

## **A Comparison of the Parenting Competencies of People Speaking English, Polish, and Spanish**

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### **Abstract**

In a study with 15,959 parents from 133 countries, we recently measured and analyzed 10 parenting competencies that have been shown in empirical studies to be associated with positive parenting outcomes; that study is currently under review, and we have presented findings from that study at previous WPA meetings. Among other findings, that study showed that the competency we labeled Love and Affection was the best predictor of good parenting outcomes; the competency we called Safety was the least valuable. In addition, total scores were higher for parents who had had parenting training, and more training was associated with higher scores. In that study, all parents completed an online questionnaire (the EPCI) in English, but we had too few participants in each country to conduct meaningful country or cultural comparisons. In a new study, we examined data collected from more than 20,000 people who completed the EPCI in their native language (the EPCI is available online in English and six other languages). To begin a multicultural comparison of parenting competencies, we looked for three languages in which the largest number of people had completed the EPCI, and we then took random samples to equalize the n's, controlling for date range, gender, and age. We ended up comparing three groups of 2,428 people, with one group that had completed the questionnaire in English, a second in Spanish, and a third in Polish. Major findings: Across all three language groups, higher total parenting competency scores were associated with better parenting outcomes, but the strength of these associations varied by language. They were strongest among English speakers ( $r$  range: 0.49 to 0.61), weaker among Spanish speakers (0.30 to 0.45), and weakest among Polish speakers (0.18 to 0.30). These findings were confirmed when we compared countries (US vs. Mexico vs. Poland), and they could be accounted for to some extent according to differences in parenting practices reported by our participants. Our findings were also consistent with findings from other studies that have compared parenting practices and values by culture. Our study also confirmed the value of parenting training for all three groups we examined.