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**Thinking Theory about Practice and Practice about Theory
Maria Węglińska (1936–2022) and Her Contribution
to the Development of Academic Early Childhood Education¹**

**Mysleć teorią o praktyce a praktyką o teorii
Maria Węglińska (1936–2022) i jej udział w przygotowaniu metodycznym
nauczycieli edukacji wczesnoszkolnej**

Abstract: This article aims to present a profile of Maria Węglińska: her life, professional and scientific development, as well as teaching and organizational activities. She dealt with academic early childhood education from the moment the University of Szczecin was established. Before that, she worked in primary education and teacher education and training institutions, which not only gave her experience but also formed her basic research interests. These were the methodology of early school education and pedeutology, and her work in these areas resulted in a number of publications that have entered the canon of methodological literature for teachers.

Keywords: pedagogy, didactics, teaching methodology, early school age.

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Biographical and professional outline

Maria Węglińska was born on 16 April 1936 into a peasant family. She was a daughter of Jan and Katarzyna née Cudzitto. Her place of birth was the village of Bielmy, Nisko powiat, in the former Rzeszów province. Węglińska started primary school in Bielmy and graduated in Przemyśl. There, in 1955, she obtained her secondary school leaving certificate at the State Pedagogical Secondary School. Also in 1955, as a result of the work order (No. 3, 1955), which was customary in the 1950s, she was forced to move to Szczecin, where she began work as a teacher.² The analysis of entries in her personal files shows how diverse her professional experience was, affecting her later scientific and didactic activity. Węglińska was employed in the following institutions in Szczecin: Primary School No. 10 (1955/56–1958/59), the Exercise School at the Pedagogical Secondary School (1959/60), Primary School No. 43 (1960/61–1963/64), Primary School No. 70 (1964/65), 1st Teacher Training College (1965/66–1967/68), Teacher Training Department (1968/69), Higher Teacher Training School (1969/70–1972/73), Higher School of Pedagogy (1973/74–1984/85) and the University of Szczecin (1985–2001).³ The University of Szczecin, or more precisely, the Institute of Pedagogy, was where she worked the longest, until her retirement. She died in Szczecin on 7 January 2022.

The variety of places of employment and the fact that Węglińska went through almost all levels of education had a direct impact on the development of both her research interests and the quality of her teaching practice. She accumulated experience and used it at subsequent professional levels. Years of work in primary education as an early school teacher and a short but valuable time at the Exercise School at the Pedagogical Secondary School bore fruit. Namely, she was first employed as an elementary teaching methodologist and internship supervisor at the 1st Teacher Training College, and then as head of the Elementary Education Section in the District Methodological Centre in Szczecin.⁴

2 Archives of the University of Szczecin (AUS), sygn. 137/814, Akta osobowe pracowników: Maria Węglińska, p. 23.

3 Ibidem, pp. 1, 6, 23.

4 AUS, sygn.137/814, Akta osobowe pracowników: Maria Węglińska, pp. 21, 23; M. Węglińska, *Moje życie, „Nauczyciel i Szkoła”*, 8 (2000) p. 218.

The source materials prove that from the very beginning, Węglińska was known as a responsible, committed employee who approached her duties with care. A letter justifying the granting of a special allowance for work at the 1st Teacher Training College reads, 'She is distinguished by great diligence and zeal in her educational work. She organizes assistant practice at the training school very well.'⁵

In 1969, Węglińska applied for employment as a lecturer at the Department of Elementary Teaching Methodology of the Higher Teacher Training School and that was when her academic life began. At that time, her scientific development intensified.⁶

Before taking up her new position, Węglińska graduated from Teacher Training School No. 2 in Poznań in 1959, majoring in pedagogy with a specialization in elementary education. Her diploma thesis was entitled 'Wykorzystanie własnego środowiska w nauczaniu przyrody i geografii w klasach I-IV szkoły podstawowe' [Using One's Environment in Teaching Natural Science and Geography in Grades I–IV of Primary School]. The defence of her diploma thesis coincided with the commencement of part-time studies at the University of Warsaw in the field of pedagogy. She graduated in June 1963 with her master's thesis entitled 'Praca szkoły a wizytacja' [School Work and Inspection] under the supervision of Professor Tadeusz Pasierbiński, PhD.⁷

While working as a lecturer in pedagogical subjects at the Higher Teacher Training School, whose heads cared for the scientific development of employees, Węglińska entered the next stage of her professional development – this time of a scientific nature. Almost immediately after she was employed in 1970, she was sent to Poznań for doctoral studies, which she completed two years later. She wrote her doctoral thesis entitled 'Nauczyciele klas początkowych i ich stosunek do wykonywanego zawodu' [Teachers of Primary Classes and Their Attitudes to the Profession] under the supervision of Benon Bromberek, PhD. The dissertation received positive reviews from Halina Baczyńska, PhD

5 State Archives in Szczecin (APS), sygn. 174, Studium Nauczycielskie I im. K. J. Gałczyńskiego w Szczecinie, Sprawy kadrowe – opinie, zaświadczenia, nagrody, przeszerogowania 1966–1967, Pismo z 19 grudnia 1966 r. do KOSS od Dyrekcji I SN, p. 44.

6 AUS, sygn.137/814, Akta osobowe pracowników: Maria Węglińska, p. 31.

7 M. Węglińska, *Moje życie*, p. 218.

and Professor Tadeusz Wróbel, PhD. On this basis, on 10 May 1976, the Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences resolved to award Węglińska the degree of Doctor of Humanities in the field of pedagogy.⁸ Consequently, she moved to a position as an assistant professor, first at the Higher School of Pedagogy, established in 1973, and later at the University of Szczecin, which was founded in 1985.

In 1991, Węglińska attempted to initiate the habilitation (post-doctoral) procedure at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The basis for obtaining a habilitated doctor's degree was her scientific achievements, culminating in a habilitation thesis entitled 'Postawy czytelnicze dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym' [Reading Attitudes of Children at Younger School Age].⁹ Having received positive reviews, it was published by the Scientific Publishing House of the University of Szczecin.¹⁰ In February 1992, at the meeting of the Council of the Institute of Pedagogy of Adam Mickiewicz University, the following candidates for the habilitation committee were proposed: Professors Bromberek, Jerzy Kujawiński, Józef Skrzypczak, Maria Tyszkowa and Zbigniew Kwieciński. At the same time, a discussion was held on Węglińska's application. Having appreciated the wealth of her scientific achievements, which was reflected in the positive initial reviews by Professors Kujawiński and Bromberek,¹¹ the committee pointed out the methodological shortcomings of her habilitation thesis. This became the basis for the decision of the Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences on 9 March 1992, which was unfavourable for Węglińska and resulted in the withdrawal of her habilitation documents.¹²

However, this unfavourable course of events did not change the fact that both the accumulated achievements and the findings described in her habilitation book successfully translated into her valuable and high-level research and teaching activity in the following years of work. As mentioned, the Institute

8 Archives of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (AUAM), sygn. 825/1044, Wydział Nauk Społecznych, Akta doktorskie Marii Węglińskiej.

9 AUAM, sygn.825/1045, Wydział Nauk Społecznych, Akta habilitacyjne Marii Węglińskiej, p. 1.

10 M. Węglińska, *Postawy czytelnicze dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym*, Szczecin 1991.

11 AUS, sygn. 137/814, Akta osobowe pracowników: Maria Węglińska, pp. 185–194.

12 AUAM, sygn. 825/1045, Wydział Nauk Społecznych, Akta habilitacyjne Marii Węglińskiej, pp. 8–11.

of Pedagogy, part of the University of Szczecin, was Węglińska's chosen place of work. Within the institute, and through it various structural changes, Weglin-ska worked in a number of departments, which were the Department of General Didactics, the Department of Early School Pedagogy, the Early School Pedagogy Unit, and, since 2000, the Early School Pedagogy Laboratory.¹³

Teaching and organizational activity

Węglińska's basic scientific interests, which were pedeutology and the didactics of elementary education, were also the basis for her teaching and organizational activities. All forms of classes (lectures, exercises, seminars) that she conducted with students related to the field of early childhood education and were carried out primarily in teaching specialties. The science camps that Węglińska ran for almost 25 years were also organized in this way. They were usually organized in towns peripheral to Szczecin, mainly rural settlements. This was undoubtedly an advantage because students could experience educational work in various social environments. This allowed them to broaden their pedagogical horizons and gain valuable experience that would pay off in their future professional work. Moreover, this form of student activity gave them another tangible benefit. They used the materials collected during the science camps in their master's theses. Węglińska also used them when preparing her subsequent scientific publications. All the master's theses supervised by her were related to early childhood education.¹⁴

The second important dimension of her teaching activity, which proves that she had consistent research interests, was her participation in various forms of training for primary education teachers (using the nomenclature of that time). The institutions with which she cooperated, effectively using her experience, were the Teacher Education Institute – the Teacher Training Department in Szczecin and the Władysław Spasowski Teacher Training Centre – the Department in Szczecin. Importantly, she participated as a consultant

13 J. Król, *Instytut Pedagogiki – struktura organizacyjna, władze i infrastruktura*, in: *Instytut Pedagogiki (1985–2015)*, eds. J. Król, E. Magiera, Szczecin 2015, pp. 51–64.

14 M. Węglińska, *Moje życie*, p. 219.

in the 11th Pedagogical Progress Session devoted to the issue of working with gifted students.¹⁵ This undertaking was important as it resulted in a publication entitled *Jak pracować z uczniem zdolnym* [How to Work with a Gifted Student],¹⁶ prepared under Węglińska's supervision. It contained materials authored by teachers and for teachers that were important from a didactic point of view.

However, the above-mentioned publication is only one of Węglińska's numerous achievements and proof of her extraordinary concern for the quality of teaching. Among her research interests and her published books and articles on these, there is an unquestionable wealth of works on didactic topics, particularly methodological ones in the field of early school education.

Areas of research interests

In this article, it has been stated more than once that Węglińska's main research interests were focused on didactics and pedeutology, which is reflected in her professional development path, teaching and organizational activity and the scientific promotions she subsequently obtained. Węglińska's research profile was therefore clearly defined and can be treated as the axis around which she conceptualized her areas of scientific and methodological exploration. For the purposes of this narrative, these can be divided into five basic areas.

Early education methodology

Didactics, particularly detailed teaching methodology in grades I–III, was one of the pillars of Węglińska's research work. She devoted many books and articles to this issue, the most general assumptions of which are presented in her publication *Jak przygotować się do lekcji? Wybór materiałów dydaktycznych* [How to Prepare for a Lesson? A Selection of Teaching Materials].¹⁷ This is

15 Ibidem.

16 *Jak pracować z uczniem zdolnym w klasach I–III? Poradnik dla nauczycieli*, ed. M. Węglińska, Szczecin 1990.

17 M. Węglińska, *Jak przygotować się do lekcji? Wybór materiałów dydaktycznych*, Kraków 1997.

a kind of compendium of didactic and methodological knowledge, the importance of which was expressed by the author as follows:

The efficient conduct of a lesson in accordance with didactics and methodology guidelines largely depends on how well a teacher is prepared for the lesson... Among the factors preventing routine is skilful planning of everyday teaching and educational work.¹⁸

The 13 chapters of this book deal with the construction and development of a lesson plan, its typology, exercises to develop divergent and convergent thinking, issues of motivation, issues of educational goals, classification of methods, forms of student work and teaching resources.¹⁹ The idea behind writing this type of publication was best expressed by Węglińska herself, 'I believe that... I allowed teachers to work creatively in developing lessons and writing a lesson plan.'²⁰

The new version of this publication, a response to teachers' needs related to the reform of the education system in 1999 which introduced integrated education in grades I–III, was the book *Jak przygotować się do zajęć zintegrowanych?* [How to Prepare for Integrated Classes?].²¹ The reviewer commented on it as follows:

A lot is said and written about integrated education in primary grades, presenting goals, tasks and examples. So far, there are no methodological works on a teacher's preparation for lessons, which is one of the basic elements of the modern teaching-learning process.²²

Węglińska used the method from her previous publication and focused on the construction of a lesson plan taking into account formal requirements, the issue of planning in selected theoretical approaches and various types of educational institutions, principles of education, educational forms and

18 Ibidem, p. 7.

19 Ibidem, passim.

20 Ibidem, p. 8.

21 M. Węglińska, *Jak przygotować się do zajęć zintegrowanych?*, Kraków 2002.

22 P. Kowolik, „*Jak przygotować się do zajęć zintegrowanych?*”, *Maria Węglińska*, Kraków 2002: [review], „*Nauczyciel i Szkoła*”, 3–4 (2002) p. 390.

methods, and teaching resources. The connecting factor here was the category of integration and various related solutions in the field of integrated teaching and upbringing. A valuable supplement to the book contained model lesson plans based on selected original programmes.²³

A practicing teacher or a trainee teacher could treat the content of the above publications as a propaedeutic stage introducing the area of detailed methodology, which was represented in subsequent valuable works by Węglińska. The previous ones generalized the experiences gained from a teacher's work and were an expression of the author's reliable specialist knowledge on the subject, while those presented in the next part of the article are related to Węglińska's research. A special place was given to the issue of forms of expression because, as the author aptly wrote, 'Learning to express thoughts correctly in speech and writing is one of the most difficult processes.'²⁴ The forms of expression that became the subject of her subsequent publications were: a letter, a description and a picture. The content structure of each of these publications was comparable and can be reduced to the following elements: a theoretical approach to a given form of expression and methodological and programmatic assumptions in the light of literature; embedding the analysed form of expression in the curricula of that time; a methodical approach to the issues discussed, together with the presentation of ready-made methodological guidelines; and the results of empirical research presenting children's skills in the examined area.²⁵ Each experimental piece of research conducted proved to be important and indicated an urgent need to improve the effectiveness of a teacher's work in the area of all the forms of expression mentioned above. The deficiency of students' skills in these areas²⁶ led Węglińska to the constantly repeated, very

23 M. Węglińska, *Jak przygotować się do zajęć zintegrowanych*.

24 Eadem, *List jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, Szczecin 1997, p. 7.

25 Eadem, *List jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*; eadem, *Opis jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, Warszawa 1989; eadem, *Jak pracować z obrazkiem*, Kraków 2000.

26 Eadem, *List jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, pp. 69–99; eadem, *Opis jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, pp.102–116; eadem, *Jak pracować z obrazkiem*, pp. 99–126; eadem, *Umiejętność adresowania listu przez uczniów klasy III na przykładzie środowiska wielkomińskiego*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Prace Instytutu Pedagogiki”, 1 (1997) pp. 127–134.

correct conclusion about the visible connection between the quality of a teacher's teaching activities and children's achievements in formulating oral and written statements.²⁷ At the same time, it was an incentive to formulate an equally valid conclusion about the usefulness of the discussed publications in pedagogical practice. Their author defined her goal each time as helping teachers in their teaching struggles and facilitating the implementation of difficult tasks.²⁸ This intention is evidenced by the fact that each publication was equipped with model methodological solutions included in the contents or an annex.

Two later books edited by Węglińska also served as guides. The subject of the first one was storytelling as an important form of expression.²⁹ The book consists of three parts, in which Węglińska describes the characteristics of storytelling from a methodological perspective, ways of developing the skills for editing a story, and storytelling from the perspective of the statements of individual early education methodologists. According to the editor, the task of the selected texts was to 'provide teachers with material for creative imitation, which will involve transforming given examples and adapting them to individual working conditions'.³⁰ A similar idea was also behind the second publication entitled *Jak pracować z uczniem zdolnym w klasach I-III? Poradnik dla nauczycieli* [How to Work with Gifted Students in Grades I-III? A Guide for Teachers].³¹ This is a unique book because it was written from 1988 to 1990 as a result of Węglińska's collaboration with teachers during eight subject-methodological conferences and with 30 self-education teams, whose efforts focused on the issue of working with gifted students. As a result of the actions taken, which also included consultations with parents of gifted students,

27 Eadem, *List jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, p. 98; eadem, *Opis jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, p. 117; eadem, *Jak pracować z obrazkiem*, p. 127; eadem, *Umiejętność adresowania listu przez uczniów klasy III na przykładzie środowiska wielkomiejskiego*, p. 133.

28 Eadem, *List jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, p. 8; eadem, *Opis jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, p. 5; eadem, *Jak pracować z obrazkiem*, p. 12.

29 *Opowiadanie jako forma wypowiedzi w klasach początkowych*, ed. M. Węglińska, Kraków 1997.

30 Ibidem, p. 7.

31 *Jak pracować z uczniem zdolnym w klasach I-III? Poradnik dla nauczycieli*, ed. M. Węglińska, Szczecin 1990.

methodological teachers and academics under the supervision of Węglińska developed a guide for teachers of the youngest primary school pupils. This was a kind of handbook of knowledge about abilities and aptitudes, the purpose of which was defined as:

to derive the essence of understanding the phenomenon of abilities and aptitudes from the theoretical and practical point of view of psychology and pedagogy by assigning this knowledge to subjects covered by the curriculum in grades I-III. We tried... to highlight the characteristic features of special abilities, taking into account methods and forms of work.³²

It should be emphasized again that all of the books presented above had an indispensable practical value and their extensive methodological sections provided valuable assistance to teachers in their teaching work.

Reading education

The issues of reading, particularly in relation to children of younger school age, were the subject of particular concern and research for Węglińska. This was related to her scientific interests, but also to her career path. She was employed at the Faculty of Polish Philology of the Teacher Training College, which was an important institution for her.³³ That time undoubtedly sensitized her to the issues of reading culture, which is a timeless problem and, from today's perspective, it has taken on an alarmist character. Moreover, that one of her publications in this area was planned as her habilitation book is also significant. However, it was preceded by another book entitled *Czytelnictwo uczniów w młodszym wieku szkolnym* [The Reading Activity of Students of Younger School Age].³⁴ In justifying the choice of topic, the author pointed to the lack of in-depth research at that time (1988) on the problem of reading among children of this age group and also the importance of contact with books for optimal human devel-

32 G. Konarzewska, *Wstęp*, in: *Jak pracować z uczniem zdolnym w klasach I-III?*, pp. 5–6.

33 APS, *Studium Nauczycielskie I im. K. J. Gałczyńskiego w Szczecinie*, sygn. 270, *Wykaz imienny pracowników naukowych poszczególnych wydziałów*, p. 1.

34 M. Węglińska, *Czytelnictwo uczniów w młodszym wieku szkolnym*, Szczecin 1988.

opment.³⁵ Węglińska's evaluation of the reading status of children of younger school age and its determinants clearly indicated a high correlation between a child's reading interests and their social environment, including their family's financial situation, and what we today call habitus (the mother was particularly important here). Węglińska used her research results to provide valuable and practical pedagogical tips for both parents and teachers.³⁶

Węglińska developed the issues raised in this work in her next publication, which, in her opinion, was of key importance in her achievements.³⁷ The book consists of eight chapters that discuss issues such as: children's reading initiation (including the role of the family); children's reading activity at younger school age (reading efficiency and reading interests); shaping reading attitudes from a theoretical perspective; children's attitude to reading (cognitive, emotional and practical dimensions); the role of biopsychological and environmental factors in differentiating reading attitudes (sex and age status, family participation and their educational activities, and mothers' knowledge about the reading attitudes of their children).³⁸ The empirical research once again prompted Węglińska to formulate practical conclusions for parents and teachers, which can be called an appeal to intensify educational and teaching activities aimed at developing a reading culture.³⁹

In her subsequent publications, Węglińska developed the issue of children's reading activity at the early education stage in terms of attitudes, reading interests and the role of the family environment. She presented the results of her systematically conducted empirical studies, each time constituting the basis for formulating recommendations for work and developing research as well as educational and didactic projects.⁴⁰

35 Ibidem, pp. 3–4.

36 Ibidem, pp. 100–107.

37 Eadem, *Postawy czytelnicze dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym*.

38 Ibidem.

39 Ibidem, pp. 234–242.

40 Eadem, *Postawy czytelnicze dzieci wielkowiejskich (analiza porównawcza)*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Prace Instytutu Pedagogiki i Psychologii”, 21 (1995) pp. 63–75; eadem, *Stosunek dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym do czytelnictwa czasopism w zależności od środowiska*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu

Pedagogy and the psychology of education

An integral element of the effective teaching process is the issue of students' motivation and attitudes towards school and their education. These issues naturally fit into Węglińska's research profile, as they constituted a reasonable extension of the methodological issues she addressed. The problem that inevitably arises when analysing the course of a teacher's teaching activity to support them in their efforts concerns a student and their readiness to actively participate in the teaching process. The starting point here can be considered the general attitude of a student towards school, to which Węglińska devoted her book entitled *Stosunek uczniów klas niższych szkoły podstawowej do nauki* [The Attitude of Primary School Younger Pupils towards Learning].⁴¹ The author assumed that research in this area was necessary because 'elementary teaching determines the direction of pedagogical activities and the further fate and school career of students'.⁴² The basis for writing the book was research conducted under Węglińska's supervision by students staying at the science camp in Przybiernowo and Kamień Pomorski in 1978 and 1979.⁴³ The time that elapsed from the research to the book's publication seems to be very long, of which the author was aware,⁴⁴ but at the same time, she did not consider the topic to be outdated. A student's attitude towards learning, the teacher, individual subjects and learning-related activities is a timeless problem. This is particularly true in relation to the early school education stage when the time spent at school is 'an extremely important period for the future of every child. This is a period of exceptionally positive (like never before) attitudes of students towards learning, and therefore towards teachers and school'.⁴⁵ Educators can

Szczecińskiego. *Prace Instytutu Pedagogiki*", 2 (1999) pp. 243–256; eadem, *Stosunek do czytelnictwa w wypowiedziach uczniów w młodszym wieku szkolnym i ich matek (na przykładzie środowiska wiejskiego)*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Prace Instytutu Pedagogiki”, 3 (2000) pp. 27–36.

41 Eadem, *Stosunek uczniów klas niższych szkoły podstawowej do nauki*, Szczecin 1982.

42 Ibidem, s. 6.

43 Ibidem.

44 Ibidem.

45 Ibidem, p. 110.

draw specific pedagogical conclusions from this, which, according to Węglińska, are all the more important because ‘teachers’ awareness of the enormous opportunities opening up to children obliges them not to use them, but to maintain and strengthen these positive attitudes towards learning’.⁴⁶

Węglińska was aware of the importance of the problem undertaken and so she continued to explore it in her next publication entitled *Motywacje szkolne dzieci w młodszym wieku* [School Motivations of Children of a Younger Age].⁴⁷ The work consists of four chapters in which the author discusses the issue of school children’s motivation for learning, doing homework, attending school, reading various forms of printed words, factors determining sympathy for a teacher, children’s emotional attitudes towards various characters, school activities and supervising teachers.⁴⁸ The publication, as Węglińska pointed out, was:

the result of many years of experience gained in direct work with children, constant exchange of experience with teachers of schools in the Szczecin province and my own research. It is also based on research conducted as part of a master’s seminar.⁴⁹

The starting point for presenting the effects of the conducted diagnostic research is a theoretical analysis of motivation, taking into account its correct terminology, features, sources, the role of motivation in the learning process, how motivation forms and its disorders, as well as the factors shaping motives.⁵⁰ Traditionally, Węglińska used the research results to formulate valuable tips for teachers, postulating the need for their self-education in the field of motivation, as well as the essence and importance of early education. Attention is also drawn to suggestions regarding the content of education and pedagogical development, in which – according to Węglińska – special attention should be paid to developing teachers’ psychological competences, that is,

46 Ibidem.

47 Eadem, *Motywacje szkolne dzieci w młodszym wieku*, Szczecin 1999.

48 Ibidem, p. 8.

49 Ibidem, p. 9.

50 Ibidem, pp. 11–38.

‘the ability to learn about, shape and correct motives in the education process’⁵¹ and develop positive motivation, which is a condition for effectively awakening it in students.⁵²

The relationship between a student’s motivation and their social environment,⁵³ observed in the above-mentioned research, directed Węglińska’s attention to a child’s immediate environment. This resulted in a separate publication entitled *Wiedza matek o postawach i motywacjach dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym* [Mothers’ Knowledge about the Attitudes and Motivations of Children of Younger School Age].⁵⁴ The author rightly notes:

Without the real cooperation of the basic environments in a child’s life, the school cannot achieve its goals or achieves them only partially. Therefore, for the cooperation of teachers and parents in the education process to be effective, both parties should demonstrate knowledge of the problems related to the education of children at a younger school age. Shaping positive attitudes of students towards school can only take place when the activities of a family and school are aimed at stimulating the child’s development and unleashing their individual potential.⁵⁵

This belief also became the premise for conducting empirical research in which mothers’ knowledge of their children’s attitudes and motivations was analysed. It included two main issues: children’s emotional attitude to school and children’s school motivations, which were further differentiated by the environment, social background and mothers’ education. The research was the stimulus for Węglińska to formulate accurate conclusions and recommendations, addressed not only to mothers but also a child’s home environment. The most important included: deepening knowledge of attitudes and motivation; gaining better knowledge of children’s emotional attitude to school and their motivation to learn; creating conditions conducive to shaping posi-

51 Ibidem, p. 134.

52 Ibidem, p. 135.

53 Ibidem, p. 132–133.

54 Eadem, *Wiedza matek o postawach i motywacjach dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym*, Szczecin 1999.

55 Ibidem, p. 10.

tive attitudes towards school activities; and limiting causes of anxiety.⁵⁶ Even though almost a quarter of a century has passed since the book's publication, the postulates presented in it have not lost any of their relevance.

Pedeutology

A teacher and particularly their teaching work were present in all Węglińska's publications. This could not be otherwise since, almost from the beginning of her professional and scientific career, the issue of appropriate preparation of teaching staff for the teaching process was the subject of her research and practical activities. She mainly focused on issues related to teaching methodology, examining the quality of this process and pedeutological conditions. An expression of these interests was a book raising the aspect of the relationship between the quality of a teacher's teaching work and the performance of early school students.⁵⁷ The publication, through the issues it raises, clearly refers to the previously published book describing one of the forms of expression. The then-emphasized relationship between students' achievements in their ability to create descriptions and the quality of teaching work became a pretext for presenting the effects of verification-experimental research in this area. The implementation of a carefully designed pedagogical experiment in natural school conditions, divided into experimental and control classes, proved the validity of the previously assumed hypotheses. In other words, there was a clear correlation between teachers' careful planning of the teaching process in experimental classes and students' achievements in the area of descriptive skills as a form of expression and knowledge of appropriate rules. Based on the research results, Węglińska formulated suggestions regarding the development of competences in self-editing descriptions. She encouraged teachers to use specialized methodological literature more often, use various types of descriptions, design more lessons developing this skill, refer to children's diverse knowledge and apply the principle of grading difficulty.⁵⁸

56 Ibidem, p. 143.

57 Eadem, *Jakość pracy dydaktycznej nauczyciela a efekty uczniów klasy III z języka polskiego (na przykładzie opisu jako formy wypowiedzi)*, Szczecin 1996.

58 Ibidem, pp. 105–107.

Węglińska's published doctoral dissertation entitled *Nauczyciele klas początkowych i ich stosunek do wykonywanego zawodu* [Primary School Teachers and Their Attitude towards Their Profession]⁵⁹ can be used to expand pedagogical knowledge. To solve the problem mentioned in the title, she conducted research among teachers of the then Szczecin province and students of primary education at the Higher Teacher Training School. She analysed the socio-demographic profile of teachers, their attitudes towards their profession and their determinants.⁶⁰ However, as the research was conducted a long time ago (1971), its results can be treated from a historical and educational perspective. Nevertheless, the correlation between a positive attitude towards one's profession, a sense of professional satisfaction and the quality of teachers' teaching work revealed in the publication remains valid.⁶¹

The presented research areas and their measurable effects are complemented by a book that, although it escapes the above-mentioned division, is among Węglińska's extremely important scientific achievements. It can be said with high probability that many generations of students treat it as a priority. This is a guide to writing a master's thesis, first written for students of primary education and then, in the next version, addressed to all students without differentiating the field. In both these versions, the author presented and characterized in an extremely clear way the subsequent stages of writing a diploma thesis: from formulating the topic through the selection of appropriate methods and techniques to a set of expressions and helpful phrases that can be used during the final editing.⁶² The success of the publication is measured by the fact that its second version has so far had eight editions, and subsequent generations of students benefit from Węglińska's instructions.

59 Eadem, *Nauczyciele klas początkowych i ich stosunek do wykonywanego zawodu (na przykładzie byłego województwa szczecińskiego)*, Warszawa-Poznań 1979.

60 Eadem, *passim*.

61 Eadem, pp. 112–113.

62 Eadem, *Jak pisać pracę magisterską?: poradnik dla studentów nauczania początkowego*, Szczecin 1993; eadem, *Jak pisać pracę magisterską?: poradnik dla studentów*, Kraków 1997.

Conclusions

Węglińska is the author of more than a dozen works, dissertations and scientific articles. Many years of work in primary education and institutions improving teachers' professional qualifications enabled her to notice not only the difficulties teachers face in their teaching activities but also the lack of methodological support for them. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Węglińska devoted all her research and professional activity to efforts to improve the quality of teaching work and help teachers not feel alone in their teaching process. Her publications have become extremely valuable and useful not only for trainee teachers or those just starting their careers but also for those who have been working in the profession for many years. Despite the passage of time, her books are still widely read and she is remembered as an extremely modest, cordial and ready-to-help person.⁶³

Let this article be summarized by Węglińska's own words, which best reflect the intention of her research and methodological efforts and, at the same time, constitute a message for the recipients, that is, teachers: 'teaching materials are the material from which one's own work is to be created.'⁶⁴

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu było przedstawienie sylwetki Marii Węglińskiej: jej drogi życiowej, rozwoju zawodowo-naukowego oraz działalności dydaktyczno-organizacyjnej. M. Węglińska z edukacją wczesnoszkolną na poziomie akademickim była związana od samego początku powstania Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. W latach poprzedzających pracowała w szkolnictwie na poziomie podstawowym i zakładach kształcenia oraz doskonalenia nauczycieli, co nie tylko zaowocowało doświadczeniem, ale uformowało podstawowe zainteresowania badawcze. Były nimi metodyka edukacji wczesnoszkolnej i pedeutologia, a aktywność w tych obszarach dała w efekcie szereg publikacji, które weszły do kanonu literatury metodycznej dla nauczycieli.

Słowa kluczowe: pedagogika, dydaktyka, metodyka nauczania, młodszy wiek szkolny.

63 Due to editorial requirements and the impossibility of including memories of Węglińska within this text, a separate publication is planned on this subject.

64 M. Węglińska, *Jak przygotować się do lekcji? Wybór materiałów dydaktycznych*, p. 8.

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