

Paula Pustułka

Bangor University, UK

‘THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH SIX SCHOOLDAYS PER WEEK!’
EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES OF POLISH MIGRANT MOTHERS PARENTING IN
GREAT BRITAIN

POLISH MIGRANT MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN: MOBILITY,
CAPITAL AND EDUCATION

A claim that female mobility is always inherently different from the one executed by men constitutes the core background argument for this work (see ie. Bjerren 1997, Slany 2008, 2010). While Polish women have taken on the roles of primary migrants in earlier decades (Morokvasic 2004, Slany 2008), they are continuously entangled in the family dynamics of intergenerational and gendered care provisions’ requisitions – both to their elderly and their children. This matrix of beyond-border and cross-generational dependencies remain influential on the education-related life-choices and strategies abroad, for women are influenced by the educational capital they bring along and influential over the capital their children will have.

As primary care providers and decision-makers within families, women are fully responsible for both practical and ideological choices made for their children (Vasquez 2010, Erel 2009, 2012)., thusly, the issues related to maternal decision-making are the focus of this paper, arguing that mothers are the primary actors determining the trajectories of their children in regards to both foreign and Polish schooling. The titular quote spoken by an older female migrant interviewee Helena can be seen as one of the research questions in itself, in a nutshell wondering: *Do all migrant mothers agree that extra-school on Saturday is a good thing? And if they do, what kind of school do they have in mind?* The paper attempts to evaluate and present explanations of distinct views.

Children’s schooling is one of the most powerful institutional and organizational concerns for migrant mothers worldwide (ie. Erel 2010, Pratt 2012, Parrenas 2006 , Vasquez 2010) and Polish women are no exception (see ie. White 2011, Ryan et al. 2008, Ryan D’Angelo 2011). While the intra-European context of the mobility effectuated by

Polish women may suggest encountering largely compliant and EU-regularized educational systems across the three EU member-states, the reality is marked by structural differences (Horner et al. 2007) and poses demands for constant renegotiations of family strategies of settlement and return within implications for and of the given educational frameworks. It is quite striking that underscoring the importance of education has been present across my interviews in a variable capacity: education as a platform for upward social mobility, link to the sending society, point of contact with a host nation, and finally – as a reason to migrate or a reason to stay abroad. Migrant mothers are clearly aware that educational strategies and choices became a key value and a crucial aspect of parenting abroad, with educational trajectories of family members increasingly linked to the migratory project on the whole (see also: Pratt 2012, Ryan et al. 2008, Erel 2009). This paper addresses such entanglements within transnationally-strategies educational choices of Polish women who have settled abroad and parent their children in the United Kingdom.

While Polish migration scholars largely discussed the role of education in post-EU accession mobility projects, concerns have been particularly raised in regards to brain-waste and brain-drain (ie. Kaczmarczyk 2006), rather than inner-working of migrant capital and its intransferability (see Erel 2009, Moskal 2010, Nowicka 2006 for such takes) or its impact on children's schooling (Goudbourne et al. 2010: 73-81, Erel 2009). Broadly speaking, the scholarly attainment of interviewees reflect the general patterns of rather high education levels, while their pathways on the labour market were somewhat marked by initial deskilling, problems with qualifications' recognisability, language barriers and so on, pinpointing the issue of capital's legitimization (Bourdieu 1986). Perhaps the reflections on own experiences that showcased interplay between (mostly Polish) education and (generally foreign) labour market journeys make Polish migrant mothers particularly aware of their pivotal role in planning children's education, seeing it as a vital concern and focal point of their parenting. Although many researchers argued that Polish migration has prevailing tendencies of being chaotic and unplanned (Slany & Ślusarczyk 2010), Ryan and Sales have recently concluded that their research subjects discussed careful planning of mobility, additionally noting that "the education of children emerged as a significant determinant of family migration decisions, with children's age crucial in affecting the choice about whether to move" (2013:93).

Nevertheless, in the Polish Euro-migration context, children's educational issues have thus far mostly been addressed from a perspective of the minors left behind in Poland,

with potential individual consequences and challenges for classrooms where children of migrants are present (ie. Kawecki et al. 2012). What we know about children abroad, on the other hand, pertains mostly to the broader discussions on migrant families, including international (Parrenas 2008, Goudlborune et al. 2009) and Poland-focused (Heath et al. 2011) transnational family scholarship, which primarily looks at children's multi-sited entanglements in regards to kinship dynamics, focusing on educational issues to a lesser degree. In terms of backdrop demographic findings, Britain is clearly experiencing a Polish "baby-boom", with the numbers of Polish children born in the UK steadily increasing (ie. Janta 2013, ONS 2013). With pre-EU-accession numbers were at just 1400 births per year, the subsequent annual statistics rose dramatically to 6600 children in 2006, and then spiked further to 13.333 and 16 101 births in 2007 and 2008 respectively ((Trevena 2009:17-18, ONS 2007 & 2009). In 2010, 19.762 births have been registered, constituting 2.7% of all children born in UK that year (Praszalowicz et al. 2013). The fertility rates of Polish women in the United Kingdom are now almost double of those measured for women who stayed in their home country, with TFR=2.5 among Poles in UK, compared to TFR=1.3 in Poland (ONS 2012, Janta 2013). Ten years on, we may no longer see mass influx, but the new challenges of considerably more Polish children born abroad (inc. those from mixed-marriages) entering mainstreams schools and seeking supplementary Polish education should be anticipated.

In broader literature, parenting style has been included in a model of educational capital developed by Howard et al., who underscore levels of parental engagement with school and their generally often reinforced and communicated outlook on education as a value as a key predicate for increased educational aspirations and attainment (1996:142-144). Recalling classic social capital conceptualizations, Ryan et al. (2007:675) remind that Putman specifically stated that social capital is "negatively correlated with migration" (2007:156, cited in Ryan et al. 2004:675) and Colman argued that mobility can potentially be a destructive force for said capital. Concomitantly, positive educational messages directed at migrant children should originate in schools, which constitute the first institutions where migrant parents encounter new society's practices and migrant children are being socialized and subjected to integrational efforts (Ryan & D'Angelo 2011, Gouldbourne et al. 2010). Furthermore, as "varying levels of available cultural and social capital differentially enable parents to influence their children's educational desires" (Howard et al. 1996:146), making it crucial to look at said capital of migrants, both in

regards to its transferability from abroad (Erel 2012) and the inner-differentiation alongside social class axis within a migrant community, only recently emerging in the context of Polish post-accession diaspora (Trevena 2011). Drawing on Bourdieu's work, Ryan et al. apply notions of capital to their study of recent Polish migrants in London, stating that "migrants' ability to mobilize social capital and successfully engage in bridging may [...] depend upon the cultural capital (language, skills and educational qualifications) at their disposal. (2004:677) and, furthermore, "people from the same ethnic group may have differential access to these forms of bridging capital" (Ryan 2004:676). They illustrate this phenomenon with examples of differentiation between low-skilled labour migrants and professionally mobile Polish women interviewed in their research in 2004. They conclude that while engaging in children's schooling facilitated development of networks and social capital for low-skilled Polish women formerly bound primarily to their co-ethnic milieus the already aligned social capital of professionals resulted in instantaneous formation of cross-ethnic and class-orientated networks through schools, with 'Polish' networks absent (Ryan et al. 2004:682-683). Another illustrative example of class-derived educational attitudes can be seen in language policies: while extensive research has challenged ascribing negative consequences to bilingualism, in the common practice it oftentimes remains linked to adverse educational effects in the dominant social constructions of 'linguistic schizophrenia' discourses (Pavlenko 2006), particularly reinforced in Britain, where, according to Burck, language policies privilege assimilation (2011:362)¹. Accordingly, zooming in on the example of Polish children in primary education in Ireland, Kosmalska notes that Irish society is rather difficult to integrate with and a high degree of segregation is present in schools of certain districts where even 60% of children are non-native and religion remains a criterion on school applications (2012:130-132), and pinpointing potential area of problems earlier seen in the context of migrants in the British schooling facing disadvantages (Gouldbourne et al. 2010).

¹ Interestingly, Burck's interviews with migrant parent' linguistic choices have revealed a gendered practice where migrant mothers, unlike foreign-born fathers, predominantly spoke their mother-tongue to their children from birth. This illustrates the importance of looking at mothers, while also showcasing a gendered dimension of what is considered 'natural' or normative, both in parenting and speaking 'mother tongue' (Burck 2011:371-372). This example prominently links educational scholarship on language/identity with feminist studies of mothering, with its critiques of 'normative' visions of motherhood's naturalist neutrality (ie. O'Reilly 2010, Hryciuk & Korolczuk 2012) - a key theme in my doctoral work.

Statistical information from DCSF School Census² in 2008 have demonstrated that at least 26840 students of primary and middle schools declared Polish as their first language, signifying 0.4% of an entire student population and 3.3.% among all children whose first language was not English (DCSF 2008, Praszalowicz et al. 2013, Ryan et al. 2008). More recent data for 2012 have spotlighted this trend with 53 915 students with Polish as mother-tongue at doubled rate of 0.8% for the entire student body (DCSF 2013). In London itself, 16 475 Polish children frequented English schools in 2011 (Lasocka 2011). It was further measured that almost 25% among them (4070) also attend Polish Saturday schools (Lorenz 2012, Lasocka 2011, Praszalowicz et al. 2013:26-27). While many worry that this leaves out the majority of children, blaming this fact on parental disengagement and economic reasons, the fact remains that educational entities constitute a largest and fastest-growing type of structures present in associational landscape of Polish migrant organizations in UK (Lacroix 2011:14-16). With long and worldwide tradition of supporting Polish migrants abroad in their general mission of fostering national identity constructions abroad and espousing social networks of Poles abroad, today's landscape of Polish schools in UK is visibly changing in response to post-accession migration challenges and a majority of them falls under a category of "schools which aim to maintain the cultural and/or language traditions of a particular community", as defined and examined by Mayrol et al. (2010:27). There is currently over 130 schools (Lasocka 2011) in operation, marked by a growing diversity of schools pertains to their legal status, curriculum, selection of textbooks and materials, offer for different age groups, time and duration, as well as type of classes available (Praszalowicz et al. 2013). As schools' connection to the centralized umbrella organization of Polish Educational Society (*Polska Macierz Szkolna*) varies (Lacroix 2011), it is conceivable that schools primarily respond to locally contextualized needs of migrants in a particular area and are dependent on capital and engagement on their constituency's side. Volunteering academic personnel is not only responsible for curricular choices, but also plays a vital role in shaping ideology that guides their local educational entity, with examples of religious education (inherently present or purposefully absent from various schools), and inclusiveness towards *all* children rather than selecting only new/old migrants, fluent in Polish or learners of a second language (Praszalowicz et al. 2013). Catering to such needs continues to pose

² DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) collects school survey data on local and national level. Since 2008 Polish is being tracked among the languages used by pupils.

challenges for all involved and as schools continue to demonstrate minimum levels of transnational engagement in a form of beyond-diaspora orientations and activities (Lacroix 2011), they have to be revisited.

Methodologically, the paper draws on my doctoral research – a qualitative cross-nationally comparative project on Polish mothering abroad, using the empirical data from narrative interviews and participant observation³. Furthermore, selected data collected during recent projects on Polish schooling in UK⁴ and home-visits of Polish female migrants⁵ is also presented.

UNBREAKABLE LINK BETWEEN MOTHERING STRATEGY AND EDUCATIONAL CHOICES

A main undertaking for this work is to showcase the irrevocability of the connection between a strategy that a mother effectuates in her parenting and the educational choices she makes for her children, equally illustrative and applicable to broader family orientation and social capital (see also: Erel 2012, Howard et al. 1996). Both locally-led obligatory schooling and various forms of supplementary Polish education (or lack thereof) are taken into account. The motherhood models used here should be

³ My doctoral dissertation „Polish mothers on the move – gendering parenting experiences of Poles raising children in Germany and the UK” is supervised by Professor Howard Davis at Bangor University and due for submission in late 2013. The research was funded by Bangor University’s 125 Anniversary Research Scholarship (2010-2013), and supported by a short-term visiting scholar grant from DAAD awarded in 2011. While the dissertation compares female experiences between Poland, Germany and UK, the scope of this paper limits the discussion UK, primarily for the reasons of the Polish supplementary schooling being a growing phenomenon in this destination. Therefore, the core empirical material entails 16 core narrative interviews (a combination of semi-structured and biographic method) conducted in UK in 2010 and 2012. Demographically, the group consists of women aged 31 on average, mothers of 2 children (mean) with sample’s TRF=1.73. Children’s ages ranged between 0 and 18, with 8.9 average age, The average length of migration was just over 6 years; 12 women arrived in the first two years of May 2004. The material was subjected to a qualitative cross-comparative case-by-case analysis (Wengraf 2001) Supporting ethnographic data includes material from participant observation at Polish playgroups, mothers’ meetings and Saturday schools.

⁴ “Polish schooling in Britain: tradition and modernity” project was financed by Polish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and completed in 2012 by Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in cooperation with Jagiellonian University. I have been involved in this project in Research Assistant capacity. The project data was collected primarily via semi-structured interviews with various stakeholders; here the interviews with parents are recalled.

⁵ “Ambivalent Returns? Polish mothers tackling inter-generational family obligations during their temporary returns from the UK” project has been completed under the research grant awarded by the Jagiellonian University Polish Scientific Institute in London in 2013. A web-survey, expert interviews and narrative interviews were research techniques used in this study. The data from 4 interviews with short-term female returnees is presented here, based on a selection criteria of children in schooling (11 children total between 4 women, age range 5-14, av. age 9.8). Analysis in progress – preliminary results presented.

approached as ideal-type constructs, requiring certain limitations and generalization in regards to broader concepts, such as social capital, social class, transnationality, translocality and cosmopolitanism⁶. Similarly, educational practices are understood in line with contemporary British scholarship on “doing family”, put forward by Morgan (1996:192) and later developed (1999, 2003, 2011). It indicates a flexible and dynamic approach that allows for an inclusion of all activities more or less related to education. The key core mothering strategies⁷ found in my research will now be discussed in their educational context⁸.

‘MOTHER-POLES’ TRANSLOCALIZING EDUCATION

Conversations with migrated ‘Mother-Poles’ highlight the ‘managerial matriarchy’ (Titkow 2008 & 2011) of the family practices (inclusive of parenting style) that these women execute in their lives abroad. For that they are very vocal about making the ‘right’ decisions and taking full responsibility for their family’s wellbeing and appropriated ideologies of patriotism, they illuminate a concatenation of womanhood and nationhood (Hryciuk & Korolczuk 2013), reinforced by the presence of a religious element in a form of a Catholic figure of the Virgin Mary (see ie: Graff 2008) and strongly determinant of how women in this group envision their children’s education.

Convinced of their mission as Polish mothers and patriots, oftentimes abandoned by their partners in their mission towards transferring heritage and Polish culture (Titkow 2008, see also: Vasquez 2010), Mother-Poles do not hold British schools in high esteem, often stating that Polish system is much better, voicing critiques of the teaching methods and curricular content. More so than mothers in other groups, they are reminiscent of the respondents’ narratives recounted by Ryan’s and D’Angelo (2011:244-254) in the fact that they struggle with being ‘a minority’ and understanding or accommodating diversity. They are in constant (mental or actual) conflict with the local values, which they deem dangerous and delinquent, as per a quotation from Helena’s story below:

⁶ I discuss these terms in greater detail in my doctoral thesis.

⁷ It has to be noted that a peripheral strategy of Feminist Mothering (as defined by ie. Kinser 2010, O’Reilly 2008 & 2010) was also identified and discussed in the thesis. In terms of education, it is largely concurrent with New Migrant Motherhood and will therefore not be discussed separately.

⁸ While a presentation of the education-related data provides a focus, the full list of mothering characteristics examined in the doctoral thesis is much more extensive and considers twelve areas of differences, such as labour market, religion & religiosity, gender orders, belonging & ethnicity etc.

*I don't want them [children] to mix up with the locals, they're bad influence, they should be with children **like them** – not some Muslims who do not belong here [sic!- PP]. [...] and I wish there were full-time normal Polish schools here – there are enough of us to do this. I wish they had the same proper education that children in Poland get./MP⁹/*

The latter account pinpoints to reasoning explainable by the fact that Mother-Poles are largely expressing a wish of going back to Poland, yet are unable to fulfil this dream, mainly due to their economic circumstances. However, rather than to recognize the fact of a necessity to acknowledge and understand their new localities, they settle in a mind-set of 'intentional unpredictability' (Eade et al. 2006), which may work for the majority of migrants but appears detrimental to the migrant children in a long-run, as research suggests that migrants who network exclusively with groups of co-ethnics may be socially disadvantaged and immersion in mono-ethnic community can bring about ghettoization (Wierzbicki, 2004, Griffiths et al., 2005, cited by Ryan et al. 2004:676). Regardless, Mother-Poles choose to orientate themselves and their children towards the country of origin, subjecting educational choices to a judgement of their perceived value in Poland rather than in the receiving country. Beata, a 38-year-old chef and a mother of a teenage girl, who both arrived in UK in 2004, goes to extremes in demonstrating that her daughter is Polish (and just lives in Britain "temporarily"). She not only assured me that all of her daughter's friends are Polish, but also downplayed the fact that her daughter has problems with her British school by saying that it is not important since she does not need a diploma from here and adamantly arguing that her main education will be in Poland. While some Mother-Poles underscore their children's fluency in English and attending British schools as beneficial (although largely seeing that future in Poland!), their primary goal remains to prepare children for a return. Matylda's two sons, aged 10 and 8, have already been attending Polish Saturday School in their town of residence for 5 and 3 years respectively, yet she does not feel that this is enough to ensure educational transition and as right as she might be, the intensity of extra schoolwork she imposes on her children needs to be noted:

We spend weekends and holidays on translating the exercises they do in their English school into Polish and we go over Polish textbooks assigned to their current age or division chapter by chapter [...] I want my children to have catholic friends, I just need these children to be Polish [...and] at Christmas it should be about God and not the

⁹ For the sake of brevity, I am using abbreviations for the three models of mothering when supplying quotations: MP for 'Mother-Pole', IM for intensive motherhood, NMM for New Migrant Mothers.

commercialization [komercha – a pejorative term describing consumerist focus was used-PP] you see here [...] We will be going back to Poland soon. /MP/

Regrettably, between Matylda's low-skilled work in a warehouse, her husband's recent unemployment, and significant debts still needing to be paid back in Poland, this optimistic prospect of a fast-approaching return to the homeland does not seem particularly likely. Standing out for understanding the reality, Matylda differs from others in this group by not having unrealistic expectations towards the Polish school, which some interview-partners believed to issue grade reports and end-of-year certificates recognizable in the mainstream Polish educational system. Vast proponents of Polish Saturday schools as facilitators for maintaining cultural belonging, national culture and heritage, Mother-Poles are vocal about "bad parents who cannot be bothered" to preserve their children's national identity and skip Polish school. Agata, who should be commended for commuting for over an hour to bring her children to the closest Polish supplementary school, has even equated participating in Polish schooling with patriotism, at one point referring to those who do not value their Polish heritage (as in: speak English at home, allow children to become English, do not engage with the diaspora) as 'traitors'. Significantly, the common narrative among Mother-Poles is reminiscent of migrants' stories of forced exile marked by utmost sacrifice (see ie. Garapich 2011), which much predate contemporary women. Concurrently, the importance of Catholic religion and inherent connection between Polish schooling and parish activities has been almost univocal.

Mother-Poles effectuate translocal lives marked by a clear preference for Polish ethnic enclaves abroad and Polish educational system. Such attitudes should not only be delineated for the betterment of understanding of the heterogeneity among the Poles abroad, but also as a potential site for intra-ethnic conflicts. The already conceptualized tensions between "old" and "new" migrants (ie. Temple 2011) should therefore refer to the parenting strategy and dimensions of religion and social class that often determine social divisions not exclusively between the generations but also among the post-2004 migrants. As local as they may be, conflicts have already arisen in the schools when Mother-Poles clashed with other migrant mothers from Poland. Keeping in mind that Mother-Poles strongly believe in Polish schooling abroad, the examples particularly pertinent to this

group include two areas identified in several stories from various stakeholders¹⁰. Those were:

1/ Insufficient/broken/inexistent relationship between a given Saturday school and a parish has prompted mothers to challenge or abandon Polish schooling for either ideological or practical reasons (ie. wishing to connect education with preparation for holy sacraments);

2/ “Too much diversity” – mothers could not handle the growing numbers of children from mixed-marriages (also biracial), who according to them lacked language skills, were perceived as disruptive in the classroom (ie. encouraging the unwelcome usage of English in the Polish schools); the action taken focused on ‘removing’ such children from school and obviously had adverse effects on women representing different views.

These two illustrative examples should be kept in mind for later cross-comparisons with schools-discontent factors given by mothers in other groups. While Polish Schools may advertise as facilitating integration with a receiving society (Lasocka 2011), this was not the case among Mother-Poles.

INTENSIVE MOTHERING AND GENERALLY EXCESSIVE EDUCATION

A basic definition of Intensive mothering states that mothering is a laborious, emotionally trying and costly task that demands constant provision of 24/7 care and attention from mothers, centralizing children as key players in families and societies (Hays 1996). At the very core of this model, the extensive and intensive practices involved are evidently applicable to educational choices, often viewed as investments into capital-building potential and future payoffs (Erel 2009, 2012). Unlike Mother-Poles, Intensive mothers tend to gravitate more towards the local schooling, ensuring that their children are well-adapted and doing well in the system that will most likely determine their future paths. Those choices are concurrent with their own educational capital and occupational status of successful professionals in the West, showing similarities with highly-skilled mothers worldwide, who use ‘English language fluency’ and ‘British education’ as means to satisfy their ‘cosmopolitan strivings’, not only in their instrumental sense but primarily

¹⁰ I am here referring to both recorded and informal conversations and observations that have taken place during „Polish schooling in UK – tradition and modernity” project. The people in different roles (teachers, parents, headmistresses) have either hinted at or openly recounted these situations and problems, both in specific cases and as general tendencies.

in redefining their pan-national and class belonging (Park & Abelman 2004:667, Erel 2012). Children's skills in Polish are contextualized as one of the many elements within "global education" that Intensive mothers desire for their children, sometimes losing to other possibilities that are seen as 'more appropriate':

My husband was not particularly open to this idea of them going to [a Polish] school and I am not sure if I can win with him next year when they are old enough to sign up for a sailing school for children, his dream hobby for them [...] As for now they are attending the school and are having much fun at it; I can see it gives them [a lot], that they can speak to other children in Polish, this is completely different from talking to us – adults, a different language [...] I will see what to do later, one thing is clear that I will take them from the school if some religious messages [in original: "tony maryjne" suggesting a negative outlook on the presence of catholic/national element in educational contents] prevail /Kamila-IM/

While her two children currently attend Polish Saturday School, Kamila has demands for a specific type of school that is 'modern', which in her view entails disassociation from religion. As can be expected, the school-leavers and those who decided against Saturday schools in the first place largely belong to the Intensive mothers' category. Lena's daughter, for instance, has been attending a school in their earlier place of residence for one year but a combination of factors has led the mother to cease her involvement in Polish schooling. Lena was unhappy with patriotic and heroic narrative of sacrifice, underscoring elements related to historical suffering of the Poles in exile presented in a very expressive form even to the youngest children. She further noted her disappointment with fellow Polish parents, who appeared more interested in shaming the British social welfare system than in their children, also mentioning being appalled with their racist remarks towards other immigrants and the local society. With tolerance and diversity named among the key values that Lena wishes to imprint on her children, it is no surprise that her vision of Polish school differed from the one that the institution she happened to encounter had shown to her. Still, the family continues speaking Polish at home and the parents invest time in teaching their children to read and write in the language, in line with the motivation of "bilingualism as a form of capital for life". However, the focus on multicultural values and carefully considered type of a particular and British educational pathway, for which the parents agreed on to change jobs and move house, has taken priority.

While Intensive mothers are not *per se* against Polish Saturday schooling, they often do not see value in peer relationships that those environments foster, arguing that contacts with peers from around the world is sufficient (if not more beneficial). Such views were expressed by Basia, a graphic-designer living in Wales and a mother of two daughters aged 8 and 5, who also acknowledged that there was enough to do over the weekends in their international circle of friends and professional acquaintances (quite telling activities' examples included trips to a sea world and aquarium, hopping over to Ireland for a sightseeing weekend, art classes from accomplished artists, etc.). Nevertheless, she talked about home-schooling her daughters and ensuring that they can read and write in Polish, encouraging them by obtaining the best of the Polish children's books and using digital media. In addition, Basia envisions certification examinations in Polish as part of her daughters' academic curriculum. Other Intensive mothers had similar views, illuminated in strategies of registering in Polish internet school, hiring GCSE/ A-level Polish¹¹ tutors or signing children up for language-exam preparatory courses.

In the cosmopolitan lifestyles of migration seen as a way of making the life (for oneself and one's children) easier (rather than means of survival, as in the case of Mother-Poles), there is generally no place for Polish school built on values of national sacrifice strongly linked with Catholicism. Beyond-national European and middle-class values of women in this group led them to question Polish Saturday school as inadequate educational choice, particularly when they were faced with clear distinction of expectations towards the school shared by other parents (as in Lena's story). Because education is such an important value, there is still a possibility to lean these parents back in, with an educational offer of quality Polish lessons and certification options, with diversity in the background. For now, however, different ways of maintaining Polish language competence are being chosen by Intensive mothers.

NEW MIGRANT MOTHERHOOD – TOWARDS AN EDUCATIONAL BALANCE

¹¹ GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education, qualification exams recognized across the UK, normally sat by students aged 15-18 but open to anyone. It can be taken in over 45 subjects (Qualification and Curriculum Authority). In 2010, 4.000 students have taken the Polish exam, with 1500 pupils doing so in Polish Schols (Lasocka 2011). It is also possible to select Polish as a modern language for one's A-level exams at the end of secondary education (equivalent of the Polish "Matura").

A slight majority of my interview-partners have neither executed Intensive mothering nor relied on Mother-Pole in their parenting strategies. It was particularly visible in discussions about education when women recalled struggles to ‘marry’, ‘bridge’ or ‘connect’ two systems, understanding a need for facilitating children’s educational attainment and success in Britain while underscoring the vast range of strategies they attempted to ensure that their children accomplish basic literacy skills (reading, writing) and have a decent general comprehension in the Polish language. A hybridized strategy of balancing educational efforts between the two contexts of sending and receiving societies is therefore distinguishing the New Migrant Mothers.

As such, Ania, who works with newly arrived Polish women, recommends that parents cultivate their Polish roots while equally opening their social circles to integration, foreign acquaintances and practices. She said:

It is not good to exaggerate: I feel sad when I hear Polish people speaking broken English to their children in the street – one has to raise their awareness, educate them [...] On the other hand, our children live here, so they should feel well here, so overall I would like them to feel a part of the Polish community here in Britain, to engage with it.

Indeed, her children (aged 8 and 4 at the time of the interview), speak Polish without an accent. Although her younger child has been born in UK, she first learned to read in Polish. Neither has it prevented her from being a star pupil in her English school, perfectly fluent in the language. Both children happily attend Polish Saturday School but are said to be similarly comfortable in the activities they partake in from their English school’s side, such as dancing and playing sports. Continuing on, Marta’s story showcases New Migrant Motherhood in a different age-group context, as her now 16-year old has arrived in Wales at the age of 9:

After just a year here my son was mistaken for a Welshman, I was very proud of him for managing to integrate as quickly, but, truth be told, I was also a little worried whether he would remember that he is also Polish [...] Now it is harder, he is almost a grown-up, but earlier he would spend every summer in Poland, cultivate friendships there, took classes at our local Community Centre.

Marta elaborated that ensuring her son sees Poland as attractive was also tied with his future in Britain, as he has taken a GCSE exam in Polish. Furthermore, it is interesting that the mother herself narrates a dual identification she envisions for her son and this seems to be guiding her educational choices. She wants to keep the door open for potential

university studies in Poland, although she underlined that it would have to be a top-ranked program taught in English. As a part-time teacher Marta encourages other migrant parents to speak their language at home, highlighting the financial payoff for buying certain high-quality educational materials (books, electronics) in the country of origin cheaper as a practical way for bringing general knowledge and learning Polish simultaneously. In fact Klara, another interview-partner has told me about doing just so when her daughter requested an expensive digital wall world map, which she bought for her during a stay in Poland, fulfilling the girl's wish but effectively making her learn new Polish vocabulary in a subject that interested her but was not taught in a Polish school at her level. In that sense, New Migrant Mothers are effectuating practices of capital's transnationalization described by Erel (2009, 2012).

For Amelia, who initially migrated to Germany with her German husband but has been living in the UK since the family moved there in 2008, Polish schooling is "a fight for Polishness of her [three] children", aged 13, 11 and 7, who all consistently rebel against this form of education. While her foreign spouse is said to be supportive, Amelia is very stressed about forcing her children to attend Polish Saturday School, constantly making adjustments, changing schools and managing her own desired involvement with the school, catering to her children's wishes instead. While she has said: *This is important to me and I really want it to be important to them*, when recounting her motivations, she also seemed to be at the end of her rope, mentioning that this school is her last attempt and a last resort. Luckily, this time around Amelia seems to have found a place which better suits the needs of her children who have lived and gone to school in Germany and Britain but had very limited contact with Polish language aside for the mother using it at home. Understandably, the language competence of her children (born abroad to a foreign father) is not up to par when compared to those pupils of similar ages who have spent most of their lives in Poland, migrating with their Polish parents only a few years earlier. This posed a problem in the two schools Amelia tried out earlier, where her children were simply lost with no staff member challenging the age-driven class division blind to actual competency level.

All in all, New Migrant Mothers have successfully attempted balancing educational strategies towards destination locality and their Polish origin. Their children were always involved in obtaining or maintaining a set of literacy skills in Polish. When Polish Saturday School was either (geographically) unavailable or unable to fulfil particular needs

of their children, mothers sought out alternatives. Children appeared to display high levels of success in their foreign schooling, with examples of winning competitions, memberships in sports teams and academically-orientated groups. In several cases, successful admission to university education in Britain was noted. Resourcefulness of transnational New Migrant Mothers facilitates educational success abroad but maintains an option for children to connect with and benefit from their Polish heritage. They thus are likely to develop a bi-national orientation of being Polish and British in regards to language and culture (Mayrol et al. 2010).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This final section brings together the differences between maternal attitudes to schooling among Polish migrant mothers, as summarized below in Table 1.

Table 1.

Migrant Mothers and Schooling (grid comparison).

	Mother-Pole	Intensive Mother	New Migrant Mother
<i>Educational strategies and the receiving country</i>	Limited value assigned to foreign education, often no understanding of the local system paired with unwillingness to learn; English language fluency among children seen as a potential benefit on the Polish labour market in the future	General “intensive” nature of educational practices, choices and investments, extensive focus on the destination country	Slight preference for the destination country, which is seen as the driving force behind higher educational attainment; understanding of the systemic differences cross-nationally
<i>Vision of the Polish schooling abroad/ Poland-focused educational strategies</i>	Vast support and acknowledgement of Polish schooling abroad Users of supplementary weekend Polish education, often broadening its scope through additional	Polish language treated as an additional element of ‘global’ education, an area of a relative easiness for building social/academic capital. Ideals of a ‘modern’ Polish school	Support of Polish schooling, often in an active form of volunteering, etc.; Ideals of a balance between traditional and modern school that is capable of including all migrant children. Polish

	Polish- and Poland-focused educational activities. Polish school equated with Catholic school	disassociated from religion and nationalistic narratives; Home-schooling and certification often replaces Polish institutionalized/ supplementary education	school as a potential resource improving performance in a British school.
<i>Key Values</i>	Patriotism, national heritage, Catholic religion-associated values, superiority of 'Polishness' in various areas.	Beyond-national upper middle-class values, Europeanization, globality, (cosmopolitan) integration, diversity	Heritage and Integration, core middle-class values, traditional religiosity, bi-national focus
<i>General orientations in migration</i>	Translocalism; migration seen as sacrifice for the nation, unwelcome necessity	Cosmopolitanism; migration as an "easier" life for parents and children	Transnationalism, migration as life-improvement for children, might be less so for parents.

Source: Own data analysis.

In light of their migratory background paired with their position in the social structure and occupational status, Polish migrant parents are effectuating educational strategies towards their children in a beyond-border manner, with practices ranging from translocal, to transnational, to cosmopolitan. While Ryan (2007) suggested that "having children necessitates local practical support and seems to enable migrant women to access particular types of localized networks", she further noted that not all migrants "become enmeshed in their neighbourhoods" abroad, and the here-presented findings support the claim for an inner-differentiation among post-UE accession migrants. It is no longer possible to look at migrant biographies from a singularly ethnic perspective (as in "a Polish migrant"), as interrelatedness between educational capital, social class and parenting strategies is evident. While it has been clear that Polish migrant women are dissimilar from their male counterparts (Slany 2008), it should be underlined that Polish female low-skilled worker abroad and Polish female professional migrant will neither be mobile nor mother in a same way. The differences extend beyond destination country character and pertain to educational capital and social class from pre-migratory contexts, vastly determinant of parenting strategies and educational choices incited abroad.

Undoubtedly, there is an observable and continuous interest in Polish supplementary schooling among the recently migrated Polish parents, with a potential of framing it beneficially for both Polishness and achieving certain necessary levels of integration with the host society. It is important to note that very few women among those interviewed have completely abandoned Polish education. While it is clear that English language is increasingly seen as an “ideological vehicle” with a value beyond its practical usage (Park & Abelmann 2004: 647) globally, “Polish” has a potential for being a localized form of ideology transmitter, in line with anthropological and sociological works on language and identity (ie. Temple 2011). The mainstream British educational frameworks pushing towards intensifying teaching and learning of modern language as obligatory and to a high standard (Lasocka 2011) may improve the standing of Polish as an important and commodifiable asset.

Further research taking into account specific variables of children’s age at migration, earlier competence, social class and habitus (parental engagement, interest and knowledge, aspirations: Maylor 2010), children with one foreign-born parent, with a view on the longer story of mobility is needed, especially in the local context of Polish schools abroad as a type of ‘first-responders’ that may inform and determine educational strategies of Polish migrant families settled in the United Kingdom.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bjerén, G. (1997), Gender and Reproduction, [in:] T. Hammar et al. (eds.) *International Migration, Immobility and Development. Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, New York: Oxford.
- Bourdieu P. (1986), The forms of capital, in: J.G. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwoodpress, pp. 241–259.
- Bryceson D., Vuorela U. (eds) (2003), *The Transnational Family. New European Frontiers and Global Networks*, New York: Berg.
- Burck C. (2011), Living in several languages: Language, gender and identities, *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, vol. 18(4), p. 361–378.
- Chiswick B.R., Miller P.W. (2009), The international transferability of immigrants’ human capital, *Economics of Education Review*, vol. 28, p. 162–169.

- D' Angelo A., Ryan L (2011), Sites of Socialization — Polish parents and children in London schools, *Studia Migracyjne - Przegląd Polonijny*, vol.1/2011, PAN Warszawska Drukarnia Naukowa: Warszawa, p. 237-258.
- Erel U. (2009), *Migrant Women Transforming Citizenship: Life -Stories from Britain and Germany*, London: Ashgate.
- Erel U. (2012), Engendering transnational space: Migrant mothers as cultural currency speculators, *European Journal of Women's Studies*, vol. 19(4), p. 460–474.
- Gouldbourne H., Reynolds T., Solomos J., Zontini E. (eds) (2009), *Transnational Families: Ethnicities, Identities and Social Capital*, London: Routledge.
- Grabowska-Lusinska I. (2012), *Migrantów ścieżki zawodowe bez granic*, Warszawa: Scholar.
- Hays S., (1996), *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Horner W., Dobert H. (eds) (2007), *The Education Systems of Europe*, Springer Ebook.
- Howard V.E., McLaughlin T.E. Vacha E. (1996), Educational Capital: A Proposed Model Its Relationship to Academic and Social Behavior of Students at Risk, *Journal of Behavioral Education*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1996, p. 135-152
- Hryciuk E., Korolczuk R. (eds.) (2012), *Pozegnanie z Matką Polką? Dyskursy, praktyki i reprezentacje macierzyństwa we współczesnej Polsce*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UW.
- Janta B. (2013, forthcoming), *Studia Migracyjne*,
- Kaczmarczyk P. (2006), Highly skilled migration from Poland and other CEE countries – myths and reality. in: Gmaj, K., Iglicka, K. (eds) *The Transatlantic Security Challenges and Dilemmas for the European Migration Policy Project*, vol. 4, Brain Drain or Brain Gain - a Global Dilemma. CSM: Warszawa. p. 33-64.
- Kosmalka J. (2012), Immigration and primary education in Ireland, *Studia Sociologica IV*, vol.2, p. 127-146
- Lacroix, T. (2011), The Indian and Polish Transnational Organisational Fields, *The IMI Working Papers Series*, vol. 40.
- Kawecki I, Kwatera A., Majerek B., Trusz S. (2012), The social and educational situation of circular migrants' children in Poland, *Studia Sociologica IV*, vol. 2, p. 147-161.
- Lasocka M. (2011), Polska oświata w Wielkiej Brytanii - rzeczywistość a potrzeby, Paper presented at III Kongres Polskich Towarzystw Naukowych na Obczyźnie, Młodzież polska na obczyźnie – zadania edukacyjne, 7 – 11.09 2011, Kraków, Polska Akademia Umiejętności.
- Maylor U. et al. (2010), *Impact of Supplementary Schools On Pupils' Attainment: An Investigation Into What Factors Contribute To Educational Improvements*, Department for Children, Schools and Families, Research Report DCSF-RR210.

- Norton B. (2000), *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity, and Educational Change*. Harlow: Longman/Pearson.
- Park S.J., Abelmann N. (2004), Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea, *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 77, No 4, p. 645-672.
- Parrenas, R.S. (2005), *Children of Global Migration. Transnational Families and Gendered Woes*, Stanford University Press.
- Pavlenko A. (2001), Bilingualism, gender and ideology. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, vol. 5(2), p. 117–151.
- Praszalowicz D. Irek M., Malek A., Napierala P., Pustulka P, Pylat J. (2013), Polskie szkolnictwo w Wielkiej Brytanii- tradycja i nowoczesność. Raport końcowy,http://pau.krakow.pl/Polskie_szkolnictwo_UK/Polskie_szkolnictwo_UK_RAPORT.pdf,
- Pratt G. (2012), *Families Apart: Migrant Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love*, University of Minnesota Press.
- Ryan. L. et al. (2008), 'Polish Children in London Primary Schools: opportunities and challenges', Project Report available online, last accessed on 01.07.2012 http://www.mdx.ac.uk/hssc/research/centres/sprc/docs/Polish_Pupils_in_Lon.pdf
- Ryan L., Sales R. (2013), Family Migration: The Role of Children and Education in Family Decision-Making Strategies of Polish Migrants in London, *International Migration*, Vol. 51 (2), p. 90-103.
- Ryan L., Sales R., Tilki M., Siara B. (2007), Recent Polish Migrants in London: Social networks, transience and settlement, Research report for RES- 000-22-1552 ESRC study.
- Ryan, L., Sales, R., Tilki, M., Siara, B, (2004), Social Networks, Social Support and Social Capital: The Experiences of Recent Polish Migrants in London, *Sociology*, vol. 42, p 672-690.
- Slany K.(ed) (2008), *Migracje kobiet, Perspektywa Wielowymiarowa*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Titkow A. (2012), Figura Matki Polki. Próba demitologizacji, w: R. Hryciuk, E. Korolczuk (eds.) *Pozegnanie z Matką Polką? Dyskursy, praktyki i reprezentacje macierzyństwa we współczesnej Polsce*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pp. 27-48.
- Titkow, A. (2007), *Tożsamość polskich kobiet. Ciągłość, zmiana, konteksty*. Wydawnictwo IFIS PAN, Warszawa.
- Trevena P. (2011), Divided by class, connected by work: Class divisions among the new wave of Polish migrants in the UK, *Studia Migracyjne-Przegląd Polonijny*, Warszawa: PAN WDN, s. 71-96.

- Vasquez J. (2010), *Chicana Mothering in the Twenty-first Century. Challenging stereotypes and transmitting culture*, in: A. O'Reilly (ed) *Twenty-First-Century Motherhood, Experience, Identity, Policy, Agency*, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 23-39
- White A. (2011), *Polish Families and Migration since EU Accession*, Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Zielińska K. (2010), *W poszukiwaniu nowej wspólnoty? Feministki o narodzie, obywatelstwie i demokracji*, [w:] A. Malek, M. Warat (eds.) *Ponad granicami: Kobiety, migracje, obywatelstwo*, Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellonskiego, p. 63-85.