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# Home preparation of anglophone children for school: The influence of a different culture

Lenka Venterová 

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**Abstract:** This qualitative study deals with home preparation for school of children with a different cultural background in the Czech Republic. This specifically concerns the anglophone minority group that reside in the country. According to Kachru's model, the Czech Republic belongs to the Expanding Circle, which means that the English language is only present as a foreign language. In the methodological part of this study, we focus on children with English as their mother tongue who attend Czech primary schools in the Czech Republic. These children need to cope not only with the different culture background of their parents, but also with a different language of education than their mother tongue. The parents in the families under examination try to make the conditions for school preparation easier for the children, but they encounter completely different problems with respect to their monocultural peers. In exceptional cases, they are even forced to change primary school.

**Keywords:** English, preparation for school, situational analysis, different cultural background, primary school, external tutoring

## Domácí příprava anglofonních dětí na vyučování: Vliv odlišného kulturního prostředí

**Abstrakt:** Tato kvalitativní studie se zabývá přípravou dětí z odlišného kulturního prostředí na školní vyučování v České republice. Konkrétně anglicky hovořící minoritní skupinou. Vzhledem k tomu, že Česká republika patří dle Kachruova modelu do tzv. Expanding Circle, je zde tento jazyk pouze na úrovni prvního cizího vyučovacího jazyka. V metodologické části studie se věnujeme dětem, které mají anglický jazyk jako svůj mateřský jazyk a navštěvují v České republice základní školu. Tyto děti se musí ve školním prostředí a při přípravě na vyučování vyrovnávat nejen z odlišnou kulturou svých rodičů, ale také s odlišným vyučovacím jazykem než je jejich mateřský jazyk. Zkoumané rodiny se snaží svým dětem různými způsoby ulehčit přípravu na vyučování a narážejí přitom na zcela odlišné problémy než jejich monokulturní vrstevníci. Ve výjimečných případech jsou dokonce nuceni přistoupit ke změně základní školy.

**Klíčová slova:** angličtina, příprava na vyučování, situační analýza, odlišné kulturní prostředí, základní škola, doučování

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The Czech Republic is a country with only one official language, so it can be best described as a monolingual country. A great milestone in the history of the country was the Velvet Revolution of 1989 and the subsequent political, social and economic transformation. Another big step in its history was the division of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the independent country of Czech Republic on 1 January 1993, as well as the accession to the European Union on 1 May 2004. All of these events increased the volume of international migration. More foreigners have started coming to the Czech Republic and a significant percentage of them retained English as their mother tongue. They also teach it to their children, along with their cultural habits. Inside their family environment they create a third culture where their original culture is mixed with Czech culture. This is a newly created family platform in which they live with their children. The aim of this study is to highlight the difficulty of home preparation for school attendance in a monolingual country where school education is compulsory and where homework is a part of preparation for school on most days.

## 1 Home preparation for school

The terminology related to school preparation for children in their home environment is mainly focused on concepts of home preparation and homework. The meaning of these concepts is interconnected and used in similar contexts. [Maňák \(1992\)](#) states that home preparation is considered to be a part of school attendance and continuation of school learning in the home environment. [Jursová \(2011\)](#) describes home preparation as an activity that should make a child's work easier at school. The child prepares these activities at home to be ready for education at school. Home preparation is directly related to education, and its content is designed to support learning, knowledge retention and repetition processes. To what extent home preparation provides support and how much time a child should spend on it is a very difficult question as it depends on the child, which makes this a very individual process ([Pope, 2001](#)). Through this training, children have the opportunity to gain habits and experience in independence and responsibility. These tasks can also encourage them and often force them to resolve the frustrations they cause ([Majerčíková & Petrů-Puhrová, 2017](#)). The role of a child in the family is, among other things, undoubtedly fulfilled by home preparation for school. This role can change the attitudes of parents to children and the style of family life. Parental support is expected to strengthen the child's autonomy in order to increase family cohesion and to help the child gain a respected and firm position in the family structure ([Šulová & Škrábová, 2012](#)). Problems can emerge when the parent is not used to home schooling or is unable to communicate fluently in the language of education.

## 2 English in the Czech Republic

In the perspective of this study's focus, it should be appropriate to clarify the position of English in the Czech Republic. The expansion of English was influenced after 1989 when Russian lost the position of a compulsory foreign language at schools and Russian teachers were often re-trained and started teaching other foreign languages ([Nekvapil, 2007](#)). After 1990, English as a first foreign language was appended to compulsory education, starting from the fifth grade of elementary schooling. The third language (i.e., the second foreign language) became optional in the seventh grade. Starting from 1995, the first foreign language became compulsory from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and the second foreign language from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. If English is taught from the third year, then German, Spanish, French, or Russian are offered preferentially as second foreign language. Starting from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, another language might be taught as an optional subject ([Průcha, 1999](#)). Whereas English is included in the curriculum for the junior primary schooling already, it became the most frequent foreign language in the country. The accession of the Czech Republic in the European Union in 2004 played also a significant role ([Nekvapil, 2007](#)).

In the previous century, this language was subject for research ([Kachru, 1985](#)). In the 1990s, [Kachru \(1996\)](#) visualised how the three Circles were related to each other in a diagram as follows (see Figure 1).

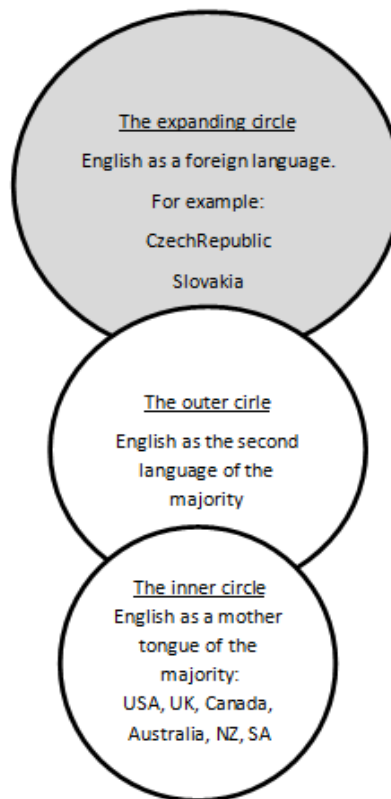


Figure 1. Three concentric circles of Englishes (own source)

- The Inner Circle contains countries with English as the mother tongue of the majority
- The Outer Circle contains countries with English as the second language of the majority
- The last circle is the Expanding Circle, where English is as a foreign language. Here belongs also the Czech Republic.

At about the same time, another diagram visualising the three Circles of English was also introduced in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* ([Crystal, 1995](#)).

### 3 Third culture kids

The third-culture concept emerges in families whose parents come from different cultures, often having even different mother tongues. These families gradually build their own platforms with a unique culture in which they live and raise their children ([Frame, 2004](#)). In this model, children acquire a part of the culture from the mother and another part from the father, and this mix influences them in their living environments. Therefore, in this manner they build a new, enriching environment, the so-called third culture model. [Casmir \(1999\)](#) described this framework as an active process, through which varied cultural groups mutually converge. When the children start attending the elementary school, which is at the age of six or seven years old, a new determinant, i.e. the school environment, enters the family and starts influencing it (see Figure 2).

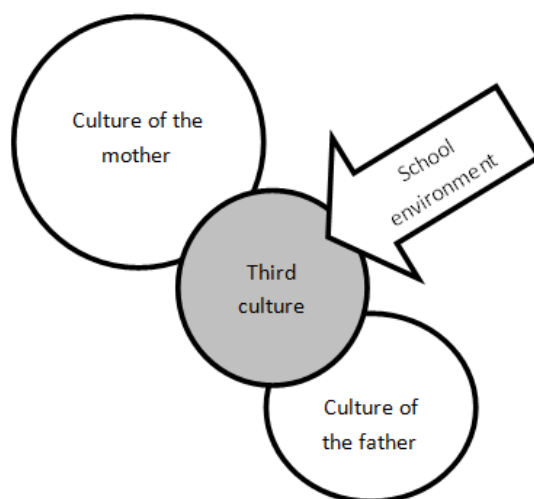


Figure 2. Third culture model, influenced by the school environment (own source)

Not only they cope with two, often highly different, cultures at the same time, but starting from a certain moment they also have to consider school attendance and everyday home preparation for school. The newly-formed third culture becomes a shared platform for all participants, i.e. for all household members. It takes a long time to build this new environment as well as to make it natural and acceptable to all participants. During that time, a creation of new communication patterns may be expected, this finally resulting in forming a homogeneous concept that all members understand and can keep mutually developing. Thanks to this model, individuals coming from different backgrounds may function successfully every day (Brahic, 2013).

The term third culture kids was first used in the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by US anthropologists Useem and Cotrell (1993). They researched the specifics of subcultures formed by foreign workers and their families living in relative isolation at military bases, mission stations, and business complexes in India. During their extensive research among Americans residing for a long time in India, they discovered that these people have a certain specific lifestyle which differs significantly from that of the Americans living in the US.

Pollock and Van Reken define the third culture kid concept as a person who spent a significant part of his/her childhood development outside the cultural backgrounds of one or both parents. The Third Culture Kid develops a relationship to every culture it encounters, this however without being fully integrated in any of them. Even though elements of individual cultures form a part of individual life-experience of those children, they often feel the sense of belonging rather to people whose life-experience is similar (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 13).

Their life experience leads third culture kids to acquire certain abilities and practical skills that are beneficial for themselves as well as for their environments. According to Schreiner (2009, p. 132) between positive aspects belong better “readiness for mobility, familiarity with multiple cultures, openness and respect to other people and different cultures, more detailed perception of different cultures, flexibility, communication skills, interest in foreign cultures, and intercultural competences.” These children view the world in a very wide perspective, they are less prejudiced as they are used to a different cultural environment (Schreiner, 2009). According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009, pp. 77–89) between the negative aspects of third culture kids belong “the widened worldview because they may get in conflict with the sometimes straightforwardly simplistic perspective of people who lack such experience.” Their behaviour may be perceived as a lack of patriotism or haughtiness. The fact that third culture kids may be characterized as cultural chameleons (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009) has also its negative antipode. They often find it difficult to feel at home in any culture. Though it may

outwardly seem that they are integrated in the surrounding culture, they actually only adapt their external behaviour. They may thus experience disillusionment when they fail to get on with their friends or they have other (specific) problems with school attendance compared to their schoolmates.

## 4 Methodology

The purpose of this research is to determine the most common difficulties with home preparation experienced by children from families consisting of partners who come from different cultures and who have also different mother tongues. The children are exposed to the Czech language from their birth, however, their main mother tongue is English.

*Criterion for the research:*

1. Children must be from families living in the Czech Republic, where each partner has a different mother tongue and one of these languages is English.
2. Families with children (child) in elementary schools in the Czech Republic (ISCED 1, 2).
3. Primary schools attended by these children must educate in Czech language, according to the Czech educational curriculum and be enrolled in the Register of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

In order to achieve the research goal, the qualitative research strategy using semi-structured interviews was selected. The research sample was deliberate and personal contacts of the researcher were exploited.

Individual participants could choose where they wanted to conduct the interviews. All of them preferred their natural environment. The researcher therefore visited all the families at their places, which provided a unique opportunity to look into their home environment and to observe some of the habits that they introduced from their original culture. In particular, this related to the environment in which children usually prepare for school. This would not have been possible if the interviews were conducted in a neutral environment.

All participants were given the opportunity to choose their preferred language of communication. Participants coming from abroad selected English, which was also their mother tongue. This included also a participant whose command of Czech is on the B2 level (according to the Common European Framework of Reference: learning, teaching, assessment). Participants coming from the Czech Republic communicated with the researcher in Czech. It is clearly not the duration of stay in a foreign country or the influence of environment - the mother tongue remains the preferred language when it comes to a free choice. It is interesting that when the participants are in their family environments, they communicate with one another exclusively in English. They stated that this language was easier for them.

There were six participants in the research, specifically three families (see Figure 3). Two out of these three families were personal contacts of the researcher. The researcher only had limited previous contact with last family (JL), but they entered the research through family CV. This made it easier for the family as well as for the researcher, because it allowed them to be open from the beginning to answer any question.

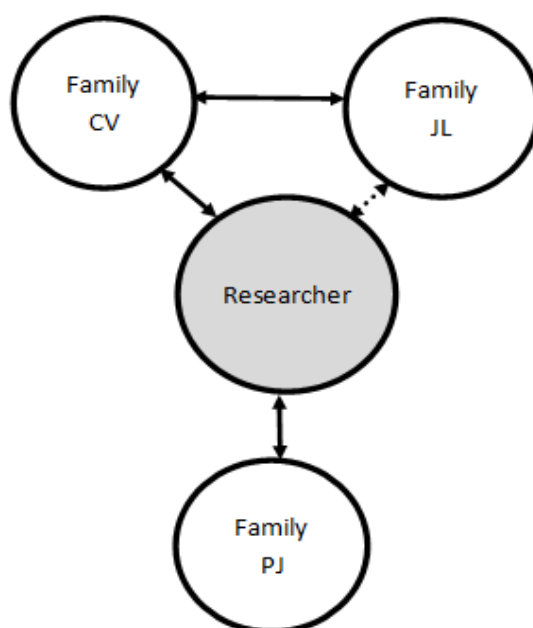


Figure 3. Scheme of gaining a sample of participants for the research (own source)

Interviews were made with six participants (see Table 1 to 3), i.e., parents meeting the above criteria. Authentic statements of informants included in the data interpretation are written in italics, accompanied with the participant's name between parentheses.

Table 1

*Chosen Participants for Research (Family – JP)*

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Pavlína	Name*: Jacob	Name*: Karen	English, limited Czech
Mother tongue: Czech	Mother tongue: English	Age: 8 years	

\* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

Table 2

*Chosen Participants for Research (Family – JL)*

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Ludmila	Name*: Josh	Name*: Jasmine, Victoria	English, limited Czech
Mother tongue: Czech	Mother tongue: English	Age: 13 years, 10 years	

\* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

Table 3

*Chosen Participants for Research (Family – CV)*

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Valerie	Name*: Caden	Name*: Lacey, Daisy	English, limited Czech or Afrikaans
Mother tongue: English	Mother tongue: Afrikaans	Age: 13 years, 10 years	

\* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

## 5 Data analysis

The research material acquired was analysed using situational analysis procedures. From the perspective of the research process, in its initial phase the situational analysis relies on analytical strategies which are highly similar to those of the classic grounded theory. However, the situational

analysis differs from the classic grounded theory due to the creation of varied forms of maps in all research stages, which serve both as aids for further research and as resulting products of analyses (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015). The reason of this difference can be found in a much more comprehensive view of the research field given by the situational analysis, which leads to a more accurate rendering of reality compared to the traditional grounded theory (Kalenda, 2016).

The study of Venterová (2017) makes it evident that anglophone pupils attribute to education a significantly higher value than the majority of pupils in the Czech Republic. This study focuses on the influence of a different (anglophone) culture on the demands posed on selected participants by home preparation for school.

The acquired data were analysed in the following steps:

1. Transcription of all interviews was made. These were subsequently subject to open coding and complemented with notes. This allowed to identify the key elements of domestic environment and of individual cultural determinants.
2. Afterwards, a messy map was formed, based on the elements identified (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Connected the topic of home preparation of anglophone children for school

3. In the following step, all 59 elements included in the messy map were classified in ten key categories and the so-called order map was created (see tab. 4).



Table 4

Structure of order map (own source)

Individual actors	Collective actors	Discursive construction of individuals in the collective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individually integrated pupil</li> <li>- Committed class teacher</li> <li>- Non-committed class teacher</li> <li>- Principal</li> <li>- Educational adviser</li> <li>- Psychologist</li> <li>- Researcher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers</li> <li>- New classmates</li> <li>- Previous classmates</li> <li>- Class groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Willing teacher</li> <li>- Inexperienced teacher</li> <li>- Uncompromising parent</li> <li>- Attempting to get better pupil</li> <li>- Lazy pupil</li> <li>- False friendship</li> </ul>
School environment	Teacher's effort	Position of the child in school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Original school environment</li> <li>- New school environment</li> <li>- Difficult travelling</li> <li>- Getting up early in the mornings</li> <li>- Quality, free education</li> <li>- Kindergarten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finding alternative solutions</li> <li>- Unwillingness to search for alternative solutions</li> <li>- Individual study plan</li> <li>- Communication in mother tongue with the teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different person</li> <li>- Standard student</li> <li>- Outsider</li> <li>- Class exclusion</li> <li>- Feeling of personal uncertainty</li> </ul>
Culture determinant	Time based codes	Home environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mother tongue</li> <li>- Life style</li> <li>- Leisure time use</li> <li>- Mixing of individual cultures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age of the teacher</li> <li>- Age of the child</li> <li>- Length of lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Challenging homework</li> <li>- No homework</li> <li>- The need of using dictionary for homework</li> <li>- Independence in home preparation</li> <li>- External tutoring</li> <li>- Family tutoring</li> <li>- Change of residence</li> <li>- Own space for school preparation</li> </ul>
Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal communication with the teacher</li> <li>- Teacher as a colleague</li> <li>- Mediated communication with the teacher</li> <li>- Communication about specific needs</li> <li>- Main language of the education</li> <li>- The first foreign educated language</li> <li>- Easier communication</li> <li>- More difficult communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation with professionals</li> <li>- Cooperation with the parents</li> <li>- Moving abroad</li> <li>- Safety</li> <li>- Residence as a determinant</li> <li>- Poor service accessibility</li> <li>- Finance demanding tutoring</li> </ul>	

- The analytical work that followed consisted in a relational analysis focusing on elements determining home preparation of pupils from intercultural partnerships (see Figure 5). The relational analysis offers multiple data interpretation and analysis ([Kalenda, 2016](#)).



*kindergarten over there. Only Daisy and only as a pre-schooler went to kindergarten in (name of the village),<sup>5</sup> because we moved. [...]. (Valerie)*

*Karen visited kindergarten only in the last year. Back then, it wasn't compulsory, but I had to go back to work. She had never visited kindergarten before, because we were living in SA and the preschool education is simply too expensive over there. I couldn't find work, to pay for private education and we didn't want her to visit government kindergarten. (Pavína)*

When asked about the nursery they chose for their children and on what grounds the decision was made - views of different parents varied similarly according to the approach of individual families to preparation for school.

*My daughter has Skype tutoring, the travelling was too difficult for us. (Josh) So far, we manage it without external help. Every day we train writing, reading and math. At this moment it's enough, but we are aware, that may need help in the future. (Petra) I had an tutor, but it didn't work out. Daisy did not behave well, she was constantly angry. Than the lady said we shouldn't come anymore. Recently children attend a different school, where they have tutoring immediately after lessons in the school building. [...]. (Valerie)*

Children in the CV family changed primary school during compulsory school education. Parents decided to do it because they felt there was a lack of communication and unwillingness to do so in the previous school. Although children had individual study plans, they did not benefit proportionately from their efforts. In the new school, they have an English-speaking psychologist who supports them and the option to do homework at school before they go home. As Useem and Cotrell (1993) state, children of the third culture change school more often than most children if they are unsuccessful at school. "Changing the school helped us a lot, our children have to travel far, but they finally have support at school" (Caden).

All families would be glad if children had the same opportunity in preparation for the next day and write homework directly at school after the end of the lessons. Only one school offers this option to the selected families, facilitating these children in overcoming obstacles in their studies. Moreover, this school offers this service for free, as part of an individual approach to their pupils. Parents are aware that most schools do not offer this option. They are also aware that the school and the teachers often do not have the capacity to teach pupils in the afternoon.

*They spend more time at school, but they come home with their homework already finished, which makes life easier for us. They just need to learn at home sometimes. We are delighted that the new school offers this opportunity. (Valerie) We would be glad if the school offered tutoring, even if we must pay for it, but this option is not available. The teacher said she could provide private lessons after lesson, but only for two pupils, no more. She offered the daughter the opportunity to ask if there was something she needed immediately after a lesson, but even this was not enough. She needs support more regularly and more time. (Ludmila) This would be a wonderful option, but I don't know if the school offers something like this. The daughter does not need this now, but this will become unavoidable in future, so we will definitely be interested. (Pavína) I again understand schools do not offer tutoring because they do not have capacity available and there are too few teachers. I think that today, a school that helps children with their homework or that provide extra lessons is the exception. (Josh)*

It is evident from the interviews that all children need more attention when doing their homework and that individual families solve this issue differently. The decision concerning the way of helping the child was highly influenced by the family's place of residence.

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<sup>5</sup> Due to the anonymization, the real name of the village was deleted.

*It was a big problem for us, regularly travelling there and back. One Czech lesson took me three hours of my time. Picking up the children from school, bring them to (town name - due to anonymization, the town name was deleted), wait and back home. When I wasn't working, I was driving. This changed at the moment, when my children changed their school. Now they have tutoring in the school building. [...] (Valerie) [...] We live almost in the centre, so maybe in the future it will not be a problem. So far, we can do it ourselves. Actually me, my husband can 't speaks Czech at all. (Pavčina)*

The workload of parents influences home preparation as well.

*[...] Tutoring is expensive and time-consuming, but it must be done. I believe that it will return in the future and that this are well-invested money. [...] Just the travelling is annoying. [...] (Caden) [...] My daughter has Skype tutoring so she doesn't have to go anywhere. Now she is old enough and can travel alone, but it wasn't always like that. Even she would prefer an individual tutor, but it's not easy to find someone around here [...] (Ludmila) My kids don't want Skype, they keep saying they can't concentrate and wouldn't like it. (Valerie)*

Another significant element is the approach of the teacher not only to the pupil but also to his/her parents, which subsequently determines the relationship between the school and the parents.

*[...] Recently, in the new school, the teachers are actually my colleagues. So, they can just pick up phone and call me. (Valerie)<sup>6</sup> A colleague always calls me, someone who knows me well and can speak English. This didn't exist in the previous school. There was no one willing to talk to us and when they could, they just criticized and only in Czech and my husband or me weren't able to understand. (Valerie)*

The volume of homework influences the relationship of the family (not only the child) with the school. *Karen gets homework but she's in the first class, so she's still very careful. I always sit with her and, when she needs it, I help her. (Pavčina)*. Parents of first-graders anticipate that their child will be getting homework and that they will participate in performing it. The involvement of parents in home preparation leads to better results specifically in homework. The role of the parent is needed to provide the child with an optimal environment and to encourage the child in explaining obscurities and expressing his/her opinion when asked to ([Šulová, 2009](#)).

*[...] Children don 't enjoy their homework, in the previous school they didn't it late in the evenings, often we didn't understand the task. So, we often had to search on the internet to find out what they want us to do. [...] That's why I'm glad that they hardly have any homework in the new school. (Caden)*

Individual parents come from different cultures. Therefore, a question arose, namely why they live specifically in the Czech Republic, as it is often very difficult for their children. All families agreed on the same element, which was: High-quality, free education. This element was very interesting for the researcher. All families were happy about the educational system in the Czech Republic, even though it is often very difficult for them.

*[...] In South Africa, if we want to give our child a high-quality education, it'd cost us most of the money we'd earn. And we wouldn't have any money left for school supplies, travelling, living, security and everything else. Although public schools are over there, but in that case, Karen'd be the only white child, and she wouldn't learn much. And we didn't want that. (Pavčina) Education in South*

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<sup>6</sup> Mother works at the same school, but at different detached department and knows most of the children's pedagogues in person (researcher's note).

*Africa is very expensive. Although I went to school over there, but it was back then during Apartheid when everything was different than today. (Jacob)*

## 6.1 Positioning map

One of the frequently criticised characteristics of the classic grounded theory is an excessive simplification of meanings when deviations in statements of research participants from central meaning categories are not reflected or are obliterated as deviations from the standard (Clarke, 2003, 2005, Thomas & James, 2006).

Later, the positioning map (see Figure 6), based on extracts from the participants' narrations, charts the positions they hold in relation to the following meaning axes – The influence of cultural determinants on the child's home preparation for school education and the intensity of home preparation for school education.

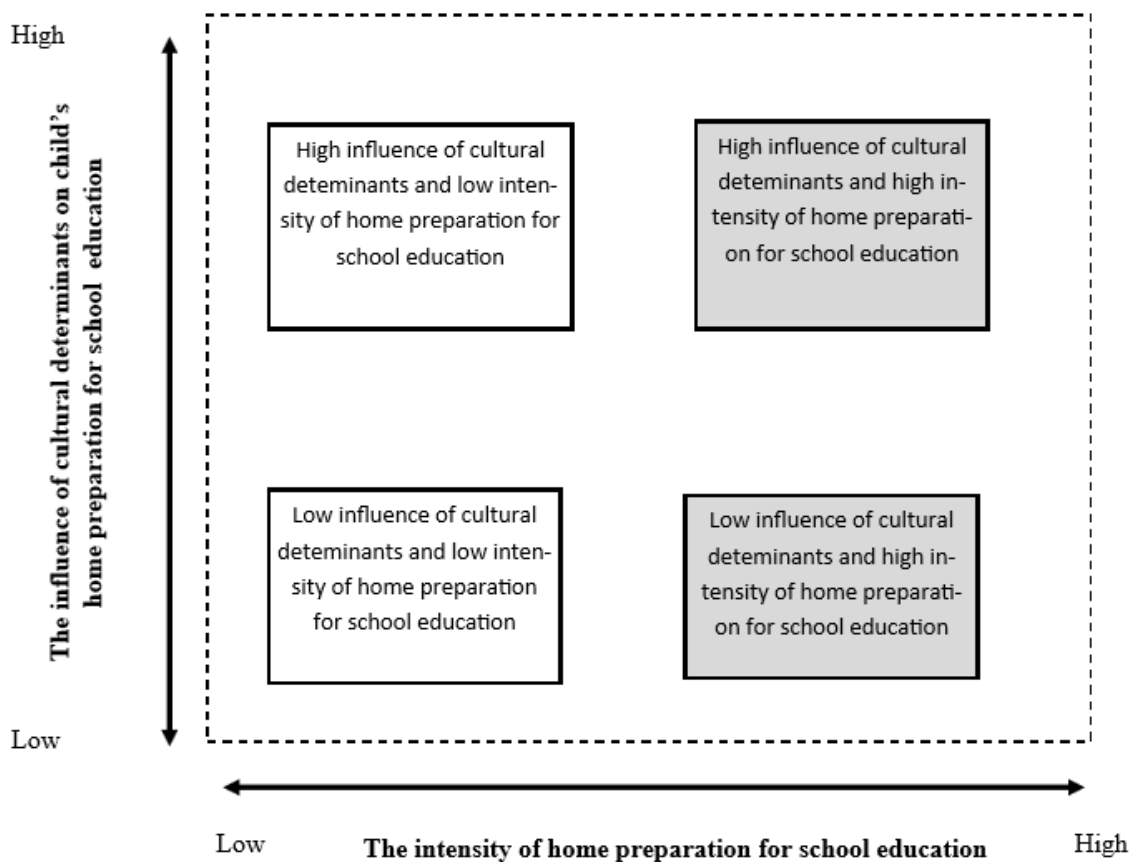


Figure 6. Focusing on the cultural determinants and intensity of home preparation

Concentrating on the level of intensity of home preparation for school education and the impact of cultural determinants, it is clear that cultural determinants have an impact on school preparation, especially with the CV family. This family, however, found a way to relieve the influence of these determinants without having to change their cultural habits, which they have transferred from their original culture. The greatest support is given by a new elementary school that the children attends and where the teachers help the children with homework and they provide additional explanations about the subjects. For the other two families, the impact of cultural determinants is lower, but still the children need to learn more for school education. This is outlined by the increased intensity of preparation for schooling, external tutoring.

## 7 Conclusion

This qualitative study explores the influence of a different culture on the preparation of anglophone children for elementary school. Even though all these children were born in the Czech Republic where they first attended a kindergarten and then they started their elementary schooling, they also preserve a part of the culture of the English-speaking parent. This is partly due to the fact that this culture was mediated to them not only through the parent, but for two of the participants also through a foreign nursery, and for another one through a stay abroad before starting the compulsory schooling in the Czech Republic. For the last family, even though the children attended Czech kindergartens only, the influence of the anglophone culture is really strong in the family and it still influences their schooling. This not only influences preparation for school to a large extent, it also poses obstacles in coping with their schooling in the form of communication with the teacher or understanding the teacher's presentation of the curriculum. This happens despite the fact that all children from the families included in the research were born in the Czech Republic and they were in contact with the Czech language from early childhood.

This contribution with its design may be perceived as pioneering in the context of research performed so far, as it differs from the traditional examination of influence of domestic environment on schooling. We also deem the sample of selected families as innovative as it involves families with partners coming from diverse cultures who have different mother tongues and decided to live in the Czech Republic. They are aware of the fact that the local life is difficult for them in the perspective of linguistic and cultural differences; however, they are determined to overcome such obstacles. The acquired data show that the influence of the language as well as the cultural situation of the family is transferred to their children and from the domestic to the school environment.

Families endeavour to integrate their children in the Czech educational system by providing external tutoring for their children. Education is of high importance in the eyes of the parents. All parents acquired varied university degrees and they wish similar education for their children, although preparation for school is highly demanding for them. This applies not only to their personal help to children but also in terms of time, as they drive their children to external tutoring.

In agreement with [Maňák \(1992\)](#), home preparation is an integral part of school attendance. [Jursová \(2011\)](#) states that this preparation will facilitate the child's work at school. Although it makes the learning in the school easier for the child, it can become too difficult for anglophone children and their families. If these children get homework, the task should have a simple, clear assignment and should not be marked in order for pupils from a different cultural environment to do it. [Majerčíková and Petrů-Puhrová \(2017\)](#) state that home preparation includes more than just homework in the form of individual tasks. It is assumed that parents are involved as an implicit part of family life. In our case, however, it can mean a complicated search for external tutoring and commuting. According to [Straková \(2016\)](#), who has been engaged in educational inequality research in the Czech Republic for a long time, some teachers have very convincing arguments for giving homework and others for not giving reasons. In her opinion, teachers should be left autonomous in assigning homework, but at the same time they should always keep in mind that some parents are not able to provide suitable conditions to do these tasks. As a result, children suffer even if they are innocent. The school should

A different culture does not only influence school preparation to a large extent, it also puts obstacles in place on how to cope with schooling in the form of communication with the teacher or understanding the teacher's presentations. This could be reflected in the success or failure of the child in the school.

be aware of it. A possible solution would be to create a space at school to allow children to work with someone other than their parents. Experience from American schools shows that teachers are not trying to delegate responsibility for education to parents (Straková, 2016).

If the child is unsuccessful at school despite the external tutoring, they are willing to accept a change of school, which is also confirmed by Useem and Cotrell (1993). The family CV took this step and they are convinced it was correct step for their future. Grand'Maison (1976) describes the problem of the educational system that does not adapt to the present. Changing school is a complex process for their children because they have to get used to new environment, new schoolmates and teachers. This happens frequently also at the cost of complex commuting. However, bad relationships are reflected in the child's school results (Rabušicová, 2004). In the new school, they search for teachers having a good grasp of foreign languages with whom they are able to communicate and who would apply an individual approach to help their children succeed in their schooling. The amount of homework is also an important element for them, given the time workload of the parents and the language barrier - for this reason they have a bias in favour of a smaller homework frequency. Communication between the school and the family is an important factor influencing education. High-quality interaction is therefore highly important (Šedřová, 2004). Moreover, it is evident from the acquired data that families created their own platforms at home, which are different from those of typically monocultural families in the Czech Republic.

The family combines two highly different cultures complemented from the third side by the compulsory schooling, to which they are trying to adapt. They keep trying persistently to overcome all obstacles posed on them in their effort to adapt to schooling in the Czech Republic, granting their children education of good quality, while preserving a part of their *original selves*.

*The author declares that this is the original study and text in this form has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published otherwise.*

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