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## THE PERSPECTIVE ON LEARNER AUTONOMY IN REAL TEACHERS' PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER PRIMARY POLISH EFL EDUCATION

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The last 30 years of EFL and ESL research have demonstrated an evolving scenario of an EFL/ESL classroom. Changing roles of language teachers and language learners, the appearance of *communicative approach* to language teaching and a few unconventional methods, which focused on *learner-centeredness* have encouraged language researches to devote their studies to the issue of *learner autonomy*. Although autonomy is an unresolved and complex issue, it is defined as “the learners’ readiness, ability and willingness to plan, evaluate, negotiate and make systematic decisions about their learning process” (Holec 1981: 3; Benson 2006: 22).

The aim of this paper is to present the perspective on learner autonomy in Polish schools and demonstrate the potential difficulties why autonomy is still a novelty in the classroom. In the context of Polish education, we can speak of *half autonomy* (Dickinson 1992; Zawadzka 2004: 223; Michońska-Stadnik 1996), which is defined as “the road to preparing learners to complete autonomy and to responsibility, codecision, participation in managing one’s own learning process” or “due to numerous limitations in the process of developing autonomy in the Polish classroom context, the essence of the teacher’s roles and actions in developing autonomy in learners and their active attitude towards learning” (Wilczyńska 2004: 52).

This paper is supported by the empirical study on learner autonomy in a higher primary foreign language classroom, which has been carried out in two random state schools in rural Poland. The study started in September 2013 and lasted for 9 months. The work of over a hundred language learners at the age of 11, 12 and 13 and four female English teachers with varied experience in foreign language

teaching was observed during English lessons. The respondents also took part in a series of interviews based on a different set of questions and the teachers were asked to fill in an extensive questionnaire. This paper concentrates on the results from the first phase of the study (class observations) as well as the outcomes of the interviews with the teachers and the questionnaires they filled in. This part of the study demonstrates the teachers' views and attitude towards autonomous learning and verifies their methodology in a real classroom setting, whereas the outcomes of the interviews with the learners focused on learner autonomy beyond the classroom context are not included in the paper.

## 2. LEARNER AUTONOMY IN POLISH EFL CLASSROOM

Over the past 30 years there has been a marked interest in learner autonomy in the context of Polish education. Changing roles of the teacher and learners in the classroom and particularly in the EFL classroom, cognitive method, communicative approach to language teaching as well as a few unconventional methods of teaching foreign languages motivated Polish teachers and language educators to investigate learner autonomy both empirically and theoretically.

Autonomy practitioners in Polish literature generate various interpretations of the term autonomy, which are not always straightforward. We clearly see the framework of *behaviorists' tradition* towards education and learner development in Polish schools. Behaviorists rejected the concept of a cognitively active and independent person who is driven by internal motives and aspirations. If we understand autonomy as a freedom and independence from external factors (Jezińska, 2003), in the light of behaviorists ideology, autonomy is interpreted as a set of skills or learners' behaviours which may help them manage a language material better. Learner independence, in this view, is understood as working without the teacher's or other learners' help.

According to Michońska-Stadnik (1996), *half autonomy* is the term that should be applied to a Polish educational context since (complete) autonomy is an ability that can be developed in adults whose language competence is at least at the intermediate level. It is difficult to refer to *complete autonomy* if it is not developed since early education. She claims that young learners should be gradually, systematically and methodologically involved in the language process to make autonomous decisions.

Dickinson (1992) and Zawadzka (2004: 223) also refer to the term *half autonomy*, which is defined as "the road to preparing learners to complete autonomy and to responsibility, codecision, participation in managing one's own learning process" or "due to numerous limitations in the process of developing autonomy in the Polish classroom context, the essence of the teacher's roles and actions in developing au-

tonomy in learners and their active attitude towards learning (Wilczyńska 2004: 52). It appears that it is difficult to achieve *complete autonomy* in the classroom context.

Zawadzka (2004: 222) defines learner autonomy as “the responsibility for the process of learning in and outside the classroom, determining the objectives, content, method, techniques, control and assessment of the learning process.” Komorowska (2002: 167) defines autonomy as “*the ability* to complete tasks individually, flexibly and unconventionally in a new context... the ability to work without supervision and to transfer new knowledge into new linguistic situations and contexts.”. Orchowska (2008: 251), on the other hand, highlights the importance of developing *self-consciousness* in learners and the habit of self-educating and integrating the acquired knowledge and skills.

Zawadzka claims that learner autonomy, to a large extent, depends on teacher autonomy, that is developing in teachers educational identity, tendency to transformations and pedagogical creativity. There is a direct relation between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy, which was proved in the project conducted by Pawlak (2004). Wysocka (2003: 38) asserts that “successful learner autonomy can be achieved through an autonomous teacher”. Michońska-Stadnik (2004: 18) claims that “no autonomous learners are generated without an autonomous teacher” and that autonomous behaviours need to be developed among this working group if we want autonomous learners in a Polish EFL classroom.

Chudak (2007: 46) puts forward a claim that “it is doubtful if the development of autonomy in the context of an EFL Polish classroom is possible and most would probably agree with this claim due to traditional approach to teaching and a still dominant role of teachers. It is the teacher who decides on the content of the language, the teaching aims and controls the learners’ results. The learners’ individual learning preferences are taken into consideration to a marginal extent so that they do not disturb the concept of teaching. Chudak (2007) particularly highlights the importance of the pedagogical dialogue between the teachers and their learners. Henceforth, it is misleading to consider autonomy as individual learning – learning without a teacher.

Michońska-Stadnik (2004) refers to a *psychological* version of autonomy in the context of a Polish EFL educational system, which is defined as the ability to take responsibility for the learning process (Benson 1997). This version of autonomy is closely related to the tradition of *constructivism*. In the light of constructivists ideology, each learner constructs/acquires knowledge in a characteristic and individual way, independently of how knowledge is presented by a teacher. This process depends on learners’ social background and all people from their surroundings.

Michońska-Stadnik (2004) claims that learners who are not autonomous have problems constructing their knowledge individually, they are incapable of taking responsibility for their own language process. They have problems integrating with other learners or social groups and social factor plays irrelevant role in their learning as they tend to regard teachers as the only authority.

Since the 1990s, after marked changes in political, economic and social system, Polish community has been standing in front of new changes and perspectives. However, the scenario is that teachers born after the 1950s and 1960s have stuck in stable socialist living conditions. They are afraid of initiatives, changes or new technology, they are reluctant to develop professionally. Most of these teachers are still active in Polish educational system. The question is if they can transform their attitude towards life and teaching/training to become autonomous teachers (Michońska-Stadnik 2004).

A few empirical studies (Michońska-Stadnik 2004; Batyra 2013/2014) prove that young generation of teachers, though, know a lot about learner autonomy and have a very positive attitude towards shifting more responsibility onto learners so that they take more responsibility for their learning process and discover their own individual way of handling linguistic problems, do not promote any forms of autonomous learning and autonomy is a complete surprise in a Polish EFL classroom and particularly in district areas.

Henceforth, for Michońska-Stadnik (2004: 18), “autonomy is viewed as “an *attitude towards life*, and not only the possibility for the learners to decide about tasks and topics, ... it is *responsibility* that lies at the bottom of any change in Polish educational EFL system .”

The elements of learner autonomy can be traced in ministerial documents (The Directive of the Ministry of Education from 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1999 and 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2002). In the core curriculum designed for pre-school education, it clearly states that teachers should support *independent learning* in young learners, enable the child to *make decisions*, assist in *planning* and support *creative action*.

In the Directive of the Ministry of Education from 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1999 and 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2001, the core curriculum for primary schools and junior high enumerates which skills learners should develop to be able to work effectively in the conditions of the contemporary world. They are directly related to the concept of learner autonomy: *planning, organizing, self-evaluation, taking more responsibility, solving problems creatively, using and organizing resources* etc.

Educational documents as well as Polish literature prove that autonomy does exist, however it is difficult to isolate any systematic autonomous behaviours in the classroom probably due to traditional, clichéd and secure behavioral system.

### 3. LEARNER AUTONOMY IN REAL TEACHERS' PRACTICES IN RURAL POLAND

The study devoted to autonomous learning was carried out in two school backgrounds in the countryside in Poland and launched in mid September, 2013 and continued until mid August, 2014. The respondents who took part in the study were

115 male and female English learners at the age of 11, 12 and 13 from three fifth and three sixth grades and their four female English teachers with varied teaching experience.

The study was divided into two phases. Phase 1 encompassed intensive and long-term classroom observations. The aim of the observations was to isolate and classify any autonomous behaviours generated by the teachers and the learners in the classroom setting.

Phase 2 of the study covered intensive interviews with four English teachers and over a hundred language learners based on a different set of questions as well as an extensive questionnaire which the teachers' were asked to fill in. The aim of Phase 2 was to examine if there are any signs of autonomy off the classroom as well as verify any signs of autonomy in the classroom with what the teachers and the learners said during the interviews and the results of the questionnaire. Table 1. presents an exact number of the respondents who took part in the first and second phase of the study.

Table 1. The number of the respondents, including English teachers, who agreed to take part in the first phase of the study

School 1					School 2		
Teachers:	<b>TB</b>	<b>TA</b>	<b>TA</b>	TA	Teachers:	<b>TC</b>	<b>TD</b>
Grades:	<b>5A</b>	<b>5B</b>	<b>6A</b>	6B	Grades:	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
No of learners in the group:	<b>17Lrs</b>	<b>18Lrs</b>	<b>22Lrs</b>	21Lrs	No of learners in the group:	<b>19Lrs</b>	<b>18Lrs</b>
No of learners who were observed during English lessons:	<b>17Lrs</b>	<b>18Lrs</b>	<b>22Lrs</b>	21Lrs	No of learners who were observed during English lessons:	<b>19Lrs</b>	<b>18Lrs</b>
The overall number of the observed learners:	<b>78Lrs</b>				The overall number of the observed learners:	<b>37Lrs</b>	
The overall number of the observed learners (School 1 and 2)	<b>115Lrs</b>						
No of learners who were interviewed:	<b>10Lrs</b>	<b>17Lrs</b>	<b>21Lrs</b>	20Lrs	No of learners who were interviewed:	<b>15Lrs</b>	<b>18Lrs</b>
The overall number of the interviewed learners:	<b>68Lrs</b>				The overall number of the interviewed learners:	<b>33Lrs</b>	
The overall number of the interviewed learners (School 1 and 2):	<b>101Lrs</b>						

This study aims at answering a few research questions: Is there any autonomy inside an English classroom? (Phase 1), who initiates autonomous behaviour in the classroom – the learners (consciously/unconsciously?), the teachers or the learners and the teachers? (Phase 1), are there any attempts to act autonomously off the classroom setting? (Phase 2), how are autonomous behaviours generated off the classroom setting? (Phase 2), is there anything that the teachers do to facilitate and promote independent learning outside the classroom? (Phase 1, Phase 2).

### 3.1. A GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents who took part in the study were 115 male and female English learners from three fifth and three sixth grades and their four female English teachers with varied teaching experience. The respondents were initially at the age of 11 (fifth-grade learners) and 12 (sixth-grade learners) and continued as 12 and 13-year olds respectively.

Due to an anonymous character of the research, the learners as well as the teachers and their schools adopted a new identity. In the study, the learners' names were replaced with numbers which the learners chose themselves. The teachers were renamed as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C and Teacher D respectively and two primary schools were renamed as School 1 and School 2 (see Table 1.).

During the first phase of the study, it was possible to isolate and distinguish general behavioural and cognitive characteristics of the learners. Class 5A (School 1), consisted of 17 learners – eight male and nine female learners, who seemed well-integrated and well-mannered. However, one male learner was particularly intimidated, refused to cooperate with the teacher as well as other learners. He appeared absent from the lesson and did not follow the teacher's instructions.

Class 5B (School 1), with seven male and 11 female learners was generally attentive, willing to cooperate, obedient and responded quickly to the teachers' questions. Class 6A (School 1), consisting of eight male and 14 female learners seemed far less responsive than class 5B, it was the largest group among the respondents with one learner who acted as a classroom clown, and whose hyperactive nature and a constant need to answer all the teacher's questions disrupted classroom work. Still, the learner in question, was a very good language learner.

Class 6B (School 1), with nine male and 12 female learners, often misbehaved, especially the boys, whose reactions to the teacher's comments were ill-mannered and callous. Generally, the class responded to the teacher's questions only when nominated, very few learners were diligent with neat and tidy desks.

Class 5 (School 2), with nine male and ten female learners, was responsive and willing to cooperate. The girls were very obedient, a few boys were particularly

talkative and joked about everybody whenever the opportunity arose. Yet, the class' linguistic competence was above average.

Class 6 (School 2), with 12 male and six female learners, was the most noisy class among the respondents, who were often tested for their disruptive behaviour. They treated their English teacher as a colleague, which resulted in their disrespectful attitude towards the lessons and the subject. During most English lessons, the teacher shouted the instructions or had to calm the class down to be able to communicate with the learners.

Table 2., presents a general profile of the teachers and summarizes their teaching experience, including teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners. Teacher A, who is Russian and holds MA degree in English, teaches at two primary schools simultaneously and has been teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners for the past 20-24 years making herself the most experienced teacher among the respondents. Teacher B is also a history teacher, who teaches at junior high and an English school in Poland. Like Teacher A, Teacher B is a registered teacher with MA degree in English, who has been exposed to teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners for the past 10-14 years. Teacher C, who is a contract teacher, is a class tutor of Class 5, School 2 and holds BA degree in English. Teacher D, who is a probationary teacher, teaches English at junior high, secondary school and the Centre of Foreign Languages in Poland. Teacher D as well as Teacher C have been teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners for approximately four years making themselves the least experienced teachers among the respondents.

Table 2. A general profile of the four teachers extracted from the questionnaire (Part I)

Aspects	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D
<b>1. Nationality</b>	Russian	Polish	Polish	Polish
<b>2. University degree</b>	MA	MA	BA	MA
<b>3. Vocational title</b>	A registered teacher	A registered teacher	A contract teacher	A probationary teacher
<b>4. Overall teaching experience</b>	20-24 years	15-19 years	0-4 years	5-9 years
<b>5. Overall experience in teaching to 5th and 6th-grade learners</b>	20-24 years	10-14 years	0-4 years	0-4 years

### 3.2. THE METHOD AND THE INSTRUMENT

The basic instruments for the study were lesson plans prepared successively for nine months during Phase 1, 21 interview questions for the learners as well as a four-part questionnaire (part four of the questionnaire being the interview for the

teachers) in Phase 2. The lesson plans have been described in English, whereas all interviews and the questionnaire for the teachers have all been prepared and carried out, for linguistic reasons, in Polish.

The description of 279 lesson plans concentrates primarily on the stages of the lesson and the lesson procedure and a thorough description of the learners' as well as the teachers' responses, classroom behaviour, interactions, sets of teachers' instructions etc. and any signs of autonomous behaviour in the classroom.

The interview for the learners consists of 21 interview questions. The questions deal with learner strategic competence, organizational skills, motivation, attitude towards language learning, their interests, language awareness, strengths and weaknesses, preferences, modes, course books etc.

The questionnaire prepared for the teachers (see Figure 1.) consists of three main parts and one introductory part, which examines the teachers' overall teaching experience, education, degrees, vocational titles etc. The remaining three parts concentrate on the teachers' knowledge and experience of autonomous learning. In part two of the questionnaire, the teachers have been presented with 100 statements concerning all possible aspects of autonomous learning, which are based on the Likert scale. Part three consists of 30 unfinished statements devoted to autonomy. Finally, in part four, the teachers were asked to answer 25 questions in the form of an interview.

Figure 1. An extract of a four-part questionnaire for the teachers

<b>Part 1</b>				
<i>12 questions (see Table 2) measuring the teachers' educational background and experience in language teaching, including teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners.</i>				
<b>Part 2</b>				
<i>100 statements concerning all possible aspects of autonomous learning based on the Likert scale, e.g.</i>				
<i>1 – I strongly disagree</i>				
<i>2 – I disagree</i>				
<i>3 – I am not sure/I do not know</i>				
<i>4 – I agree</i>				
<i>5 – I absolutely agree</i>				
1) Introducing autonomy allows learners to realize their own interests.				
1	2	3	4	5
2) Using the Internet supports autonomous learning beyond the classroom.				
1	2	3	4	5
3) Regular contact with the language enhances autonomy in and off the classroom.				
1	2	3	4	5



- 4) Limited learner's exposure to the language hampers autonomous learning off the classroom.

1	2	3	4	5
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- 5) Teacher's experience in language learning influences their teaching practices.

1	2	3	4	5
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### Part 3

*30 unfinished sentences concerning autonomous learning based on the teachers' experience in teaching to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners.*

- 1) I systematically raise my learners' awareness how important it is to study English through...
- 2) I try to introduce more innovative activities in and outside the classroom such as...
- 3) I try to encourage my learners to be more actively involved in their learning process through...
- 4) I try to teach my learners to take more responsibility for their learning process through...
- 5) I encourage my learners to take more risk in using the language outside the classroom through...
- 6) I try to encourage my learners to take up endless challenge in studying English through...

### Part 4

*25 interview questions concerning autonomous learning, e.g.*

- 1) What characteristics of autonomous learners can you identify among the 5<sup>th</sup> and/or 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners whom you are teaching now?
- 2) Are 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade learners ready to take some responsibilities in the classroom?
- 3) How do you encourage your learners to use English outside the classroom?

Finally the data were examined descriptively and quantitatively. The lesson plans, as well as the teachers' responses in the interview and in the questionnaire were analysed descriptively whereas the data gathered during the interviews were analysed quantitatively.

The learners' and the teachers' responses in the interviews, which were all audio-recorded, were then transcribed, presented in figures and tables in the findings section and finally measured, calculated and analyzed quantitatively. In this paper, the figures and tables demonstrate only some answers to the questions owing to the amount of questions.

### 3.3. THE PROCEDURE

During the first phase of the study, the work of 115 language learners and four English teachers was intensively observed, audio recorded and thoroughly de-

scribed in the form of observation notes during English lessons. Class 5A, 5B and 6B (School 1) and their English teachers were seen twice a week, Class 6A (School 1) was observed three times a week, whereas Class 5 and 6 (School 2) only once a week. The frequency of the observed classes, especially in the case of School 2, depended on the negotiated number of the teaching hours, which the school principal and the teachers agreed on as well the researcher's ability to travel smoothly between School 1 and School 2.

The second phase of the study was organized at the beginning of June, 2014 and lasted until mid August, 2014. The interviews with the learners were organized in small groups or pairs. Yet, some learners wished to talk as the whole class. The learners were given the freedom to negotiate whom they wished to take part in the interview with to feel more confident to answer any questions in the presence of their friends and colleagues.

First, the learners from School 1 were interviewed before the respondents from School 2 answered the interview questions. A few groups of learners from School 1 were pre-interviewed to improve the organizational process and eliminate any technical mistakes, such as the level of noise in the classroom, behavioural problems or the comprehension of the language and questions.

Before each group was interviewed, the questions were all read out aloud to the learners so that they had some time to think about the answers. Each interview, depending on the size of the group, lasted somewhere in the region of 15-30 minutes. In the meantime, the four teachers, who received the questionnaires to fill in at the beginning of May, were ready to take part in the fourth part of the questionnaire – an interview. Each teacher was interviewed individually.

### 3.4. THE DATA AND THE OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY



The data gathered in the first phase of the study constitute over one thousand pages of observation notes compiled in the form of lesson plans. Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 present two out of 279 observed lessons. The data in Appendix 1. and Appendix 2. demonstrate a very traditional, monotonous and prototypical way of conducting English lessons. Both Teacher A and Teacher B (School 1), as well as Teacher C and Teacher D (School 2) rely heavily on the course books administering rather than facilitating the classroom work. Their predominantly traditional roles of a controller, assessor, organizer, the only resource, tutor and investigator (Harmer 1991, Scrivener, 1994) can be illustrated in all observed lessons conducted especially by Teacher A and Teacher D with a few exceptions when Teacher B and Teacher C, though sporadically, introduced more innovative tasks, such as projects, self-assessment tasks or *sessions devoted to the history and culture of Anglo-Saxon countries* (see Figure 2.) in which the teacher attempted to develop the learners'

positive attitude towards the culture, customs and traditions of the target language. Nevertheless, no systematic symptoms of autonomous behaviours can be identified in the lessons.



Figure 2. A sample lesson plan, Lesson 11, Teacher C, Class 5, School 2, Term 2

### LESSON 11

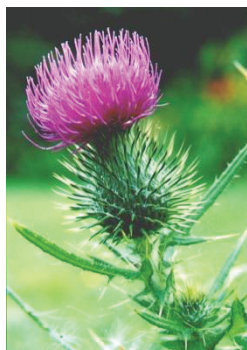
- **Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2014
- **Learners' age:** 11
- **Learners' grade:** 5
- **Level of proficiency:** A1/A2
- **No of learners in the group:** 18/19
- **Materials used:**
  - the map of great Britain, the Union Jack, England, Wales, Scotland, the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia

- the pictures of a thistle and a daffodil

- **The subject of the lesson:** *Powtórzenie wiadomości o krajach anglo-saskich*
- **The name of the course book:** Skinner, C., Bogucka, M. (2007). *New Friends 2. Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- **The stages of the lesson and procedure:**
  1. The learners and the teacher enter the classroom.
  2. The teacher checks the attendance list.
  3. The teacher asks the learners to prepare the maps the learners received last week.
  4. The teacher introduces briefly the topic of today's lesson.
  5. The teacher displays the map of Great Britain on the blackboard and elicits some information about it from the learners. The learners volunteer to provide the answers. The teacher elicits the patrons and symbols of the British countries. The teacher shows the photograph of a thistle and a daffodil. The teacher puts the map of Great Britain on the blackboard. The teacher puts the photographs of the British flags, the Union Jack, the American flag, the Australian flag, the New Zealand flag and the Canadian flag on the blackboard, the teacher discusses them briefly. The teacher asks the learners what Canada is famous for, what languages are spoken in Canada and the name of the capital city.



6. The teacher discusses the handouts the learners are to receive in a moment. The teacher reads the instructions to some tasks and asks the learners to translate them into Polish. The teacher writes down some words on the blackboard. The teacher distributes the handouts about the USA. The teacher leaves the class for a moment to photocopy more handouts.

T: *landmark*

7. The teacher draws the learners' attention to the texts on page 100. The teacher plays the recording, the learners listen and try to find two landmarks. The teacher elicits the answers from the learners. The teacher asks the learners to find the English word for *drapacz chmur* in the text.

**Cross-curricular studies**

## WELCOME TO NEW YORK CITY!

This is a map of New York City. New York City is a very busy place and there are lots of cool places to visit. The key has symbols for the different places in the city. Can you find the symbol for a landmark?

The **Statue of Liberty** is a very famous New York landmark. It's on Liberty Island in New York harbour. Lots of people visit the statue of Liberty every year. You can climb up to the head of the statue – but there are 154 steps! There is a museum in the statue, too. Can you find the Statue of Liberty on the map?

The **Empire State Building** is very tall – you can see it's 442 metres high and it's got 102 floors! You can see amazing views of New York City from the top floor. **What square is the Empire State Building on the map?** New York has got some amazing parks and great museums. **How many parks can you find on the map?** **How many museums can you find? What squares are they in?**

**Now you're ready to explore New York City. Have fun!**

school	bus station	library	fire station	train station	police station	restaurant	landmark
car park	hotel	theatre	hospital	bank	post office	park	museum

adopted from: Wakeman, K. (2014: 100). *Today! 2. Zeszyt ćwiczeń*. Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited.

8. The teacher draws the learners' attention to the words on page 101. The teacher reads the words and elicits their meaning from the learners.

### New words

explore harbour high island  
key landmark skyscraper  
symbol

adopted from: Wakeman, K. (2014: 101). *Today! 2. Zeszyt ćwiczeń*. Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited.

9. The teacher returns to the texts on page 100. The teacher nominates some learners to read the texts and translate them into Polish. The teacher corrects the learners' pronunciation mistakes. The learners provide the location of the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building on the map as well as find the location of the parks and the museums.
10. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 2 on page 101. The teacher reads and explains the instructions. The task is to look at the map in exercise 1 and write the grid references. The teacher reads the information about the location of these spots and the learners provide the references.

### Comprehension



**Look at the map in Exercise 1 and write the grid references.** Podaj współrzędne, używając mapy z ćwiczenia 1.

- 1 The hotel is in D3.
- 2 The fire station is in .....
- 3 The Statue of Liberty is in .....
- 4 The hospital is in .....
- 5 The theatre is in .....
- 6 The Empire State Building is in .....
- 7 The school is in .....
- 8 The bank is in .....
- 9 The restaurant is in .....
- 10 The library is in .....

adopted from: Wakeman, K. (2014: 101). *Today! 2. Zeszyt ćwiczeń*. Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited.

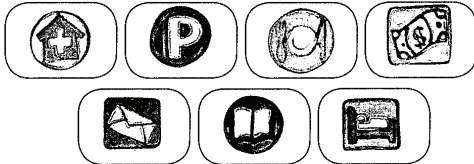
11. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 4 on page 101. The task is to listen and draw the symbols on the grid. The teacher reads the instructions and explains to the learners how to complete the task. The teacher elicits the names of the symbols from the learners. The teacher plays the recording, the learners listen and try to complete the task. The teacher stops the recording after each symbol and elicits from the learners the grid reference. The teacher elicits the meaning of the symbols from the learners. Most learners write the words in the grid, some cross out the symbols to make the choice easier.


**Listening**



**Listen and draw the symbols on the grid. Which grid squares are empty?**

Posłuchaj nagrania i narysuj symbole na siatce geograficznej.

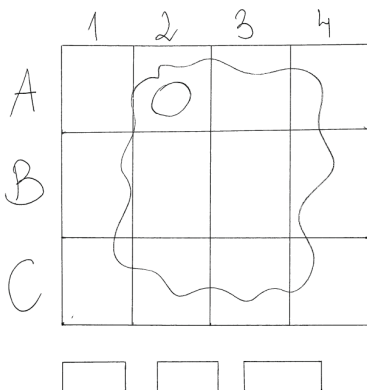


	1	2	3
A			
B			
C			


adopted from: Wakeman, K. (2014: 101). *Today! 2. Zeszyt ćwiczeń*. Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited.

12. The teacher reads the instructions from task 6 on page 101. The teacher explains to the learners how to complete task 6. The task is to draw the map of the town or the area near school using symbols and a grid and provide a description of the map. The teacher draws a sample map on the blackboard.

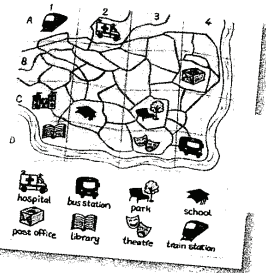
T:



### Writing: Describing a map

-  **Draw a map of your town or the area near your school. Use symbols and a grid. Draw a key for your map. Then describe your map.** Narysuj mapę swojego miasta lub okoliczności szkoły. Użyj symboli i współrzędnych. Przygotuj legendę do mapy. Następnie zaprezentuj swoją mapę całej klasie.

This is a map of my town, Toledo. Toledo has got a river and it's got some beautiful bridges. It's got an amazing old castle, too. The train station is in A1 and the bus station is in D4. My school is in C2 and the park is next to the school, in C3. Toledo has got a library, too. It's in D1. The theatre is in D3. There's a hospital in A2 and a post office in B4. Toledo is a great place to visit.



adopted from: Wakeman, K. (2014: 101). *Today! 2. Zeszyt ćwiczeń*. Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited.

Taylor (2002) claims that the road to autonomous learning is not covered unguided. The data in Appendix 1. and Appendix 2. prove that Teacher A and Teacher B do not make any attempts to prepare their learners to autonomous learning, i.e. teaching and showing learners how to be assertive, critical, negotiate, be good listeners, explain their choices and preferences, analyse their solutions (Komorowska 1978, 2002 and Wilczyńska 1999). The teachers' and the learners' roles in lessons 1 and 6 (Appendix 1. and 2.) are narrowed down to traditional form of giving instructions and an obedient action of carrying out tasks.

Komorowska (1978, 2002) and Wilczyńska (1999) further assert that in an autonomous classroom the teacher should also restructure traditional teaching methods, the teacher's role as an expert, leader and administrator and the learners' role as passive recipients are remodeled. The teacher should raise the learners' awareness of their needs, learning preferences, strengths and weaknesses, help their learners find extra resources and best ways of memorizing grammar or vocabulary.

Komorowska (2002), Taylor (2002), Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) and Wilczyńska (1999) claim that an autonomous language learner should be able to decide about the following: the choice of tasks, the skills they wish to practise, time devoted to a single linguistic issue, whom they wish to work with when involved



in cooperative tasks – it is the only element the learners could decide about, the assessment forms, if and how their linguistic gaps are evaluated/assessed/corrected, the choice of homework (the choice between three or four tasks), the choice of English course books, which the participants of Borg and Al-Busaidi's (2012) as well as Batyra's study (2013/2014) find unacceptable, the use or choice of other tools/applications/extra learning aid they wish to implement in their learning process and the assessment of the teacher's performance, i.e. whether learners felt they achieved their learning goals within each lesson or liked the lesson.

Figure 3. demonstrates the teachers' responses to questions number 6, 16, 17, 20 and 25 of the third part of their questionnaire, in which they were asked to complete 30 statements concerning autonomous learning based on their teaching experience to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners.

Figure 3. An extract of the teachers' responses to the third part of the questionnaire, questions number 6, 16, 17, 20 and 25

<b>Question 6, part 3: I systematically raise my learners' awareness how important it is to study English through...</b>
TA: <i>praising their work or giving extra pluses.</i>
TB: <i>discussing their future plans.</i>
TC: <i>Encouraging to read the Internet sites, they can communicate with other international learners.</i>
TD: <i>using my own experience about the surrounding world as an example.</i>
<b>Question 16, part 3: I try to introduce more innovative activities in and outside the classroom such as...</b>
TA: <i>asking learners to make dialogues or encouraging them to take part in different projects.</i>
TB: <i>films in English, games, contests.</i>
TC: <i>involving learners in projects or <u>watching films about the history and customs of English speaking countries.</u></i>
TD: <i>introducing modern technology.</i>
<b>Question 17, part 3: I try to encourage my learners to be more actively involved in their learning process through...</b>
TA: <i>making dialogues, involving learners in projects.</i>
TB: <i>no answer.</i>
TC: <i>assigning extra homework.</i>
TD: <i>showing positive aspects of studying English based on my own experience.</i>
<b>Question 20, part 3: I encourage my learners to take more risk in using the language outside the classroom through...</b>
TA: <i><u>taking part in festivals and contests.</u></i>
TB: <i><u>watching films, taking part in festivals and contests.</u></i>
TC: <i>discussing the importance of English language</i>
TD: <i>the praise of their efforts, not grading everything, not marking every single mistake.</i>

Question 25, part 3: I try to encourage my learners to take up endless challenge in studying English through...
TA: <i>asking them to take part in various contests.</i>
TB: <i>developing their linguistic competence and skills.</i>
TC: <i>no response.</i>
TD: <i>developing their knowledge as well as skills.</i>

In question six, the teachers were asked about the ways in which they raise their learners' awareness of the importance of English. The teachers' answers differ. Classroom observations prove that, even though sporadically, the teachers reinforce positively their learners' work, encourage them to use on-line social networks, ask them about their future plans or use their own experience to reinforce and facilitate the learners' will to study English, especially beyond the classroom context.

The teachers' responses to question 16, in which they were asked about any forms of innovative work they encourage their learners to take up, partially overlap with the classroom observation. A few learners from both schools did take part in a singing district contest in May, 2014, did few course book based projects in the classroom and *watched once a film about Britain and the States*. The lesson was particularly interesting and the learners were involved and enthusiastic about the lesson more than throughout the entire school year. The interviews with the learners prove that they do watch English films (with subtitles on or off) and listen to music in English. Nevertheless, autonomous learning should be systematic, especially in the classroom context, where learners can be trained to take up endless opportunities to manipulate the language beyond the classroom. Participating once in a contest or giving learners an opportunity *to watch a film about British and American customs and traditions* and few projects is not enough to develop autonomous learning in language learners.

Questions 17, 20 and 25 deal with any possible forms of activating learners in taking up endless challenges in studying English in and outside the classroom. The teachers puzzled over the answers, sometimes giving no answer, but their responses overlap with the responses to questions six and 16. The teachers said it was difficult to encourage all learners to do anything extra if the majority treated English as a school subject they needed to pass. Nevertheless, the interviews with the learners prove that they manipulated the language more than required even if in a more entertaining way, i.e. playing on-line games, watching films in English, analyzing song lyrics, listening to music.

Figure 4. demonstrates an extract of the interview based on 25 questions from the last part of the questionnaire. In question 3, the teachers were asked to enumerate the characteristics of autonomous learners among the group of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners who took part in the study. Teacher A sees willingness and curiosity among 5<sup>th</sup>-grade learners, which she believes diminishes with age. Teacher D claims that

her 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners are clever, spontaneous, react quickly to questions, are willing to work in collaboration, have better intuition, are responsible and take up risk in using English. Teacher B does not recognize any autonomous characteristics among her 5<sup>th</sup>-grade learners, but refers to general characteristics such as planning and relying on one's own materials. Finally, Teacher C says her 5<sup>th</sup>-grade learners are clever, inquisitive and active.

Question 5 of the interview concerns the learners' readiness to take first steps towards autonomous learning. All teachers confirm that their 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners, who took part in the study are intellectually, cognitively and psychologically ready to become autonomous making a few stipulations, e.g. the parents need to facilitate this process, *the positive attitude towards language learning need to be cultivated* as early as possible and the learners' interests and hobbies need to be catered for as well as class routines should undergo restructuring.

In question 8, the teachers were asked about their learners' abilities to evaluate their learning process. Generally, the teachers doubt if their learners have developed such abilities, which proves why over the half of the respondents (53% of learners out of 101) do not think at all about how much they have learned. Benson (2006) claims that learners become autonomous if they can take charge of and evaluate their learning process.

Figure 4. An extract of the teachers' responses to the fourth part of the questionnaire – the interview, question three, five and eight

<p><b>Question 3, part 4: What characteristics of autonomous learners can you identify among 5<sup>th</sup> and/or 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners whom you are teaching now?</b></p> <p>TA: <i>My 5<sup>th</sup>-grade learners are curious and willing to study English. 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners, on the other hand, their motivation and willingness dramatically drops as they start to be interested in the opposite sex, have more important things to do.</i></p> <p>TD: <i>Those better and clever learners are more spontaneous, their reaction time is quicker, willing to cooperate, good guessers, more responsible and have good grades and they are risk takers.</i></p> <p>TB: <i>Some learners do not exhibit any autonomous characteristics, some don't not exhibit any characteristics at all, basically any attempt to plan their work or look for some materials.</i></p> <p>TC: <i>Clever, ask frequently questions, inquisitive, hardworking, more active.</i></p>
<p><b>Question 5, part 4: Are 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade learners who you are teaching now ready to take first steps towards autonomous behaviour?</b></p> <p>TA: <i>Yes, they are, but we would need to be supported by their family too to consolidate this process outside the classroom.</i></p> <p>TD: <i>Yes, they are, if a positive attitude towards language learning is cultivated since the earliest grade.</i></p> <p>TB: <i>Yes, they are, some even at 4<sup>th</sup> grade exhibit some autonomous characteristics, but then we lose contact with them, teachers change all the time.</i></p>

TC: *Yes, some are ready, but generally this class is totally teacher dependent, even during projects they have to be told who is responsible for what, every teacher says they are lazy, but it is possible with a few learners who are hardworking. I think, the teacher would have to get the learners interested in the subject so that they are curious about English and classes would have to be prepared in a different way.*

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this paper an attempt has been made to demonstrate the perspective on learner autonomy in Polish EFL classroom and demonstrate the potential difficulties of introducing autonomy in educational context.

The first phase of the study, which covered intensive observations for a period of nine months, clearly shows that four female English teachers do not make any *systematic* attempts to introduce any innovative teaching solutions in their methodology. The lessons were repetitive, monotonous, clichéd, course book based and teacher oriented. The majority of the observed lessons (279) were conducted in a very traditional, almost PPP way.

The teachers did not adjust their methodology to an individual and heterogeneous character of each group, but relied on a repetitive model instead as if they were teaching a set of identical learners without any sophisticated needs, weaknesses or linguistic problems. In 95% of the classroom situations, it was the teacher who initiated classroom work, as presented in Appendix 1 and 2, and made decisions about every aspect of the language task, the procedure which most learners got used to. The learners were unenthusiastic about the way the lessons were conducted, treating English as a school subject they were obliged to study to be promoted to the next grade.

The teachers' age, nationality (TA being Russian), university degree, vocational titles, as well as their experience (TA – 24 years, TB – 19 years, TC – 4 years, TD – 9 years) in foreign language teaching did not influence an autonomous character of the lessons.

Conscious development of learner autonomy in learners should begin in the classroom and since autonomy is the ability that learners can be consciously trained to master, the lessons did not contribute to even gradual development of independence or language awareness.

Nevertheless, the interviews with the teachers as well as the answers given in the questionnaire prove that teachers' attitude towards the subject was very positive. For example, in question 16, part III of the questionnaire: *I try to introduce more innovative activities in and outside the classroom such as...*, the teachers responded: TA: *asking learners to make dialogues or encouraging them to take part in different projects.*, TB: *films in English, games, contests*, TC: *involving learners*

*in projects or watching films about the history and customs of English speaking countries, TD: introducing modern technology.* The responses seem satisfactory, yet the learners participated in two or three projects a year, few participated in an English contest, saw a few clips about the history of English speaking countries during a single lesson, used Interactive White board once a week (only class 5B) and produced lots of dialogues they learned by heart from the course book.

The introduction of learner autonomy in Polish state schools requires time, dedication, teachers' willingness and marked changes in the way educational system is viewed. It clearly appears that teacher autonomy is rather a personality factor, attitude towards teaching and *life* (Michońska-Stadnik, 2004), willingness, dedication, courage and time devoted to testing new approaches in the classroom which all have a tremendous impact on the way English is *promoted* by the teachers in any educational context.

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## AUTONOMIA UCZNIA Z PERSPEKTYWY NAUCZYCIELA I AUTENTYCZNEJ PRAKTYKI NAUCZYCIELSKIEJ W KONTEKŚCIE POLSKIEJ KLASY OBCOJĘZYCZNEJ SZKOŁY PODSTAWOWEJ

### Streszczenie

Na przestrzeni ostatnich trzydziestu lat zwrócono szczególną uwagę na kwestię dotyczącą autonomii ucznia w kontekście polskiego szkolnictwa. Zmieniająca się rola nauczyciela oraz ucznia w klasie, a szczególnie w klasie języka obcego, metoda kognitywna, podejście komunikatywne, a także kilka niekonwencjonalnych metod nauczania języków obcych przyczyniło się do wielu badań empirycznych oraz powstania prac teoretycznych dotyczących tego zagadnienia.

Celem niniejszej pracy jest ukazanie perspektywy wdrażania autonomii ucznia w klasie języka angielskiego oraz ukazanie potencjalnych problemów związanych z jej wprowadzaniem w polskim szkolnictwie pomimo wymogów ministerialnych kształcenia ogólnego, które jasno stawiają nauczycielom wymagania inicjowania zachowań autonomicznych.

Niniejsza praca poparta jest badaniami empirycznymi, poświęconymi autonomii ucznia w starszych klasach szkoły podstawowej na terenie wiejskim. Badania polegały na obserwacjach pracy ponad stu uczniów w wieku 11, 12 i 13 lat oraz ich czterech nauczycielek podczas zajęć języka angielskiego, a także na licznych wywiadach, w których wzięli udział respondenci. Dodatkowo nauczycielki wypełniły kilkuczęściowy kwestionariusz dotyczący wszelkich form autonomicznego nauczania w szkole oraz poza nią.

W pracy przedstawiono wyniki z obserwacji lekcji, wywiadów z nauczycielkami oraz wypowiedzi z kwestionariuszy, które pozwoliły pokazać stosunek nauczycielek do wdrażania autonomii w polskiej szkole oraz zweryfikować wypowiedzi z kwestionariuszy i wywiadów z wynikami zebranymi podczas obserwacji lekcji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** autonomia ucznia; półautonomia; proces uczenia się; odpowiedzialność; pozytywny stosunek do kultury języka obcego,

THE PERSPECTIVE ON LEARNER AUTONOMY IN REAL TEACHER'S  
PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER PRIMARY POLISH EFL  
EDUCATION

Summary

In the past 30 years there has been a marked interest in learner autonomy in the context of Polish education. Changing roles of the teacher and learners in the classroom and particularly in the EFL classroom, cognitive method, communicative approach to language teaching as well as a few unconventional methods of teaching foreign languages motivated Polish teachers and language educators to produce empirical as well as theoretical papers devoted to autonomy.

The aim of this paper is to present the perspective on learner autonomy in Polish EFL classroom and demonstrate the potential difficulties why autonomy is still a taboo issue in Polish education despite clear ministerial requirements in the core curriculum of general education.

This paper is supported by the empirical study devoted to learner autonomy in a Polish higher primary foreign language classroom, which encompassed long-term classroom observations as well as the interviews with the learners and the teachers, who were also asked to fill in an extensive questionnaire. The respondents were over a hundred language learners at the age of 11, 12 and 13 and four female English teachers with varied experience in foreign language teaching.

This paper concentrates on the results from the first phase of the study (class observations) as well as the outcomes of the interviews with the teachers and the questionnaires they filled in. This part of the study demonstrates the teachers' views and attitude towards autonomous learning in Polish state schools and verifies their methodology in a real classroom setting.

**Key words:** learner autonomy; half autonomy; learning process; responsibility; positive attitude towards a foreign language culture.

**Appendix 1.**

**A sample lesson plan, Lesson 6, Teacher B, Class 5A, School 1, Term 2**

**LESSON 6**

- **Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2014
- **Learners' age:** 11
- **Learners' grade:** 5A
- **Level of proficiency:** A1/A2
- **No of learners in the group:** 15/17
- **Materials used:** -----
- **The subject of the lesson:** *We're lost*
- **The name of the course book:** Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz. M. (2011), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 2. Student's Book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

• **The stages of the lesson and procedure:**

1. The learners come into the classroom and write *Subject* and *Lesson* on the blackboard.
2. The learners sing happy birthday to his colleague who celebrates his birthday today.
3. The teacher asks the learners if they have visited the website the teacher recommended, with some English exercises concerning vocabulary.
4. The teacher asks the learners to list the names of their absent colleagues.
5. The teacher writes down the subject of the lesson on the blackboard: *We're lost*.
6. The teacher nominates one learner to return her colleagues short tests on vocabulary. The teacher asks the learners to dictate their test grades.
7. The teacher asks the learners to open their course books on page 74 and 75. The task is to listen and read *Agata and Friends* story. The teacher plays the recording, the learners listen and follow the text.

1 2.35 Listen and read. Then act out the story.

**1** Agata and her friend Faith are in town with Sophie and Marcus.

**1**  
Agata This is Faith. She's from London.  
Sophie Nice to meet you. Is this your first visit to Oxford?  
Faith Yes, it is.  
Marcus How long are you here for?  
Faith The weekend.

**2**  
Tourist 1 Excuse me. Where is the town hall, please?  
Marcus Take the first left. The town hall is next to the police station.  
Tourist 1 Thanks very much.  
Agata You know Oxford really well, Marcus. Can you show us the town?  
Marcus Sure, why not!

**3**  
Marcus This is Oxford Castle. It was a prison, but today it's a hotel. There's a small museum here, too.  
Agata Is that true?  
Sophie Yes, it is. Marcus's history project was about the castle.  
Faith You're a great tour guide!

**4**  
Sophie Look! Those tourists are following us!  
Faith They're getting a free tour from Marcus!  
Agata Where are we going next?  
Marcus How about the university library?

**5**  
Faith Where are we now?  
Marcus Er... I'm not sure. Were we in Longwall Street?  
Agata No, we weren't. It was the High Street.  
Sophie We were here ten minutes ago.  
Agata We're going round in circles!  
Faith We're lost!

**6**  
Tourist 1 He doesn't know where he is!  
Tourist 2 What a waste of time!  
Marcus But I'm not a tour guide!  
Agata Poor Marcus!

adopted from: Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz. M. (2011: 74, 75), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 2. Student's Book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

8. The teacher assigns roles. The learners are to read their roles of the dialogue. The teacher corrects the learners pronunciation mistakes. The teacher models the correct form and the learners repeat them.



9. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 2 on page 75. The teacher reads the instructions and then translates them into Polish. The task is to put the events of the story in the correct order. The learners work individually on the task. After a while, the teacher elicits the answers. The teacher corrects the learners' responses. The teacher calls out the numbers and the learners put them in the correct order.

**Comprehension**

**2 Put the events of the story in the correct order.**

a Marcus talks about Oxford Castle.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b The tourists are angry with Marcus.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c Marcus and Sophie meet Faith.	<input type="checkbox"/>
d A tourist asks for directions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
e They get lost.	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Two tourists follow Marcus and his friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>

adopted from: Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz M. (2011, 75), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 2. Student's Book*. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

10. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 3 on page 75. The teacher reads the questions and then explains to the learners in Polish how to find and provide the answers. The teacher gives the learners 5 minutes to complete the task. The teacher asks the learners to find the answers in the text. The learners work individually on the task. Very few learners cooperate. The teacher gives feedback. The teacher reads the questions and the learners try to provide their answers. The teacher corrects the learners' responses. The learners provide only words or phrases. The teacher insists the learners provide full answers. The teacher asks the learners to write the questions and answers in their copy books. The teacher insists again on providing full answers. The teacher provides the model sentences on the blackboard. In the meantime, the teacher returns the learners' in-class tests on Unit 5. Consequently, the learners do not work on the task, but analyze their mistakes in the test. After a while, the teacher asks the learners to return their tests. The teacher nominates some learners to read their sentences. Some learners have not completed the task. The teacher corrects the learners' grammar mistakes.

T: *Where does Faith live?*



T: *Faith lives in London.*

T: *How long is she staying in London?*



T: *She is staying in Oxford for the weekend.*

**3 Answer the questions.**

- 1 Where does Faith live?
- 2 How long is she staying in Oxford?
- 3 Where is Oxford town hall?
- 4 What is Oxford Castle now?
- 5 Are Faith and Agata angry with Marcus?

adopted from: Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz M. (2011, 75), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 2. Student's Book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

11. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 4 on page 75. The teacher reads the instructions. The task is to match the phrases from the story with their translations. The teacher nominates some learners to provide their answers. Most learners volunteer to read their answers. The teacher reads the English phrases and the learners provide Polish equivalents. The teacher asks the learners to rewrite the phrases with their translations to their copy books and frame them. Some learners are already packed and ready to leave the classroom.

### Everyday English

- 4 Match the phrases from the story with their translations.

1	How long are you here for?	2	Can you show us ...?
3	Sure, why not!	4	We're lost!
5	What a waste of time!		

- |   |                               |     |
|---|-------------------------------|-----|
| a | Zgubiliśmy się!               | ___ |
| b | Na jak długo tu przyjechałaś? | ___ |
| c | Jaka strata czasu!            | ___ |
| d | Jasne, dlaczego nie!          | ___ |
| e | Pokażesz nam ...?             | ___ |

adopted from: Falla, T., Davies, P. A., Shipton, P., Palczak, E., Szpotowicz, M. (2011: 75). *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 2. Student's Book*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

12. The teacher assigns homework: the learners are to find 10 words with a long schwa /ɜ:/ in a dictionary.

## Appendix 2.

### A sample lesson plan, Lesson 1, Teacher A, Class 6A, School 1, Term 2

#### LESSON 1

- **Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2014
- **Learners' age:** 12
- **Learners' grade:** 6A
- **Level of proficiency:** A1/A2
- **No of learners in the group:** 17/22
- **Materials used:** -----
- The subject of the lesson: *Utrwalenie czasu Past Simple w oparciu o kontekst*
- **The name of the course book:** Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz M. (2011), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 3. Student's book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

- **The stages of the lesson and procedure:**

1. The teacher asks the person on duty to say today's date and report on his absent colleagues. The teacher asks the person on duty to write the date on the blackboard.
2. The teacher asks the learners to open their course books and recall the last activity they did with the teacher.
3. The teacher draws the learners' attention to the dialogue in task 1 on page 63 in the course book. The teacher plays the recording and the learners listen and follow the text. The teacher draws the learners' attention to task 6 on page 63. The teacher reads the phrases from the box and asks the learners to work in pairs and use the expressions from the box and replace them with the blue parts of the dialogue. The teacher reminds the learners of changing the forms of the verbs into Past Simple forms. The learners work in pairs and prepare their own dialogues. After few minutes, the teacher nominates each pair to act out their dialogues. The teacher corrects the learners' grammar and pronunciation mistakes.

### Talking about events

- 1 **2.17** Listen and read. Write the correct names in the sentences.

had a good weekend, but  had a bad weekend.

**Liam** How was your weekend?

**Kate** It was great. On Saturday we saw a really good film at the cinema. Then on Sunday I went to the beach.

**Liam** That sounds fun.

**Kate** What about you? How was your weekend?

**Liam** It was terrible.

**Kate** Oh, why was that?

**Liam** On Saturday I lost my mobile phone. Then

on Sunday I was ill. I stayed in bed all day!

**Kate** Oh, dear! Poor you!



- 6 Work in pairs. Prepare a dialogue like the one in exercise 1. Change the blue words. Use the phrases in the box to help you.

**A good weekend:** surf the Internet  
meet my friends go cycling / skateboarding  
see a good film buy a new T-shirt / CD  
watch a DVD

**A bad weekend:** lose my wallet / MP3 player  
leave my bag / jacket on the bus  
have a bad cold / headache  
drop a glass of coke on my laptop

- 7 Act out your dialogue in class.

adopted from: Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz M. (2011: 63), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 3. Student's book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

4. The teacher assigns homework: the task is to memorize the dialogue and act it out with a person from a pair.

5. The teacher draws a table on the blackboard and draws the learners' attention to task 4 on page 63. In task 4, there are positive and negative phrases. The teacher elicits the phrases (first positive, then negative) from the learners and puts them in the correct column. The teacher asks the learners to work in pairs and make up a short exchange, one learner from a pair is to say something positive or negative and the other learner is to use one of these expressions to react to what the other learner said, the learners are to take turns. The learners work on the task. After a while, the learners act out their exchanges. The teacher corrects the learners' grammar and pronunciation mistakes.

☺	☹
Cool!	Oh, dear!
You're so lucky	Bad luck
That sounds fun	Poor you
	That's a shame

- 4 Draw a chart and complete it with the phrases in the box.

Bad luck! Cool! That sounds fun. Poor you!  
Oh, dear! You're so lucky! That's a shame.

Reacting to good news	Reacting to bad news
	Bad luck!

adopted from: Falla T., Davies P.A., Shipton P., Palczak E., Szpotowicz M. (2011, 63), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 3. Student's book*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

6. The teacher asks the learners to open their activity books and check what the last task the learners did with the teacher was. The teacher asks the learners to complete the tasks from page 50. The teacher monitors the class and assists the learners in the tasks. The teacher elicits the structure of negative sentences in the Past Simple. In task 1, the learners are to complete the sentences with the correct negative form of the verbs in the brackets. In task 2, the learners are to look at the chart and write true sentences in the Past Simple about Amy, Calum, Luke and Jazz using the information from the chart. In task 3, the learners are to use the information from the chart in task 2 and answer the questions using short answers. In task 4, the learners are to complete the dialogue with *did* or *didn't* or the correct forms of the verbs. In task 5, the learners are to put the words in the correct order to make logical questions in the Past Simple and then provide true answers about themselves.

### Past simple

- 1  **\*** Uzupełnij zdania właściwą formą przeczącą czasowników w nawiasach.





- 1 They \_\_\_\_\_ (not have) pizza for lunch.
- 2 She \_\_\_\_\_ (not go) to school on Friday.
- 3 We \_\_\_\_\_ (not watch) TV last night.
- 4 He \_\_\_\_\_ (not do) his homework.

- 3  **\*** Popatrz na tabelkę w ćw. 2 i odpowiedz na pytania, używając krótkich odpowiedzi.

- 1 Did Calum see a film?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Did Jazz go to the park?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Did Luke and Jazz play cards?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 5 My sister \_\_\_\_\_ (not break) the mirror.  
 6 My friends \_\_\_\_\_ (not visit) me last weekend.

2 (\*\*\*) Popatrz na tabelkę. Co te osoby zrobiły a czego nie zrobiły podczas minionego weekendu? Napisz zdania w czasie *past simple*.

	see a film	go to the park	play cards	chat online	do homework
 Amy	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
 Calum	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
 Luke	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
 Jazz	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓

- 1 Amy / see a film \_\_\_\_\_  
 2 Calum / go to the park \_\_\_\_\_  
 3 Amy and Calum / play cards \_\_\_\_\_  
 4 Luke / chat online \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 Amy and Calum / do their homework \_\_\_\_\_  
 6 Jazz / do her homework \_\_\_\_\_

- 4 Did Amy chat online? \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 Did Luke and Calum do their homework? \_\_\_\_\_

4 (\*\*\*) Uzupełnij dialog formami *did* i *didn't* oraz właściwymi czasownikami w odpowiednim czasie.

- Daisy Lucy, <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ your history homework yesterday evening?  
 Lucy Yes, I <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. But it was difficult. What about you?  
 Daisy No, I <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. I <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ understand it!  
 Lucy I can help you if you want.  
 Daisy Thanks. <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ the TV programme about mysteries last night?  
 Lucy Yes, I <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_! It was really good!  
 Daisy And <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ chocolate cake at lunch today?  
 Lucy Yes, I <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. But how <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you know?  
 Daisy Because you've got chocolate cake on your school shirt!  
 Lucy Oops!

5 (\*\*\*) Co robiłeś/robiłaś w miniony weekend? Ułóż wyrazy we właściwej kolejności tak, aby powstały pytania w czasie *past simple*. Następnie napisz odpowiedzi zgodnie z prawdą.

- 1 do / you / did / sport? \_\_\_\_\_  
 2 see / you / a / did / film? \_\_\_\_\_  
 3 early / you / go / did / to bed? \_\_\_\_\_  
 4 you / do / your / did / homework? \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 you / your / friends / did / meet? \_\_\_\_\_

adopted from: Wheeldon S., Shipton P. (2011, 50), *Podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej. Steps in English 3. Workbook with Student's CDs*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press.

7. The teacher reminds the learners of their homework assignment (the dialogue) and assigns more homework: the learners are to recycle the vocabulary from Unit 5 and finish the tasks from the activity book from page 50.