teachers (10%), and language interference (5%).

Question 2

Which language aspects are prone to loss? (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Language areas/skills prone to loss.

As many as 71% of the surveyed teachers claimed that of all language aspects vocabulary is most prone to loss, 48% identified g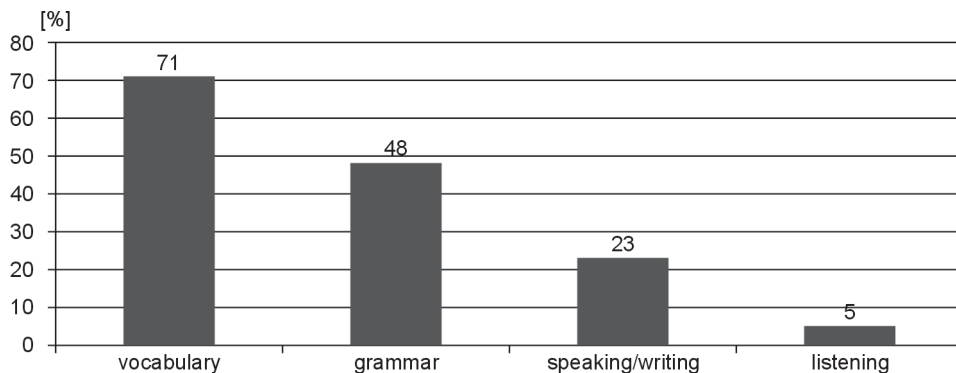rammar, 23% – speaking and writing, while 5% considered listening as particularly susceptible to loss. As for grammar components prone to loss, the participants listed the Third Conditional, Past Perfect, and other complex tenses. In addition, vocabulary both in speaking and writing was regarded as susceptible to attrition along with productive skills in general.

Question 3

Which aspects of a language are resistant to loss? (see Figure 3).
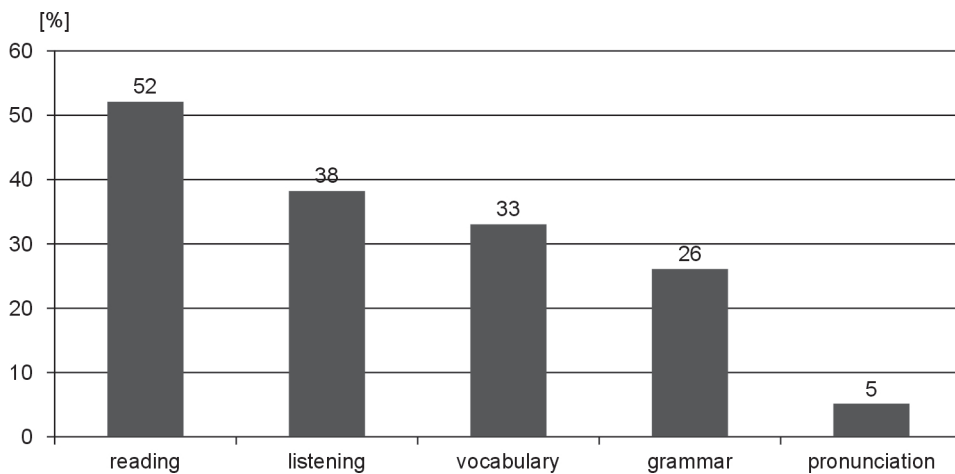
Figure 3. Language areas/skills resistant to loss.

The aspects of a foreign language which are most resistant to loss are, in the opinion of the respondents: reading (52%), listening (38%), vocabulary (33%), grammar (26%), and pronunciation (5%). The participants emphasized that most resistant to loss are those elements of language which are most frequently used, such as everyday vocabulary and simple grammar.

Question 4

How could one prevent foreign language loss? (see Figure 4).
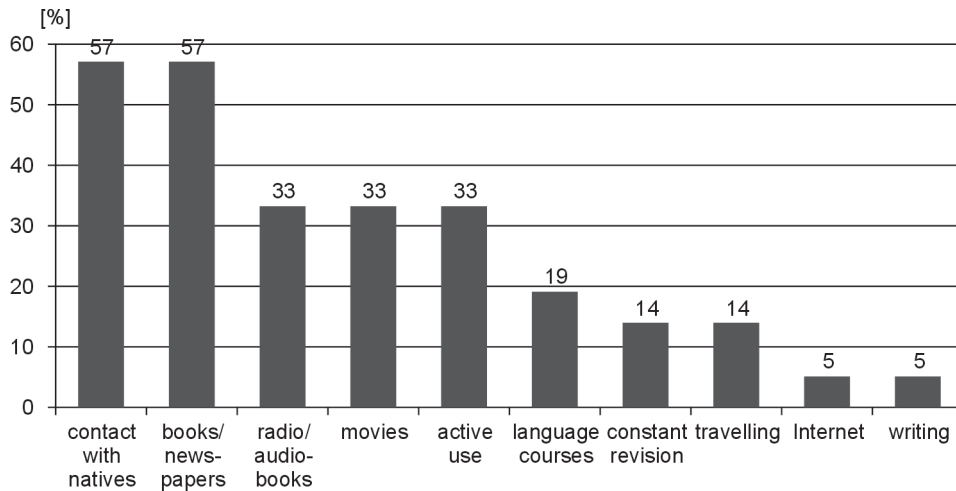
Figure 4. What prevents language loss?

The participants specified several ways of preventing foreign language loss, the most important of which are contact with native speakers (57%) and reading books/newspapers (57%). The respondents were of the opinion that watching films in a foreign language (33%), listening to the radio and audiobooks (33%) and, in general, using the language actively (33%) warrants its retention. They also recommended taking part in language courses (19%), travelling (14%), using Internet resources (5%), and practicing writing in a foreign language (5%).

Question 5

Do foreign language teachers have to constantly work on their language skills? If so, why? If not, why not? (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Why do FL teachers have to work on their language competence?

All participants confirmed that foreign language teachers constantly have to work on their language skills. Their responses can be grouped into four categories: (1) "[I]n order not to forget the language" (47%); (2) "[B]ecause languages change and evolve" (33%); (3) "[I]n order to provide students with good input" (19%); and (4) "[T]o advance students' as well as one's own linguistic knowledge" (14%).

Question 6

How should foreign language teachers further develop their language competences? (see Figure 6).
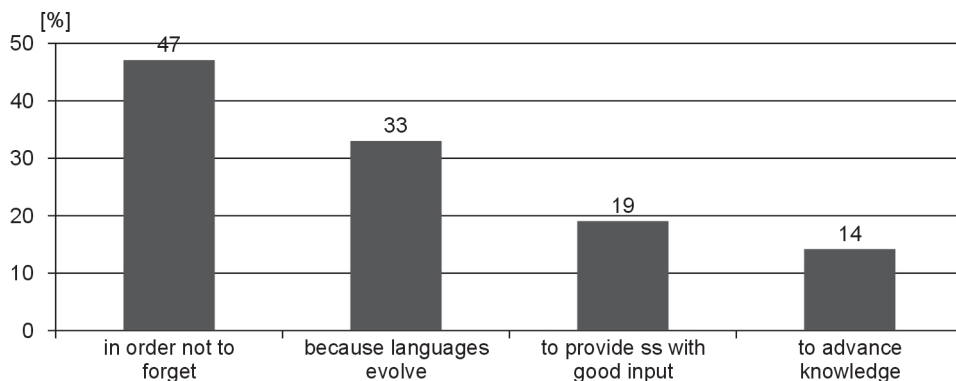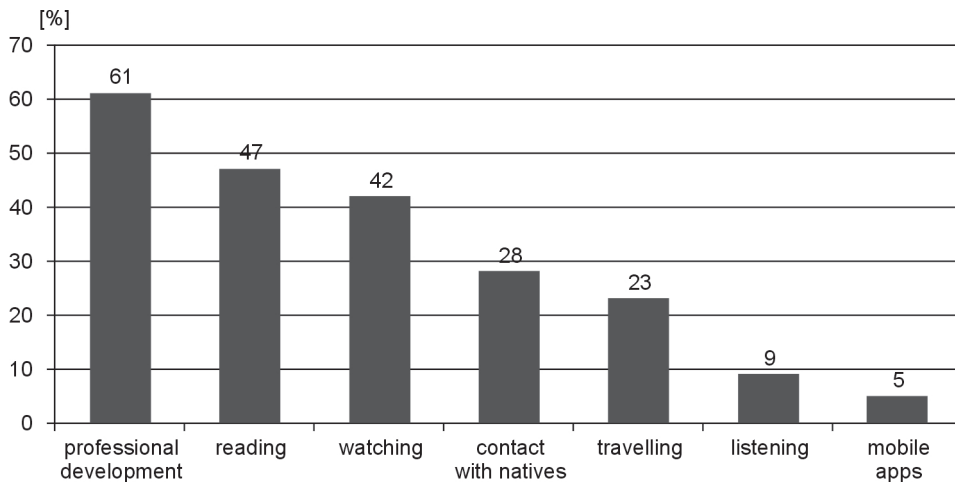

Figure 6. How should FL teachers further develop their language competences?

The participants identified several ways to develop foreign language competences, the most important of which was professional development (61%). According to the respondents teachers should also develop their language skills through reading (47%), as well as watching television and films in a foreign language (42%). Surprisingly, only 28% of the respondents listed contact with native speakers as a preventive measure. Subsequently, the respondents listed travelling (23%), practicing listening in a foreign language (9%), and using mobile apps (5%).

Question 7

Are foreign language teachers' language skills prone to loss? (see Figure 7).
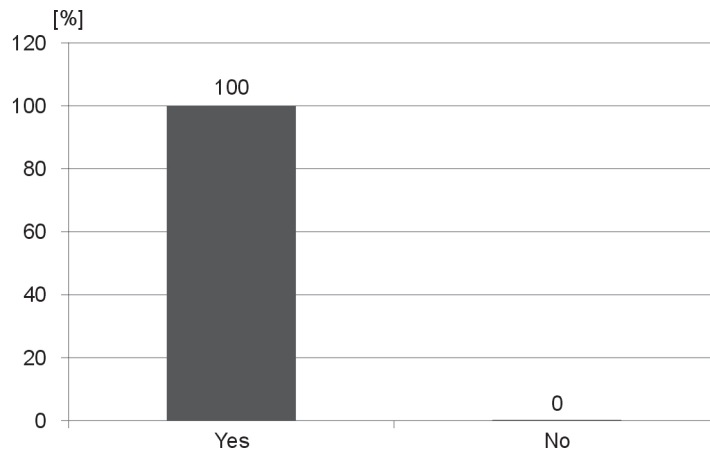
Figure 7. Are foreign language teachers' language skills prone to loss?

All participants admitted that foreign language teachers' language skills definitely are prone to loss. However, they declared that they were neither aware of language attrition nor related it to their own competences prior to the survey.

Discussion

We acknowledge that the sample size in our diagnostic study might have been too small to draw any major conclusions. It was, however, representative enough in a sense that certain patterns did emerge regardless of the sample size.

In Question 1, we inquired whether the participants confirm that foreign language knowledge is susceptible to loss. Surprisingly, the preliminary analysis revealed that nearly half of the participants immediately related the question to their own profession/language experience and stated that teachers working with different age groups could be differently prone to language attrition. This finding is alarming for two different reasons. First, according to our respondents, those who teach children are more likely to attrite than the teachers whose learners are older. Needless to say, the process of acquisition or knowledge accumulation has physiological manifestations. In general, teaching is manifested by passing on knowledge and, thus, leaving traces behind. Teachers have a privilege not only to influence young minds but also to activate different parts of their students' brains. In order to achieve that, teachers need to provide their learners with input whose frequency is important. Further, abstract notions have to be broken down into cognitively manageable units that are easy to parse. Once understood, internalized and rehearsed, the abstract notions can be com-

mitted to long-term memory and retrieved whenever necessary. The brain is changed by the experience. Brain regions that are frequently used grow bigger owing to the formation of additional connections among neurons. In this sense, learning can be equated with creating neuro-traces either as changes in the existing connections between neurons or as new neural connections. Earlier in life, learning proceeds more swiftly and effortlessly due to brain plasticity. Childhood is a time of significant brain growth. Cortical grey matter is at its highest volume in the prepubertal population (Mills et al., 2016). The grey matter contains those areas of the brain that supervise muscle control and sensory perception (e.g., speech, hearing, seeing, memory) which are crucial in the process of learning (Miller et al., 1980). The child constantly absorbs new things, shows an inquisitive spirit, embarks on new adventures, explores and experiments in the environment. This window of opportunity eventually „closes." Consequently, the educational system should protect, not fail, very young FL learners whose natural aptitude has to be supported by the teachers who understand the population they work with.

Second, considering the responses given by the participants in the present study, the teachers whose learners are young are not necessarily motivated to work on their own language competence. We speculate that this fact might partially stem from teachers' failure to realize their students' full potential and cognitive needs. The quality of an early language exposure is indeed important, though. Au et al. (2002) investigated the acquisition of Spanish by college students who had overheard the language as children and in some cases knew a few words. The participants neither spoke nor understood Spanish and were evaluated as "heritage language" acquirers. The "overhearers" were compared to students who had no exposure to Spanish before the age of 14. The members of both groups were native English speakers studying Spanish as an L2. The test results indicated that the "overhearers" acquired a native like accent while the other students did not. The mere exposure to the language meaningfully present in their linguistic environment during formative years resulted in phonological attainment reached years later. Furthermore, some participants in our study pointed to incompetent teachers as a possible source of language loss on the part of the students. A different perspective is assumed here. By doing so, the respondents related to their own experience of language learning which may still resonate with them.

As for Question 2, a number of issues arose in relation to language areas/skills which are prone to attrition. The respondents identified speaking and writing as language areas susceptible to loss. This is in line with the findings that receptive rather than productive skills are more resistant to loss (Bahrick 1984; Hansen 2011). The vast majority of the participants pointed to vocabulary with low frequency of use and complex syntactic structures. In both cases the underlying assumption is that the frequency of use is a determining factor of

language attrition. The category of low-frequency items has been identified as "high attrition sites" (Preston, 1982). In Question 3, we asked which aspects of a language are resistant to loss. The vast majority of the participants identified receptive skills, reading and listening, as less susceptible, which is again consistent with Bahrick (1984) and Hansen (2011). Everyday vocabulary and simple syntactic structures were also characterized as loss resistant. Some participants conveyed that well-rehearsed elements, whether lexical or syntactic, are much more easily committed to long-term memory than their poorly-rehearsed counterparts. Once more, the frequency of use emerged as a decisive factor in language retention.

The next question related to the ways in which one can avoid language loss. There was a myriad of preventive measures listed by the participants, from contact with native speakers, the active use of a foreign language or attending language courses through a constant revision, to reading books/newspapers, watching movies, and travelling. All of the aforementioned measures were to guarantee an active use of a foreign language. Some participants elaborated on their survey responses and added that it is imperative to stay in touch with the language at all cost and that one cannot afford to lose contact with the language one studies. The preventive measures distinguished by the participants in the present study overlap with the strategies counterbalancing attrition observed by Włosowicz (2016).

The participants' responses to Question 5 can be divided into those that pertained to the teachers' own language (e.g., "to advance one's knowledge," "in order not to forget") and those referring to learners (e.g., "to provide students with good input"). The teachers not only acknowledged that languages are dynamic entities which evolve and change over time, but they also emphasized the need to constantly update their knowledge of the English language. Their descriptive answers that followed were humble, reflective, and revealed that the respondents understand knowledge of language to be a continuum along which one can fluctuate. Below, we present some of the most profound opinions voiced by our respondents:

Every teacher is also a student.
Constant effort is required if one is to become an expert.
I experienced that and I know now how quickly one can lose access to previously gained knowledge.
Language loss in teachers is more severe than in language learners.
Language learning never ends.

[author's translation]

Taking into consideration the answers to Question 6, it is apparent that the participants misunderstood it. Here, we asked how foreign language teachers

should further develop their language competences. As many as 68% of the respondents replied that they improve their language competences through professional training (e.g., conferences, workshops). They seem to have mistaken professional development for language development. The responses appear compatible with what some of them stated off the record, though. Unofficially, our participants admitted that they learn about new methodologies, they participate in workshops and conferences, but they do not necessarily make an effort so as to maintain their language competence through a regular contact with the language they teach. They conceded that while speaking the language in class, they rarely go beyond the subject-specific metalinguistic terminology and classroom register. In addition, the do not expand on their lexical repertoires either. They described their lexical acquisition as sporadic and incidental. It is evident that they do not attrite professionally as teachers but linguistically as language users.

Finally, in Question 7 we narrowed down the scope of our inquiry and asked specifically whether foreign language teacher language competence could be compromised. The participants unanimously responded „yes" to the question. Some teachers admitted that the survey made them realize that attrition applies not only to their learners but to their own language skills as well. Once again, the participants drew attention to the fact that particularly those foreign language teachers who teach (young) children have to be vigilant. Elementary school teachers are more likely to cease their language development. After all, foreign language teachers cannot be expected to interact with language learners of a limited linguistic control in the same way they communicate with (near) native-speakers (Elder, 1993c). FL teachers claim to simplify the English they use in class for their students' sake. In turn, this simplified in-class communication together with the exposure to the errors made by students do not always foster teacher's language development. As a remedy, the respondents proposed teaching students of different age, which, in their view, will help teachers maintain their language competences and will motivate them to speak better in class. Language attrition could be triggered by a lack of motivation or a burnout effect, as lack of motivation is known to correlate with language loss (Mehotcheva, 2010; Schmid & Dusseldorp, 2010). Like the participants in the study done by Włosowicz, our respondents complained of the administrative work they are required to do and lack of flexibility on the part of school principles.

As a final point, we wish to address the length of teaching experience. The participants in our survey had, on average, seven years of professional experience. Considering it from the perspective of attrition, seven years of teaching suffice to experience language slowdown. In some measure, this is in keeping with Bahrick (1984) who tested 773 individuals speaking Spanish as their L2. They differed in terms of acquisition paths and incubation periods, the time

during which they had no contact with Spanish. The incubation periods ranged from a few months to over 25 years of non-active learning. A greater intensity of attrition has been observed during early years of language non-use (0–3) than subsequent years (5–25). In light of what Bahrick reported, the results of the present study appear disturbing because, unlike the Spanish learners in Bahrick's experiment, our participants are expected to use the language actively. Of course, the extent to which they do so remains to be determined. We can only speculate that however much language they use is apparently not enough to sustain it. Novice teachers should be informed that initially, attrition proceeds rapidly and reaches a plateau at later stages. The first few years of teaching are, thus, crucial for long-term language retention. Foreign language teachers have to be supported in their professional endeavors. We aim to reach out to the community of foreign language teachers and draw their attention to the phenomenon of language attrition, inform them about ways to prevent it and recognize its early stages not only in their students, but in their own language production as well. Non-native language teachers have to rethink their own language competences. Foreign languages have to be maintained on a regular basis or to state it in Di Martino and Di Sabato's terms—language maintenance should not be of "a once-in-while nature but rather […] a life-long form of training" (2012, p. 77).

Taken as a whole, in the present study we made the following observations: (1) the level of language attrition awareness among FL teachers is low; (2) FL teachers do not seem to always distinguish between language and professional competence; (3) FL teachers are more likely to relate attrition to their students' rather than to their own language skills; (4) teachers who teach preschool and kindergarten learners are more prone to attrition than FL teachers whose students are teenagers and adults; (5) those who teach young FL learners report to be less motivated to maintain their language skills. Undoubtedly, more research is needed to examine the relation between lack of motivation and teachers' language attrition which for now remains understudied.

Conclusion

The benefits of studies investigating language attrition in FL teachers are at least twofold: (1) The present study and studies alike stress the importance of supporting FL teachers in their professional endeavors particularly by providing them with more opportunities to work on their language competence; (2) By raising teachers' awareness of the problem, we aim to prevent FL loss and emphasize that changes are needed in teacher education programs so as

to include the issue of attrition, self-assessment of one's language competence, and strategies promoting regular language maintenance.

Moreover, most foreign language teaching programs tend to exclusively concentrate on improving teachers' professional (methodological) competence while ignoring the importance of their actual use of language (Cullen, 1994). It goes without saying that language improvement initiatives are not only expensive undertakings that require devoting considerable resources, but are also time-consuming in terms of development and implementation. By no means, it is an easy task. However, it is an imperative and urgent matter because insufficient FL teacher language competence may negatively influence their own self-confidence, sense of professionalism, and it may also prevent them from a skillful implementation of their methodological abilities, which in turn may obstruct learner progress. FL learners' success largely depends on their teacher's language and professional competences.

Lastly, in order to investigate non-native teacher language attrition it is imperative to first define the domain of teacher proficiency to understand what is being lost. We ought to determine whether teacher proficiency is different from other professional competences and establish if it is distinguishable from "general" language proficiency (Elder, 2001). Further, the underlying assumption of the present study also relates to the issue of an adequate teacher language assessment. This, in turn, relates to the dilemma that teacher language proficiency is not defined in a systematic and consistent way. According to Elder (2001), when designing tests measuring teacher language competence, we have to compromise between "real and ideal." It is challenging to design tests/measures which are genuinely representative of the target environment (Douglas, 2000). "The construct of teacher proficiency, is clearly multidimensional, and this poses problems for the interpretation and reporting of performance" (Swales, 1990, p. 52). What adds to the problem is the vastness of a possible classroom interaction or "allowable contributions" made by teachers.

The present diagnostic study is just a prevue of what we intend to accomplish longitudinally. Our long-term goal is to organize workshops on language attrition for FL teachers and teachers-to-be and to implement online measures (e.g., eye tracking, ERP) which could determine the level of attrition and in turn inform pedagogy. Meanwhile, it is necessary to rethink pedagogy and reset priorities. Non-native language teacher linguistic competence and attrition merit further attention and examination to warrant long-term solutions. We begin to scratch the surface, but even now at the preliminary stage it becomes evident that what emerges is only the tip of a multilayered iceberg.

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Geht das auch sie an?
Die Fremdsprachenlehrer angesichts des Phänomens des Verlusts der Sprachkenntnisse

Zusammenfassung

Der nicht pathologische Verlust der Sprache wurde schon in Bezug auf Heimatsprache und Zweitsprache genau erforscht und beschrieben (Bardovi-Harlig & Stringer, 2010; Schmid & Mehotcheva, 2012). Wir haben aber immer noch unzureichende Kenntnisse über eine andere Population, die durch Verlust von Sprachkenntnissen gefährdet ist, nämlich die Fremdsprachenlehrer, die keine Muttersprachler sind. Die Fremdsprachenlehrer, welche alltags gegen fehlende Fortschritte bei ihren Schülern ankämpfen, können auch einer anderen Herausforderung ausgesetzt werden, nämlich fehlender Weiterentwicklung ihrer eigenen Sprachkenntnisse. So ist auch diese Population in den Forschungen zum Verlust der Sprachkenntnisse zu berücksichtigen. In vorliegender diagnostischer Untersuchung bemühen sich die Verfasserinnen zu ergründen, inwiefern die Fremdsprachenlehrer sich über den Sprachverlust im Klaren sind und in welchem Maße das Problem sie selbst angeht. Der Anlass zur diagnostischen Untersuchung waren die während ihrer vieljährigen Hochschularbeit mit Fremdsprachenlehrern angesammelten Meinungen. Die Verfasserinnen gingen davon aus, dass sich die Fremdsprachenlehrer in der zu unterrichteten Fremdsprache ausgebrannt fühlen können oder auch einem Rückgang ihrer linguistischen Fähigkeiten unterliegen. An der Untersuchung nahmen 21 Fremdsprachenlehrer (Durchschnittsalter von 29 J.) teil, die einen anonymen Fragebogen mit geschlossenen und offenen Fragen ausfüllen sollten. Die Rohanalyse offenbart die Gründe des Verlustes von Sprachkenntnissen bei Fremdsprachenlehrern und suggeriert die Richtungen der etwaigen künftigen Forschungen.

Schlüsselwörter: Fremdsprachenunterricht, Verlust der Sprachkenntnisse (eng.: language attrition), Fremdsprachenlehrer

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Self-reported vs. Self-rated Pronunciation in a Non-native Language

Abstract

The study investigates how their own accent in English is self-perceived by Polish learners. More specifically, we compare how, and to what extent, self-reported pronunciation differs from self-rated pronunciation prior to and after the exposure to one's recorded speech. Previous research on non-native accent rating has concentrated on scores obtained from native speakers or other proficient speakers of English. In the current study, we concentrate on how learners evaluate their own accent in English for parameters such as pronunciation, articulation, and fluency. We also introduce an independent variable of proficiency to see if it interacts with the perception of learners' pronunciation. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted and the result showed that there are no major differences between how learners report their accent in English and how they rate it from the recording of their own speech. It indicates that the general self-image of one's accent is fairly stable and exposure to the sample of one's speech does not change the overall self-perception.

Keywords: psycholinguistics, phonetics, self-assessment of pronunciation, language learning

Introduction

Several studies have provided the rationale for self-assessment in language learning, namely: promotion of learning and increased learner motivation, a raised level of awareness, the positive impact of metacognitive awareness on goal-orientation, an expansion in range of assessment techniques, shared assessment burden and the autonomy of learners as a post-course effect (Oscarsson, 1989; Salimi, Kargar, & Zareian, 2014). The significance of accurate self-rating is a result of the assumption that standardized tests do not fully succeed in evaluating language competence, due to creating artificial contexts for language

use (Spence-Brown, 2001). Self-assessment has been argued to constitute an indispensable part of autonomous learning (Grader & Miller, 1999; Harris, 1997). Hunt, Gow, and Barnes (1989, p. 207) emphasize that without self-assessment, "there can be no real autonomy." The purpose of this study is to establish how Polish learners assess their own pronunciation skills at secondary and tertiary levels of education. The research aimed to check whether any significant changes could be observed in the learners' self-rating scores before and after they were exposed to the pre-recorded samples of their own productions. We aimed to tap the expectations students hold for their L2 pronunciation skills and see if—when confronted with reality—they believe they have met them.

Another goal was to look for differences between the two levels of proficiency to see how experience affects self-ratings. The following paper also aims to address the issue of learners' self-judgment of their pronunciation, confidence in their own pronunciation skills and awareness thereof. We sought to find whether there arises the problem of either overestimation or underestimation of competence, of which, as MacIntyre, Noels, and Clément (1997, p. 279) speculate, "self-enhancement would probably facilitate language learning while self-derogation would impair progress." In their research, MacIntyre et al. (1997, p. 281) "took ratings of perceived competence prior to the language tasks" and note that, "it also would be interesting to have self-assessments done after task performance. […] Post facto reporting might actually enhance the biases, because highly anxious students might focus on errors in performance and less anxious students […] on their communicative successes." The present study can therefore be considered a follow-up investigation with a focus on accent rating. It combines qualitative and quantitative methods of research in pursuance of a deeper understanding of both the tendencies observed in self-rating and the possible reasons behind them.

Previous Research

Nowacka (2012) points to the importance of good English pronunciation as perceived by L2 learners. In her survey, almost all respondents (98%) agreed on its significance, while 89% of them believed that students should aim for native English pronunciation. The findings of a number of studies into the reliability of self-assessment suggest a pattern of overall agreement between self-assessments and ratings (Blanche, 1985; Oscarsson, 1978; Rea, 1981). Oscarsson (1978) notes that, when given scaled descriptions of performance as rating tools, adult learners demonstrate the capacity to accurately evaluate their linguistic ability. It has also been reported that over the course of second

language practice and through feedback, specific student training and/or do-mestic immersion speakers display an improved ability to correctly self-assess their sound discrimination skills and oral performance (Chen, 2008; Dolosic, Brantmeier, Strube, & Hogrebe, 2016; Ross, 2006; Yules, Hoffman, & Damico, 1987). This indicates that more advanced learners should find self-assessment of their L2 pronunciation less problematic. Previous findings also point to the importance of clear and explicitly stated assessment criteria which help im-prove the effectiveness and precision of self-assessment (Chen, 2008; Dolosic et al., 2016). Some learners have admitted to employing (among other cognitive strategies) phonetic self-evaluation as a tool in developing their pronunciation skills (Nowacka, 2008). However, other research suggests that problems with valid self-evaluation occur even in advanced L2 learners (Dlaska & Krekeler, 2008). Although the results of expert raters' assessments of pronunciation and self-ratings coincided in 85% of all cases, the students only managed to identify a little less than a half of all the speech sounds which the raters con-sidered inaccurate. In their study, MacIntyre et al. (1997, p. 274) observe that "subjective, self-rated proficiency relates substantially to actual proficiency, but the two are not isomorphic." Raasch (1980) and Ross (2006) note rather low correspondence between self-assessment and expert judgments. Nowacka (2008) also found that graduates from English departments in Poland tend to lack self-criticism, and are therefore incapable of accurate and objective self-evaluations of their pronunciation. Blue (1988) shows that nationality serves as an important factor, with some nationalities tending towards overestimation of their level and others likely to underestimate it. There is also evidence to suggest that students whose self-assessments are unrealistically high or low are more likely to give up on language learning than those who are able to assess their skills realistically (Blue, 1994).

Previous research also shows that non-native speakers tend to be consistent in rating other non-native speakers' pronunciation more critically than they rate their own (Episcopo, 2009). Breitkreutz, Derwing, and Rossiter's (2001) study draws attention to the fact that in stand-alone pronunciation classes, some of the most popular CDs used in computer labs focus solely on phonetic segments. Consequently, it may be assumed that the learners' awareness of the primacy of prosodic variables is low. In Derwing and Rossiter (2001), nearly 40% of ESL students were unable to identify specific problems with their pronunciation. Meanwhile, the remainder usually pointed to segmentals (84% of all problems mentioned). Only 10% of the acknowledged difficulties were related to prosodic aspects of pronunciation.

The Current Study

In the current study we look into how and to what extent self-reported pronunciation differs from self-rated pronunciation. By self-reported pronunciation we mean evaluating one's pronunciation skills in general without referring to any particulars samples of one's speech. By self-rated pronunciation we mean evaluating the recording of one's pronunciation by listening to a recording of one's speech. The main objective is to directly confront scores obtained for self-reported pronunciation with those obtained for self-rated pronunciation. Such confrontation allows us to look into the stability of the perception of one's pronunciation skills. Logically, one of the following patterns is predicted to emerge in the results:

1. The scores for self-reported pronunciation are equal to the scores obtained for self-rated pronunciation, indicating that the awareness of one's pronunciation skills is stable and is not affected by specific performance in a given speech sample.
2. The scores for self-reported pronunciation are higher than the scores obtained for self-rated pronunciation, indicating that the awareness of one's pronunciation skills is generally overrated and that it is verified negatively when listening to one's recorded speech samples.
3. The scores for self-reported pronunciation are lower than the scores obtained for self-rated pronunciation, indicating that general self-perception of one's pronunciation is underestimated and that it is enhanced when listening to one's performance in a recording.

Another categorical predictor used in the current study is the proficiency of speakers. Lower-proficiency students versus higher-proficiency students are hypothesized to perform differently in their ratings of self-reported and self-rated pronunciation; however, the exact pattern of differences cannot be predicted. The lower-proficiency speakers/raters had not received any specialized training in pronunciation and phonetics. The higher-proficiency speakers/raters had completed a two-year course in pronunciation and phonetics. While the actual differences in pronunciation skills between the two groups are obvious, it is hard to predict how proficiency and pronunciation training will affect self-reporting and self-rating of their pronunciation. One or some of the following patterns are logically likely to emerge:

1. Higher-proficiency speakers/raters will self-report their pronunciation higher than lower-proficiency speakers/raters because they have confidence in their pronunciation skills as a result of longer exposure to English and the completion of pronunciation and phonetics training.
2. Lower-proficiency speakers/raters will self-report their pronunciation higher than higher-proficiency speakers/raters because they are not acquainted with

detailed intricacies of English pronunciation and are unaware of mistakes they make.

3. When listening to the recording of their own speech, higher-proficiency speakers/raters will self-rate their pronunciation higher than lower-proficiency speakers/raters because, again, they will have more confidence in their performance.

4. When listening to the recording of their own speech, lower-proficiency speakers/raters will self-rate their pronunciation higher than higher-proficiency speakers/raters because they will be unaware of and will not notice their pronunciation mistakes and problems.

The last issue to resolve is if self-reported pronunciation and self-rated pronunciation will interact significantly between the two groups. We hypothesized that the higher-proficiency speakers/raters would self-rate their pronunciation from the recording higher than in self-reports, because the knowledge of phonetics and pronunciation details may decrease general self-perception of their pronunciation, however, when they were exposed to the real samples of their speech, they would be likely to appreciate it with higher scores. On the other hand, lower-proficiency speakers/raters were hypothesized to self-rate their pronunciation in the recording lower than in self-reports, because the exposure to their own real pronunciation would make them realize that it did not match the target native pronunciation. However, these hypotheses are not a very strong bet and other patterns are not much less likely to emerge in the results.

Together with the results for pronunciation rating, we also report results for other aspects of speech, such as articulation and fluency. Moreover, we decided to include descriptive qualitative questions about the strong and weak points of the speakers/raters pronunciation.

Participants

A total of 66 learners of English took part in the study. The lower-proficiency group consisted of 35 participants (20 females; 15 males) with a mean age of 18 years. They were all second-grade students of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (classes taught exclusively in English) at the 1st Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Edwarda Dembowskiego in Gliwice. Their estimated proficiency was B1–B2 in the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). They had had no separate dedicated training in pronunciation or phonetics. The higher-proficiency group consisted of 31 participants (24 females; 7 males) with the mean age of 24.9 years. They were fifth-year students of English recruited from the Institute of English, University of Silesia in Katowice. Their proficiency was C1–C2 in the CEFR. They had completed a two-year course in pronunciation and phonetics which had covered

both segmental and suprasegmental aspects of English pronunciation. None of the participants in either group reported any speech or hearing disorders nor had any indication of such.

Materials

The materials included rating of selected aspects of pronunciation and speech production using a 1–9 Likert scale. In the first part of the experiment, the aspects to rate referred to the participants' self-perception without any exposure to the recordings of their speech. The same aspects were used in the second part of the experiment, when the participants rated recordings of their own speech. The following parameters were used for rating:
1. How do you rate your pronunciation? [(1) strongly Polish-accented—(9) native-like].
2. How do you rate your articulation? [(1) very unclear—(9) very clear].
3. How do you rate your fluency? [(1) very poor—(9) very good].
   We also decided to include a more subjective, emotionally-loaded parameter of expected changes and improvement in the participants' pronunciation:
1. How much do you want to change in your pronunciation? [(1) nothing—(9) everything].
   Additionally, two descriptive questions for qualitative analysis were provided:
1. What do you consider to be the strengths of your pronunciation?
2. What do you consider to be the weaknesses of your pronunciation?

Procedure

In the first part of the experiment, the participants filled in a questionnaire with afore-described points relating to their self-perceived pronunciation. They were instructed to objectively rate and describe how they perceived their pronunciation and accent in English. In order to reduce social desirability bias, the personal details provided by the respondents were kept to a minimum—initials and dates of birth—for proper assignment of the recordings in future stages of the research. After completing the questionnaire, the participants were recorded reading a short passage in English:

> I entered the hotel manager's office and sat down. I had just lost $50 and I felt very upset. "I left the money in my room," I said, "and it's not there now." The manager was sympathetic, but he could do nothing. "Everyone's losing money these days," he said. He started to complain about this wicked

world but was interrupted by a knock at the door. A girl came in and put an envelope on his desk. It contained $50. "I found this outside this gentleman's room," she said. "Well," I said to the manager, "there is still some honesty in this world!"

They were instructed to read it with a natural tempo in the most natural way. The lower-proficiency students were recorded in a quiet room with a dynamic Shure SM58 microphone connected to the Quad-Capture USB interface (Roland). The higher-proficiency students were recorded in the Acoustics-Phonetics Laboratory at the Institute of English, University of Silesia in Katowice, in a sound-proof booth. The signal was captured at 44100 Hz (24 bit quantization) through a headset dynamic Sennheiser HMD 26 microphone fed by a USBPre2 (Sound Devices) amplifier. All recordings were saved as .wav files.

After two months, the participants were invited to take part in the second part of the experiment in which they were asked to listen to their own recording and rate it using the same parameters as in the first part. A two-month period guaranteed that the participants did not remember how they had rated their pronunciation in the self-reporting stage. The recordings were played through headphones from a laptop. All participants easily recognized their voice and were aware of the fact that they were to rate their own pronunciation from the recording.

Analysis and Results

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. The quantitative data were analyzed in a mixed 2x2 ANOVA with a between-subject independent variable of proficiency (lower/higher), a within-subject independent variable of task (self-rate your pronunciation/rate your recording) and a dependent variable of rating (1–9). The qualitative data were analyzed from descriptive answers concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the participants' self-reported pronunciation and from the exposure to the recordings.

Quantitative analysis

Rated pronunciation. The mean rating for self-reported pronunciation in the lower-proficiency group was 5.6 (SE = 0.2) and 5.5 (SE = 0.2) in the higher-proficiency group with the insignificant difference [F(1, 64) = .15, p > .05],

indicating that both groups self-reported their pronunciation almost alike. The ratings between 5 to 6 suggest that both groups perceived their pronunciation as only a little higher than average. When exposed to the recording of their own speech, the participants rated their pronunciation almost identical as in the self-reporting stage. The mean rating was 5.5 (SE = 0.2) for the lower-proficiency and 5.8 (SE = 5.8) for the higher-proficiency group respectively. The difference between the groups was not significant [F(1,64) = .88, p > .05]. Predictably, there were no significant within-subject differences between self-reported pronunciation and pronunciation rated from the recording in either the lower-proficiency group [F(1, 34) = .07, p > .05] or higher-proficiency group [F(1,30) = 2.6, p > .05].

Rated articulation. The self-reported mean scores for articulation were very similar to the ones for pronunciation. The mean rating in the lower-proficiency group was 5.6 (SE = 0.2) compared to 5.4 (SE = 0.2) in the higher-proficiency group. The difference was not significant [F(1, 63) = .79, p > .05]. When exposed to the recording, the lower-proficiency students had a mean score of 5.2 (SE = 0.3). The mean score in the higher-proficiency group was 5.6 (SE = 0.3). Again, the difference was statistically insignificant [F(1, 64) = 1.14, p > .05]. Within-group comparisons for each group between scores obtained from self-reporting and rating the recording revealed that the differences were not significant in either group. In the lower-proficiency group the difference was close to significant [F(1, 33) = 3.15, p = .08], pointing to some trend that listening to the recording decreased ratings of articulation (5.6 to 5.2), however, again, the difference was not statistically significant. In the higher-proficiency group the trend was reversed (5.4. to 5.6), but it was also statistically insignificant [F(1, 30) = .74, p > .05].

Rated fluency. Ratings for fluency did not differ much from the already reported ratings for pronunciation and articulation. Self-reported scores did not differ significantly between the lower-proficiency (M = 5.9; SE = 0.2) and higher-proficiency (M = 5.7; SE = 0.2) groups [F(1, 64) = .53, p > .05]. A significant difference emerged when the participants listened to the recording. The lower-proficiency students rated their fluency significantly lower (M = 4.9; SE = 0.3) than higher-proficiency students (M = 6.2; SE = 0.3) [F(1, 64) = 9.53, p < .01]. A mixed analysis with two categorical predictors of proficiency (lower / higher) and task (self-rate your pronunciation / rate your recording) revealed a significant interaction of proficiency and task [F(1, 64) = 14.5, p < .001]. Figure 1 shows that listening to the recording triggered different tendencies in rating fluency depending on proficiency.
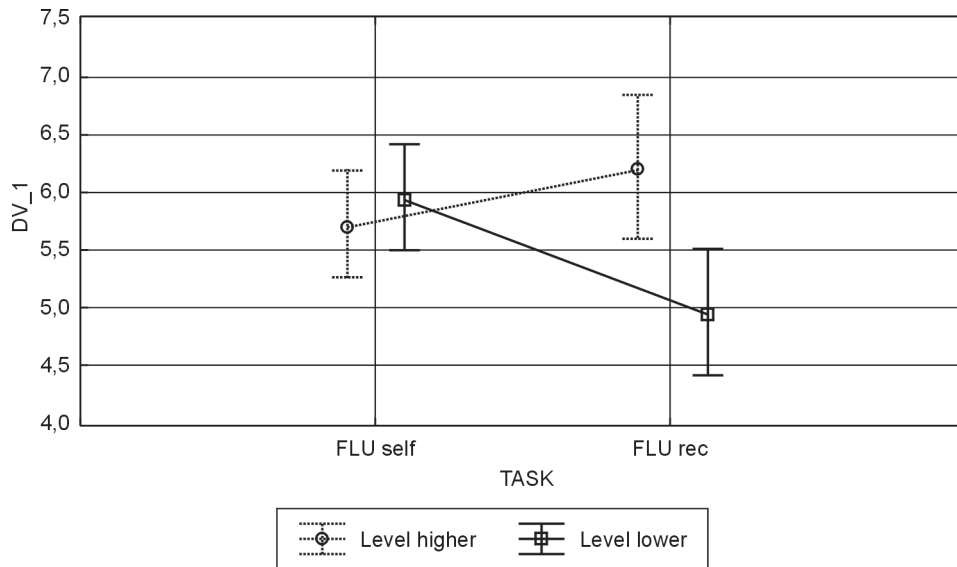
Figure 1. Interaction plot between proficiency and task for rated fluency.

While the higher-proficiency students increased their mean ratings from 5.7 to 6.2, the lower-proficiency students decreased their mean ratings from 5.9 to 4.9. The post hoc Bonferroni tests showed that the significant main effect was largely contributed to by the lower-proficiency group which significantly decreased rating of their fluency when exposed to the recording ($p < .01$). This difference was not significant in the higher-proficiency group ($p = .6$).

Desired change in pronunciation. The reported desired change in pronunciation prior to the recording was almost identical: 5.6 ($SE = 0.3$) and 5.5 ($SE = 0.3$) for the higher- and lower-proficiency group respectively. When exposed to the recording, the participants exhibited slightly different trends depending on proficiency. The higher-proficiency students decreased the rating of desired change to 5.5 ($SE = 0.3$), compared to the lower-proficiency students, who increased their mean scores to 6 ($SE = 0.3$); however, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant [$F(1, 64) = 1.58$, $p > .05$]. Within-group comparisons revealed that the difference in rating for self-reporting and after listening to the recording was not significant in either the higher-proficiency [$F(1, 30) = .01$, $p > .05$] or lower-proficiency group [$F(1, 33) = 1.43$, $p > .05$].

Qualitative Analysis

The participants' answers provided for the two descriptive questions were assigned into one or more of four groups: as being related to pronunciation, articulation, tone of voice, and/or fluency of speech. Other answers, either unrelated, unclear or difficult to categorize, were not taken into account for the purpose of this analysis, and were therefore omitted, but will be brought up in the general discussion.

Differences in self-reporting. For question one, "What do you consider to be the strengths of your pronunciation?", out of 31 respondents in the higher-proficiency group, 18 students provided answers which pointed to one or more of the four aspects of pronunciation mentioned above. The same was the case for 23 people in the lower-proficiency group of 35.

The percentage share for each mentioned feature is presented in Figure 2.

What do you consider to be the strengths of your pronunciation?

	Pronunciation	Articulation	Fluency	Tone of voice
Higher proficiency group	40.0	35.0	20.0	5.0
Lower proficiency group	36.7	30.0	20.0	13.3
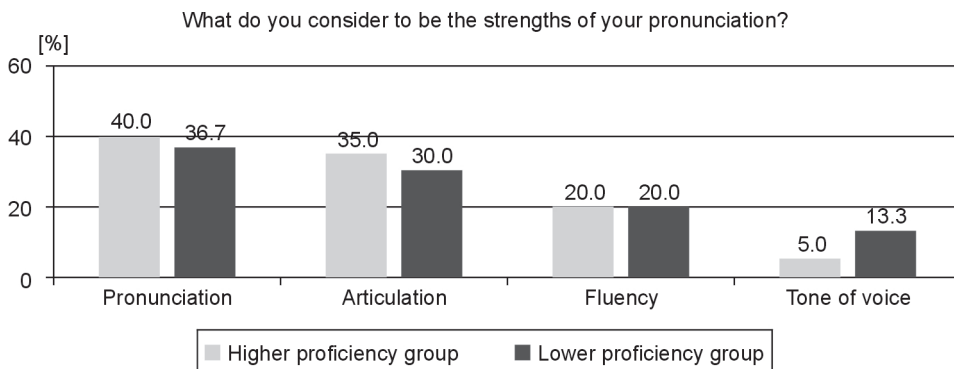
Figure 2. Bar graphs for answers assigned to the four aspects for both levels of proficiency, strength of pronunciation.

It appears that there is a tendency for higher-proficiency speakers to initially value their pronunciation and articulation slightly higher than the lower-proficiency group, but they are much less eager to consider their tone of voice satisfactory. Both groups reported to be equally content with their speech fluency. The response rate, however, is not to be considered very solid.

For the second question, "What do you consider to be the weaknesses of your pronunciation?", the response rate was considerable. Out of 31 respondents in the higher-proficiency group, assignable answers were provided by 29 students. In the lower-proficiency group, the question was answered by 30 of 35 students.

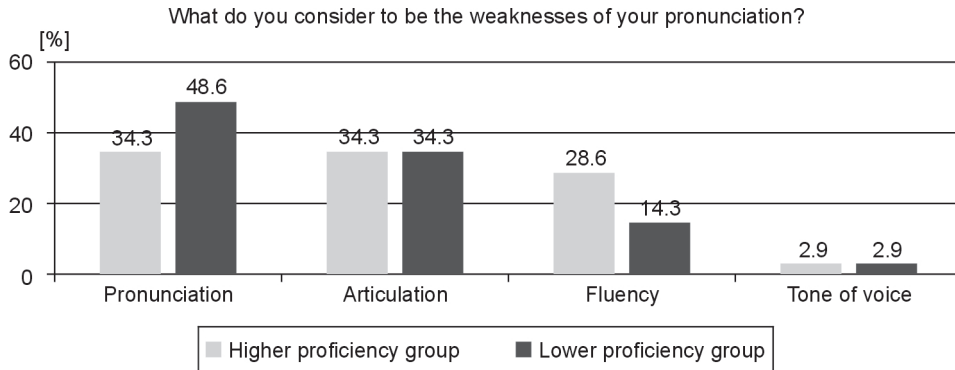Once more, the percentage share is represented in Figure 3.

What do you consider to be the weaknesses of your pronunciation?

Figure 3. Bar graph for answers assigned to the four aspects for both levels of proficiency, weakness of pronunciation.

The difference in how often pronunciation was mentioned is fairly consistent with what has been revealed in the first question—namely that lower-proficiency speakers are less satisfied with their pronunciation. Remarkably, identical disregard for their articulation and tone of voice was shown in both groups, but with tone of voice being mentioned less frequently. Lower-proficiency speakers were expressively less likely to refer to their fluency when discussing their weaknesses.

Self-reporting vs. post-exposure rating in higher-proficiency partici-pants. The change in response rates between the self-reporting and post-exposure stages of the experiment was not substantial, with six more respondents answering the first descriptive question, and one fewer answering the second descriptive question (see Figure 4).
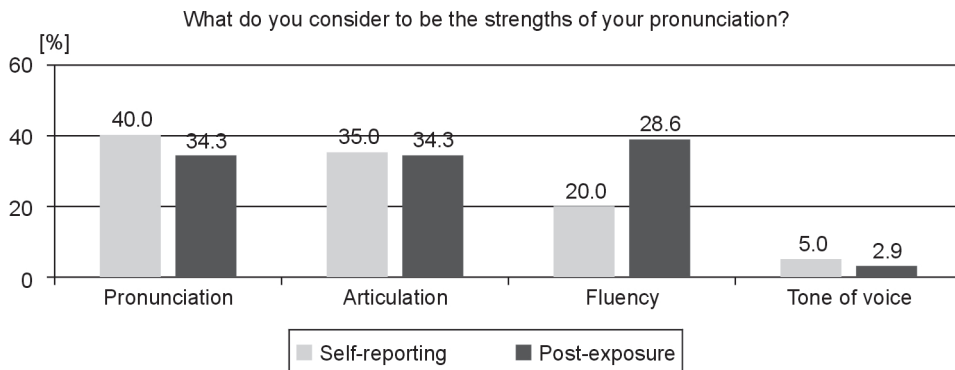
What do you consider to be the strengths of your pronunciation?

Figure 4. Bar graph for descriptive answers assigned to the four aspects for higher-proficiency speakers, strength of pronunciation.

The second stage, self-rating, resulted in a lower percentage share of pronunciation among the provided answers, although the change is not very significant. It may indicate the students' initial—though moderate—overestimation of their skills. The change in fluency percentage, however, suggests that the exposure to the pre-recorded samples left the students pleasantly surprised by their own fluency of speech. There is only very minor variability in the rating of articulation and tone (see Figure 5).

What do you consider to be the weaknesses of your pronunciation?

Figure 5. Bar graph for descriptive answers assigned to the four aspects for higher-proficiency speakers, weakness of pronunciation.

Following the second part of the experiment, the only major changes in the descriptive answers were related to pronunciation and fluency. The higher-proficiency speakers were slightly more dissatisfied with their pronunciation, but their fluency was not mentioned as a weakness quite as often anymore. The frequency of their pointing to articulation and tone did not undergo any serious change.

Self-reporting vs. post-exposure rating in lower-proficiency participants. Similarly to what was the case for the university students, the difference in response rates between the two stages of study was not substantial, the only change occurring in the first descriptive question, which came to be answered by three more participants in the second part of the experiment (see Figure 6).

What do you consider to be the strengths of your pronunciation?
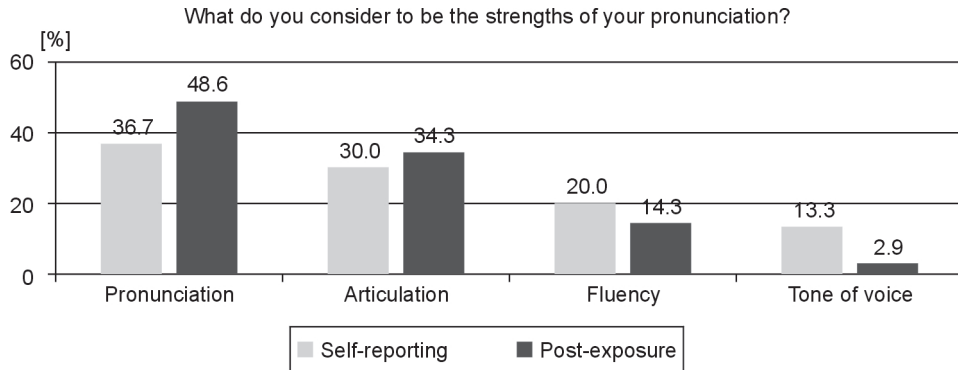
Figure 6. Bar graph for descriptive answers assigned to the four aspects for lower-proficiency speakers, strength of pronunciation.

After listening to their speech samples, the students were less likely to point to their tone of voice and/or fluency as one of their strengths, but appeared rather pleased with their pronunciation and articulation (see Figure 7).

What do you consider to be the weaknesses of your pronunciation?

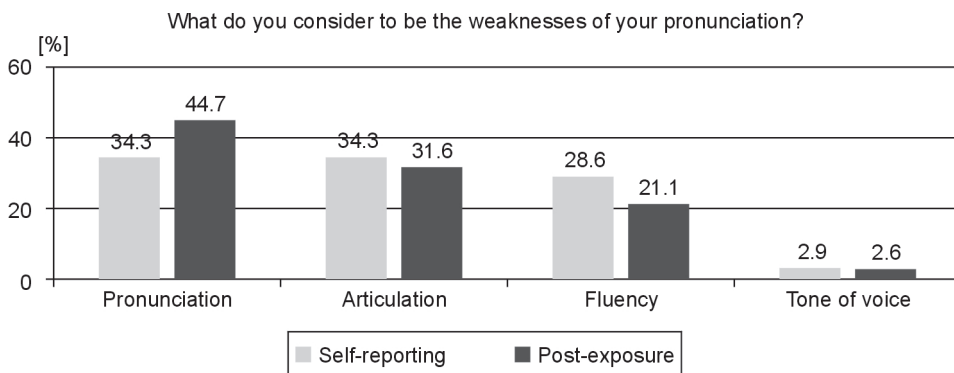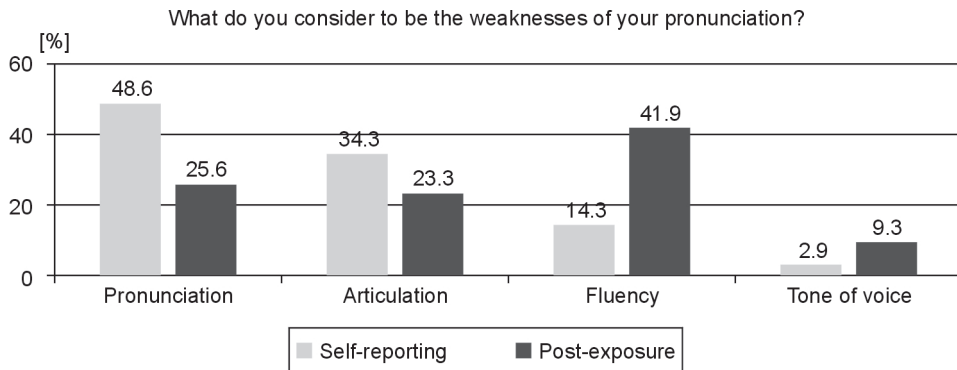*Figure 7.* Bar graph for descriptive answers assigned to the four aspects for lower-proficiency speakers, weakness of pronunciation.

It was not until the second stage of the experiment that the students seemed to widely acknowledge their lack of fluency as their weakness—the switch appears to have been very rapid. Again, as a logical consequence of the respondents' contetment with their pronunciation and articulation, those two features were mentioned much less frequently, in the case of articulation the frequency dropping to a near half of what was observed in the first stage.

General Discussion

The analysis of the quantitative results will be presented from two perspectives: the perspective of proficiency on self-perception of one's pronunciation and the perspective of how listening to the recording of one's speech changes the perception of one's pronunciation. In the first perspective, what emerges as the most evident is the stability of self-perception of pronunciation irrespective of proficiency. The fact that the higher-proficiency group was both more advanced in language competence and had had prior training in pronunciation did not affect their ratings—even though previous studies have shown that formal phonetic training substantially improves productive pronunciation skills (Nowacka, 2008). It is interesting to note that both groups rated their pronunciation between 5 to 6 on a 9-point scale, which points to the fact that they perceived their pronunciation as only slightly higher than the average between native and non-native. It may be concluded, at least in the light of the current results, that students, who should theoretically be much more confident in their pronunciation, are in fact not. Additionally, the ratings of the desired change do not show that less proficient students are more willing to change something in their pronunciation. It runs counter to initial intuition that lower-proficiency and lack of specialized pronunciation training should lead to the higher desire for improvement. Similarly surprising is the fact that the higher-proficiency students expressed relatively high desire for change, as high as the one expressed by the lower-proficiency students. It leads to the conclusion that proficiency and phonetic training do not guarantee more confidence in pronunciation. As Gardner et al. (1989) observe, anxiety levels normally tend to decline with the rise of experience and proficiency. Whenever a student expects to fail, anxiety results—which could in turn lead to self-derogation bias in the self-assessment of language skills. It could therefore be alleged that higher-proficiency students of English who should, in theory, be confident enough to perceive their pronunciation skills as advanced (due to their experience), and who at the same time tend to rate themselves as just slightly above average (between native and non-native) may suffer from a form of language anxiety.

Similar results were obtained for articulation and fluency. As regards articulation, it may be argued that the participants did not fully differentiate between articulation and pronunciation. While it may be the case for the lower-proficiency students who had not received any training in pronunciation and phonetics, the higher-proficiency students are likely to have been aware of the difference between pronunciation and articulation. Nevertheless, the mean rating for articulation is very similar to the one for pronunciation in both groups. It leads to the conclusion that articulation is taken to be fully integrated with

pronunciation independent of how proficient students are or whether or not they have acquaintance with phonetics.

The comparison of the results from self-reporting and after exposure to the recording points to a general conclusion that listening to one's recording does not change the perception of one's pronunciation. Listening to the recording did not change ratings for either pronunciation or articulation. The exception here is fluency, which exhibited the influence of task on ratings in an inter-acting pattern. After listening to the recording, the higher-proficiency students increased their mean scores, whereas the lower-proficiency students decreased their scores. It is not easy to explain why this parameter exhibited the effect of task. There are, however, two reasons to consider it as separate from both pronunciation and articulation. One reason is that fluency is somehow discon-nected from pronunciation. In common wisdom it is taken to mean how fast one speaks irrespective of specific correctness of pronunciation and articulation. It is also connected with skills such as the generation of syntactic constructions and verbal fluency. Another reason is that rating fluency from the recording of a read text is not well-grounded methodologically. Fluency seems to be more connected with spontaneous speech, where it is inseparably coupled, at least in general conception of the term, with skills such as word finding and sentence construction.

The qualitative analysis was conducted from two perspectives—the perspec-tive of differences in self-reporting among the two levels of proficiency, and the perspective of differences in descriptive answers pre- and post-exposure to one's recording in each group of participants. Regardless of the level of proficiency, both stages of our study have come to show that out of the four aspects we grouped the descriptive answers into (pronunciation, articulation, fluency, and tone of voice), pronunciation was referred to the most often, both as a weakness and a strength. It could be argued that this is due to the im-portance students of all levels attach to attaining native-like model in accent, intonation, and stress. This conclusion is consistent with Nowacka's (2012) aforementioned study. When enquired about their weaknesses, the students would frequently point to how "Polish" they sounded. In both groups, there were instances of participants misunderstanding the task and providing anwers which were irrelevant to pronunciation, but instead referred to their vocabulary, listening comprehension or grammar skills, which could be indicative of their poor understanding of what proper pronunciation stands for and equals to. It can be generally concluded that as it comes to fluency, the lower-proficiency students slightly overestimate their fluency whereas the higher-proficiency stu-dents underestimate it. A possible explanation for this is that generally, more is expected from university students in terms of fluency, and they could therefore repeatedly be made to feel that they did not meet certain standards. The only truly significant changes which could be observed in the qualitative questions

were those related to pronunciation and fluency in the lower-proficiency group between the two parts of the experiment. For fluency, these results are in tact with what has been shown in the quantitative analysis, where the mean decrease in rating was statistically significant. In the case of pronunciation, however, the findings were not distinctly reflected in the 1–9 scale ratings in the previous part of the analysis. Regardless of their level of acquaintance with transcription and phonetics, both groups used phonetic symbols to point to their specific articulatory problems—those instances, however, were still very rare. Many students saw their pronunciation as clear and easy to understand, and perceived this intelligibility as a definite strength. Another interesting aspect to note is the switch in response rates between questions concerning the self-reported strengths and weaknesses of the participants' pronunciation. The increase in the number of answers for the weakness question may suggest that it is much easier for students to think and speak of the flaws in their language skills than of the strengths. Yet we must also acknowledge the possibility that the respondents might have been somehow intimidated by the prospect of being verified by comparing their reported strengths and their recording. Therefore, this particular tendency could have more to do with experimental inhibitions among L2 learners than with how they actually perceived their pronunciation skills.

Conclusions

As may be concluded from the current results, the general perception of one's pronunciation ability is stable, not affected by specific performance in a given recording and irrespective of proficiency. Students at both levels of proficiency express similar desire for improvement of their pronunciation skills—hence, experience and phonetic training do not seem to translate into confidence. Instances of the participants' misunderstanding of the survey questions were telling and are to be taken into account for future research, perhaps in the application of even more clearly defined criteria.

The current findings that self-reported pronunciation does not differ from the pronunciation rated from the recording of one's speech forms a starting point for our future investigation in which we intend to apply voice manipulation. The rationale is as follows: if one self-reports one's pronunciation in the same fashion as they rate it from the recording of their voice, we are interested to see if ratings for the recording of one's own pronunciation change if one does not know they are listening to their own speech. In other words, we plan to create a situation in which students will rate their own pronunciation, being unaware of the fact that they are actually listening to their own speech. In

order to do that, we plan to manipulate voice parameters to the extent that the voice is reliably altered without manipulating other speech parameters that may contribute to accent rating. In order to set out with such a study, we needed to establish that students indeed do not differ in their self-reporting and rating their own recording when they know it is their own speech. The current study has established that self-reporting and the recording rating are fully connected.

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Die Selbsteinschätzung der fremdsprachigen Aussprache vor und nach dem Abhören der Aufnahme der eigenen Stimme

Zusammenfassung

Die im vorliegenden Artikel geschilderte Untersuchung betrifft die Selbsteinschätzung der fremdsprachigen Aussprache bei polnischen Schülern der niedrigeren und höheren Lernstufe. Sie konzentrierte sich darauf, die Unterschiede zwischen der Selbsteinschätzung vor und nach dem Abhören der Aufnahme der eigenen Stimme zu vergleichen. In früheren Untersuchungen zur Ausspracheeinschätzung besprach man die den Schülern von Muttersprachlern oder fort-geschrittenen Sprachbenutzern gegebenen Noten, wohingegen in vorliegender Analyse die Einschätzung des eigenen Akzents hinsichtlich solcher Kriterien wie Aussprache, Artikulation und Flüssigkeit im Mittelpunkt steht. Die Forschungsergebnisse wurden dann einer qualitati-ven und quantitativen Analyse unterzogen. Es wurden keine relevanten Unterschiede zwischen der zu erklärten Ausspracheeinschätzung und der Selbsteinschätzung der Aussprache nach dem Abhören der Aufnahme von eigener Stimme festgestellt. Das lässt zum Schluss kommen, dass die allgemeine Wahrnehmung eigener Akzentqualität beständig ist und sie ändert sich nicht in Folge der Reaktion auf solche Aufnahmen.

Schlüsselwörter: Psycholinguistik, Phonetik, Selbsteinschätzung der Aussprache, Fremd-sprachenunterricht

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Benefits of L1–L3 Similarities
The Case of the Dative Case

Abstract

The present study looks at the effects of structural similarities between L1 and L3 on learner performance. The main focus is on the knowledge of the dative construction in Polish learners of Portuguese. Portuguese and Polish share a number of important similarities in their use of the dative, which include functions not found in English, the learners' L2. The main question investigated in this study is whether learners are aware of the non-banal similarities (given that they do not occur in English) and whether they can make use of that knowledge. It is found that learners do benefit from positive transfer, but that depends on the kind of function and frequency of the dative.

Keywords: dative, transfer, avoidance, priming

Introduction

The role of L1 in the learning of a foreign language has been an important recurring theme since the beginning of second language acquisition research. It has also received conflicting interpretations, ranging from proposals that transfer from L1 is of negligible importance (e.g., George, 1972), through the recognition that it does affect performance in a foreign language, usually negatively (Cornips, 1992), to more nuanced analyses showing that much depends on proficiency. Thus, recent studies suggest that "as proficiency increases meaning-related transfer becomes more common" (Agustín Llach, 2010, p. 6), while "form-focused transfer is most dominant in the early stages of language learning" (Gabryś-Barker, 2006, p. 145).

In this study, I wish to focus on the role of structural similarities between an L1 and L3 in acquisition and performance. Specifically, I will look at elements of grammar that are shared by the two languages, but are at the same time fairly remarkable in the sense that they are not found in the learner's L2. This will make it possible to correlate very concrete linguistic data with performance data and revisit the long-standing debate on whether contrastive analysis is relevant to learning. I will question the view that "[i]nterference, or native to target language transfer, plays such a small role in language learning performance that no contrastive analysis, no matter how well conceived, could correlate highly with performance data, at least on the level of syntax" (Whitmann & Jackson, 1972, p. 40), and I will argue that similarities uncovered by comparison can in fact strongly facilitate learning. To explore the question of positive transfer, the present study examines Polish learners' perception of the dative construction in Portuguese. Similar studies investigated the acquisition of the dative construction in a foreign language, although to the best of my knowledge none featured the pair Polish-Portuguese. In one, Zyzik (2006) reports on the acquisition of the Spanish dative by English-speaking learners, and while the findings of that study are relevant to our discussion, the combination of languages it involved determined a focus quite unlike in the present study. That is, because there are few common uses of the dative in Spanish and English, learners cannot fall back on their L1 knowledge to assist consolidation of the L2 system, so Zyzik's study did not explore the benefits of similarities. On the other hand, the present investigation looks at how certain uses of the dative construction, common to L1 and L3, can be consolidated thanks to the similarities. In the following section, a description of the dative is offered, focusing mainly on similarities between Portuguese and Polish, especially those points that set the two languages apart from English.

The Dative

The Dative Alternation

Indo-European languages are characterized by the presence of the dative case, which marks indirect objects, typically expressing recipients in situations of transfer of possession (as in: *Pass me the salt*). Even in languages without overt case, like English, the dative case affects the behavior of various grammatical constructions. For example, those verbs that alternate between the dative and prepositional frames are sensitive to the nature of the entity candidate for dative case marking. While animate entities can freely receive dative case and

thus alternate freely between the prepositional and dative frame (1), inanimate participants resist the alternation (2). The logic of the constraint blocking uses like (2b) is that since the dative case prototypically marks recipients and potential possessors, inanimate entities incapable of possession do not qualify for dative marking.

(1) a. Jordan threw the ball to Carter. (Prepositional frame)
    b. Jordan threw Carter the ball.   (Dative frame)

(2) a. Jordan   threw the ball to the basket. (Prepositional frame)
    b. *Jordan threw the basket the ball.   (Dative frame)

According to Gropen et al. (l989) and Pinker (1989), the constraint on animacy is universal, and as such can be found in many languages. Indeed, such is the case of other European languages, where inanimate participants can only be expressed through a goal *to*-PP, but not a dative frame. In Portuguese and Polish, such uses are thus also anomalous. The following is a Polish translation of example (2):

(3) a. Jordan rzucił piłkę   do kosza.
       Jordan   threw ball   to basket
       'Jordan threw the ball to the basket.'

    b. *Jordan rzucił oszowi   piłkę.
       Jordan   threw basket-DAT ball
       'Jordan threw the basket   the ball.'

This shows that in their exposure to the dative system in a new language, learners should be able to rely on at least some principles operative in the functioning of dative objects that are not language-specific, but indeed common to more languages.

   Still, there are particularities in the way the dative construction is used. Some uses are common to L1 and L3, and they are especially interesting when they do not occur in L2. They will be discussed below.

Dative of Possession

   Of great interest is the range of meanings which are expressed by the indirect complement construction. Portuguese makes use of indirect complements to indicate a possessor affected in an event (*dativo de posse*, Bechara, 2002, p. 425; Rocha Lima, 2011, p. 308).

(4) Lavaram-lhe   o pescoço e   cortaram-lhe o cabelo.
    (They) washed-him the neck   and cut-him   the hair.
    (Jorge Schwartz, Vanguardas argentinas)
    'They washed his neck and cut his hair.'

(5) […] curar-lhe a   filha. (Raimundo Lúlio, *O Livro das Bestas*)
     cure-him   the daughter
     'to cure his daughter'

(6) Partiram-lhe   os vidros   e   roubaram-lhe o rádio.
    (They) broke-him the windows and stole-him   the radio
     (Joana Vilela, *Lisboa, anos 70*)
     'They broke his windows and stole his radio.'

These uses are strikingly similar to the behavior of the Polish dative, which is also typically employed to express the affected possessor. The above sentences can be translated almost word for word, save the inexistence of articles in Polish:

(7) Umyli   mu szyję i   obcięli mu włosy.
    (They) washed him neck and cut   him hair.
    'They washed his neck and cut his hair.'

(8) […] uleczyć mu córkę.
    cure   him daughter.
    'to cure his daughter'

(9) Wybili   mu szyby   i   ukradli mu radio.
    (They) broke him windows and stole   him radio.
    'They broke his windows and stole his radio.'

The similarity between Polish and Portuguese can better be appreciated when they are contrasted with English. In the construction which describes an activity directed toward an object and its possessor, Polish and Portuguese mark the affected possessor by means of the dative pronoun, whereas English indicates it by means of the possessive pronoun:

Table 1
Form of dative of possession constructions in Polish, Portuguese, and English

Polish	Portuguese	English
Cut *him* [hair]	Cut *him* [the hair]	Cut [*his* hair]
Obetnij mu [*włosy*]	*Corta-lhe* [*o cabelo*]	

Ethical Dative

An even more remarkable similarity can be observed in the use of the so-called ethical dative (*dativo ético*, Bechara, 2002, p. 425). Here, a participant is mentioned that is not directly involved in the situation (Svobodová, 2014, p. 54)—it is not an argument of the verb, but is mentioned as an "affected party," a participant emotionally involved in the situation. The participant in question is usually the speaker. In some cases, the participant can be rendered in English as a colloquial dative (e.g., *sing me a song*); in other cases it is most naturally not mentioned at all (11); and in still other situations it is expressed by the malefactive *on* construction (12).

(10) Abre-me essa porta. (José Leite de Vasconcellos, *Revista Lusitana*, 1917)
      Open-me that door
      'Open that door.'

(11) Não me enviem cartões   a essas pessoas. (Bechara, 2002, p. 425)
      Not me send   postcards to those people
      'Don't send postcards to those people.'

(12) Não me chores agora. (Mário de Carvalho, *Apuros de um pessimista*
      Not me cry   now
      em fuga, 1999)
      'Don't cry on me now.'

Predictably, these uses are also available in Polish (13)–(15).

(13) Otwórz mi te   drzwi.
      Open   me that door
      'Open that door.'

(14) Nie wysyłajcie mi kartek   do tych   osób.
      Not send   me postcards to these people
      'Don't send postcards to those people.'

(15) Nie płacz   mi teraz.
      Not cry   me now
      'Don't cry on me now.'

It should be pointed out, however, that this special use of the dative construction is not very common in either Portuguese or Polish. It is typically only found in spoken language, and is used on special occasions, when the speaker feels

the need to stress his or her emotional involvement toward the outcome of the situation being discussed. One can speculate that a speaker may reasonably be imagined as functioning successfully in either language, without using or hearing this element for extended periods of time.

Dative of Opinion

One point of dissimilarity between Polish and Portuguese is the use of the dative case to express a scenario including its participant's perspective.

(16) É-*lhe* claro que existe qualquer coisa de maior.
     Is-him clear that exists some   thing of greater
     (http://www.revistapassos.pt, accessed May 12, 2017)
     'It is clear to him that there exists something greater.'

(17) É-nos proveitoso   neste mundo utar.
     Is-us advantageous in-this world fight
     (www.ocalvinista.com, accessed May 12, 2017)
     'It is worth our while to fight in this world.'

(18) Não *me* é possível traduzir em palavras o que   sinto.
     Not me is possible translate in words   the what (I) feel
     (Juscelino Kubitschek, *Discurso de 1960*)
     'It is not possible for me to translate into words what I feel.'

It should be noted that in Polish too some meanings can be expressed by means of this dative construction (19)–(20). In some cases, usage similarities are quite striking, so much so that the familiar classic line *humani nihil a me alienum puto* is rendered through essentially the same dative structure in both Polish and Portuguese (21).

(19) Jest mi obojętne, jakiej są   płci. (Mirosław Bujko, *Złoty pociąg*)
     Is   me indifferent what are sex
     'It doesn't make any difference to me what sex they are.'

(20) Nie było mu trudno takie rodziny znaleźć.
     Not was   him hard   such families find
     (Kacper Zagadka, *O Małym Królu*)
     'It wasn't hard for him to find such families.'

(21) a. Sou homem; nada humano   me é estranho.
       (I) am man;   nothing human me is strange
       'I am a human being; I consider nothing that is human alien to me.'

      b. Jestem człowiekiem; nic   co ludzkie   nie jest mi obce.
      (I) am man;   nothing that human not is   me strange
      'I am a human being; I consider nothing that is human alien to me.'

However, while Polish has a rather limited selection of predicative adjectives that take dative complements, in Portuguese, the construction allows any adjective that expresses the subject's opinion toward the proposition presented in the sentence. Below is a brief sample of adjectives attested in the construction:

(22) a. Era-lhes *óbvio* que... ('it was obvious to them that…')
     b. Era-lhe *estranho* que... ('it was strange to him that…')
     c. É-me *duvidoso* que… ('it is doubtful to me that…')
     d. É-me *pouco relevante* que… ('it is not very relevant for me that…')
     e. Essa questão é-me profundamente *indiferente*… ('the question is profoundly indifferent to me…')
     f. É-me *assustador* sequer pensar… ('I find it frightening to even think…')
     g. É-me *evidente* que... ('It is evident to me that…')

The similarities between Polish and Portuguese, relative to English are summed up in Table 2.

Table 2
Presence or absence of three functions of the dative in Portuguese, Polish, and English

	Dative of possession	Ethical dative	Dative of opinion
Portuguese	+	+	+
Polish	+	+	–/+ (only single adjectives)
English	–	–	–

Learnability Challenge

The above uses of the Portuguese dative construction present a challenge for learnability theories. The most obvious question is whether they are mastered by Polish learners of Portuguese as a third language,[1] and if so, whether their successful usage can be attributed to similarities with Polish. As experienced language learners, they can be expected to be aware that uses like the ethical dative or the dative of possession are far from universally available options, since they are not found in English. Their existence in Polish and corresponding absence in English may prompt learners of Portuguese to employ avoidance strategies on the grounds that it would be beyond belief that such evidently special L1 features could also be found in another language. Even when they have witnessed similar uses, Polish learners of Portuguese may still avoid them in their own production, because "when great similarities exist […] the learner may doubt that these similarities are real" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 138).

On the other hand, one can also view learners' perception of similarities more optimistically. It is equally possible that once they are noticed, such similarities may be taken advantage of in building proficiency in a L3. Such a turn of events would be consistent with the idea that "[t]he use of prior knowledge, i.e. of one's L1, could contribute to learners' success […] at the cognitive level (objective language progress)" (Gabryś-Barker, 2006, p. 164).

One can expect such success to be contingent on the learners' level and prior knowledge that new competences can be built upon. This is consistent with the Teachability Hypothesis, which claims that

> […] the acquisition process cannot be steered or modelled just according to the requirements or precepts of formal instruction. On the contrary, […] teaching itself is subject to some of the constraints which determine the course of natural acquisition. (Pienemann, 1989, p. 57).

Points of an L2 grammar can only be acquired successfully when the learner is ready for them; that is, their acquisition should be preceded by first mastering those points of grammar that are earlier and more basic in the acquisitional chronology. This presupposes a natural sequence in which the uses of dative outlined in the Section The Dative are arranged. Thus, it is fair to consider typical transfer-of-possession uses (*Eu dei-lhe flores*, 'I gave her flowers') as being the first stage in the acquisition of the dative construction. This is then

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[1] It is assumed here that for Polish learners in general, Portuguese almost always is a third language. When Polish speakers become interested in learning Portuguese, they already know at least English and in many cases, they are also fluent in Spanish, as is the case with the subjects in the present study.

followed by uses where the 'possession' element is present but is secondary to the construction's focus on affectedness (Dative of possession and Ethical dative), which are in turn followed by uses where possession is most backgrounded and is not commonly found in L1 (Dative of opinion). Similar conclusions about the existence of a sequence of acquisition of the dative system are presented in Zyzik (2006, p. 132). If transfer-of-possession uses have been internalized, the learner should be ready for the Dative of possession and Ethical dative, especially if these two applications of the dative are also present in L1.

And there is good reason to believe that that is in fact what happens. It has been demonstrated that language users are sensitive to unusual patterns in the input, which are incorporated into a speaker's linguistic knowledge as a result of mere exposure, as argued by authors like Bybee (2010) and Taylor (2012) who hypothesize that "each linguistic encounter lays down a trace in memory" (Taylor, 2012, p. 3). Specifically, what seems to happen is that as language users attend to input, certain features present in that input register in their minds as salient points likely to have a long-lived effect on their linguistic knowledge. It should be pointed out in this connection that salience and noticeability have obvious implications for second language acquisition. Under the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), it is a measure of successful learners (of a foreign language) to what extent they are able to notice new elements of the input that they were not previously aware of and to go on to use these forms themselves.

It is important to stress that the new features need not even be noticed consciously. A large part of knowledge is built without conscious report, as is indicated by the way people reuse elements of preceding discourse in their own production. For example, Levelt & Kelter (1982) show that the choice of grammatical constructions used when answering a question depends on the very question's construction. If a person is asked *At what time do you close?* the answer is very likely to include the preposition *at*, but the preposition is equally likely to be absent in the answer if the question lacks it (*What time do you close?*). While speakers are clearly sensitive to the "question's surface form [which] can affect the format of the answer given" (Levelt & Kelter, 1982, p. 78), most probably, they are not even aware that their answer echoed the form of the question.

What such findings suggest is that the presence of an element in the input is powerful enough to prime the learners to echo that element in their own use, and the strength of priming depends on the salience and noticeability of a given element. The Portuguese dative is an interesting case in the context of salience-driven priming and use, because its salience should be heightened by its remarkable similarity with Polish. It is evident that such features do get noticed, for it would be rather counterintuitive to view exposure to input as having no effect on the learner's knowledge. It would be interesting to see how the "trace in memory" envisioned by Taylor (2012) translates into actual use.

Thus, the question to be explored is what effect on the learner the similarities with L1 have. Are they dismissed as "suspicious," "too good to be true" and therefore worthy of avoidance, or, on the contrary, do they contribute to priming and, in consequence, to more felicitous learning?

Study

Research Questions

The study aims to address the following questions:

1. Can L1 knowledge be tapped in developing an L3 system in areas of great similarity? Can such similarities neutralize interference from L2? One fairly peculiar use of the dative construction investigated in this study is governed by identical L1 and L3 rules, and it is therefore of great interest whether learners can transfer the construction's specifications from L1 to L3.
2. Does recent exposure to uses of a construction prime adequate use of that construction? In other words, can the learner benefit from encountering a specific use of the construction without explicit instruction regarding its function?
3. Are the functions of the dative construction discussed in sections: Dative of Possession, Ethical Dative, and Dative of Opinion located within a natural hierarchy determining their chronology of acquisition, in line with the *Teachability Hypothesis*?

Participants

The study involved 25 subjects, third-year students of Portuguese, aged 20–23, enrolled in the Spanish-Portuguese program at the University of Silesia in Katowice. At the time of the study, the subjects had completed three years of intensive training in Portuguese, attending various classes in Portuguese as the language of instruction. The group included 19 females and six males. All subjects were native speakers of Polish, with English being their L2 and Portuguese coming as an L3. None of the subjects reported having visited a Portuguese-speaking country before.

Task

The subjects were instructed to complete ten sentences with blanks and multiple-choice options. The blanks referred to verb complements, of which six included dative objects and these were the focus of the study. The remaining four sentences contained accusative and other complements and were included to make it harder for the subjects to discover the objective of the study (which could prompt them to select the correct answers for the wrong reasons). The sentences presented to the subjects had the following format (The sheet with all sentences is shown in Appendix C). The sentence in Figure 1 can be translated as 'Paulo says that they broke the windows in his car and stole the radio,' and the correct answer is C, which involves a dative complement, literally 'broke *him* the windows.'

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6. O Paulo diz que --------- partiram os vidros no carro e roubaram o rádio.
A. ele                                        C. lhe
B. o                                          D. dela
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Figure 1. Format of sentences used in the task.

The six sentences with dative complements included two that exemplified the *ethical dative*, two with the *dative of possession*, and two with the *dative of opinion*.

At this point it is necessary to address one possible objection, namely the possibility that filling blanks may not represent the most natural demonstration of performance. Indeed, apart from completing forms or questionnaires, natural use of a language in communicative settings rarely involves tasks typical of classroom work. Nevertheless, the format adopted in the study can be considered a reliable tool measuring the learner's level of acquisition of the system. To complete the sentences, it is necessary to understand the content of the sentence, identify the semantic element of possession and associate it with the correct use of the dative construction. This may not guarantee active use in completely free-choice expression, but it does show the learner's growing understanding, passive or active, of the dative functions.

The subjects were divided into two groups, with 13 and 12 participants in each. One group was first asked to read three short paragraphs in Portuguese which featured the three uses of the dative in Portuguese. The idea was to measure possible effects, if any, of structural priming: Does exposure to a given construction affect performance in the use of that construction with other verbs? To ensure that the subjects would not mechanically skim over the relevant uses of the dative, they were instructed to answer comprehension questions that required focusing on the information conveyed by means of the dative constructions (see Figures 2 and 3).

É-me indispensável estar perto do mar, da Natureza, ouvir o silêncio, e Portugal tem paisagens magníficas; impossível não regressar com energias renovadas. Fonte http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2010-04-02-a-escolha-de...-sofia-nicholson	2. A autora precisa da Natureza para A. escrever sobre ela. B. tirar fotografias. C. nadar no mar. D. descansar.

Figure 2. A comprehension task used to prime the subjects.

It is indispensable for me (lit. *it is me indispensable*) to be close to the sea, to Nature, hear the silence, and Portugal has magnificent landscapes; impossible to not come back with renewed energy. Source http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2010-04-02-a-escolha-de...-sofia-nicholson	2. The author needs Nature to A. write about it. B. take pictures. C. swim in the sea. D. rest.

*Figure 3.* Translation of the example shown in Figure 1.

Three short paragraphs were also shown to the subjects in the other group (control), but the passages in this group did not include uses of the dative construction. The objective of using non-dative texts in the control group was to observe differences in the effect on performance in the case of priming and the absence of priming.

The sheets with paragraphs and comprehension tasks are given in Appendix A (group with priming) and Appendix B (control group, no priming).

Results

The first salient observation is a clear bias in the distribution of the correct answers among the three functions of the dative construction. The best perform-ance is found in the use of the *dative of possession* (100%, 100% in group A, and 92%, 77% in B); followed by the *dative of opinion* (42%, 25% in A; 23%, 8% in B) and the *ethical dative* (8%, 0% in A; 15%, 0% in B). The uses of the dative of possession were recognized correctly by almost all subjects, whereas the ethical dative sentences were missed by a great majority of subjects, with the dative of opinion sentences faring only slightly better. It should be noted that the contrast is so strong that it cannot be a result of coincidence or ran-dom fluctuation. For example, in the primed group, 12 correct answers were given to each sentence exemplifying the *dative of possession* (i.e., all subjects got them right) and only one correct answer to the *ethical dative* examples (with 23 incorrect answers). Thus, the difference between the correct answers given to the *dative of possession* examples and the *ethical dative* examples is statistically significant, with its Two Tailed *p*-value and One Tailed *p*-value both

at 0, which means there is a 100% chance the proportions are different. The percentages of correct answers are shown in Figures 4 and 5.
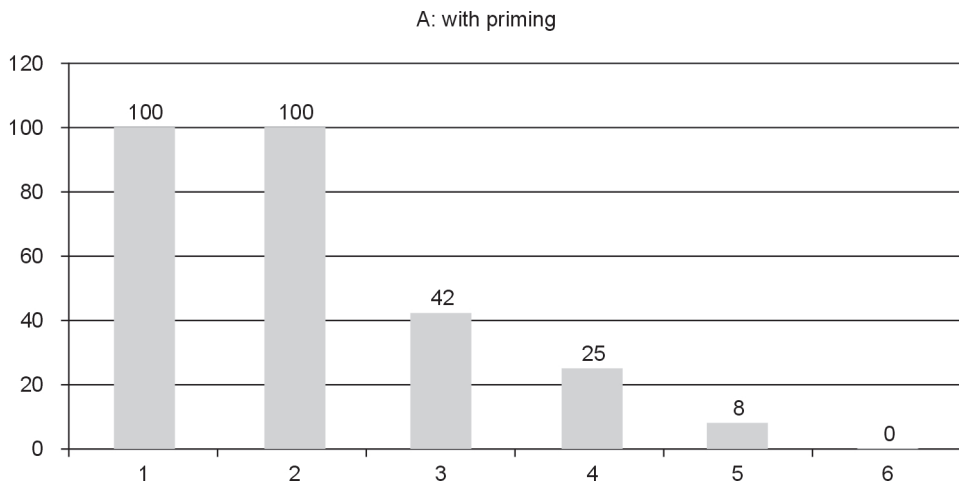
A: with priming

Figure 4. Correct choices (in %) for the sentences with the dative of posses-sion (1–2), the dative of opinion (3–4), and the ethical dative in group A (with priming).
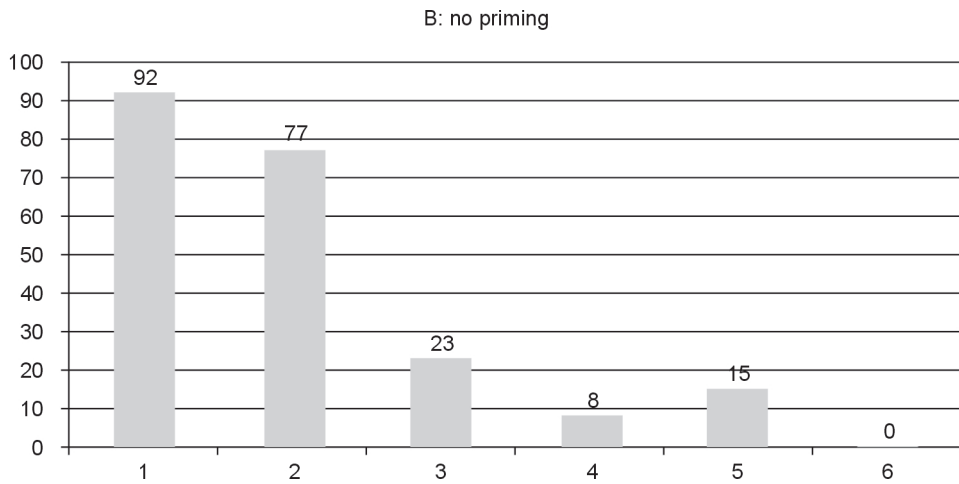
B: no priming

Figure 5. Correct choices (in %) for the sentences with the dative of possession (1–2), the dative of opinion (3–4), and the ethical dative in group B (no priming).

Priming does seem to play a role, but it is stronger in the case of the dative of possession. As Figures 4 and 5 illustrate, the percentage of correct answers (the first two columns) in the unprimed control group, although high, is visibly lower than in the group that benefited from priming. Although the difference

may not be statistically very significant in the case of the first sentence (with only a 52% chance that the proportions are different), the difference is much more pronounced in the second example, where there is a 91.8% chance that the proportions are different. In the first pair, the two-tailed p-value is 0.48 and the one-tailed p-value: 0.26; in the second pair, the two-tailed p-value is 0.08, and the one-tailed p-value: 0.04. In the case of the dative of opinion (examples 3–4), the chances that the differences between the results in the primed and the unprimed group are significant are 67% and 75.2%, and in the ethical dative sentences (5–6), the chances are 40% and 0%. The diminishing trend in the effects of priming can be seen in the orientation of the dotted line in Figure 6.
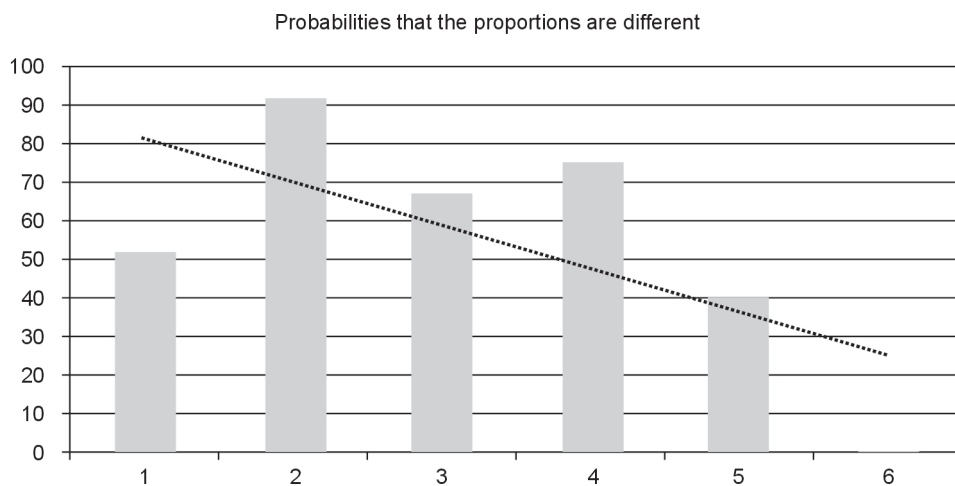

Figure 6. Probabilities (in %) that the proportions between primed and unprimed groups are different.

Discussion

The examples tested did not involve typical uses of the dative case, ones that can be found in English (i.e., transfer of possession uses discussed in the Section The Dative Alternation), so the subjects could not rely on the "universal" logic of the dative construction. To give correct answers, the subjects had to tap their knowledge of more language-specific properties of the dative construction described in the following sections: Dative of Possession, Ethical Dative, and Dative of Opinion.

Thus, the likeliest explanation of the data presented here is transfer from L1, or at least lack of strong L2 transfer. Because the dative of possession is fairly common in Polish, it can be assumed that when it is noticed in Portuguese, it is internalized most easily. Note that almost all the subjects recognized and

applied correctly the use of the dative of possession in both sentences that exemplified it, in both the primed and unprimed group. To appreciate the significance of the data obtained, it is necessary to consider the two sentences in some detail. They featured two kinds of possession, namely alienable (23) and inalienable possession (24).

(23) O Paulo diz que *lhe* partiram os vidros no carro e roubaram o rádio.
Art Paul says that *him*-DAT broke ART windows in-art car and took ART radio
'Paulo says that they broke the windows in his car and took the radio.'

(24) A Antónia acredita que foi a viagem a Fátima que lhe curou o corpo.
Art Antónia believes that was ART trip to Fátima that her healed ART body
'Antónia believes that it was the trip to Fátima that healed her body.'

In the example with alienable possession, the radio is seen as being possessed more "distantly"; that is, it is not an inalienable part of the subject's body. In example (24), on the other hand, the body is a typical instance of inalienable possessum, more intuitively associated with the grammatical category of possession. The decision to include two such different kinds of possession in the sentences test was motivated by the need to avoid skewing the answers given to some types of the dative construction. That is, one would expect better performance in the case of the dative of possession relative to the other uses of the construction, if the examples used in the form were disproportionately more transparent or in any way more accessible than those representing the other uses. The inclusion of the alienable possession sentence (23) was designed to make this part of the task closer to the other uses of the dative construction in terms of difficulty. In the case of the dative of possession sentences, the alienable possession use could be considered more challenging, and indeed this is reflected in the results which are lower than for the inalienable possessive use, but only slightly. What needs to be underscored is that the sentence was nevertheless handled much better than the other uses. That is, one can conclude that the difference in performance is not due to the objective, informational content of the sentences, but due to grammatical difficulty. The dative of possession is more accessible because it is a deeply entrenched part of Polish grammar, unlike the other two uses, which although present, are not as frequent. The dative of opinion and ethical dative contrast strongly with the possessive use of the dative construction in that they are considerably less common in Polish. While the ethical dative functions the same way in both languages, it is far from being a basic feature of the grammar of either language. And the dative of opinion, although attested in Polish, is used with a very restricted range of adjectives. As a result, learners of Portuguese have limited chances of coming across instances of these functions with sufficient frequency for the construc-

tion to be noticed and internalized. When uses like the ethical dative do get noticed only sporadically, their appearance in Portuguese may strike learners as either implausible or downright incomprehensible, and consequently these functions may not be recognized as such at all.

The differing effects of priming for the dative of possession on the one hand, and the ethical and opinion dative on the other can be accounted for in terms of their frequency, too. It could be speculated that the uses of possession dative shown to the subjects before the task helped pre-activate the function, because it was already present in their minds in one form or another. Although some effect could be observed, priming failed to translate significantly into better performance in the case of the other two datives, probably because there was little to prime: the structures were not part of the subjects' knowledge of Portuguese, so they were missed in the priming input, or the right association was not made when it came time to use the knowledge in the multiple-choice task.

All this justifies the conclusion that transfer from L1 is contingent on a number of factors. One is the learners' proficiency level. The subjects examined in the study were intermediate learners with enough experience to take advantage of the observed similarities through positive transfer from L1. This represents an evident improvement over the tendency to transfer from L2, often negatively, at lower levels of proficiency in L3 (Angelovska & Hahn, 2012). For example, in the case of beginning learners of Portuguese, negative transfer from L2 is the only explanation for the use of the verb *ser* ('to be') in the "age description" collocation. Polish students tend to build sentences like *Eu sou 20 anos* ('I am 20 years') instead of *Tenho 20 anos* ('I have 20 years') because their L2 English interferes, even though transfer from their L1 Polish would have been yielded the right structure. At more advanced stages, transfer tends to "even out," with both L1 and L2 serving as sources for more positive transfer.

The results of the study also justify the observation that, to the extent that the subjects' correct responses can be attributed to transfer from L1, the effects of transfer outweigh avoidance mainly in the case of more common constructions. It seems that the reason why the subjects' performance was more reliable in the case of the dative of possession than in the ethical or opinion dative is that the former is a more common feature of grammar and therefore more likely to have been come across, and hence psychologically more entrenched. The latter two types are, by comparison, so rare that they may have been misidentified. It should be underscored that in the multiple-choice task, the subjects were attracted by distracters that were securely not keyable – the options selected were incorrect, being either ungrammatical or semantically anomalous or both, but it was these options that were nonetheless perceived as being more acceptable than the intended dative keys. This shows that the two rare functions of the dative were misinterpreted by the subjects.

Finally, the data demonstrate that the role of priming also depends on the frequency of the material. While the more frequent structures benefited from the subjects' recent exposure to relevant examples in the input, their performance on the low-frequency dative constructions barely changed at all in the primed group compared to the control. This finding can be viewed as being in conflict with the theory that priming effects increase as frequency decreases. That is, previous studies have shown that language users tend to notice and repeat those elements of input that are unusual or infrequent when compared to other forms. Thus, for example, observing the passive voice in the input can be trigger enough for the speakers to build a passive sentence themselves: even though the passive voice is not a particularly unusual form, it is considerably less frequent than the active voice, and is therefore likely to stand out in the input. This regularity has been named "the inverse frequency effect: the less frequent structure primes more" (Jaeger & Snider, 2008, p. 1064). By virtue of being less frequent, an expression has the so called "surprisal effect" which assures its noticeability. However, as the present study of the dative construction shows, the "inverse frequency effect" seems to cease when the frequency of a given construction is too low. As such, the finding is not really a contradiction of the inverse correlation of priming strength and frequency, but instead it complements it: the inverse correlation holds for most cases of "familiar" constructions such as the passive voice or the comparative degree of adjectives, and it correctly predicts that priming will be stronger for the less frequent member of a given pair of constructions. It can be hypothesized that language users do notice constructions that are relatively less frequent *provided* that these constructions are recognized and comprehended reliably and adequately. On the other hand, priming does not even begin to occur for forms that remain obscure to the learner because of their low frequency and are therefore not even tempting candidates for reuse after recent exposure. This sudden cessation of the correlation can be represented graphically by means of Figure 7.
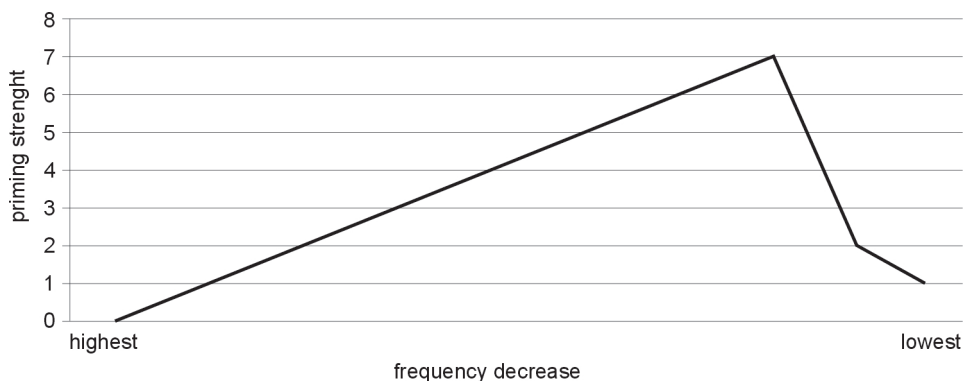

Figure 7. Inverse frequency effect with an abrupt drop for very infrequent forms.

Outlook

Unfortunately, there are limits to the strength of conclusions that can be drawn from the present data. As hinted above, correct answers in a multiple choice task do not guarantee correct use of the corresponding language points in the learners' production. Indeed, there is no way of knowing how learners go about the use of the dative construction in their writing or speech, because as of today, no learner corpora of Portuguese output are available which could be searched for the use of specific language forms. Ideally, a research design for future investigation of factors such as priming, learners' L1, or their level should make use of triangulated experimental and corpus data as corroborating evidence. This, however, may remain a mere plan waiting for Portuguese learner corpora to be created. Learner corpora are available for English, such as the *International Corpus of Learner English* (ICLE, Granger et al., 2002), and such corpora were used to investigate the use of the dative construction by Polish and German learners of English (Callies & Szcześniak, 2008), but rare language combinations like Polish-Portuguese make the creation of similar tools rather unlikely any time soon.

Another way to supplement judgment tasks like the tool used in the present study would be to use other data collection techniques such as elicited production, because experimental data are often needed to corroborate data obtained from one source (see Wasow & Arnold, 2005). Elicitation was not attempted here for reasons of space, but there is no theoretical reason why the learners' knowledge of the applications of the dative should not be investigated through structured question-response tasks, where subjects are presented with pictures illustrating simple events and asked to describe who did what to whom. Admittedly, this would require a larger-scale project involving a more complex setup, with a substantial number of non-dative sentences included as controls, all of which would require a discussion twice the size of the present study. Nevertheless, such studies can be undertaken to verify the findings presented here.

Conclusions

The results of the present study confirm that positive transfer from L1 can override the influence of L2 in the acquisition of an L3 especially at higher levels of proficiency. Indeed, it would be counterintuitive, if not downright absurd, to find L1–L3 similarities being ignored or their knowledge not being put to work in acquisition. Especially in the case of relatively common con-

structions, learners seem to be aware of the correct form of L3 expressions, which correspond closely in form and function to their equivalents in L1, and then L2 appears to subside as a source of transfer. However, it is evident that avoidance, likely motivated by L2–L3 differences, does play a role when it comes to structures that are rare, albeit perfectly grammatical and natural in L1. It should be fairly uncontroversial to propose supplementing the classroom practice of such L3 forms with explicit instruction in order to demonstrate the similarities in question. Contrasting the learners' L1 and L2/L3 and pointing out common properties can be beneficial insofar as it may help raise awareness of features that would otherwise remain obscure or misunderstood.

These conclusions seem especially valid in light of the effects of priming. As the results show, priming from input to immediate use is stronger for those forms that the learners are capable of recognizing in the first place, which can be seen as a restatement of the $i + 1$ Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982). That is, priming occurred most visibly for forms within the learners' reach, when they represented input within the $i + 1$ range. Conversely, priming decreased for rarer forms because they represented "input plus *much more than* one," well beyond the learners' competence level. To help learners benefit from priming (and transfer), their level would first need to be elevated, and one way of doing so is through explicit contrastive analysis of L1/L3.

This is also consistent with the idea that, as predicted by the Teachability Hypothesis (Pienemann, 1989), successfully internalizing such finer points of grammar appears to be subject to constraints to do with the natural course of acquisition. It seems the more advanced functions of the dative construction cannot be mastered until the learner has cleared its most basic application, the transfer of possession. It is only after this most obvious and common use of the dative has been consolidated that the learner is ready for functions like the dative of possession or ethical dative, and these in turn precede the so-called dative of opinion, a function that comes and is learned last.

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Konrad Szcześniak

Die Nutzen aus den Ähnlichkeiten zwischen Erstsprache (L1) und Drittsprache (L3). Kasus: der Dativ

Z u s a m m e n f a s s u n g

Die vorliegende Arbeit betrifft strukturelle Ähnlichkeiten zwischen der Erstsprache (L1) und Drittsprache (L3) und deren Bedeutung für die im Fremdsprachenunterricht erzielten

Leistungen. Das Thema wird am Beispiel der Dativkonstruktion und deren Anwendung von den Portugiesisch lernenden Polen erörtert. Die polnische und die portugiesische Sprache kennzeichnet eine ganze Reihe von Ähnlichkeiten im Dativgebrauch, die solche Funktionen umfassen, welche in dem Englischen, das eine Zweitsprache für Portugiesisch Lernende ist, nicht vorkommen. Die Arbeit soll die Frage beantworten, ob sich die Fremdsprachenlernenden der bestehenden und nicht unbedeutenden Ähnlichkeiten (die im Englischen nicht auftreten) bewusst sind und ob diese Kenntnisse ihr Lernen begünstigen. Es wurde festgestellt, dass die Portugiesisch lernenden Polen im Stande sind, den positiven Transfer auszunutzen, das aber ist von konkreten Funktionen und von der Häufigkeit des Dativgebrauchs abhängig.

Schlüsselwörter: Dativ, Transfer, Vermeiden, Bahnung

Leitura
Costumes e comportamentos
Leia os trechos e responda às perguntas.

Claro que há coisas que me chateiam, como a toda a gente, mas penso sempre que tenho duas opções: posso deixar que isto me afete o suficiente para me pôr de mau humor e estragar-me o dia ou posso passar por cima, ir dar um passeio e pôr para trás das costas.

Fonte
http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2015-04-24-So-fia-Escobar-Este-ano-tem-sido-o-melhor-da-minha-vida

1. Podemos inferir que a autora do trecho evita que
A. lhe estraguem o dia.
B. muita gente pense mal dela.
C. os seus amigos fiquem chateados.
D. o passeio demore demasiado tempo.

É-me indispensável estar perto do mar, da Natureza, ouvir o silêncio, e Portugal tem paisagens magníficas; impossível não regressar com energias renovadas.

Fonte
http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2010-04-02-a-escolha-de...-sofia-nicholson

2. A autora precisa da Natureza para
A. escrever sobre ela.
B. tirar fotografias.
C. nadar no mar.
D. descansar.

Ele teve mãe – usamos a frase para definir homens cada vez mais raros. São os que, a qualquer hora, estão de barba feita e adequadamente vestidos. Parecem ter saído do banho naquele momento. Não só. São educados e gentis. Não poupam *obrigados, desculpe-me* e *com licença*. Dão prioridade à mulher, abrem-lhe a porta do carro e lhe puxam a cadeira no restaurante. Convenhamos: o produto é cada vez mais raro, mas existe.

Fonte
http://blogs.correiobraziliense.com.br/dad/filho_sem_mae/

3. Segundo a autora, qual dos seguintes comportamentos NÃO seria sinal de boa educação?
A. Abrir a porta a uma mulher
B. Oferecer banho a amigas
C. Estar de barba feita
D. Pedir desculpa

Leitura
Costumes e comportamentos
Leia os trechos e responda às perguntas.

Fria não consigo ser, porque vejo sempre à minha frente uma pessoa a lutar pelos seus sonhos e tenho imensa empatia com os concorrentes, mas objetiva sim, pois acredito que críticas construtivas nos ajudam a crescer e evoluir. Sou totalmente contra as críticas destrutivas.

Fonte
http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2015-04-24-Sofia-Escobar-Este-ano-tem-sido-o-melhor-da-minha-vida

1. Podemos inferir que a autora do trecho evita
A. dar conselhos.
B. falar com críticos.
C. magoar as pessoas.
D. lutar pelos seus sonhos.

Gosto de conviver directamente com as pessoas, partilhar, viver outras realidades. Normalmente passo as férias de forma ativa, mas também para enriquecer-me pessoalmente.

Fonte
http://caras.sapo.pt/famosos/2010-04-02-a-escolha-de...-sofia-nicholson

2. A autora provavelmente
A. passa muito tempo na praia.
B. fica em hotéis caros.
C. fala com os locais.
D. vê muita televisão.

Seja respeitoso. Boa parte das pessoas se indigna com palavrões, obscenidades, linguagem vulgar e expressões chulas. Só as acolha em situações excepcionais. É o caso de manifestação de alguém quando a palavra tiver indiscutível valor informativo ou refletir o seu estado emocional.

Fonte
http://blogs.correiobraziliense.com.br/dad/filho_sem_mae/

3. Segundo a autora, quando seria aceitável usar um palavrão?
A. Ao pedir ajuda
B. Ao falar com clientes
C. Ao sentir dor muito forte
D. Ao convidar amigos a uma festa

Appendix C

Preencha os espaços em branco usando uma das opções sugeridas.

1. E vocês nem -------- pensem em comer chocolate e gelado. Nada de açúcar!
A. eu   C. me
B. se   D. meu

2. O circo chegou -------.
 A. -lhe   C. nem
 B. à cidade   D. -o

3. Disse à polícia que não conhecia os suspeitos, nem ------- tinha visto.
 A. Ø   C. os
 B. suas   D. lhes

4. Não ------- voltes morto. Quero-te vivo.
A. te   C. me
B. o   D. lhe

5. Agora é ------- óbvio que votar à direita é uma melhor opção que votar à esquerda.
A. mim   C. meu
B. -me   D. -se

6. O Paulo diz que --------- partiram os vidros no carro e roubaram o rádio.
A. ele   C. lhe
B. o   D. dela

7. Depois de ouvir a palavra nova, o aluno escreveu --------- no caderno.
A. sua   C. -a
B. deles   D. -o

8. A Antónia acredita que foi a viagem a Fátima que --------- curou o corpo.
A. seu   C. a
B. dele   D. lhe

9. Quando a Ana recebeu a carta do Tiago, mandou --------- de volta.
A. -no   C. -a
B. -lhe   D. -o

10. Quando estamos no último andar do Empire State Building, é --------- assustador olhar
    para baixo.
A. nós   C. -nos
B. tanto   D. nosso

Reviews

Kurt Braunmüller and Christoph Gabriel (Eds.). 2012. *Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies*. Amsterdam–Philadelphia: John Benjamins. ISBN 978-90-272-1933-6 (Hb). ISBN 978-90-272-7349-9 (Eb). (Humburg Studies on Multilingualism, ISSN 1571-4934; v.13) 474 pages

The volume's number is 13 in John Benjamin's reputable series Hamburg Studies on Multilingualism. Defying superstition, the book with its Editors' Foreword, 25 chapters, name and subject indexes is a commendable enterprise. This excellent publication presents a stimulating panorama of research carried out by the Collaborative Research Center on "Multilingualism." The three main areas of investigation: (1) the acquisition of multilingualism, (2) historical aspects of multilinguals and variance, and (3) multilingual communications, are among the main foci of contemporary research on multilingualism.

At present, the term *multilingualism* is a buzzword. A deluge of books, articles, and projects have appeared, and along with positive aspects of this long awaited change, sometimes the word multilingualism is used as an attraction in a book or article title, unsupported by the contents. Unlike those, this volume is really about multilingualism and its treatment of various linguistic phenomena goes beyond the monolingual paradigm.

Part One, "How Language Is Acquired and Lost in Multilingual Settings: First and Second Language Acquisition, Foreign Language Learning and Language Attrition" deals with the vast variety of linguistic phenomena, such as morphology, syntax, morphosyntax, segmental phonology, and discourse

production. It also covers the subfields of foreign language learning, and second and third language acquisition (SLA and TLA), involving a range of languages.

Manuela Schönenberger, Monika Rothweiler, and Franziska Sterner open the volume by reporting on their study on successive bilingual children in the chapter entitled "Case Marking in Child L1 and Early Child L2 German." Based on spontaneous production data from bilingual L1 Turkish children, and experimental data from monolingual and bilingual children with Turkish, Polish or Russian as their L1, and German as L2 for all of them, the authors examined the early L2 acquisition with regard to whether it resembles L1 acquisition, or shows similarities to adult L2 acquisition in the domain of grammar.

Susanne E. Carroll, in her "First Exposure Learners Make Use of Top-Down Lexical Knowledge When Learning Words" breaks good news for learners and teachers, as she emphasizes the importance of the first exposure to a target language. She argues that even minimum exposure to continuous speech may result in rapid learning, even when target words contain novel L2 sounds. This study suggests a more nuanced approach and presents a refreshing well-based counter-weight to balance traditional discussions of frequency effects. The contribution highlights the rapid rate at which sound forms are created and mapped to referents, and is convincing in regard to the powerful role of L1 lexical knowledge on L3 word learning.

The three next chapters of this section expand evidence on early bilingual acquisition. "The Emergence of a New Variety of Russian in a Language Contact Situation: The Case of a Russian Swedish Bilingual Child," by Natasha Ringblom adds new shades of meaning to our knowledge of bilingual child development. The multilingual, rather than monolingual point of departure in such an investigation would seem to be more effective.

In "The Acquisition of Gender Agreement Marking in Polish: A Study of Bilingual Polish-German-Speaking Children," by Bernhard Brehmer and Monika Rothweiler describe the development of gender marking in a group of simultaneous, or successive bilingual children from age 2:11 to 6:5, growing up in Germany. It was found that unlike monolingual children, for bilingual Polish-German children, the acquisition of gender assignment and gender agreement in Polish is not accomplished in early childhood.

Natalia Gagarina examines "Discourse Cohesion in the Elicited Narratives of Early Russian-German Sequential Bilinguals." Comparing the narrations of bilingual children with monolingual Russian-speaking children and adults, allowed the author to expand the evidence on bilingual advantage over monolinguals. In particular, bilinguals of all age groups produce longer utterances and use more word tokens per story, in comparison to monolinguals due to the greater sensitivity of bilinguals in establishing cohesive ties in discourse.

Nelleke Strik in "Wh-questions in Dutch: Bilingual and Trilingual Acquisition Compared," compares bilingual and trilingual acquisition of Dutch-

French, and Dutch-French-Italian, in five and seven year-old bilingual and trilingual children. Monolingual children and adult learners were control participants in elicited production tasks, thus increasing the scope and reliability of the study. The data from this study generally point to qualitative differences of multilingual development, as compared to monolingual development. With that, among the findings is the fact that the production of qualitatively different structures is restricted, and that the age of the learners reflects on their use of inversion. The author accounts for this data with the help of a theory of transfer based on derivational complexity.

The contribution by Alexandra Żaba and Conxita Lleó, "German Segments in the Speech of German-Spanish Bilingual Children," presents new data on early bilingual acquisition of consonants and discusses the possibility of the delay linked with particular vowels and consonants. The authors state that the dissimilarity in production of segments in L1 as compared to monolinguals, and consonants involved in German voicing contrast, contribute to a delay in the bilinguals' target-like acquisition of sounds, whereas vowels normally do not. Cristina Pierantozzi offers the contribution on "Agreement within Early Mixed DP: What Mixed Agreement Can Tell Us about the Bilingual Language Faculty."

In their chapter, "Gender Marking in L2 Learners and Italian-German Bilinguals with German as the Weaker Language," Antje Stöhr, Deniz Akpinar, Giulia Bianchi, and Tania Kupish consider the mastery of grammatical gender by adult simultaneous bilingual speakers, and highly proficient L2 learners. Exploring the knowledge of gender assignment and agreement, and the implications of differences in this area between users and learners is productive.

"A Bidirectional Study of Object Omissions in French-English Bilinguals," by Michaela Pirvulescu, Ana T. Pérez-Leroux, and Yves Roberge contributes to the debate on the effects of bilingualism. By focusing on object omissions, the authors argue that at least in the domain of null-object possibilities, bilinguals experience delay, as compared to monolinguals, in the rate of production. With that, the authors indicate that development of bilinguals and monolinguals is comparable, and attribute the effects in the rates of omission they found, to the retention of the default null object representation, and to the nature of bilingual input.

French is learnt more efficiently as an L3 than as an L2, in the settings of Swiss primary schools, because students who previously learnt a foreign language can use their skills in English as a resource when learning French. This very important, clear, and convincing case is argued by Andrea Haenni Hoti and Sybille Neinzmann in the chapter "Foreign Language Reforms in Swiss Primary Schools: Potentials and Limitations." The authors describe the study which they carried out comparing the two models of foreign language teaching, and the competencies of the children from both programs in the French

language. The authors based their research on the tenets of third language acquisition (TLA). They also found that one year later the initial advantage of the more experienced learners had disappeared. This, and other far-reaching implications of the study are significant, both for theoretical understanding of multilingualism, and for its practical implementation in education.

The section is concluded by the chapter: "'Multilingual Brains': Individual Differences in Multilinguals—A Neuro-Psycholinguistic Perspective." Julia Festman reports on two research projects representing two lines of research—one, comparing early and late trilinguals on a sentence processing task using fMRI, and the other, which deals with bilinguals who were found to be different in how they switch unintentionally between their two languages. The second line of research carried out by Festman distinguishes two groups of bilinguals termed "switcher" bilinguals, and "non-switcher" bilinguals, in accordance with their behavior when switching the languages. Festman indicates that there might be a relationship between switching behavior and control abilities. In terms of the executive control, "what distinguished both groups most is their in/ability to prevent errors of cross-language interference in monolingual settings, that is, when a specific target language is required" (p. 213).

As for the neuro-linguistic line of investigation of the multilingual brain, the author discusses a number of significant studies in that domain and presents the work of Elise Wattendorf and her colleagues. Comparisons between early (before age 6) and late (after age 6) multilinguals among other things, suggest that early bilingualism leads to structural plasticity, and reveal that the "early bilingual brain differs from the late bilingual brain during sentence production, but not during language perception tasks."

Along with that, the chapter provides a well-focused overview of the most recent research on multilingualism, with a focus on individual differences and the brain.

The chapter is, in fact a state-of-the art overview of contemporary neuro-psycholinguistic research on multilingualism, not just bilingualism, and acknowledges "the strong impact the knowledge of a third language has on language processing" (p. 209).

The ten articles of Part Two "How Language Changes in Multilingual Settings: Contact-Induced Language Variation and Change," convey a broad range of issues on variation and changes in morphology, phonology, structure of language varieties in contact, using the data from old languages such as Old Swedish, Middle High German, and Medieval Latin, and contemporary language varieties: Faroese, Danish, Occitan, French, Italian, Spanish and Polish, to name only some. This section also includes the chapter by Svenja Kranish, Juliane House, and Viktor Becher in which "Changing Conventions in English-German Translations of Popular Scientific Texts" are discussed at length.

I found the next two studies especially absorbing and solid. Martin Elsig in "Subject-Verb Inversion in 13th-Century German and French: A Comparative View" offers meticulous systematic comparison and analysis of the data extracted from Old French and Middle High German, aimed at defining whether the sources of the inversion in Old French and Middle High German are the same, or different. The author defies the plausible-sounding assumptions, and arrives at the conclusion that by the mid-thirteenth century, the speakers of Old French and of Middle High German drew on different grammars for subject inversion.

In the abstract of his contribution "Multilingual Constructions: A Diasystematic Approach to Common Structures," Steffen Höder argues that multilingual perspective on language contact phenomena is more adequate, than referring to the effect of such phenomena on the monolingual systems. Taking this as a point of departure, and extending the concept of diasystematicity to languages and multilingualism, the author postulates that in situations of stable and intense language contact, a "pro-diasystematic" change takes place. This means, according to the author, that interlingual correspondence is regulated in such a way that the higher proportion of common structures, and a lesser proportion of idiosyncrasies is found between two contacting languages. The common system is simplified to the effect that it loses its languages' specific restrictions, and becomes productive in the other language as well.

Caroline Heycock and Hjalmar P. Petersen provide a comprehensive description, thorough analysis, and insightful observations on a rich system of modern Faroese pseudo-coordinations, in comparison with the same phenomenon in Mainland Scandinavian languages. Csilla-Anna Szabó and then Bernhard Brehmer and Agnieszka Czachór continue investigation into the structure of contacting languages, one of which is German. The first of them, is the case of two unrelated languages, in the chapter "Toward a Fused Lect: Mixed German-Hungarian Concessive Conditionals in a German Dialect in Romania." On the basis of detailed examination of linguistic material from the multilingual speech community in Romania, Szabó reports on the strong structural similarities and lexical material from Hungarian, in the German dialect of this community, which the author, following Auer's typology (1998), believes to be the process of emerging a new bilingual grammar of a fused lect. The second contribution dealing with the aspects of structure is: "The Formation and Distribution of the Analytic Future Tense in Polish-German Bilinguals." Brehmer and Czachór investigated how German patterns are involved in the formation of the analytic future tense in the Polish used by its young speakers in Germany. The findings have implications for the issue of language attrition.

The three following contributions, each very good in its own right, celebrate the tenacity of "small" varieties, in contact with bigger languages and reveal the complex dynamism of multilingual reality. This cluster of chap-

ters deals with phonological systems of languages in contact. In "Perception and Interpretation of Intonational Prominence in Varieties of South African English," Sabine Zerbian examines prosodic differences in varieties of the same language, English, against the multilingual background of South Africa. The author addresses the perception of intonation and the interpretation of focus marking through prosodic means, by the listeners who are speakers of contact languages of the Bantu group, unrelated to English. The propitious research design allowed the researcher to discover significant differences in perceptions of intonational differences between Black South African English on the one hand, and other varieties of South African English on the other hand, and to come up with a number of other findings. This well-written paper also introduces readers to the realm of African multilingualism, the nature and manifestations of which are considerably different from the European multilingualism, for example (Brann, 1991; Anchimbe, 2007).

"The Prosody of Occitan-French Bilinguals" by Raféu Sichel-Bazin, Carolin Buthke, and Trudel Meisenburg captivates by its measured narration and comprehensive methodology. The reader sees in detail the nuances of how, and in which aspects, the varieties drawing on Latin, French, and Occitan, developed each in their own way, and how, being close territorially, they mutually influence each other, again, in different ways in certain aspects.

"Diachronic Prosody of a Contact Variety: Analyzing Porteño Spanish Spontaneous Speech" by Andrea Peškova, Ingo Feldhausen, Elena Kireva, and Christoph Gabriel continues investigation into Romance historical linguistics in another place and time. The authors take us to Buenos Aires where the Spanish variety of Porteño is spoken, allegedly influenced by massive Italian immigration between 1830 and 1950. The authors meticulously trace and consider the historical and linguistic causes of the changes and the persistence of Porteño Spanish. Their study is also notable for its methodological rigor, and in that, dissimilar to other diachronic studies of prosody, the researchers employed recordings for their comparison.

Ariadna Benet, Susana Cortés, and Conxita Lleó illuminate "Devoicing of Sibilants as a Segmental Cue to the Influence of Spanish onto Current Catalan Phonology." The study can be said to belong to the diverse areas of phonology and sociolinguistics; and its findings are relevant to educators and linguists alike. The different results on vowel and voiced sibilant production in Catalan obtained in two areas of Barcelona indicate that a phonological change in the situation of language contact can be caused by a combination of internal and external linguistic factors.

Part Three, "How Language is Used in Multilingual Settings: Linguistic Practices and Policies," contains three contributions of good quality dealing with the reality of multilingual practices and the challenges faced by the participants of these particular multilingual settings.

In "Explaining the Interpreter's Unease: Conflicts and Contradictions in Bilingual Communication in Clinical Settings," Kristin Bührig, Ortrun Klishe, Bernd Meyer, and Birte Pawlack elegantly single out and define the elusive, and therefore unresolved problems in medical translation. They also formulate the problem within the theoretical framework and present it as a practical task to be dealt with. The approach is to offer classes for nurses who frequently have to undertake the job of translation, taking into consideration, and building course content that would resolve around the issues identified by nurses themselves.

The domain of healthcare is increasingly aware of the acute need for bilingual and multilingual services (see, e.g., Georgiou, 2013). Measuring in multilingualism has always been a challenging enterprise. The more praise-worthy is the successful attempt of evaluating speech accommodation between pharmacists and patients. To my mind, the study by Myfyr Prys, Margaret Deuchar, and Gwerfyl Roberts, "Measuring Bilingual Accommodation in Welsh Rural Pharmacies" is exemplary, creative, innovative, and very practically minded. It turns out that speech accommodation is widespread within bilingual clinical encounters. No doubt, then, that measuring it and might lead to greater opportunities to improve communications skills of medical professionals. To this end, the authors have developed a formula with the help of which they suggest calculating the relative proportion of Welsh and English words, and determine "how much the speaker changes his proportion of Welsh versus English words over time in relation to the proportion being used by the interlocutor" (p. 419).

The volume concludes by the chapter "Becoming Bilingual in a Multilingual Context: A Snapshot View of L2 Competences in South Tyrol" written by Chiara Vettory, Katrin Wisnievski, and Andrea Abel. Using the data of an extensive linguistic and psychosocial survey, the authors collected information on the competences of South Tyrolean schoolchildren in their L2—Italian for the German speakers and German for Italian speakers and revealed salient differences. Competence is not exclusively language related as extra-linguistic factors exert notable influence, too. Among the findings is that "school type appears to be the strongest predictor of L2 proficiency" (p. 451) in these particular sociolinguistic settings. Apart from supplying data of special interest to the local reality of South Tyrolean bilingualism, the findings provide additional evidence and food for thought to educational research in multilingual settings.

To conclude, the contributions are all different in numerous ways, but together they constitute a comprehensive picture of multilingual individuals and multilingual societies. A variety of diverse kinds of multilingualism are treated here, manifesting the super-diversity of multilingualism, both from diachronic and synchronic perspectives. Other beneficial characteristics of this serious and important volume on multilingualism research are that a number of contributions, in the best traditions of science, while treating traditional assumptions

in the field with knowledge and care, justifiably dare to defy them if they feel it necessary and come up with novel ideas and insights.

One could wish, perhaps, that the abbreviations of the key terms (e.g., "DP" on p. 137) commonly used in specific linguistic disciplines, be deciphered at their first appearance in the text, rather than later. Readers may not quickly recall terms in disciplines other than their own, and for novices to the subject will benefit from greater accessibility to the contributions. This minor suggestion does not diminish the value of the volume in any way.

On the whole, *Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies* is an excellent source for information on multilingualism and multilinguals, full of insights and inspiration for practical work and future studies.

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Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak, Mirosław Pawlak, *Willingness to Communicate in Instructed Second Language Acquisition. Combining a Macro- and Micro-Perspective*. (Second Language Acquisition). Series editors: David Singleton and Simone E. Pfenninger. Bristol–Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters, ISBN 978-1-78309-716-6, 231 pages

The book written by Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Mirosław Pawlak entitled *Willingness to Communicate in Instructed Second Language Acquisition. Combining a Macro- and Micro-Perspective* is a compendium of knowledge on willingness to communicate and perhaps the most recent update on empirical findings in this area of second language acquisition. The volume consists of three major sections, an extensive bibliography, seven appendices and additionally author and subject indices.

The volume starts with the Introduction, which constitutes a convincing justification for taking up the topic of willingness to communicate (WTC), a classic construct in psycholinguistics, second language acquisition, and communication studies, just to name a few disciplines in which WTC features as a significant variable. WTC has become of special interest especially in the era of globalization, when the need for communicative effectiveness has come to the fore in the world of travel, professional and personal interaction, and, importantly, immigration. The authors place WTC within studies of contextualized individual learner differences as well as studying interaction as an important facilitative factor and in fact predictor of success in second/foreign language acquisition/learning. Such an understanding derives from psycholinguistic (in-

dividual determinants) and sociolinguistic (contextual) perspectives from the Interaction Hypothesis (1985), Output Hypothesis (Swain, 2000), Skill-Learning Theory (DeKayser, 2007) or Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf, 2006). First of all, this introductory part of the book presents the construct of WTC, following MacIntyre et al.'s (2011) understanding of it as a multidisciplinary concept deriving from psychology, linguistics, education, and communication. The authors offer a brief overview of the first empirical studies on WTC, the focus of which was on cause-and-effect and which were carried out as quantitative statistical analyses in relations to individual variables. They juxtapose these with the more recent studies of MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) and the authors' own research which departs from the above focus and represent a so-called situated approach emphasizing the role of immediate context and dynamic model of WTC. Thus, they also suggest that perhaps because WTC is not stable and fluctuates, the dynamic systems theories (DST) proposed by Larsen-Freeman & Cameron (2008) among others can best demonstrate the dynamic interplay of different factors. Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak stress the role of context and in this case the Polish tertiary educational environment as typical of Central Europe. They offer a comprehensive overview of studies as well as their own pioneering contribution in this area.

The volume looks at the concept of WTC from a macro-perspective, in which variables relevant to it are identified and also from a micro-perspective, in which fluctuations of WTC are observed during specific moments of time, like for example during a single class. The three main sections of the volume focus on the following:

Part One, "Overview of Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Issues."
Part Two, "Exploring WTC in a Foreign Language Context: A Macro-Perspective."
Part Three, "Investigating WTC in the Course of Speaking Classes: A Micro-Perspective."
Each section of the book has a clear structure, as it is preceded by an introductory commentary and is rounded off with a conclusion

Part One "Overview of Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Issues" (pp. 3–72) constitutes the background to the subsequent parts of the book. It comprises three chapters. The opening Chapter One "WTC: Definitions and Evolution of the Concept," as the title suggests, offers a discussion of the understanding of WTC from a diachronic perspective. The authors demonstrate the origins of the concept in L1 referencing the research of McCroskey, Richmond, and Bear (1992) among others, and proceed in their discussion to the L2 context of WTC. In initial studies, WTC was perceived as a personality trait. However, with the work of MacIntyre et al. (1998) and later MacIntyre (2007), a hybrid model of L2 WTC was proposed. More WTC antecedents were introduced, among them anomie, alienation, communicative anxiety, motivation and contact with language. WTC started to be perceived not as a stable personality feature

but a dynamic one. Such a perception had far-reaching consequences for re-search, as WTC became a multidimensional construct relating to psychological, linguistic, social, and pedagogical concept.

Chapter Two "Methodology of Empirical Investigations into L2 WTC" presents an overview of studies with focus on their design and research methods. It offers an extensive comment on quantitative studies using scales and self-report questionnaires, this critical tool being the adapted version of the L1 WTC questionnaire of McCroskey (1992). The reader will find here a representative selection of studies from the first attempts to research WTC (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996) to more recent ones (among them, MacIntyre & Legatto, 2010; Gallagher & Robins, 2015; Choi, 2016). These studies are mostly large scale statistical analysis projects. However, the authors are fully aware of the evolution in research on L2 WTC and point out the shift in research methods towards mixed ones, in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and the new focus is not only on WTC as stable behavioral pat-tern, but also on dynamic changes resulting from contextual factors, such as for example a learning context, contact with language, attitude, topic focus, etc. An outline overview of studies is presented here in a tabular form (Table 2.1, p. 21) to be followed by a more substantial discussion of the individual studies that offer new insights into L2 WTC. The chapter concludes with the proposal to view WTC within a complex dynamic systems framework.

The last chapter in Section One, Chapter Three: "Empirical Investigations of L2 WTC Antecedents" presents the most important research carried out in different contexts of language learning/acquisition. The studies overviewed fo-cus on anxiety (e.g., MacIntyre et al., 2002, 2003; Hashimoto, 2002; Clement et al., 2003; Dewaele, 2007), WTC and motivation (e.g., Ryan, 2002; Dörnyei, 2002; Noels, 2003, 2005; Lockley, 2013), self-concept (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Yue, 2014), age and gender (MacIntyre et al., 2002; Baker & MacIntyre, 2005) and personality (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Ghonsooly 2012). The most extensive overview relates to the research focusing on WTC and contextual factors, both cognitive and affective, such as classroom inter-action context, security and responsibility (Kang, 2005), instability and thus, variability of WTC (Cao, 2006), the role of a teacher in WTC (Zarrinabadi, 2014), a type of task and its performance (Weaver, 2007 or the authors' own contribution to researching L2 WTC from a dynamic perspective (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016). The authors also point to new data collection tools used in these studies such as an FL learner journal and narrative texts. The previously-mentioned multiplicity of factors perceived now as antecedents of L2 WTC adds to the difficulty of designing valid and reliable tools of measure-ment, of which the authors are fully aware. The next parts of the book com-ment on macro- and micro- perspectives in researching WTC on the basis of the authors' own research.

Part Two "Exploring WTC in a Foreign Language Context: A Macro-Perspective" (pp. 73–116) constitutes a well-structured sequence of three chapters. The authors' aim here is to present the design of the study and the validation process of a new tool used as a data collection instrument. The study conducted is to contribute to further extensive L2 WTC research but it is contextualized here and focuses on a specific FL learning environment of a Polish university. This part starts with Chapter Four "The Rationale for and Design of the Study," which presents the aims of the research carried out as following the tradition of large-scale quantitative studies and importantly discusses the stages of the development of a new measurement tool designed by the authors as an adapted version of existing WTC questionnaires, which is suitable for the Polish context. A detailed analysis of the modifications adopted are presented and justified. In the same chapter, a detailed description of the two studies, the pilot and the study proper, is offered.

The following Chapter Five "Findings of the Study" demonstrates the results relating to factors underlying the construct of L2 WTC and the relationships between them as well as their contribution to WTC of Polish students studying English as a major. The authors meticulously describe the first stage of the study in which the six-factor WTC tool piloted earlier (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2016) was implemented in a group of 107 subjects. Considering their sample not to be big enough, the authors carried out the same task in a group of 614 subjects to validate the tool, which resulted in establishing an eight-factor model of WTC, at the same item-reducing the number of scale entries from 105 to 55. The eight identified factors comprise communication confidence, ought-to self, classroom environment, international posture (openness to experience), unplanned-in-class WTC, international posture (interest in international affairs), practice-seeking WTC and planned-in class WTC. These factors were presented by means of correlational analysis in their data analysis.

A detailed discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapter is offered in Chapter Six "Discussion of the Findings." It not only offers a fairly extensive commentary on their findings but is also fully aware of the limitations of their study; the authors refer to these and point out sensitive areas which may not have been fully taken into account, such as individual learner differences (ID). Thus, the authors suggest lines for further research. The discussion focuses on the components and correlates of WTC in Polish students majoring in English. It demonstrates the relationships between WTC components and their correlates. On the basis of their analysis, a hypothesized model of WTC as predictor of L2 communication is constructed. The factors and variables identified in it are discussed comprehensively here. As mentioned above, the authors are cautious and realize that there are weak points in their research. Thus, they conclude that perhaps a more fine-grained model of some constructs could be adopted (e.g., in the case of motivation or learner beliefs). Also, the

fact that the sample was not really homogenous, as it embraced both B.A. and M.A. students, might constitute a weak point, too. They are fully aware that ID will have a significant role in WTC. So generally, a cautious attitude to the results is expressed here and the need for more research is strongly recommended. Nevertheless, some of the findings discussed are worth mentioning. Interestingly, what emerges as a major finding is that readiness to speak is determined by planned and unplanned in-class WTC and practice seeking, which strongly correlates with communication confidence.

Part Three "Investigating WTC in the Course of Speaking Classes: A Micro-Perspective" (pp. 117–186) presents in detail another study conducted by the authors, this time it is, as they put it, "a more fine-grained picture of the factors shaping learners' readiness to contribute to ongoing classroom interaction" (p. 117). The study is contextualized and aims to demonstrate the situational and dynamic character of WTC. The opening Chapter Seven "The Rationale for and Design of the Study" provides a detailed discussion of the reason for designing a study that would enrich previously-carried-out large-scale research projects and add to the understanding of the construct of WTC as a fluctuating feature of learner readiness to communicate in a specifically selected context of a FL, a conversation class. In justifying the use of a micro-perspective, the authors emphasize its complimentary character in the context to large-scale research, which results in establishing tendencies and patterns but does not tap into the individual learner differences which constitute important variables in learners' readiness to communicate. On the other hand, a micro-perspective is rich in substance, as it is grounded in the specific context of an FL class, here, FL speaking class. Additionally, at the present stage of SLA research, it is generally assumed that the dynamics of the process constitute one of its main characteristics. The most recent studies cited by the authors, investigating for example the construct of motivation, are designed to account for it from a complex dynamic systems theory (Dörnyei et al., 2015; MacIntyre, 2015). As rightly stated, a micro-perspective is compatible with recent research on motivation. At the same time, as is pointed out, there are very few studies that are actually set in real-time classroom events in which for example motivational levels are measured by "moment-by-moment fluctuations" (p. 121). The micro-perspective study of WTC presented here is an extension of previous research (Pawlak et al., 2016) which was based on a single FL conversation class, whereas now more extensive data was collected in the course of three conversation lessons. The general aim of the study was to pinpoint individual and contextual variables in WTC and fluctuation of participants' readiness to communicate. The clearly formulated questions specifically refer to the extent of fluctuation of WTC during each class, its possible patterns of and factors determining either increase or decrease in WTC, the degree of individual variation of the above and the factors significant for it and also the differences between WTC in these three

conversation classes (p. 123). The authors provide a fairly detailed description of the participants grouped in three samples of two first-year B.A. majors in English and one group of year two students. The participants are described as a relatively homogenous group due to their learning profiles, study background but also their self-perception of language ability and especially their speaking skills. An important part of this chapter focuses on a detailed description of the three conversation classes both in terms of the topics discussed (crime and punishment and dreams and imagination) and classroom management in terms of forms of work (group and pair work or whole class discussion), emphasizing simultaneously that although the topics came from the obligatory syllabus, ways of running the classes were determined by individual lecturers. Out of 90 minutes, the 60–65 minutes of each class when speaking actually occurred were the focus of analysis. The data was collected by means of WTC grids (tapping into fluctuation of participants' readiness to communicate at specified interval times and recorded (Appendix 6) and end of the lesson learner questionnaires, the aim of which was to identify learner-internal and learner-external factors contributing to their WTC but also their profiles and self-perceived levels of language competence. The variables enumerated were, among others, modes of work, interlocutor and his/her language proficiency. The questionnaire also included individual comments on speaking instances in terms of most and least conducive to WTC, to be identified by the participants. Additionally, the authors implemented detailed lesson plans of each conversation class as prepared by the teachers and supplemented by their comments on their execution in terms of tasks, timings, and students' reactions to the procedure of grid filling (beeps). This chapter introduces the readers to the way of analyzing the data, presented in the following chapter. The study data was analyzed quantitatively (WTC grid) by means of descriptive statistics, qualitatively (open items in the questionnaire and teachers' comments) by identifying recurring themes and by mixed method of both.

Chapter Eight "Findings of the Study" reports in a very detailed manner on the observed dynamics of WTC in each of the classes, complemented by participants' perceptions as to the factors having an impact on individual WTC. The text starts with a general comparison between the groups as to variation in WTC in each of them. A more fine-grained analysis is then provided for each group separately, every time focusing on the fluctuation in the levels of WTC and the factors that have an impact on it, all this being discussed from the perspective of time within the whole group and in individuals and factors influencing WTC as perceived by the students in each of the groups. The analysis is quite extensive, but meticulously presented. On the basis of the WTC grids and questionnaire responses, the authors draw their main conclusions from the extensive data gathered. The data demonstrates that WTC varies considerably and fluctuates due to different contextual and individual factors

and their interplay, either contributing positively to the increase or negatively to the decrease in readiness to communicate in a given context.

Chapter Nine, "Discussion of the Findings" offers deep insights into the phenomenon of WTC as situated in the reality of FL conversation classes and within the framework of complex dynamic systems theory and can be considered a significant contribution to micro-perspective research on the phenomenon of WTC. This text is built around the answers to the five research questions posed—as well as a comment on the drawbacks and challenges the authors faced in their research. As described earlier, the five research questions posed related to: (1) The fluctuation of WTC during a speaking class in each of the groups; (2) identification of (possible) patterns of this fluctuation in relations to factors determining it; (3) contextual and individual factors and their influence on decrease or increase of WTC; (4) an individual variation and factors contributing to it; (5) the differences between three groups. The answers given to each question are extensive and grounded in the data presented in clearly designed figures and tables and then discussed at length in the text. The authors are aware of certain limitations of the study and they elaborate on those pointing out, first of all, certain limitations of the tools, for example, the disruptive character of the WTC grid or lack of additional instruments that might have enriched the data (for example, class observations, post-class interviews, etc.). It is also suggested here that perhaps more information on learner profiles such as their learning strategies and experiences or beliefs might have added to the study. The challenges experienced in the course of study are seen by the authors as including the practical difficulty caused by the necessity to interfere with regularly run classes and the need to gain the trust of the participants, as well as non-anonymous responses for the purposes of correlation of different tools' data. In terms of suggestions for future research, the authors suggest that perhaps the parameters of this study can be used in longitudinal studies at different levels of participant language competence and also not only in language but also in content classes. Additionally, recommendations are made here for a methodology with strong emphasis on the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative tools, among others, teachers' and learners' narratives.

In the final text, "Conclusions, Implications and Directions for Future Research," the reader will find a content summary of the three sections of the book with some tentative implications for FL classroom pedagogy, which refer to guidelines for teachers in their speaking classes and address the need for awareness-raising of FL learners in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, preferences as to the topics and tasks, as well as suggestions for training in communication strategies. The final sentiment of the chapter offers encouragement to carry on research in FL learners' readiness to communicate.

The book finishes with seven appendices (pp. 192–215) containing research tools used in the studies presented, as well as some of the data collected and

an extensive references section. The authors also provide the Author Index (pp. 228–229) of over 140 names and the Subject Index (pp. 230–231) containing 41 entries.

I can fully recommend the volume by Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak as a scholarly text, which is well-written, coherent, and well-informed both on the theoretical and empirical levels. First of all, it will be of interest to researchers in second language acquisition as it offers both a historical angle and a thorough update on research into L2 WTC. It can also offer valuable insights for FL instructors at different levels of the educational process, but mostly in the context of advanced FL instruction. The text is well-structured as the authors decided to divide it into three separate and yet connected parts, moving from a thoroughly discussed theoretical background defining the basic construct (WTC), the evolution and research methodology used, which are richly illustrated in the presentation of the sample studies. This theoretical background is followed by a presentation of a set of studies designed by the authors and looking at WTC from varied perspectives. The readers will find here an example of a large-scale study in the tradition of WTC research, but at the same time, the study introduces a contextualization and adaptation to the specific domain of a Polish advanced learner of English. However, the authors went further in their investigations and applied a dynamic systems model to another study presented here, a study carried out from a micro-perspective which looks the WTC as not a permanent feature but undergoing modifications even within a given didactic unit such as a conversation class.

The text is very dense, however, thanks to the logical and reader-friendly structure of each chapter starting with a general introduction, which allows readers to see what to expect in each chapter of the volume and finishing with a concluding section. Despite its density, it is not difficult to follow the data and arguments presented, however, it requires some concentration on the line of thinking and rich data. What I personally found interesting is the innovative study of WTC from a micro-perspective, which demonstrates the complexity of both the construct discussed and individual variation. The authors combined two of the main research interests they have been investigating for years: WTC and individual learner differences (ILD). So this volume can be treated as their finest achievement.

However, some minor critical remarks need to be made. First of all, it would be useful to have a tabular presentation of the summary of the study description: aims, focus, timing, participants, tools, etc. (Chapter 7). As mentioned by the authors, one of the tools used in the study were the lesson plans including teachers' comments. It is not clear whether they relate to the description of each lesson and thus they are included in Chapter 7 describing the study. Additionally, it would make sense to include the main findings in the concluding part of the book instead of commenting on the issues already discussed,

thus avoiding repetition. The book is very carefully edited but because it is extensive, it is inevitable that some minor slips have occurred. One of them is the incomplete heading on page 170 (research question 2). Also, because of the way the appendices are presented, they are not fully referenced. Each of the tools included as an appendix should be clearly described as to its source, which would for example make it possible to see the difference between Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, which is only clarified in the chapters themselves. It might be interesting for readers to see a sample lesson plan in the appendix section. The reader may also be a little disappointed with the Subject Index (pp. 230–231) as containing only 41 entries, which for a book of almost 230 pages seems to be too few. To conclude, it is clear that the minor slips pointed out do not diminish the scholarly value of the volume. Congratulations to the authors.

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