



**UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA NACIONAL
FACULTAD REGIONAL AVELLANEDA**

LICENCIATURA EN LENGUA INGLESA

DISSERTATION

**CHANGES IN HETERONORMATIVITY
OF THE TOPIC “FAMILY”
IN THE SERIES (NEW) ENGLISH FILE
-INTERMEDIATE LEVEL-**

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2023

Dedication

To Giulia, the reason for all my reasons.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the significant influence of my enthusiastic tutor, PhD Maria Rosa Mucci, whom I had the pleasure of having not only as dissertation director, but also as teacher in this Licenciatura course. Without her generosity in transmitting her invaluable knowledge I would have probably not even thought of the possibility of doing this work. I could have never accomplished this project without her expert guidance, support and patience. To María Rosa, all my respect and recognition.

I must also thank Gabriela Mansilla, a fierce and caring activist advocate of trans children and youth; and the unwavering Argentinian Feminist movement for giving me purpose and inspiration for developing this work. I am certain that one day mirrors will definitely reflect the real self without distorting the truth.

My sincerest gratitude to María Belén Laffué, my dearest colleague and friend, who unconditionally supported and assisted me in this project in every possible way. Thank you for working alongside me and for sharing your invaluable contribution.

Last, but by no means least, my heartfelt thanks to my family: to my parents and my sister who encouraged me beyond limits to fulfil this project, to my husband, the best teammate I could have ever dreamt of, who helps me become a better person every day, and to Giulia, my daughter, to whom I wish a future filled with love and freedom.

Abstract

Heterosexuality is the only sexual orientation widely accepted in Western society while all other sexualities are generally excluded. A heteronormative community is made up of heterosexual marriage, sexual orientation with reproductive purposes and the perpetuation of heteronormative roles and stereotypes. These ideas seem to be replicated and reinforced not only in the media or advertisements, but also in the educational system, more specifically in EFL textbooks. The present work proposes to analyse the changes in heteronormativity in the units devoted to the topic of “Family” in the series (New) English File of intermediate level in its four editions (1996, 2003, 2013 and 2018). For such purpose, a qualitative research is carried out to examine the pictures and images in the light of the Barthesian myth and the texts by applying the metadiscourse theory by Hyland. Results have shown that these texts and pictures still contribute to the reproduction of the heteronormative model.

Key words

Heteronormativity, stereotypes, gender, EFL textbooks, myth, discourse analysis.

Resumen

La heterosexualidad es la única orientación sexual ampliamente aceptada en la sociedad occidental, mientras que el resto de las sexualidades son generalmente excluidas. Una comunidad heteronormativa está conformada por el matrimonio heterosexual, la orientación sexual con fines reproductivos y la perpetuación de roles y estereotipos heteronormativos. Estas ideas parecen ser replicadas y reforzadas no solo en los medios de comunicación o en las publicidades, sino también en el sistema educativo, más específicamente en libros de inglés como lengua extranjera. El presente trabajo se propone analizar los cambios en la heteronormatividad en unidades dedicadas al tópico “familia” en la serie (New) English File de nivel intermedio en sus cuatro ediciones (1996, 2003, 2013 y 2018). Para tal fin, se realiza un estudio cualitativo para examinar dibujos e imágenes desde una perspectiva Barthesiana y textos al aplicar la teoría de metadiscurso de Hyland. Los resultados han demostrado que estos textos e imágenes aún contribuyen a la reproducción del modelo heteronormativo.

Palabras clave:

Heteronormatividad, estereotipos, género, libros de texto de inglés como lengua extranjera, mito, análisis del discurso.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Statement

The present paper is intended to investigate the changes of heteronormativity in the (New) English File course book series of intermediate level which belongs to Oxford University Press in its four editions (1996, 2003, 2013 and 2018) by stating the following question:

How has the degree of heteronormativity in the units devoted to the topic “family” in the series (New) English File of Intermediate level changed in the last twenty years?

There is a possibility that certain adjustments are made as regards the constitution of the family (blended families, single parenthood, for instance). However, the LGTBIQ+ community will probably be still invisibilised. Besides, the use of metadiscourse to study these texts and the application of the Barthesian myth to discuss visual images will probably demonstrate that heteronormativity continues to be normalised.

1.2. Theoretical Background

In a *heteronormative* society, heterosexuality is the only accepted sexual orientation and other sexualities are either excluded or seen as divergent (Baker, 2008). According to Butler, there is a “heterosexual matrix” which “designates that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalised, (...) a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality.” (Butler, 1990). In this view, heteronormativity,

binarism and a patriarchal society represent the dominant structures that shape the way the world is supposed to be.

Some of the pillars of heterosexuality are marriage, sexual relations with reproductive purposes and the perpetuation of heteronormative roles and stereotypes (Guasch Andreu, 2000). Over time, the widespread figure of a traditional family has been made up of a mother, a father, and several children. This idea seems to be replicated and reinforced not only in the media or advertisements, but also in the educational system. It is well known that teachers of EFL in Argentina use textbooks in their lessons which contain texts and pictures that may contribute to reproducing this heteronormative model.

On the one hand, visual images can be analysed from a Barthesian point of view. According to Roland Barthes, visual semiotics has two layers in meaning: *denotation* and *connotation*. The former refers to the basic meanings of visual signs, i.e. the language-object which is the mechanism of representation assimilated to language. The latter is considered a metalanguage, which is a second language talking about language itself. Barthes identifies *connotation* with the operation of “ideology”, which he also calls “myth”. Myth consists of the deployment of signifiers for the purpose of expressing and justifying the dominant values of a given society, class or historical period. As myths, signs seem to be “natural” when they are actually hiding the operation of ideology (Barthes, 1991).

On the other hand, these texts could be analysed in terms of metadiscourse, which has been proved to be a relevant social theory which is defined as “the ways speakers and writers project themselves into their discourse to signal their understandings of the material and their audience” (Hyland, 2015). It is important to note that, according to Hyland, the meaning of a text is not just what the text is about, but the result of an interactive process between the writer and the audience in which the producer makes choices as regards forms and expressions that best convey his/her/their attitudes (Hyland & Tse, 2004).

Metadiscourse is classified into two major categories: interactive and interactional. Interactive resources are concerned with ways of organising discourse and allow the writer to manage information to flow to explicitly establish his/her/their preferred interpretations. They include the use of transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code glosses. Interactional resources deal with the writer's efforts to control the level of personality in a text. They include hedges, boosters, attitude and engagement markers, and self mentions. The importance of applying metadiscourse to this analysis lies in the fact that the above mentioned categories can provide evidence of the writer's decisions about the kinds of effects that are produced to the audience and the language adjustments made to best achieve the author's goals.

1.3. Relevance

Argentina is a country which is considered to be a pioneer in judiciary and educational gender perspective. There are several laws passed which have contributed to the gender agenda, such as the *Ley de Identidad de Género* (Gender Identity Law) passed in 2012 or the *Ley de Educación Sexual Integral* (Integral Sexual Education Law) passed in 2006, among many others. Nonetheless, according to a recent investigation carried out in some provinces of Argentina in June 2021, the topics students claim to have discussed are mainly connected to contraceptive methods and sexually transmitted infections; and only 2% of the participants allege to have received *ESI* in all subjects (Fusa AC, & Impacto Digital, 2021). This demonstrates that not only do schools still focus on biology concepts, but also that after

15 years the ESI has not come into complete effect in the country. Therefore, analysis in this investigation is proposed in order to help bring about some changes in the EFL class.

Raising awareness of the content and identities which appear in the bibliography teachers select for their lessons is aimed at in order to build a more equal and fair learning environment. The community of educators will get the benefit of promoting equity by reading the critical analysis of these texts and then applying it to their own teaching experience. Besides, publishing companies could consider this investigation as a starting point for rethinking their material content in order to help students embrace a more diverse and real world in which their families and themselves are properly represented.

1.4. Objective

This research is proposed to describe the past and current situation of the target bibliography regarding the topic of study with the purpose of analysing the changes in heteronormativity in the units devoted to the topic “family” in the selected EFL textbooks. The goal is to attempt to make a humble contribution to the field of Gender Studies concerning EFL teaching materials by applying the Barthesian myth to analyse images and metadiscourse to the analysis of texts.

1.5. Organisation of the Present Work

The present research focuses on exploring the changes in heteronormativity in the construct of the family presented in units 1C (1996 and 2003 editions) and 1B (2013 and

2018 editions) of the series (New) English File, with the purpose of identifying the changes in the treatment of the topic in the period of twenty-two years.

Having discussed the introduction to this study, the work continues with a series of sections that give an account of the investigation carried out. To begin with, in section 2 the theoretical background is dealt with in detail by discussing the concepts of heterosexuality; the difference among sex, gender and sexuality; so as to dig into the notion of heteronormativity later. After that, the relevance of textbooks is explored and the section concludes by making reference to the Barthesian myth, gender studies regarding the family household, and, finally, it explores the Metadiscourse theory proposed by Hyland, among other authors.

Subsequently, the following section is proposed to describe the methodology applied to this research. Later, the analysis of the corresponding units is included taking into account, on the one hand, the Barthesian myth, and, on the other, the metadiscourse theory; both in connection with gender studies.

The last section of this work draws some concluding remarks, limitations and gaps in connection to the study in question. After discussing the relevance of representation in textbooks, this paper concludes by offering some possible suggestions to different members of the educational community so as to contribute to creating a more inclusive learning environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Heterosexuality

The concept of heterosexuality conceived as *natural* has been a subject of relevant concern in the social sciences. Blank (2012) carried out a study which concluded that the variations of meaning attached to the notion of heterosexuality are context-dependent, i.e. heterosexuality has not always existed in the manner that Western culture sees it today and that the sexual behaviour and sexuality of humans have undergone changes depending on the time and the social context they belong to. Blank also mentions the fact that the word “heterosexual” did not exist before the 1860s when Karl Maria Kertneny coined the term, together with the word “homosexual”, with the objective of having two marked categories whose specialisation could set them off from the unmarked human universal which is the undifferentiated “sexual”.

Heterosexuality has not always been the norm. In 1901 it was defined by The Dorland’s Medical Dictionary as an “abnormal or perverted appetite toward the opposite sex”, whereas in 1923 the Merriam Webster’s dictionary similarly defined it as “morbid sexual passion for one of the opposite sex”. In 1934 the Webster’s Encyclopedia (Second Edition Unabridged) defined heterosexuality in the dominant modern mode: “manifestation of sexual passion for one of the opposite sex, normal sexuality”. Heterosexuality, therefore, attained the status of norm and it was not until late 20th C that this phenomenon was investigated more deeply with the appearance of what is known today as Queer theory.

Queer theory intends to call into question the stability of the hetero/homo hierarchy, i.e. it tries to “bring the hetero/homo opposition to the point of collapse” (Fuss, 1991). Not only does queer studies focus on integrating LGTBIQ+ people, but also questions the concept of heterosexuality as well. Queer theory challenges the idea of fixed gender and sexual

identities and questions the basis for a unitary identity politics. Butler (2004) claims that in the same way that queer theory opposes those who would regulate identities, “it seeks not only to expand the community base of anti homophobic activism, but, rather, to insist that sexuality is not easily summarised or unified through categorization”. Therefore, this approach aims at providing new interpretations of the notions of sex, gender and sexuality.

2.2. Sex, Gender and Sexuality

At this point, and taking into consideration the above-mentioned perspective, it is necessary to clarify the differences among the terms sex, gender and sexuality. To begin with, sex refers to a biological or physiological characterisation, i.e. it is a category which is assigned at birth of each person based on their genitalia and/or their chromosomes. Gender, on the other hand, responds to a notion which is culturally or socially constructed that refers to an understanding or categorisation of roles applied to men and women. Western social life is guided by gender polarisation, in other words, the organisation of social life around the distinction between what is considered to be male and female (Bem, 1993). She also argues that gender polarisation operates in two related ways: first, it defines mutually exclusive scripts for being male and female, and secondly, it defines any person or behaviour that deviates from these scripts as problematic (this second aspect will be discussed in the *Heteronormativity* section further on).

The relationship between the constructed gender and the physiological sex is explored by Butler (1990), who concludes that it is not fixed:

“If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and

culturally constructed genders. Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of “men” will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that “women” will interpret only female bodies. (Butler, 1990, p. 10)

Finally, the idea of sexuality or sexual identity is connected to people’s self-concept based on the gender of the person(s) to whom they are or can be romantically and/or sexually attracted. As previously mentioned, during the last century Western society has conceived sexuality predominantly as a presupposed binary opposition between the accepted universal identities of “the homosexual” and “the heterosexual”. In spite of that, with the appearance of poststructuralism and queer theory in the late 20th C, these mutually exclusive notions were challenged.

2.3. Heteronormativity

According to López Sáez, heteronormativity is defined as “the political, social, philosophical and economic regime which generates violence towards people who do not follow the patterns of gender, sexuality, practices and desires related to heterosexuality” (López Sáez, own translation, p228). He claims that it is a political regime due to the fact that it regulates power and it defines the community as well as the individual. In accordance with this definition, it is necessary to mention again that Butler (1990) coined the term of *heterosexual matrix* which describes an invisible norm that does not appear to be constructed, but comes through as *natural*, i.e. a norm that defines everyone as heterosexual, which was mentioned in the Theoretical Background section.

Consequently, any person or behaviour that deviates from the heterosexual matrix is considered problematic. Butler (1993) argues that gender ends up being a compulsory

performance due to the fact that “acting out of line with heterosexual norms brings with it ostracism, punishment and violence”. In other words, following the rules of the heteronorm is mandatory if a person does not want to be isolated or forced to suffer because of “indiscipline”.

Heteronormativity, therefore, responds to a gender binarism that aligns biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, gender roles, and sexual orientation, within a rigid, dichotomic, male-female gender schema (Bem, 1981). In other words, the heteronorm and gender binarism compels every individual to fall into a pre-selected category, the masculine or the feminine, which should coincide with the procreative physiology corresponding to his/her genitalia.

As previously mentioned, not only do people suffer if they do not stick to the expected heterosexual orientation, but also this heteronormative model generates a power asymmetry which favours men over women and, consequently, responds to a patriarchal society. Holmes (2007) describes patriarchy as “a social system in which men have come to be dominant in relation to women” (p2). According to Segato (2003, p15), it is defined as “a relational structure among hierarchically ordered positions which has observable consequences” (own translation). Therefore, the characterization of men and women within this structure evidences this power relation: women and femininity are suppressed groups which embody negative characteristics as passiveness, weakness, dependence and emotionality, while men and masculinity comprise the dominant groups with the positive characteristics such as strangeness, activity, independence and rationality (Amerian & Esmaili, 2015). Apparently, these tags attached to females and males are not natural or inherent, but are socially and culturally constructed and supported.

In 1993 Bem (p147) stated that the *heterosexual mandate* is institutionalised in a great number of social practices, privileging heterosexuality and marginalising other sexual identities. Almost thirty years later, it is still possible to find examples which prove this point: there are still countries where same-sex sexual activity is criminalised, homosexual couples do not have the legal right to marry or raise children, there are places and institutions where homosexuality is hitherto frowned upon, and there is still denial of gay male and lesbian existence by the media, advertising and the educational system.

2.4. Textbooks

It is common knowledge that topics related to sexuality and the LGTBQ+ community are the most avoided ones in teaching materials and textbooks. Consequently, teachers are left with few chances to address these issues in class and to empower students by providing tools to break stereotypes. Paiz (2015) states that “the text/textbooks that are chosen for classroom use also present students with valued and often desired input about a target culture, (...) identities, and life ways that are available and/or acceptable in the target culture”. Similarly, Shardakova and Pavlenko (2004) argued that textbooks are subject to the social, ideological, economic, and political environment of a determinate country. Both ideas are aligned with Lugg’s (2012) who claimed that “one can read the history of textbooks as a political history of who has meaningful power to shape what is taught – and who does not.”. These notions date back to the 1970s when there was a large number of researchers who began to expose how the curriculum was shaped by economic and political elites in order to use it, both overtly and covertly, as an instrument to maintain the dominant structures of power and oppression present in Western society to this day (Foster, 2012). Taking these ideas into consideration, it is evident that textbooks cannot be considered neutral resources.

In spite of the fact that textbooks are proved to follow the interests of the dominant elite, it is also possible to understand the use of power not as unidirectional, but from a different perspective. According to Foucault (1981, p98), power can be seen as *a net-like organisation* in which all the members in the learning process (teachers and students in this case) are “active vehicles of power”, “always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power”. In this fluid model of power, “discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (Foucault, 1978, p101). This could mean that the dominant and hegemonic discourse used in the EFL textbooks can be challenged by teachers at the same time that textbooks promote an alternative and progressive discourse.

Sunderland (2000) points out that the initiatives taken by teachers are crucial, as well as classroom dynamics and the student’s own interpretation of the material. According to her, a teacher’s “talk around the text or mediation of a text could lead to a completely new understanding of the text, and that how the teacher uses the text is, therefore, more important than the text itself”. She also claims that “a text is arguably as good or bad as the treatment it receives from the teacher who is using it (2000, p155), i.e. a teacher has the possibility of *rescuing* a text embedded in gender bias in the same way that another can also undermine a text with progressive intentions (Sunderland and McGlashan, 2015). Consequently, the figure of the teacher is undoubtedly relevant for the manner in which a text is approached.

Nevertheless, the content of textbooks which still respond to discourses that are not adjusted to the new paradigms at the same time that they promote inequality should not be overlooked. According to a research carried out in Argentina by the British Council in 2015, language learning has become concerned not only with language itself, but with other aspects related to language, such as global and national cultures, lifestyles and attitudes with the purpose of making English more significant for students in order to recognise and appreciate

diversity and equality. The research also mentions that “there has been a substantial change in Argentina’s educational paradigm: there has been a shift towards an intercultural approach that recognises linguistic diversity” (p56). Respect for gender diversity and equality should also be expected from textbooks in order to respond to the new social criterion and to create a more tolerant learning environment.

2.5.. The Barthesian Myth

In accordance with the theory previously mentioned, the concept of heteronormativity in the construct of the family becomes visible in the series (New) English File of intermediate level when it is analysed in interaction with *Mythologies* by Roland Barthes (1991). This philosophical perspective gives evidence of a relation between the concepts of traditional family and gender inequality, and the images presented in the textbooks which naturalise the heteronorm and mythologize it.

As previously stated in the Theoretical Background section, Barthes argues that visual semiotics has two layers in meaning: *denotation* and *connotation*. The former refers to the basic meanings of visual signs, i.e. the language-object which is the mechanism of representation assimilated to language. The latter is considered a metalanguage, which is a second language talking about language itself. The author identifies *connotation* with the operation of *ideology*, which he also calls *myth*. In other words, the Barthesian myth is a second semiological system by means of which an intentional concept is perpetuated.

In order for the mythical concept to be maintained, first it must be appropriated, which is its fundamental character. So, it must be repeated because “it is the insistence of a kind of behaviour which reveals its intention”. To put it another way, language becomes a ‘traitor’; it erases such concept if it is hidden or exposes the concept if it is formulated; so a

second semiological system allows the myth to escape from this dilemma: “driven to having either to unveil or to liquidate the concept, it will naturalise it (...): it (myth) transforms history into nature” (Barthes, 1991. p128). The reason why, Barthes argues, myth is experienced as innocent speech is not because its intentions are hidden (if they were, they would not be efficient), but because they are naturalised.

As stated before, the operation of ideology is covert and the purpose of expressing the dominant values of a given society in a particular context is justified: “the bourgeois transforms the reality of the world into an image of the world”. Barthes completes the semiological definition of myth by arguing that it has political interests, understanding politics in its deeper meaning as describing “the whole of human relations in their real, social structure, in their power of making the world” (Barthes, 1991. p150). The author mentions that, statistically, myth is on the side of the dominant social class, since it takes hold of all aspects of different disciplines (the law, Literature, entertainment, morality, etc.). While the bourgeoisie, the powerful and oppressor, seeks to *eternalize*, the oppressed, who have the language of emancipation, aim at *transforming*.

To sum up, the main function of the Barthesian myth is to transform history into nature and eternity suppressing the voices of the oppressed who belong to a world that is in constant change. The fact that the LGTBIQ+ community exists and it is not present in EFL textbooks not only means that they are not politically neutral resources, but also that textbooks are determined to disguise what is real, other gender identities; that is, the Other. Since otherness puts at risk the interests of the bourgeoisie, the dominant class rejects it, denies it or tries to transform it into itself because “the Other is a scandal which threatens its [the bourgeoisie’s] essence (Barthes, 1991. p152).

2.6.. Family Household and Gender Inequality

In the book *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*, Cecilia Ridgeway attempts to explain why gender inequalities still remain rooted in everyday life in spite of cultural and institutional pressures which intend to level distinctions between men and women. Specifically, in the chapter *Gender at Home* she claims that, to this day, the family household is organised in a way that constructs inequalities between men and women in material resources and power. Thus, the gender organisation of the home is a source which nurtures “the system of cultural beliefs and material arrangements that sustain gender inequality” (Ridgeway, 2011. p 127).

The unequal household division of labour is a phenomenon that occurs without space, time or cultural distinction. In spite of the fact that there have been some changes in recent years -women do less than in the past and men do more-, in the USA women continue to do twice the housework than men do (Bianchi, Robinson, and Milkie 2006). Similarly, a research carried out in Argentina in 2019 showed that women are the ones responsible for doing most of the housework compared to men (Oliva, 2019). This seems to prove that it is a worldwide issue which transcends cultural boundaries.

The home is not the only arena where inequality is reproduced, the world of paid work also plays a central role in this matter. Ridgeway claims that the field of work and home are inherently interdependent due to the fact that jobs produce resources which sustain the household in the same way that the household produces labour force which sustains work. Irigaray (2004) considers this relation to be “social exploitation” when she states that “ all the social regimes of "History" are based upon the exploitation of one "class" of producers, namely, women (...) whose reproductive use value (reproductive of children and of the labour force) (...) without any compensation in kind going to them for that "work.". As a

consequence, women are “culturally presumed to be the ones most directly and morally responsible for the care and well-being of children and the making of a home” (Ridgeway, 2011, p128).

At this point, it seems appropriate to introduce the terminology suggested by the sociologist Mary Blair-Loy (2003) who defined *family devotion* as the widely shared, hegemonic cultural schema of the tie between women and the family. Society expects a good woman to feel obliged to be profoundly and essentially committed to taking care of her family, especially of children. Even though women who work must also comply with the role of ideal worker as intensively committed to work, they must primarily fulfil the culturally assigned role of intensified mothering. As Irigaray (2004) also points out, “mothers (are) reproductive instruments marked with the name of the father and enclosed in his house, (they) must be private property”.

Women are not the only ones who struggle against pre-assigned cultural roles. In the same way that women are stereotyped with the *family devotion* scheme, men must respond to the *provider* scheme. This means that men are expected to satisfy “their strongest responsibility to the family through work outside the family rather than through contributions to household labour” (Ridgeway, 2011, p 129). However, women can be, and often are, providers too; whereas men do not frequently engage in household activities. In fact, the provider scheme is less essentialized within the male sex category than the image of women as caretakers.

As previously mentioned in the Heteronormativity section, there is a power asymmetry which favours men over women in a patriarchal society. Besides, the world of work generates wealth, which is one of the means to have power. Ridgeway claims that the *family devotion* scheme and the *provider* scheme “impel women to sacrifice and men to maximise their market work, feeding disparity in their earnings and in the positions of power

and respect they can earn outside the family”. Besides, children, who are considered a “public good for society” -because they will become the citizens and workers of the future- are still considered to be essentially under their mothers’ responsibility. Therefore, “between reduced time for market work and biases in the workplace for their work, the *family devotion* and *provider schemas* contribute substantially to wage and power inequalities between men and women” (Ridgeway. 2011. P 131).

It seems relevant to mention at this point what Ridgeway calls “the gender frame in family relations” which is the way people relate to each other by using sex-categorisations and cultural beliefs about gender (2011, p132). The institution of the family is defined essentially in a gendered context “whose goals and activities are tightly linked by cultural beliefs to the stereotypic skills and attributes of both sexes” (2011, p133). Consequently, there should be gendered expectations on the part of the members of the family which would become powerful determinants of behaviour in the home. Besides, each person’s identity within the family is “understood in a way that has been systematically infused with cultural assumptions about men and women”. As a result, gender becomes a background identity in the home that allows the family to judge themselves by taking it as a referent.

To sum up, the organisation of the family, together with the world of work, creates inequalities between men and women. This worldwide phenomenon is considered social exploitation, since women *reproduce* the future workers and take care of both the current and future labour force. The family household works under a set of shared, hegemonic cultural schema which are assigned distinctively to men and women. The latter are stereotyped with the family devotion scheme, by which women must be intensively committed to the private sphere -such as doing house chores and raising children-, whereas the former are stereotyped with the provider scheme, by which men must contribute to the family through work in the public sphere. This situation creates a power asymmetry between men and women which

contributes to the existent inequality. Lastly, the gender frame in family relations is mentioned, that refers to a gendered context whose objectives are tied to cultural beliefs and stereotypes that determine behaviour at home and create the family identity.

2.7. Metadiscourse

The term *metadiscourse* was coined by Zellig Harris in 1959 to refer to the ways in which the writer or the speaker conducts the receiver's perception of a text through the use of language. So, metadiscourse is used to include both cohesive and interpersonal features that help to relate a particular text to its context. The concept has been further developed in the 1980s by Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore (1989), who have included in their descriptions discursal features such as hedges, connectives and various forms of text commentary to demonstrate how a writer or speaker uses their text to influence their interlocutor's reception of it.

A central aspect of metadiscourse is how it influences the receiver's perspective of a text or of an utterance. Hyland (2005) argues that metadiscourse includes all those linguistic features of the text which explicitly refer to the organisation of the discourse or the writer's stance towards either the content or the reader. Metadiscourse is generally defined as "discourse about discourse" or "communication about communication" (Vande Kopple 1985, 83); and it can also be seen as an open category (Hyland 2005, 27) to which writers/speakers are able to add new items according to the needs of the context.

Written discourses have been the focus of many metadiscourse studies, and begin from a functional perspective on language by referring to Systemic Functional Linguistics by Halliday, and especially to the distinction he makes among the three "metafunctions" or purposes of language: textual, ideational and interpersonal functions of a text (Halliday

1973). Due to the fact that metadiscourse analysis involves a functional approach to texts, several researchers have drawn on Halliday's "metafunctions" to create their taxonomies of metadiscourse (for instance, Crismore and Farnsworth 1989; Hyland 1998; Hyland 2005; Vande Kopple 1985). In fact, they have recognized metadiscourse items, they have categorised them by taking the functions they perform in a text into consideration, and they have identified mainly two wider purposes of metadiscourse: firstly, organising a coherent discourse, defined as textual function; and secondly, creating a relationship with the audience and conveying the writer's attitude to the text, defined as interpersonal function.

The majority of studies about metadiscourse follow Vande Kopple's (1985) classification system as their starting point. Vande Kopple's theory is aligned with the Hallidayan functional framework and classifies metadiscourse into two categories: *textual metadiscourse* and *interpersonal metadiscourse*. The former refers to the devices that mainly play the role of organising the text for the reader ("[It] shows how we link and relate individual propositions so that they form a cohesive and coherent text and how individual elements of those propositions make sense in conjunction with other elements of the text..."), whereas the latter makes reference to the items of a text that are mainly used to interact with the reader about the propositional content ("[It] helps to express our personalities and our reactions to the propositional content of our texts and characterises the interaction we would like to have with our readers about that content. ...") (Vande Kopple 1985, 87)

According to Hyland (2005), another model of metadiscourse based on a functional approach is proposed, but the distinguishable feature is that it focuses on its contextual specificity rather than on Vande Kopple's distinction between textual and interpersonal functions, by using Thompson and Thetela's (1995) distinction between interactive and interactional resources to acknowledge both the organisational and the evaluative features of interaction. The former dimension is concerned with the writer's awareness of a participating

audience: the writer's purpose is to shape and constrain the text to meet the needs of a particular reader and at the same time to guide him/her/their through the text. Therefore, the metadiscursive resources used in this category refer to ways of organising discourse. The latter dimension, on the other hand, is concerned with the ways in which writers conduct the interaction by intruding and commenting on their message: the writer's aim is to express his/her/their perspective and to involve readers. Metadiscourse used in this category is essentially evaluative and engaging, building up an imagined dialog with the reader.

As previously stated, a key aspect of metadiscourse is its context-dependency, which is the close relationship it has to the norms and expectations of those who use it in particular settings (Hyland, 2004). Textbooks are one of the main sources of acquisition of concepts and analytical methods of a discipline and they play a central role in learners' experiences and understandings of a subject (Hyland, 2005). Two simultaneous situations occur: textbooks extend competence into new areas of knowledge at the same time that they provide a coherently ordered view of the boundaries, values and practices of their discipline. Textbooks are seen as the conservative examples of current paradigms and acknowledged fact, conveying ideological representation of stability and authority. Therefore, due to the fact that textbooks are extensively used around the globe and that they carry ideological content, metadiscourse seems to be an appropriate tool which could be of help when analysing texts in connection with heteronormativity.

3. METHODOLOGY

In relation to methodology, this paper employs qualitative content research. According to Burns and Grove (2009), qualitative research is a systematic approach to highlight and explain daily life experiences and to further give them meaning. Holsti (1968) defines content analysis as a technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages. Taking the above mentioned approaches into consideration, this research focuses on exploring the changes of heteronormativity in the construct of the family presented in a selection of units of the series (New) English File, publishing house OUP, in the period of twenty-two years.

4. THE BARTHESIAN MYTH AND GENDER ANALYSIS

The books that were chosen for analysis are very popular among Argentinian EFL teachers because they are presented in a large variety of levels (Beginner, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate and Advanced) and they also offer a broad range of ready-to-use teacher's resources such as tests, activities for oral and written practice, songs and online activities, among others. Due to the popularity of this series, these books have been widely used with teenagers and adults in Argentina in the last two decades. The first book was released in 1996 with the title English File, and three more editions were printed under the name of New English File: in 2003, 2013 and 2018.

Since the purpose of this research is to attempt to identify variations in the treatment of heteronormativity, two conditions had to be met: to begin with, it was necessary to find a series of books which was successful, and, therefore, used by an extended audience. Secondly, a relevant topic which was repeated in all four editions was required in order to see if there were any changes made in time. Finally, the topic selected was the family because it is present in English File (1996) unit 1C titled "Good Relations", in New English File second edition (2003) unit 1C called "We are Family", in New English File third edition (2013) unit 1B titled "Family Life" and in New English File fourth edition (2018) unit 1B named "Modern Families".

All four units are submitted to a qualitative content analysis which is carried out through the reading, investigation and interpretation of visual images and text which are considered relevant for this research. The analysis of the data collected is performed on the grounds of the Barthesian myth and metadiscourse respectively, in continuous interaction with bibliography pertinent to the core of this paper. Later, a comparative study of the data

from the different book units is developed with the purpose of finding similarities and differences in order to see the changes in the approach to the topic of concern.

4.1. English File Unit 1C “Good Relations” (1996)

According to Barthes (1991), myth is a second-order semiological system made up of a signifier, a signified and a signification, also called myth. Myth is a type of speech which is defined by its intention (connotative meaning), much more than by its literal sense (denotative meaning). It is necessary to mention the importance of the role of culture, which is “a noble, universal thing placed outside social choices”. Each society has their own values which are deeply rooted in their history and customs, which cannot be measured because “culture has no weight” (Barthes, p81). Myth has an inherent cultural component because it is not possible to judge an idea without having a preconception of humans and their history depending on their location in time and place. Therefore, it is important to highlight the fact that, when analysing myth, culture inevitably comes into play. Taking this into consideration, focus can be made on the pictures presented in (New) English File course book series of intermediate level which belongs to Oxford University Press in its four editions (1996, 2003, 2013 and 2018)

The first analysis will be devoted to unit 1C of the Student’s book English File of Intermediate level printed in 1996 (see Appendix B). On the first page of the unit which is titled “Good relations”, two topics are dealt with: family members and describing people. Exercise *a* asks students to take a family quiz about relations among family members, exercise *b* is about completing a text using vocabulary items used to describe people’s appearance, exercise *c* has to do with writing sentences with “look” or “look like” and exercise *d* encourages students to say as much as they can about the people in the pictures with some guiding questions.

Two images of families can be seen on this page (see Appendix B, p. 73). In the case of the signifier, the picture on the left denotes a white family made up of a red-haired woman and a blonde man (mother and father) with two children, a red-haired boy and a blonde girl who are posing outdoors. They are smiling and wearing casual and comfortable clothes. The signified, i.e. the connotation, could be that they are happy, relaxed and joyful. The fact that they are outdoors suggests that they are on holiday and they are having a good time, and it could be inferred that they are wealthy.

The picture on the right denotes a hispanic family made up of a dark-haired woman and man (mother and father) with their children, a dark-haired boy and girl. They are posing indoors and are also smiling. They are wearing informal clothes, the woman is wearing make-up and a pearl necklace. There is a chess set on the table which is in front of them, a TV set in the top left-hand corner and in the background there seems to be a vase with flowers and a big picture. In the case of the signified, it seems to be expressing happiness, realisation, and bonding. Besides, the elements such as the chess set, the tv set, the vase, the big picture and the pearl necklace invite the audience to think that they are wealthy. Therefore, economic prosperity is also perceived.

The myth underlying these two pictures is connected to the concept of a perfect family, which is wealthy, happy at all times and which is made up of a heterosexual couple with two children, preferably a boy and a girl. It is worth pointing out that both families seem to be wealthy. While the audience's western cultural stereotype assumes that the white family are wealthy with the elements shown in the picture, in the one of the hispanic family the author might have included a lot of elements which are culturally associated with status to make the audience aware that a hispanic family can be rich. The white family does not seem to need this clarification because the reader would probably have inferred that at first sight.

On the second page of the unit, there are two sections. The first one is devoted to grammar analysis of the use and rules of determiners *both*, *neither* and *either*, and is at the same time subdivided into two parts: one regarded with the inference of their use and another with an exercise to complete a description of the grammar rules. The second section encourages students to talk about their families in pairs with a set of guiding questions.

There are two pictures to be analysed on this page (see Appendix B, p. 74). The first one is a picture in black and white which possibly dates back to the 1940's or 1950's. There is a family made up of a man and a woman, mother and father, with two children, in this case, a girl and a baby girl. They are smiling and they are wearing formal clothes: the man is wearing a suit with a tie, the woman, who is wearing her hair up with a typical hairstyle of the time, is wearing a suit with a skirt and a brooch. Both girls are wearing dresses. The man is sitting on a single-seater sofa, he's holding the baby girl and showing them a book. The woman is sitting on the left arm of the sofa, but one of her legs is touching the floor, and her hands are resting on the man's shoulder and arm. In the background the wall has a wallpaper with a flowery pattern and there is a four-shelved library with a vase with flowers on top and a portrait. The connotation could probably refer to an average family who is gathered in the sitting room of the house, having a good time and reading a book, which were accepted rules followed by society.

It is important to bear in mind the fact that this picture probably portrays what is known as the Baby-Boomer generation, i.e. people who were born in the years after the end of World War II. This phenomenon is called this way due to a sharp rise in birth rates during this period. Baby boomers have a varied number of causes, and focus will be made on those which affected the concept of family in order to have a better understanding of the connotation and myth of the picture in question.

To begin with, soldiers coming back from war had the urge of celebrating life and of starting families. Besides, governments from different countries encouraged the growth of families at the same time that popular culture which was gaining importance after the war glorified marriage, pregnancy and parenthood. Another aspect that contributed to this context was that the effects of the war and the well-known Great Depression had begun to decrease, so people felt more optimistic and hopeful about the possibility of having a better future for their families (Bavel & Reher, 2013).

Taking this context into consideration, the myth beyond this image is probably connected with what society expected from families such as this one at that time: an ideal family which is economically stable and in a constant state of happiness. Again, the picture shows evidence of the presence of wealth as an expected characteristic of the average family. For instance, the wallpaper shows that this family cares for good decorations, the great number of books demonstrates that this is a well-educated group of people and the clothes they wear as well as the hairstyles of the four of them evidence hygiene and self-care. Not only do they have good taste, a high education and good hygiene, but also they have money to afford them.

Another aspect of myth which is worth pointing out is that this family is also composed of a heterosexual couple with two children, in this case two girls. Once again, the traditional family has apparently come from eternity, but this time the fact that this is a black and white picture included in a 1996 book seems to reinforce the idea that there seems not to have an origin. Therefore, the family pictures of the present (when the book was released) are not very different from the one which was taken almost fifty or sixty years before. Even though there is not a reference to the past, i.e. there is not a text or exercise about families in the past, an almost 21st C book has a picture from 60 years before. The author has probably

chosen to add a black and white picture deliberately. The myth is still, it continues to reproduce the same structure over again.

Nevertheless, there is a difference between the coloured pictures and this one which is connected to gender roles and hierarchy within the family structure. The 1996 families do not show the rigidity which is present in the black and white picture. The fact that in the image from the past the father is sitting while the woman is by his side with one foot touching the floor, which probably makes her feel uncomfortable, has historically been a proof of the position that each member of the family has. Family photography, which is considered a social document related with structured family lives which are framed by social norms, has provided information regarding family lives, gender and social class variables (Erkonan, 2016). The role of men and women are defined differently under the framework of a traditional family and this seems to be evident in this picture: the father is the provider, so he has to be seated and relaxed; the woman is the caregiver, so she cannot be seated properly because she must be on the alert to be able to care for her husband and children, and the children are dependent entities who are reading with their father because they cannot do it on their own. .

In myth, history disappears, there is a privation of History. Barthes argues that the only thing to do is to enjoy the object without wondering its origin. The traditional family has apparently always been made up of a heterosexual couple with children, it seems to have come from eternity. Besides, according to Barthes, the petit-bourgeois is incapable of imagining the Other. It is impossible to face otherness, unless it is transformed into a part of the petit-bourgeois universe. Taking this view into consideration, the three family pictures which were previously analysed invisibilize any other type of human relation that is not heterosexual, they deny the existence of the other by ignoring them.

On the second page of the unit there is another picture whose denotative meaning shows a drawing of a group of five lemurs on a dry landscape, which could be a deciduous forest which is one of the typical habitats of these animals. Three of them are standing while the other two are walking with their tail up, but all five of them are looking at the readers. The sky is blue and in the background there are two trees. The lemur at the front right is standing on a rock and the rest are on the arid ground. The connotation of this image could be that of community in a natural environment.

The myth under this picture is probably the connection which apparently exists between animal families and human families. This would suggest that the other three families which were previously described are also conceived as “natural”. It is important to mention that on this page there are no references to animals, nature or lemurs on the proposed exercises. Therefore, it would be appropriate to believe that the aim of this picture could be to reinforce the idea that the conception of the traditional family has come from eternity, there is no origin since nature has been the beginning of everything known to humans. This mythical signification is not arbitrary, but it is motivated. Since the very principle of myth is that it transforms history into nature, the apparent reality of a unique traditional family could be described as an alibi of heterosexism, which expresses its intentions of naturalising the standardisation of sexuality.

The third page of this unit is devoted to a reading comprehension activity about an article which is titled “Family Fortunes” and which discusses the way birth order influences people’s personalities. The picture which accompanies this text shows three boys who appear to be brothers who are posing for the camera (see Appendix B, p.75). Taking into account the fact that there seems not to be any evidence of heteronormativity on this page, the analysis of the picture and the text will be omitted for the sake of this research.

The last page of the unit includes speaking, listening and writing skills activities (see Appendix B, p.76). The first section deals with word stress and pronunciation, exercise 5 is a listening activity in which a psychologist speaks about things that affect people's personalities, exercise 6 deals with making conversation and the last exercise of the unit asks students to write a short text about family members or family relations.

There are two pictures on this page, but for the purpose of this research focus will be made on the drawing of a girl playing football. The denotative meaning is a white blonde girl who is trying to do kick-ups. She's wearing a green dress and football socks and boots. She has got big eyes, and a small nose and mouth. The connotation of this picture is that, apparently, she has clumsy movements probably because she is not good at doing this type of activity. Her arms are open and there are signs of movement around the ball and her foot in her attempt to keep the ball up. Her face is disproportionate because the size of her eyes is enormous compared to her mouth, which seems to emphasise the amount of attention she must pay to the ball. According to this picture, doing kick-ups is considered to be a boy-activity, which is the reason why she does not seem to feel comfortable: because she does not know how to do it properly because she is a girl.

It is important to notice that, as a difference from the rest of the pictures which show real people, this particular one is a caricature. Caricatures are drawings made to exaggerate certain features, such as physical appearance, and conduct. Their purpose is to create a grotesque effect and to make a point about human behaviour. It could be said that the myth behind this picture is to discourage girls who try to perform supposedly male activities by mocking them. The author might be claiming that even though girls wear football socks and boots, they are still wearing dresses, therefore, this image could be stating that a girl is performing an activity that is not meant for her because football is a sport played by boys.

4.2. New English File Unit 1C “We are Family” (2003)

Unit 1C which belongs to the Student's book New English File of Intermediate level printed in 2003 will be submitted to analysis in the following section (see Appendix C). It deals with the topic of family, more specifically with family members and personality characteristics and it tackles grammar points such as future plans and predictions, reflexive pronouns, prefixes and suffixes. The title of the unit is “We are family”, which makes reference to the title of one of its texts, as well as to the title of the popular 1979 song by the music group Sister Sledge which is included in the last exercise of the unit with the purpose of practising students' listening skills.

The first page comprises exercise *1a* which consists of looking at the two family pictures included in order to predict what a typical family of the future will look like according to a text whose title is “Families have a great-great future”(see Appendix C, p.77). Both pictures are caricatures which, as it was previously described, are drawings made to exaggerate certain characteristics in order to cause a grotesque effect and to make a statement about human conduct. However, these caricatures were chosen to illustrate all of the units of the book.

The first picture denotes a white extended family made up of five children, five women and five men. They are all posing, some of them are smiling, others seem to show surprise. There is a man on the left who seems to be angry and an old woman at the top right who appears to be sad. The drawings are so grotesque that their expressions are confusing: there is a woman in a red dress who is smiling but at the same time her eyebrows are frowning. Most of the people have marked and high cheekbones, and women and girls have long eyelashes which can be perfectly seen. All women have blonde hair, except for the old lady whose hair is grey. Men, on the other hand, have fair hair except for one of them whose hair is grey and two other men who are bald, but have some fair hair on the sides. All of them

are wearing formal clothes because they might be celebrating a special family occasion probably related to the baby who is together with the mother in the centre of the photo. The ladies are wearing dresses and high heels whereas men are wearing suits with a tie and shoes, except for the elderly and the children who are wearing flats. Two of the young women are suntanned, but all of them are wearing makeup.

As previously stated, this is not a real picture and the author chose to include caricatures which are grotesque with the purpose of exaggerating certain aspects of the family. The connotation, on the other hand, seems not to be clear, so this part of the analysis will not be included. One of the myths which underlies the picture might be connected to the notion that a woman is the caregiver of the family. As previously mentioned, she is at a considerable distance from each of them, which gives her more prominence than to the rest of the members. Considering the place that the blonde woman in the green dress has, it is possible to claim that, once again, women are the centre of family life, and the fact that she is carrying the baby probably means that she is the only responsible one for taking care of children as tradition has shown over the years. The *family devotion scheme*, by which a woman is expected to feel obliged to be profoundly and essentially committed to taking care of her family, especially of children (Ridgeway, 2011), could be perceived in this picture. Similarly to previous analyses, in western societies it is assumed that raising children is a woman's job.

Another myth behind this picture would be related to the fact that some family western stereotypes may be reproduced. There are three possible nuclear families in the picture, and their layout is repeated: there is a child at the front, the mother is behind the child and behind her is the father. The position of the males of these families at the very back could be interpreted as a reproduction of the stereotypical role of men as protectors and providers for the family. Again, the *provider scheme*, which entails the male responsibility to the family

through work outside the family rather than through contributions to household labour (Ridgeway, 2011) may be pointed out.

On the other hand, it is interesting to notice that there is a fourth family which seems to have a single parent whose head is the blonde woman in the purple dress. She is holding a boy's hand, who is apparently her son, and next to her is an old lady who could be considered the grandmother. This shows a frequent situation for women who are heads of a family by themselves, i.e. they respond to the *family devotion scheme* as well as to the *provider scheme*. As Ridgeway (2011) puts it, "cultural beliefs recognize that women, too, can be material providers and often are". Over the years, women have learnt to form a network with other female members of the family which functions as scaffolding for the task of child care. This has been culturally accepted for centuries and the picture seems to perpetuate this model.

In contrast to the picture of the wide extended family, there is a second image on this page which denotes a white extended family made up of three tall and thin women and a boy who are posing. They belong to different generations: the boy is the youngest, the woman in the middle is in her thirties, the one on the right is a middle-aged woman and the one on the left is an elderly woman. All of them are wearing informal clothes and they do not seem to be wearing any makeup. They are not touching each other since their arms are either at the side or behind their bodies. They have a neutral face since they do not seem to have any particular facial expression. The connotation of this picture could stand for the acknowledgment that not only do traditional families exist, but also there are other family types which deserve to be portrayed because they exist too. The fact that there is no father, probably because he left or died, does not necessarily mean that this is not a family. In fact, the appearance of this image seems to be a statement: it is declaring that this is a family just as much as a traditional one is.

The myth behind this picture is, again, connected to the *family devotion scheme*, in which the concepts of reproduction and nurturing are only in charge of women (Ridgeway, 2011). “While the *family devotion scheme* may encourage women to do housework, it obligates them to take on primary responsibility for child care” (p149). Women are the pillars of the family and the only supporters who, once again, take care of the children and the house. It is well-known that women of different generations stand for each other to carry out these activities and this happens because social relations in the home create gendered expectations which affect behaviour in the family. Sex-categorization activates stereotypes, i.e. people’s cultural beliefs about gender (Ridgeway 2011, p133), which, in the case of this picture, pre-determine women of different generations to respond to the apparent natural calling of being caretakers in spite of the fact that raising children should require equal division of the efforts by the adults who procreate.

The interesting fact is that in this picture, as well as in many cases in real life, equity is invisible, men are literally and figuratively out of the picture. The only male who appears in the image is a boy who is looking upwards, which might be a signal of his asking for protection and guidance. Even though traditional family stereotypes indicate that fathers should be the model to follow, especially for young boys, the picture has erased males from the child upbringing. Women are the ones responsible for reproduction and nurturing, while men, whose participation in the heterosexual model is essential by being part of the *provider scheme*, are absent.

The second page of the unit, which deals with family members and future forms, does not contain any pictures (see Appendix C, p. 78). It is divided in two parts: the first one includes exercises *b* which deals with vocabulary connected to family members and exercise *c* which encourages students to give their opinion about the text on the previous page. The third page, on the other hand, does include pictures of real people which

accompany a text about two sisters who talk about their relationship and their personalities. Exercise 3a activates students' previous knowledge about the topic, exercise b asks students to make predictions about the text to be checked in exercise c, and exercise d makes focus on the highlighted words of the text to introduce personality adjectives. Due to the fact that the pictures do not seem to show any evidence of heteronormativity, they will not be analysed.

The last page of the unit includes an explanation of the use and form of reflexive pronouns and six sentences with blanks to fill in with the appropriate one (see Appendix C, p.80). Exercise 4 deals with personality adjectives and exercise 5 with pronunciation of prefixes and suffixes. The last activity of the unit is divided into two parts: a listening task in which students must listen to an interview to a psychologist who talks about the influence of people's position in the family on people's personalities and a speaking task in which students have to talk about their own experience. Finally, the last exercise of the unit is a listening activity in which students listen to the song "We are family" and decide whether the vocabulary items are correct or not; and if they are incorrect they should replace them with the right word.

The picture which accompanies these exercises is a black and white photograph of a family which possibly dates back to the beginning of the 20th C. Even though families from the past are not mentioned in the listening or in any of the activities proposed, the author has chosen this picture to represent the family, in the same way that the author of English File (1996) chose to include a boomer family picture despite not having any references to the past in the unit. Besides, in the photograph in question there are seven siblings, while the psychologist who speaks in the interview mentions only four positions in the family: the first child, the middle child, the youngest and the only child.

This image denotes a white family of the Victorian era who are posing for the camera in a special photographic set. The father is sitting on the left and the mother is sitting on the

right. The youngest child is sitting between them, while the rest of the siblings are standing. Behind the parents there is a row of three children: a boy next to the father and two girls at the sides of the mother, one of the girls is holding her mother's arm. At the back there is a row of three of the oldest brothers: one boy and two young men are standing. They all have a serious facial expression and everyone is wearing informal clothes: men and boys are wearing suits with a tie, and the woman and girls are wearing dresses. It seems that this family does not belong to the upper class, but they probably had a high economic status due to the fact that they are getting a photograph, which was not cheap at those times.

It should be appropriate to mention the importance that the family had as an institution in Victorian times. It was not simply a domestic issue, but a social one. The family unit became a grounding point from which a perfect society could grow and, furthermore, acted as a means of fostering an individual's development into an upstanding citizen of the larger community. The symbolic importance of the family in these times was attributed to the home, the foundation of the family as well as to its sanctity and integrity (Wajda, S. 1992).

Family portraits show the growth of the Victorian middle class who incorporated work, leisure, gender roles and hierarchies in a period of political, social and economic transformation (Chase, K. and Levenson, M. 2000). It is possible, therefore, to discern the acting out of hierarchies (...), the elders are placed centrally (...) and are surrounded by relatives, offsprings and others. The elder is in the foreground, confident, leaning nonchalantly a little off the visual centre which is occupied by the dominant male (Stokes, P. 1992).

The connotation, therefore, could refer to a family who are gathered together to embody the values of the time which were above mentioned. The myth, on the other hand, may refer to the concept of a sacred family as something that was accepted as well as expected by Victorian society; and which should be remembered even today. The question

the reader may have is why there is a picture of a family from the past century in a textbook which makes no reference to families in the past. Barthes claimed that the mythical signification is never arbitrary and it is always motivated. It is possible that the author may have chosen this picture deliberately in order to reinforce the concept of the traditional family as a holy institution, a heterosexual one, whose purpose is to have children and maintain gender hierarchies. Again, the bourgeoisie transforms reality of the world into an image of the world, i.e. History into Nature: the traditional family has apparently come from eternity and it might not have an origin.

4.3. New English File Unit 1B “Family Life” (2013)

In the following section unit 1B which belongs to Student's book of the series New English File of Intermediate level printed in 2013 will be analysed (see Appendix D). It deals with similar topics from the 2003 version: family members and personality traits as well as grammar points such as future plans and predictions. The difference is that focus is also made on pronunciation, more specifically on word stress and adjective endings.

The first page includes a reading comprehension exercise which is divided into five parts: exercise *1a* and *1b* activate students' previous knowledge by asking questions about the pictures shown and about some vocabulary differences, exercise *1c* focuses on predictions about the text, exercise *1d* gets students into a listening activity to check their predictions and exercise *1e* is a speaking activity in which there is a set of questions for students to read and to give their opinion. The text discusses the results of a survey carried out by the BBC about families in Britain. In order to illustrate it, the author of the book chose three pictures.

The picture on the left denotes a typical extended white family who are having lunch outdoors (see Appendix D, p.81). On the table there are three middle-aged ladies (two on the left and one on the right whose arm is the only visible part of her body), a woman in her

thirties, one girl and two men. Behind them there are two women, a girl and a man in his thirties. He is the only man who is holding a food tray, the rest are being held by two of the women in the foreground and by one woman in the background who is wearing an apron. Judging by their clothes, it is possible to tell that it is a warm or even a hot day. They are having a barbecue, some sausages on people's plates can be seen, there are four salad bowls and some fizzy drinks on the table. The connotation is possibly related to the notion of a typical family gathering whose members enjoy spending time together. Having a meal is an expected behaviour from extended families in western societies because value is assigned to sharing these moments since it is a form of bonding.

The myth which underlies this picture may be connected to gender stereotypes and to the unequal division of chores. Traditionally, in a family barbecue men are the ones in charge of the grill and women are the ones responsible for doing the rest: making salads, setting the table, folding napkins and doing the dishes, among others. Even though women have gained ground and nowadays it is not that unusual to see a woman cooking a barbecue, when it comes to family gatherings the traditional division of the tasks follows the above mentioned pattern. According to Cunningham (2001), due to the fact that people are raised in gendered environments, they are more likely to have acquired skills and experience for household tasks that are traditionally associated with their gender. Ridgeway compiles a number of ideas from different sources and concludes that "performing particular, gender-linked household tasks offers an opportunity to experience oneself as a culturally competent and therefore acceptably good member of one's sex category and to simultaneously demonstrate this competence to others". In other words, doing certain activities can be translated as a gender display by transforming routine household work into a "symbolic enactment of cultural ideas of not only gender difference but also the status and power inequality that the difference connotes" (Ridgeway, 2011. P 135).

A woman should understand her place: since it is her duty to cook and clean, she should not expect any recognition for it. In this photograph women who do the work are smiling while holding the food trays in the same way that women in real life are supposed to do the chores without complaining. Once again, this can be related to the *family devotion scheme* since a good woman must feel the obligation to be profoundly and essentially committed to taking care of her family (Ridgeway, 2011). Going back to the picture, the woman who is wearing the apron proves this point: she is the only one who shows evidence of being in charge of cooking, however, she is at the very back of the group, she almost becomes invisible at the same time that the man at the centre of the picture gains prominence by doing just a part of the work.

The second picture denotes an average white family made up of a man and a woman, who are the father and the mother, and two children, a boy and a girl (see Appendix D, p81-82). The children are inside a car and they are looking at their parents who are facing each other. Apparently, they are having an argument while the man is holding a bike which is placed in the trunk of the car. The father's mouth is open as if he were saying something while he is raising his eyebrows. The mother is extending her hand as a signal of discomfort, but her facial expression cannot be seen because the picture was printed in the gutter of the book.

The connotation of this picture could be related to a typical parents' argument at the gaze of their children on a possible day out. It is unlikely, if not unimaginable, to have a close relationship with a partner without arguing with him/her/they, so this picture is showing a real-life situation. The myth behind this picture is, once again, connected with an average family made up of a heterosexual couple with the ideal number of children, and who are performing a typical family activity that is to go out in their free time. What is interesting to notice is the fact that they are not posing for the camera, they are not faking an idealisation of

the family, but the author may have chosen this picture as a way of showing a real-life situation.

The third picture shows a grandmother with her grandson (see Appendix D, p.82). They are sitting on a sofa while reading a book. They are wearing informal clothes, maybe because they are at home, and she is wearing reading glasses. The little blonde boy is putting his index finger on his mouth while the old woman is reading. The connotation could refer to a grandmother and grandson who are sharing a pleasant reading moment and the future implications of this relationship on children's development. This type of behaviour is expected by western society and it is considered as a way of bonding.

The myth behind this picture might be connected with the idea of a network of female members of the family who function as supporters of the task of raising children. Grandmothers have historically accompanied parents in taking care of their children, especially if it is the case of single-parent families whose heads are women in the majority of cases (as it will be described more deeply in the following analysis). Even though older grandparents feel less pressure regarding duties and responsibilities for their future in comparison to younger grandparents -and they can “value daily pleasures such as enjoying looking after grandchildren” (Smorti et al., 2012)-, .Viguer et. al. (2010) suggests that grandmothers are more involved in relationships with their grandchildren than grandparents are. It would be fair to say, then, that if a picture of a grandfather reading a book to his grandchild had been shown, it would not have caused the same effect as this picture of a grandmother. The myth might not have been the same since the conception that our society has about grandmothers and grandparents is quite different.

It is possible to relate, therefore, the title of the unit with these three pictures. In the first place, the family gathering as a way of showing family bonding, as well as the unequal distribution of chores. Secondly, the average family who are spending a day out, at the same

time that they are having an argument. And, finally, the grandmother who is reading a book with her grandson, at the same time that the female network which supports child care is normalised. All the positive and negative aspects are a reflection of reality, they are part of a person's *Family Life*.

Another page of the unit is devoted to a reading comprehension task which is divided into five activities about a text titled *Younger brother or only child? How was it for you?*. Exercise 5a is a speaking activity which activates students' previous knowledge by asking questions, in exercises 5b and 5c students have to read the text and answer, exercise 5d focuses on vocabulary connected to personality adjectives and the last one, 5e, is related to students' personal experiences and encourages them to speak. The text has a similar format to the one which belongs to the previous book analysed, but in this case two writers, a novelist and a journalist, talk about their experiences as a younger brother and as an only child respectively. There are two pictures which accompany this text: one which portrays two brothers and a second one which shows a girl in the countryside. Due to the fact that the latter does not seem to show evidence of heteronormativity, only the former will be submitted for analysis (see Appendix D, p.83).

The picture is a black and white photograph from the 60s which denotes two boys who are facing each other while keeping their guard up outdoors, probably in a garden. They are apparently simulating that they are having a fight because, even though their fists are up, the one on the right is smiling at the camera and the other one has his mouth open as if he were saying something when the picture was taken. Each of the boys is standing on a rock, and they are wearing casual clothes. The connotation of this picture might refer to a typical relation among brothers. It is well-known that siblings argue and sometimes they even fight. Since this image seems to be a simulation, the purpose may be to make fun of this situation.

The myth behind this picture is connected to the normalisation of violence among men which is a requirement for the *mandate of masculinity* (Segato, 2018). Violence among boys is an expected behaviour in order to be able to belong to a patriarchal society. Segato claims that the very first victims of the mandate of masculinity are men who are forced to obey the rules and hierarchies of manhood from the moment that they enter life in society, and the family is the first contact with the world. Therefore, the family is the first element of the chain that is responsible for preparing men for violence (p17, own translation). The reader may wonder why pictures of violence among girls or women are not as frequent as those among boys. In Segato's words, "the mandate of masculinity demands men to prove themselves as men all the time, because masculinity, as a difference from femininity, is a status, a hierarchy of prestige, which is acquired as a title and which has to be renewed and whose validity needs to be checked as such"(Segato, R. own translation. 2018, p42). It is frequent, and normal, to see boys and men fight, and to consider violence is a means to belong.

The last page of the unit includes four exercises: number 6 focuses on adjectives of personality, number 7 refers to word stress and adjective endings, number 8 is a listening and speaking activity, and number 9 asks students to write a description of a person. There are three images which illustrate the listening activity proposed on exercise 8: two real photographs of siblings and a picture of the cover of the book written by the British psychologist Linda Blair which will be discussed. Due to the fact that the photographs do not suggest any evidence of heteronormativity, focus will be made on the book cover (see Appendix D, p.84).

The book is titled "Birth Order" and it describes what people's position in the family tells about their character. The listening activity is about a journalist who discusses the book on a radio programme. The cover of the book in question denotes three stick figure drawings:

three siblings with different heights which stand for their different ages: the one on the left is the youngest and the one on the right is the oldest. They do not have a face, but they are wearing clothes which could be associated with two different gender expressions: trousers and short hair for the two boys, and a skirt and long hair for the girl. The boy on the left has his arms crossed and a cloud over his head, the girl in the middle has spiky hair and is wearing a t-shirt with a Jolly Roger design, and the boy on the right is wearing a tie and has a halo over his head. The connotation might refer to the differences among siblings according to their position in the family and with the conception that they have different personalities: the tie may stand for the oldest in the family who is considered to be the most mature, the spiky hair and the t-shirt might stand for a rebellious personality and the arms crossed with the cloud on the head possibly refers to a person who is selfish or fickle.

The myth which underlies this image may be connected to gender stereotypes and naturalisation. It is possible for the readers to tell boys from girls, even though the drawings are stick figures. The stereotype of males and females in western culture is expressed through physical appearance and clothes. If a person is born a male, he must wear trousers and have short hair; whereas if a person is born a female, she must wear a skirt and long hair. This means that the naturalisation of binary gender stereotypes is being reinforced.

4.4. New English File Unit 1B “Modern Families” (2018)

The last analysis will be devoted to unit 1B of the Student’s book New English File of Intermediate level printed in 2018 (see Appendix E). On the first page of the unit which is titled “Modern families” three topics are dealt with: family members, family structures and habits. Exercise *1a* focuses on confusing family vocabulary items, exercise *b* asks students to predict the results of a survey proposed as a reading comprehension on exercise *c*, and exercise *d* deals with oral skills by presenting a set of guiding questions.

On this page drawings are used to portray what is expressed in “The modern family” text which belongs to exercise *1c*. On the left side, there are three images which illustrate the results of the survey regarding family structure. On the right side there are pictures which portray the results of the survey regarding family habits. These will not be taken into consideration due to the fact that they do not seem to show evidence which could meet the purpose of this research.

In the family structure section (see Appendix E, p.85), the picture at the top left is a drawing whose denotative meaning shows a white family made up of a woman and a man, a mother and a father, and three children (two girls and one boy). They are holding hands and standing together in front of a two-storey house which seems to belong to them. They are smiling and wearing informal clothes because they are having family time. The connotative meaning could be referring to the idea that having a family makes people feel happy, calmed and without worries. Spending time with the family is something people should aim at, it is a goal because it gives people joy.

The myth behind this picture is once again related to the notion of an ideal family, which is wealthy, constantly happy and which is made up of a heterosexual couple with children. According to the article in exercise *1c*, married parents represent 60% of British families. In spite of the fact that, according to a 2019 study in the UK there has been an increase of 40% of same-sex families since 2015, the option chosen for representation in this text is still the traditional heterosexual family.

In the bottom left-hand corner there is a picture whose denotation presents a man, the father, with two children, a little girl and a boy, and they are wearing casual clothes. The man’s left hand is resting on the girl’s head, he is wearing glasses, but his eyes cannot be seen. The same happens with the boy, who seems to have his eyes closed, whereas the little girl is showing her eyes open and she is the only one who is smiling. The connotative

meaning of the picture stands for a single-parent family whose head, in this case the father, is serious because raising children is a difficult task to carry out. However, his hands show a protective and caring attitude.

The myth which underlies this drawing is connected to the need to highlight the sacrifice that a man must perform in order to raise children and to be the carer of the family by himself while the western cultural stereotype expects a woman to perform this role. According to Rudman and Fairchild (2004), assuming the responsibility for tasks linked to the other sex when the other is available to do them is to risk criticism from others for gender deviance, which refers to “performing tasks stereotypically assigned to the other sex” (Ridgeway. 2011. P 135). The risk, Ridgeway claims, is “especially great for men who take primary responsibility for caregiving since this is essentialized as a core task of femininity by dominant cultural schemas of the family”. Probably, this is the reason why the author chose to focus the audience’s attention into the father who is doing a woman’s job.

Another reason why the author might have felt the need of inspiring pity and of glorifying those men who take this role might be that it is not that frequent to find a man in charge of a family all by himself. According to the text, even though women are the head of 84% of British single-parent families, and men represent “only 16%” (English File, p10), a man was chosen to serve as the figure which represents single-parent families. On the other hand, women, who remain the most common type of lone parents as reported by a study carried out in the UK a year after the publication of this book (Office for National Statistics. 2018), still have not achieved the recognition fathers in the same situation have. It is natural to see a woman raising children, it is “their job”.

In the text of this section there is a description of the number of families which have one, two, three or more children. The denotation of the pictures chosen to represent the text are stick figure drawings: three heterosexual couples with their corresponding children

holding hands. None of them has a face or any distinguishable physical traits, except for the skirts and long hair for girls and trousers and short hair for boys. Besides, it can be noticed that colours also play a role when trying to differentiate boys from girls: blue is used for the former and green for the latter. The connotation refers to family structure, because there is a father, mother and children in all of them, and closeness because they are holding hands.

The myth behind these drawings is connected to heterosexism, stereotypes and naturalisation. In spite of the fact that the drawings are stick figures, it is still possible to tell men from women, which seems to show that gender stereotypes make a point when it comes to conceiving an ideal family. The stereotype of family in the western culture is built on the idea that a man and a woman together can make it work well, that only heterosexual couples can succeed in having the perfect family. Not only do these figures stand for the average heterosexual family, but also follow the rules of binary gender roles. The unit, which shows several pictures of this type of family, tries to reinforce the concept of a heteronormative family as the natural one.

On the second page of the unit there are two exercises: one connected to the grammar of future forms and another one about sentence stress. The first one, exercise 2 contains three activities: *a* proposes a listening activity, *b* asks students to complete a conversation and *c* focuses on functions of the future forms. The pictures included in this section will not be submitted to analysis because there seems not to be a connection to the aims of this research.

However, the section on the right offers a picture which is worth discussing (see Appendix E, p.86). The exercise on this part is divided into five activities: *a-d* deal with stressed and unstressed words and *e* is a speaking activity about people in students' families, their plans and their opinion on some hypothetical situations in the future. This last exercise proposes a set of questions to encourage oral practice. The image chosen for this section is a

drawing of a pregnant woman which is connected to the question *Is anyone in your family having a baby this year?*. The denotation of the picture is a woman who is standing with her eyes closed, she has a weak smile and she is looking down with her hand touching her belly/stomach. She is wearing comfortable clothes, her hair is loose and she is not wearing shoes, but socks. The connotation could be that becoming a mother may make you happy, because she is smiling, as well as calm and relaxed, because she is wearing comfortable clothes.

The myth behind this image seems to be related to the idea of private confinement which affects women in the unequal division of tasks connected to child care. It is important to remember Irigaray's words (2004) which discuss the status of women in a social order and one of the categories refers to a mother who is described as a woman who is a reproductive instrument marked with the name of the father and enclosed in his house. Historically, women have been confined to the private sphere in order to dedicate their lives to taking care of their houses and to raising children. In this picture the pregnant woman apparently has a submissive attitude and her appearance could express that she is at home and, therefore, relegated to private confinement. Whatsmore, Irigaray also stated that all the social regimes of history are based upon the exploitation of one class of producers, in this case women, who reproduce children and labour force without any compensation for that "work". Therefore, the fact that she is alone appears to reinforce the notion that procreation and child care falls back onto women's shoulders exclusively.

The third page of this unit deals with the description of people's personalities. It has three exercises: the first one presents vocabulary items regarding adjectives of personality, the second one focuses on word stress pronunciation and the last one presents an article about the way birth order influences people's personalities.

The picture which is next to the first exercise whose title is “Opposites attract” has a denotative meaning which presents a white man and woman, she is at the front of the picture and he is seated at her back and they are showing the upper part of their bodies (see Appendix E, p.87). The woman’s hand is holding her head and she is smiling. The man has one hand resting on his leg and the other one is covering his mouth. While the woman is looking at the camera, the man is not; and they are both wearing casual clothes. The connotation appears to be connected to the previously mentioned title which states that men and women are opposites, because they are at extremes in the picture, but at the same time they attract since the woman is smiling and the man is relaxed. A man and a woman together are considered to be the perfect combination to make a couple and to form a family.

The myth underlying this picture is connected to the conception that men and women are naturally attracted to each other and that, therefore, they are the only conceivable “combination” to form a family. The linguistic purpose of the activity which accompanies this picture is to introduce adjectives of personality with a set of five pairs of opposite adjectives that seem to reinforce gender stereotypes: the woman in the picture is generous, hard-working and talkative, whereas the man is mean, lazy and quiet. Focusing on the image, the concept of binarism is again exposed, not only due to the contrast of a man and a woman, but also due to the absence of other gender representations. Apparently, men and women have these characteristics because of their gender and, in spite of the contrast, they still must feel attracted to each other.

The article presented in exercise 6 discusses the way birth order influences people’s personalities. Even though the text describes the characters and personalities of human beings according to their position in the family, a picture of animals, in this case, a group of chicks, is chosen to illustrate the reading. The denotation of this picture is a group of five chicks on an artificial setting, i.e. they are not in their natural habitat, which are forming a line except

for one of them which is walking the other way and which has a speech bubble above its head and it says “I’m the youngest, so I’m rebellious”.

It is possible that this image was chosen for the sake of humour, i.e. pictures of animals are used in comical ways and they are portrayed with anthropomorphic behaviours in an attempt to make the audience more sympathetic and better able to connect with an animal character since they can metaphorically see themselves reflected in them (Bailey 2015). Besides, this perspective makes sense due to the fact that the speech bubble has apparently that purpose.

The connotation of this picture could be that, even though siblings seem to be very similar because these chicks look alike, they may have differences to a greater or less extent: some of them are forming a line, others are looking at the reader and there is the rebellious one which is out of the line heading the other way. But why is a picture of animals chosen to represent human families? The myth behind suggests that there is a connection between the animal family and the human family. The other pictures selected in this unit which make reference to the concept of family are drawings of people or pictures of real people. In this case, there is a picture of animals which would suggest that the other images which were previously described in this unit are also conceived as “natural”. Once again, there seems to be a reinforcement of the concept that families in the way they are portrayed in this unit have come from eternity, there is no beginning because nature has been the origin of everything known to humans.

To sum up, the pictures previously analysed apparently comprise a myth which is replicated all throughout the unit: a set of beliefs about the world which establish that a family is naturally heterosexual, that each gender has specific assigned roles to form that family and that women are the ones confined in the private sphere and, consequently,

responsible for taking care of the house and the children.

4.5. Patterns, Metadiscourse and Gender

All the books in the series (New) English File of Intermediate level contain a unit which is devoted to describing family members and their personalities (see Appendix A). The main grammar topic which is dealt with is future forms *-going to, present continuous, will* and *shall-*, except for the 1996 version which includes determiners *both, neither* and *either* as well as the difference between *look* and *look like*; without tackling future forms. All four editions bear resemblance in the content of their main texts, whether they are reading comprehension texts or listening texts. This section will attempt to establish the similarities and differences in the above-mentioned textbook series by applying gender perspective as well as metadiscoursal theory (see Appendix A, p.72).

4.5.1. How Birth Order Affects People's Personalities

The topic which is repeated in all four editions is how birth order affects people's personalities. The 1996 version includes both a reading comprehension and a listening comprehension text, the 2003 and 2013 versions deal with this topic with a listening comprehension activity only, and the 2018 edition includes a reading comprehension task. The main texts of all four editions describe different personality characteristics based on the position of a person in the family. Apparently, they do not seem to contain any evidence of heteronormativity, so they will not be taken into consideration for analysis. However, Unit 1C of coursebook English File (1996) includes an exercise which contains a listening activity that is worth submitting for analysis (see Appendix F, p.88).

There are three stages in this section: *a* is meant for general listening, *b* asks students to listen for more detail and *c* proposes students to give their personal opinion. Instructions in exercise *a* make reference to the person who is in charge of delivering the speech. “Listen to a psychologist” are the first words of the instructions which seem to prove that the text students are about to listen to is a reliable source. This person claims that the position in the family is the most important factor which contributes to forming people’s personalities and her views are meant to be respected since she is a qualified professional. Interactive resources are used to organise propositional information in order to help the projected target audience to find it in a coherent and convincing way. They include evidentials such as this one, which are metalinguistic representations of an idea from another source (Thomas and Hawes, 1994) which guide the reader’s interpretation and establish an authorial command of the subject.

The use of “of course” when referring to the importance of people’s position in the family is another interactional resource, in this case it belongs to the subcategory of boosters. The author seems to have chosen this phrase to express her certainty in what she says, at the same time that she recognizes that there are different positions and acknowledges the fact that this is well known by the audience. Nevertheless, she also includes a second element which seems to be relevant when it comes to describing what affects people’s personalities. In fact, the rest of the text is based on this notion, so it would be interesting to analyse it more deeply.

According to the author, the *sex* of siblings is crucial. She makes a clear distinction between boys and girls since she claims that this binarism is one of the reasons why their personalities and preferences are shaped. The use of interactional hedging device *probably* seems to suggest the speaker’s estimation, proposing a likely explanation and withholding complete commitment to a proposition, perhaps because these situations are likely to happen, but not always do: “you will *probably* rebel against feminine things and want to wear jeans

and play football” or “you will *probably* do exactly the opposite and like dolls and pretty dresses”.

In contrast, it is important to note the intrusion of the speaker’s perspective towards what is considered to be masculine and feminine matters by the use of the word *exactly*, since it places dolls and pretty dresses as opposed to boys’ interests, which, she claims, are jeans and playing football. The use of interactional booster *exactly* closes down possible alternatives, emphasises certainty and constructs rapport by marking involvement with the topic and solidarity with an audience, taking a joint position against other voices (Hyland, 1999). The speaker is strengthening her argument in order to help her audience reach the same conclusion: that there are feminine and masculine things which are opposed to one another and that this behaviour should be followed because it is the norm. Besides, as previously analysed, the picture which accompanies this text is that of a girl trying to do kick-ups whose myth beyond was aligned with the stereotypes mentioned in the text.

It is worth noticing the fact that the normalised stereotypical behaviour which is assigned to males and females reinforces the discriminatory practices towards those who do not follow it. This extract perpetuates heteronormativity due to the fact that the girl’s behaviour is being pointed at because it does not follow the patterns of gendered practices or desires related to heterosexuality (López Sáez, 2017).

Not only do these practices matter to describe people’s personalities, but also the parent a child spends more time with is also involved in this process according to the author. The fact that a child spends more time with the father or the mother is another aspect to take into consideration. Again, the only possibility presented in this text is a heterosexual one, i.e. that parents are made up of a male, a father, and a female, a mother. This coincides with Butler’s concept of *heterosexual matrix*, which was explained before in the Literary Review

section. In this sense, it could be interpreted that the author chooses to associate, on the one hand, personality traits such as being an extrovert and being confident with males exclusively. In fact, the speaker provides former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as a model who embodies these characteristics. On the other hand, the Psychologist aligns qualities such as communication and sociability with females. Therefore, she argues, girls who spend more time with their fathers are usually more likely to develop those male features, and the opposite happens with boys who spend more time with their mothers.

It is interesting to notice the fact that the speaker uses an interactional hedging device when describing the probable reason why boys spend more time with their mothers: “maybe because they (parents) are separated”. As previously stated, hedges emphasise the subjectivity of a position by allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than a fact. Therefore it could be said that “maybe” implies that the statement is based on the speaker’s plausible reasoning rather than a certain knowledge.

To sum up, the listening activity proposed in English File (1996) seems to respond to the heteronormative construct through the analysis of metadiscourse. To begin with, the author mentions the Psychologist’s qualifications, which is an interactive evidential resource, to prove the audience that they should trust this source (Hyland, 2015). Then, the speaker argues that the difference between boys and girls shapes people’s personalities and preferences by highlighting the normalized stereotypical behaviour which is assigned to males and females. Finally, biased gender qualities and stereotypes are aligned with boys’ and girls’ personality traits.

4.5.2 Relationships between brothers and sisters

The topic “How birth order affects people’s personalities” which was previously analysed leads to the second topic “Relationships between brothers and sisters” that can be found in the 2003 and 2013 versions. Both of them are included in a reading comprehension text format: 2003 New English File deals with the relationship between two sisters and the 2013 version presents two cases: one about two brothers and another one about an only child.

Unit 1C of Student’s Book New English File of intermediate level (2003) is titled “We are family”, which refers to the title of the text that is submitted for analysis in this section, as well as to the title of a popular song by Sister Sledge that is included at the end of the unit whose goal is to practise listening skills. At the very beginning the author presents the unit by using an inclusive *we*, which is an interactional resource which functions as self mention as well as engagement marker (Hyland, 2005). It is a device that explicitly addresses readers as participants, in this particular case with the apparent purpose of highlighting their presence. So, the audience may feel that they are a part of the topic and that the concepts which are being discussed in this unit could be related to them. The text at issue is titled *We are family... Two sisters tell the truth about themselves -and each other...* and discusses their relationship from each of the sister’s point of view (see Appendix C, p.79).

To begin with, it is important to note that the text is divided into three parts: one is a caption written by the author, and the other two are the sisters’ testimonies, Wendy’s and Carnie’s, in first person. Due to the fact that the author does not intervene in their stories, their statements will not be considered regarding metadiscourse analysis. However, there are two instances of heteronormativity which will be discussed at the end of this section.

The caption which was previously mentioned can be found right after the title and, while it provides information about the sisters, it mentions that “they are both married”. The use of the word *both* seems to show the author’s certainty towards this statement since it is

considered to be an interactional resource under the subcategory of boosters, which emphasises the force of the proposition (Hyland, 2005). It also allows the writer's bias to be glimpsed due to the fact that this statement seems to be irrelevant to the subject matter because the text describes their relationship as sisters in first person and they do not make any reference to their marital status.

When describing what their life is like in the present, the author considered it necessary to comment on two things: that they live in Los Angeles and that both sisters are married. The latter was possibly mentioned because it is relevant to remind the reader of the position of women in a patriarchal social order. According to Irigaray, women are necessary objects for the materialisation of relations among men. In this case, they are already taken and, as a consequence, they are not available in the market of women. What seems to reinforce Irigaray's idea is that they are marked with the name of the father: it is mentioned that they are the daughters of a famous singer, but even if that was not the case, they would have been marked with the name of the husband (Irigaray, 2004) .

Another instance which could be observed is the use of the comparative when describing one of the sister's jealousy: "I was very jealous of Wendy also because she was more attractive than me". The stereotype of women as rivals of other women remains prevalent in western society. The emphasis on women's undermining nature is exemplified through popular cultural representations of women as "catty" or having a "mean girl nature". The scope of these cultural representations depicts women as uniquely and negatively competing against each other (Anthony, A.; Okorie, S.; Norman, L., 2016). The presence of these examples in textbooks designed for teenagers could be considered dangerous since it is possible that these stereotypes are validated and, consequently, perpetuated.

Unit 1B of Student's Book New English File of intermediate level (2013) is titled "Family Life" and it contains a text about the relationship between two brothers and a

journalist's experiences as an only child (see Appendix D, p 83). Both testimonies are told in first person, and the only intervention of the author is made through the titles and subtitles of the text. The former can be read "*Younger brother or only child? How was it for you?*", and its last word *you* indicates an interactional resource called engagement marker (Hyland, 1999). As previously stated, it is a device that explicitly addresses readers as participants, apparently with the purpose of highlighting their presence.

The subtitles are descriptions of the people who are giving their testimonies: *The younger brother Novelist Tim Lott* and *The only child Journalist Sarah Lee*. In both cases there are Interactive resources such as evidentials, in the case of the use of the words *novelist* and *journalist*, which guide the reader's interpretation and establish an authorial command of the subject. These metalinguistic representations indicate that the source of textual information is originated outside the current text and its function is to prove to the audience that they should trust this source (Hyland, 2015). Due to the fact that the texts do not include any interventions from the author, the testimonies will not be submitted to metadiscoursal analysis.

However, it is worth pointing out the fact that there seems to be two instances in which heteronormativity is noticed. To begin with, Tim Lott describes the origin of the rivalry that existed between his brother and himself. This conflict is represented with the picture which accompanies the text, that was previously analysed in the Myth section, where two brothers are simulating a fight at the same time that they are normalising violence among men which is a requirement for the *mandate of masculinity* (Segato, 2018). This rivalry began when the younger brother was born and had to remain in hospital with the mother, and the older brother was sent to his aunt's house to be taken care of. This is a clear example of the *family devotion scheme*, in which the concepts of reproduction and nurturing are only in charge of women ; at the same time that women of the family stand for each other to carry

out these activities because social relations in the home create gendered expectations which affect behaviour in the family (Ridgeway 2011).

Another instance of the presence of heteronormativity is apparently noticeable in the games the brothers played, among which “Cowboys and Indians” is mentioned. Not only does it express a part of the colonial canon asserting white supremacy and indigenous inferiority (Yellow Bird, M. 2004), but also emphasises the violence which is expected from boys at the same time that it exemplifies the games that belong to boys as a difference from girls. The novelist states that he only remembers “him [his brother] trying to suffocate him under the bed covers”, violence is a normalised stereotypical behaviour which is assigned to males and that reinforces the discriminatory practices towards those who do not follow it.

4.5.3. Statistics and Research about families

New English File versions printed in 2013 and 2018 contain texts about 21st-century families in the UK and British families respectively which are accompanied by a reading comprehension activity. These texts bear resemblance since they are adaptations of surveys carried out in the UK and their results reflected mainly in percentages.

Unit 1B of coursebook New English File of intermediate level (2013) is titled “Family Life”, and deals with topics such as family relations, family life in the UK and personality characteristics. As stated before, the pictures chosen for this unit portray people’s positive and negative aspects which are a reflection of reality because they are part of a person’s *Family Life*.

The text which is presented at the very beginning of the unit is called “Changing -for the better?” (see Appendix D, p.81). It discusses family life in the UK and its changes. The title seems to suggest that the author is expressing his/her attitude to the proposition because asking that question could imply the writer’s views regarding the changes in British society

which is reflected in the results of the survey. In fact, the caption which accompanies the text explicitly confirms this thought. The author offers his/her position regarding this matter when he/she says: “Family life is changing in the UK- but not in the way we might think”. The writer uses the self-mention interactional resource by which explicit reference to the author is made. The inclusive *we* could also be considered an engagement marker because not only does it intend to position the reader in the same line as the writer of the text, but also it intends to build a relationship with the reader (Hyland, 2005). Besides, the use of interactional resource hedging device “might” withholds complete commitment to the proposition (Hyland, 2005).

The caption continues with the following statements: “*When the BBC did a survey of families in Britain, they expected to find that family relationships were suffering because of the decline in traditional family structures. However, some of the results were quite surprising...*”. To begin with, the use of an evidential interactive resource can be spotted when mentioning the BBC: an idea from another source is represented and an authorial command of the subject is established (Hyland, 2005). In fact, the author distances himself/herself from the ideas the BBC may have when mentioning the pronoun “they” in contrast with the inclusive *we* which was previously observed. The writer’s position can be identified by the use of conjunctive adverb “however”, which is an interactive resource transition marker which connects steps in an argument (in this case, by contrast), and the adjective “surprising”, which is an interactional resource called attitude marker, that indicates the writer’s affective attitude to the proposition (Hyland, 2005).

The results shown in this section do not seem to be concerned with family structures, but with family habits: people aged 20-24 who still live with their parents, parents who charge rent to children over 25, people’s use of the internet to contact family members, closeness with other members of the family, eating habits, among others. The audience, then,

may possibly wonder what surprising results there may be. In contrast to what was supposedly expected by the BBC (*that family relationships were suffering because of the decline in traditional family structures*), the survey showed that 95% of people say that they have a close family, and 75% of people are happiest with their families, against 17% of people who are happiest with friends. Therefore, it could be said that, even though family structures are not the same as they were in the past, people like having a close relationship with their family members and care for their families.

Unit 1B of coursebook *New English File* of intermediate level (2018) is titled “Modern Families”, and deals with topics such as family relations, modern British family life and personality characteristics. As previously stated, the pictures which are included in the unit which belongs to the latest version of the (New) English File series portray not only the average family type, but also there is an instance of single-parent family representation. However, in that example the head of the family is a man, and men stand only for 16% of the actual total of single-parent families according to the survey the book presents in one of its texts. Therefore, it would be appropriate to say that single-parent families are not entirely represented. Furthermore, even though the numbers of same-sex couple families have increased substantially in recent years in the UK, with an increase of 53.2% from 152,000 in 2015 to 232,000 in 2018 (Office for National Statistics, 2018), there is no presence of same-sex couples in the unit. Hence, the British families are not totally represented and these family models do not seem to be quite modern as the title suggests.

The text presented in this unit which is worth analysing for the purpose of this research is titled “The modern family” (see Appendix E, p.85). It discusses the results of a survey carried out around 2018 which deals with British family life and it is divided into two parts: the first one describes family structure and the second one family habits. The title of this text is the same as the title of the unit, and both analyses coincide: they seem to present

and antecede information regarding contemporary families, but these groups are not totally represented. Taking into account that the text informs the reader about the moment in which the survey was carried out by using the word “recent”, it could be fair to say that the title is not appropriate due to the fact that it does not show the audience any other family type such as same-sex families, for instance.

In the introductory part an interactional resource is used which belongs to the subcategory called attitude marker (Hyland, 2015). According to the author, the data collected has shown “some *surprising* statistics”. The use of the adjective “surprising” indicates the writer’s explicit attitude while commenting on the status of the information. Instead of discussing the probable relevance, reliability or truth of the data shown, the author chooses to impose his/her own affective attitude. The reader may wonder what is out of the ordinary so as to be surprised about. However, there does not seem to be any remarkable facts since the outcome of the survey shows average as well as single-parent families which are common family structures for the western society.

The results of the survey revealed that 60% of families have married parents, that 22% are single-parent families, that 45% of families have one child, 40% have two and 15% have three or more. It is also pointed out that 11% of families have stepchildren. There is information about family habits too: the frequency in which they meet or they argue, among others. Contrary to the family model presented in the 1996 textbook, the existence of different family structures seems to be acknowledged: single parenting as well as couples with one child or stepchildren are present in the book. It is possible that this is the fact that the author finds surprising and which needed to explicitly signal metadiscoursally.

Another interactional attitude marker used by the writer, which supports the idea that he/she is surprised, can be found in the text in two instances: when describing family structure -“*Only* 14% of the single parents are men.”- and when describing family habits -

“20% of families *only* eat together once or twice a week...”. Even though the adverb *only* is included in both of these examples, focus will be made in the former which is the one connected with the topic of the research. Again, the intrusion of the writer’s affective attitude to the proposition can be seen. He/she seems to be expressing amazement at the data collected. It could be said that the writer is surprised at the small quantity of single-parent men (14%) compared to the overwhelming 86% of women who have the same role. Furthermore, the picture included in the unit whose myth analysis apparently highlighted the sacrifice a man must perform when he is the head of the family seems to support this idea.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1. Conclusion

As final commentaries, this paper has in its core of exploration the changes in heteronormativity in the (New) English File course book series of intermediate level which belongs to Oxford University Press in its four editions. On the one hand, focus was made on the images chosen to illustrate texts and exercises by applying the Barthesian Myth, and on the other, on the use of metadiscourse to study the texts.

To begin with, and referring back to one of the hypotheses which stated that the LGBTBIQ+ community would probably be still invisibilized, it can be concluded that the appearance of this group is unobservable. As previously stated, the main function of myth is to transform history into nature and eternity by suppressing the voices of the oppressed who belong to a world that is in constant change (Barthes, 1991). Therefore, the fact that the LGBTBIQ+ community does exist and it is not present in any of the (New) English File books confirms not only that this series is not a politically neutral resource, but also that it is an indisputable proof of the denial of otherness.

The above analysis has also found that the four editions of the series reflect heteronormative views regarding the family construct, and the development in the series coincides with the premise that certain adjustments were made: at the beginning only traditional families could be observed while in the rest of the series other family types are included. In the 1996 version a strong tendency to show traditional wealthy families which belong to different historical periods could be found. A slight decline in this proclivity could be perceived in the 2003 version since it exhibits other types of families such as single-parent and extended families. However, a Victorian family photograph suggests that emphasis is made on the naturalisation of traditional heterosexual families. The 2013 edition has shown a setback in the diversity of families presented due to the fact that there are no single-parent

families depicted, only extended and traditional families. The 2018 edition, which is the latest one, presents both traditional wealthy families as well as single-parent families. Another discovery was the use of photographs of families of animals in the first and last editions, which suggest an inclination towards the notion that traditional families are *natural*.

Other findings connected with gender roles and stereotypes support the presupposition that heteronormativity continues to be normalised. Firstly, the 1996 edition presents a grotesque caricature of a girl trying to do kick-ups which seems to reinforce the idea that boys and girls are meant to perform activities according to their biological sex. In spite of the second edition's intentions to include more diverse families such as single-parent families, the 2003 book exhibits a picture of a group of women of different generations which suggests that the *family devotion scheme* as well as the network with other females is being reinforced. The third edition presents women who fulfil the *family devotion scheme* by taking care of children, the naturalisation and reproduction of physical violence among male children as a requirement to fulfil the *mandate of masculinity* and the stereotyping of males and females in western culture which is expressed through physical appearance and clothes. The last edition also reinforces appearance as a means of stereotyping males and females and reproduction as being solely a woman's responsibility.

The analysis on metadiscourse has shown evidence of gender bias in texts which belong to the first, second and third editions, whereas the 2018 version, instead, seems to acknowledge the existence of different types of families apart from the traditional one. The use of interactive and interactional resources in a listening activity about how birth order affects people's personalities has proved the normalisation of stereotypical behaviour assigned to males and females in the first edition. The second and third editions' metadiscoursal evidence in the topic "relationships between brothers and sisters" seems not to be as concluding as the ones in the 1996 version, but topics related to female marital status,

competition among women, boys' behaviour which responds to the *mandate of masculinity*, women following the *family devotion scheme* and gender stereotyped games could be observed. The third and fourth editions show evidence of the use of interactional resources in the text about statistics and research about families with the purpose of imposing the author's own affective attitude towards the data collected.

The study of EFL textbooks turns out to be a mechanism to understand the heteronormative matrix embedded in the construction of knowledge. Approaching textbooks in this sense, with their texts and pictures, could help teachers and students to establish a different meaning to their own life experiences. It is necessary to insist on the highly important role of EFL textbooks when it comes to representing different family structures which are considered crucial not only in the shaping of learners' identities, but, mainly, in the identification of equals who are able to validate their own existence.

5.2. Limitations

Although this research was carefully designed with the objective of exploring the changes of heteronormativity embedded in a series of EFL textbooks, it would be worth making reference to the limitations and shortcomings this study has found.

On the one hand, regarding the limitations of research scope, it is relevant to note that this study has examined the question of changes of heteronormativity only based on the analysis of the progression of a single series of EFL textbooks called (New) English File of intermediate level printed by Oxford University Press. In spite of the fact that this sample has shown evidence of the naturalisation of heteronormativity in the construct of the family at the same time that it presents a reinforcement in gender roles and stereotypes, it would be useful to continue analysing other cases of book series, or even a contrast of different textbooks, to

contribute to the notion of undermining gender-biased pictures and language in the classroom.

Secondly, the topic chosen for this paper is a broad subject that would certainly need more time to be fully covered. Due to the fact that gender studies comprises a large number of fields of knowledge and the analysis of EFL textbooks can be seen from different viewpoints, the scope of this work had to be necessarily narrowed leaving aside interesting issues that are definitely related to this investigation but exceed its limits of time and place.

As previously mentioned, it is common knowledge that topics related to sexuality and the LGTBIQ+ community are the most avoided ones in teaching materials. Thus, this work is expected to have opened a door through which other researchers may continue investigating heteronormativity in EFL textbooks. For educators, being aware of gender biases and being able to work against them is crucial for teaching in a more equitable way. As teacher educators, it is of paramount importance to understand that teaching cannot and should not be neutral or apolitical. Students deserve a better learning environment which does not judge or discriminate against them or their families. As long as heterosexism and homophobia are institutionally supported forms of oppression, change will be unattainable, but it is time for those who want to dismantle this oppression to continue working in the direction of a fairer world

5.3. Implications

This study which has attempted to analyse the changes in heteronormativity in the book series (New) English File of intermediate level could be considered as a starting point to approach issues regarding gender studies. It is highly necessary, therefore, to ask publishing houses to reconsider the content they propose in their EFL textbooks; at the same time that authors and

editors could get a different perspective towards the topics they deal with when designing classroom materials. Besides, teachers as well as teacher-training-college students could benefit from reading this paper in order to be more aware of the content of pictures and texts they tackle in class. All the members of the teaching and learning community should be reminded that they are responsible for transforming the classroom into a more inclusive environment.

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Appendix A

Publishing year →	1996	2003	2013	2018
Topic/Text Type ↓				
How birth order affects people's personalities	✓ Reading comprehension ✓ Listening comprehension	✓ Listening comprehension	✓ Listening comprehension	✓ Reading comprehension
Relationships between brothers and sisters		✓ Reading comprehension about two sisters	✓ Reading comprehension about two brothers	
Statistics and Research about families			✓ Reading comprehension about 21st-century families in the UK.	✓ Reading comprehension about British families

Appendix B

English File Unit 1C “Good Relations” (1996)

1 C

Good relations

both, neither, either
look/look like, adjectives describing people

1 BUILD YOUR VOCABULARY

Families and describing people

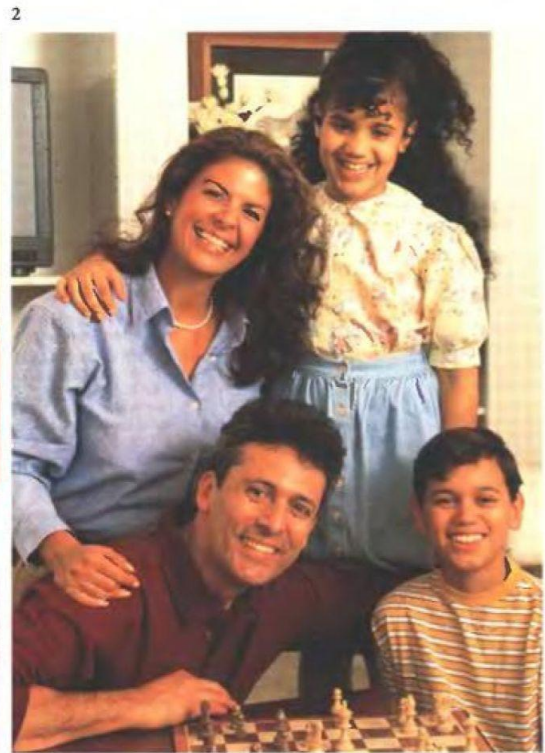
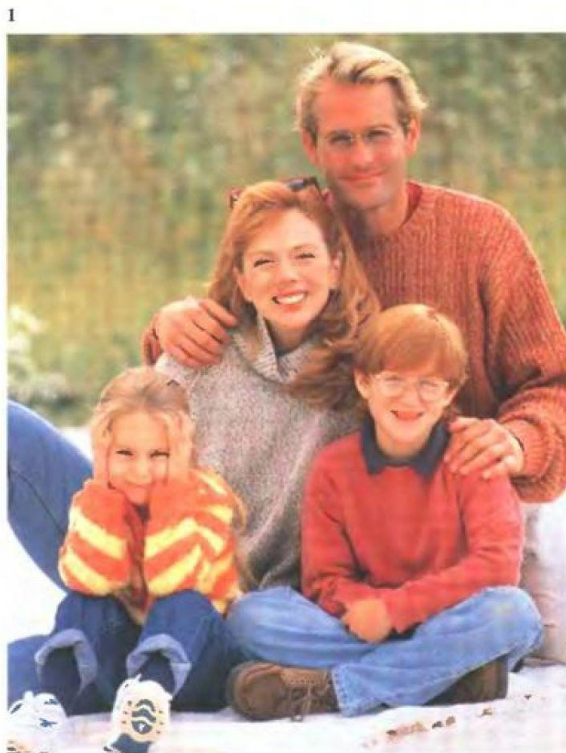
a Do the ‘Family’ quiz.

Who is, in relation to you...?	
1 your mother’s brother	<u>my uncle</u>
2 your father’s sister	_____
3 your husband’s mother	_____
4 your husband’s sister	_____
5 your brother’s daughter	_____
6 your sister’s son	_____
7 your father’s brother’s children	_____
8 your mother’s father	_____
9 your daughter’s son	_____
10 your father’s second wife	_____

b Complete Vocabulary Builder 2A *Appearance*, p.130.

c Write sentences with *look(s)* or *look(s) like*.

- Sara _____ friendly.
- John _____ his father.
- She _____ about thirty.
- Peter _____ a bank manager.
- You _____ tired.
- They _____ French.



d Say as much as you can about the people.

The adults

- What do they look like?
- How old do you think they look?
- What nationality do you think they look?

The children

- What do they look like?
- How old do you think they look?
- Do the children look like their parents?

2 GRAMMAR ANALYSIS

both, neither, either

- a Look at the photos in 1d again. Which people do the sentences describe?

They *both* have red hair.
Both the mother *and* the son have red hair.
Both of them have red hair.
 Neither the father *nor* the son wears glasses.
 Neither of them wears glasses.

They look *either* Spanish *or* Mexican.
 She doesn't really look like *either* her mother *or* her father.

- b Complete the rules.

Use *both, neither, and either* to talk about two people or things.

- _____ = not A and not B
- *both* _____ = A and B
- _____ = A or B
- After *both* and *neither* the verb must be (+).
- *Neither of us is/are tall.*
- *We both like football.*

! *neither* = one or two people, so the verb can be singular or plural.
both = two people, so the verb must be plural.

PRACTICE

- a Complete with *both, neither, or either*.

The person I'm most like in my family is probably my sister Cécile. We look like each other because ¹ *both* of us have very dark hair and dark eyes, and we're ² _____ more or less the same size, ³ _____ fat nor slim. We've got similar personalities too. We're ⁴ _____ extrovert and talkative. When the family gets together, ⁵ _____ Cécile or I always dominate the conversation. We've also got similar tastes. We ⁶ _____ love reading, ⁷ _____ novels or biographies, and ⁸ _____ of us can play any sport. At school we were ⁹ _____ probably the worst in the class at sport!

- b Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first.

Use *both, neither, or either*.

- 1 John lives in the USA and James lives in the USA too.
 _____ in the USA.
- 2 Andrea didn't come yesterday, and Gina didn't.
 _____ yesterday.
- 3 I'd like to go to Rome or Venice this summer.
 _____ this summer.
- 4 My sister and I don't smoke.
 _____ smoke.
- 5 He and his brother live in rented flats.
 _____ in rented flats.
- 6 I don't like this one or that one.
 _____ of them.

3 MAKING CONVERSATION

Your family



In pairs, A look at the questions. Tell B about your family. B listen and ask more questions. Swap roles.

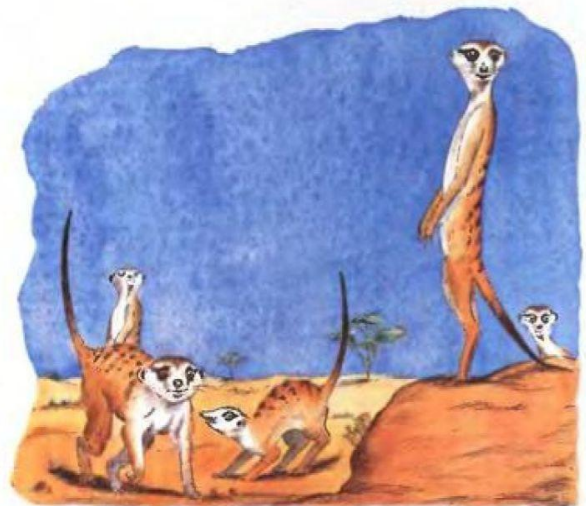
How many people are there in your immediate family?

How old are they? What do they do?

Have you got a lot of other relatives?

Who do you look like in your family?

In what way are you physically similar?



4 READ BETTER

- a What's your position in the family? Are you the oldest, the youngest, in the middle, or an only child? Do you like your position? Why (not)?
- b Read the introduction to a magazine article about how your position in the family affects your personality. Then read the paragraphs in the order that you find most interesting.

Family fortunes

Scientists and psychologists agree that although many factors contribute to forming your personality, for example, your sex, class, culture, or lifestyle, one of the most important is your position in the family. So how have *you* been affected?

Are you a first child, a middle child, the youngest, or an only child?

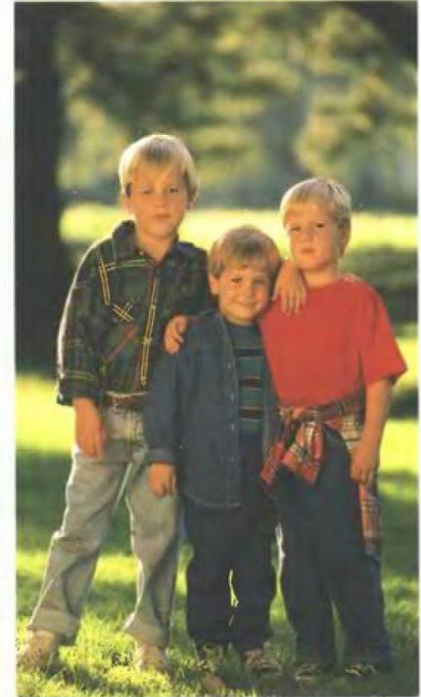
First-born children. If you are a first-born child, you are probably self-confident and a good leader – you came first, after all. You may also be bossy and even

aggressive if you don't get what you want. You are ambitious, and good at communicating, because you learned to speak from your parents, not from brothers and sisters. On the other hand, you are the oldest and so you have to be the most responsible, and this can make you the kind of person who worries a lot.

Middle children are usually independent and competitive. You had to fight with your brothers and sisters to get what you wanted. You are also co-operative as you always had to negotiate with either your older or your

younger brothers and sisters. You are sociable, as you always had someone to play with. On the other hand, you may be jealous and insecure or moody if you felt that your parents preferred your older brother or sister.

Youngest children are often very charming. You learned very quickly that you could get exactly what you want by being charming – and this can make you manipulative. You are usually affectionate and relaxed because when you arrived your parents were more relaxed themselves. But you are often not very independent, as you always had so many people to help you. This makes it hard for you to take decisions. And you may be lazy, because your parents probably pushed you less and were less strict with you than with your older brothers and sisters.



Only children are often quite selfish. You had the wonderful luxury of not having to share your parents' attention with anybody else. In fact, you received so much attention as a child that you find it difficult to be interested in other people. On the other hand, you are usually organized and responsible, and often imaginative. But you may find it difficult to communicate with others, and are very sensitive to criticism.

- c Underline the adjectives of personality. Write them in the chart.

	First-born children	Middle children	Youngest children	Only children
Positive adjectives	<i>self-confident</i>			
Negative adjectives				
Positive or negative adjectives				

- d Complete Vocabulary Builder 2B *Personality*, p. 130.

- e In pairs, compare opinions on the article. What are you like? What are your brothers/sisters/friends like?

I'm a middle child. I'm competitive, but I'm not really moody. But my younger brother is definitely...

BETTER PRONUNCIATION

Word stress

a Underline the stress.

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 jealous | 5 co-operative | 9 insecure |
| 2 ambitious | 6 affectionate | 10 aggressive |
| 3 imaginative | 7 independent | 11 responsible |
| 4 competitive | 8 sociable | 12 organized |

b **11.8** Listen and check. Practise saying the adjectives.

Remember: adjectives ending *-ive* = /ɪv/.
 adjectives ending *-ous* = /ʊs/.
 adjectives ending *-able* = /əbl/.

c Test a partner on the adjectives of personality in a above. Try to pronounce them correctly.

- A *This kind of person likes being with other people.*
 B 'Sociable'.

5 LISTEN BETTER

a **11.9** Listen to a psychologist speaking about other things which affect your personality. What are the main things?

b Listen for more detail. Complete the sentences.

- If you're a first child and you're a girl, you will be _____ if the second child is a boy.
- If you're a girl in the middle of three girls, you will probably rebel against _____ and want to wear _____ and play _____.
- If you're a girl in the middle of boys, you will probably do exactly the opposite and like _____ and pretty _____.
- Girls who have a lot of attention from their fathers in the early years are usually more _____ and _____.
- Boys who spend most of their time with their mothers are better at _____ and _____.

c Do you agree with what the psychologist said?



6 MAKING CONVERSATION

Good relations?



a In pairs, look at the topics in the box. A write three advantages for each topic, B write three disadvantages.

ADVANTAGE OR DISADVANTAGE?

Having a lot of brothers and sisters
 Being an only child
 Having an older relative living with you
 (e.g. grandmother)
 Both of your parents working

b Together discuss each point. Do you agree?

One advantage/disadvantage is that...
On the other hand...
That's true, but...
I agree/disagree because...

7 WRITE BETTER

Either:

Write three short paragraphs describing a relative.

Paragraph 1 What does he/she look like?

Paragraph 2 What's he/she like?

Paragraph 3 What does he/she like doing?

Or:

Write three short paragraphs about **one** of the topics in 6.

Paragraph 1 Advantages

Paragraph 2 Disadvantages

Paragraph 3 Your conclusions/own opinion

Use the **Writing Bank** on p.145 to help you.

▶ Go to Check your progress 1, p.114.

New English File Unit 1C “We are Family” (2003)



G future forms: *going to*, present continuous, *will / shall*
V family, personality
P prefixes and suffixes

We are family

1 VOCABULARY & SPEAKING family

- a Look at the two pictures. Which one do you think shows the typical family of the future? Read the first paragraph of the article and find out.



Families have a great-great future

Twenty years ago, the typical extended family was 'wide'. It usually consisted of two or three generations, with many children in each 'nuclear family'. People had lots of aunts and uncles but often didn't know their grandparents. However, according to a new study by the British research group Mintel, the family is changing shape. The family groups of the future will be 'long and thin', with three or four small generations.

Here are some of their predictions:

- 1 Most children will know their great-grandparents (and even great-great-grandparents) because people are living longer.
- 2 Very few children will have brothers or sisters, and it will be common to be an only child. As a result, future generations will not have many cousins either.
- 3 Many children will grow up isolated from other children and young adults. This will make them more selfish and introverted.
- 4 More couples will divorce and re-marry, some more than once. They may have children with their new partners, so many children will have a stepmother or stepfather and half-brothers or sisters.
- 5 There will be many 'boomerang children'. These are children who leave home to get married, but then divorce and return to live with their parents.
- 6 There will be more single-parent families.
- 7 Because houses are now so expensive, different generations may decide to live together, so parents, grandparents, and adult children may co-own their houses, and many couples will have to live with their in-laws.

b Now read the whole article. Match the **highlighted** words with the definitions.

- 1 _____ your grandparents' parents
- 2 _____ a child who doesn't have any brothers or sisters
- 3 _____ families where the mother or father is bringing up the children on his / her own
- 4 _____ your uncle's or aunt's children
- 5 _____ the family of your husband / wife
- 6 _____ all your relatives including aunts, grandparents, etc.
- 7 _____ your grandparents' grandparents
- 8 _____ boys who have (for example) the same father as you but a different mother
- 9 _____ the new wife of your father
- 10 _____ people who are having a relationship

c Read the seven predictions again. In pairs or small groups, answer the questions for each prediction.

- 1 Is this already happening in your country?
- 2 Do you think it will happen in the future?
- 3 Do you think it will be a good thing or a bad thing?

Useful language

- I think so. I don't think so. Maybe. Perhaps.
- Probably. I'm sure it will.

2 GRAMMAR future forms

a **19** Listen to three dialogues between different family members. Who is talking to who (e.g. brother to sister)? What are they talking about?

b Listen again and match two sentences with each dialogue (1-3). Write 1, 2, or 3 in each box.

- A Shall I make you a cup of tea? C Are you going to go to university? E I'll be really careful.
 B You'll crash it again. D I'm staying at Mum's tonight. F It's going to be cold tonight.

c With a partner, decide which sentence(s) A-F refer(s) to...

- a plan or intention
 an arrangement
 a prediction
 a promise
 an offer

d **p.130 Grammar Bank 1C.** Read the rules and do the exercises.

e Move around the class, ask other students questions, and complete the table.

Find someone who...	name	more details
is seeing a relative this weekend.		
isn't having dinner with their family tonight.		
is getting married soon.		
is going out with their brother or sister on Saturday night.		
is going to have a new nephew or niece soon.		
is going to leave home in the near future.		
is going to have a big family reunion soon.		
isn't going to go on holiday with their family this year.		

3 READING

- a In a family with two children, do you think it's better to be the older or the younger brother or sister? Why?
- b You're going to read an article about two sisters, Wendy (the younger sister) and Carnie (the older sister). Before you read, predict the answers to the questions below. Write W (Wendy) or C (Carnie).

Who do you think...?

- 1 had a more eccentric hairstyle
 - 2 admired her sister
 - 3 didn't want to be with her sister
 - 4 followed her sister everywhere
 - 5 tried to compete with her sister
 - 6 wasn't a good student
 - 7 told her parents when her sister did something wrong
 - 8 used to hurt her sister physically
 - 9 was jealous of her sister
 - 10 always defended the other sister
- c Now read the article and check your answers.
- d Look at the **highlighted** words and phrases. In pairs, choose the right meaning, a or b.
- 1 a boring
b fashionable
 - 2 a children
b adults
 - 3 a age difference
b the time they weren't together
 - 4 a become friends again
b stop speaking
 - 5 a kiss
b hurt with your fingers
 - 6 a say bad things about
b say good things about
 - 7 a we got on very well
b we got on very badly
 - 8 a ask for help
b say that somebody is responsible for something bad
- e Do you think their relationship is typical of brothers and sisters?

We are family ...

Two sisters tell the truth about themselves – and each other...

Wendy Wilson and her older sister Carnie are the daughters of the Beach Boys founder, Brian Wilson. They formed the band Wilson Philips (with the daughter of Michelle Philips of The Mamas and Papas) and their first album was a worldwide hit. Today they are both married and live in Los Angeles. Here they talk about their relationship.



Wendy

Carnie

Wendy, the younger sister says:

I always thought Carnie was really ¹cool. Especially when she was a teenager and had bright red spiky hair. But, like most older sisters, she wasn't at all interested in her younger sister. I desperately wanted to be with her and her friends, and sometimes I used to follow them, but she hated that.

When we were ²kids we both had a lot of material things like toys and clothes, but even then we knew that Mom and Dad weren't happy. We used to talk about it all the time, and after a while they separated and we stayed with my Mom. We didn't see Dad for quite a few years, which really hurt us. But it's also the thing that brought me and Carnie closer together. When I was 16 or 17 the one and a half year ³age gap between us didn't matter any more, and we started to get on with each other and to write songs together.

Being in a band – or working at anything – with a member of your family can be difficult, but it also has advantages. If we have a big argument about a song, after a while we remember that we are sisters and we ⁴make it up. Nothing is going to stop us from being sisters.



Carnie, the older sister says:

I sometimes think that poor Wendy has spent all her life competing with me. She was a very quiet, shy child, while I was incredibly talkative and demanding – I was awful! I wasn't interested in studying, all I wanted to do was go to parties, and Wendy used to tell my parents. So I was horrible to her – I used to ⁵pinch her and bite her.

I was very jealous of Wendy also because she was more attractive than me. But she always defended me when other people ⁶criticized me, and sometimes it seemed as if she was the older sister and I was the younger one. Although we were complete opposites, ⁷we were also very close and had a lot of fun together. We still do.

I think I suffered a lot because of my father leaving us when we were small, but Wendy helped me to understand that Dad loved us too, but in a different way. She also taught me that you can't ⁸blame other people for your problems, you have to look at yourself.

HOW WORDS WORK...

Look at two sentences from the *We are family* text.

'We started to get on with **each other**.'

'You have to look at **yourself**.'

- Use *each other* when A does an action to B and B does the same action to A.
We love each other = I love you and you love me.
- Use a reflexive pronoun (*myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves*) when the subject of the verb is the same as the object.
I cut myself. She looked at herself in the mirror.
- You can also use a reflexive pronoun for emphasis.
Nobody helped me. I did it all myself.

Complete the sentences with *each other* or a reflexive pronoun.

- 1 After the argument they didn't speak to _____ for a week.
- 2 This light is automatic. It turns _____ on and off.
- 3 We built the house _____. It took three years.
- 4 We only see _____ once a month.
- 5 They argue a lot. They don't understand _____.
- 6 I blame _____ for the accident. It was my fault.

4 VOCABULARY personality

a Can you remember? What do you call a person who...?

- 1 talks a lot _____
- 2 doesn't talk very much _____
- 3 feels uncomfortable and nervous when he / she meets new people _____
- 4 thinks someone loves another person more than him / her _____

b p.146 Vocabulary Bank *Personality*.

c Write down the first three adjectives of personality that you can remember from the Vocabulary Bank. Don't show them to your partner. Your teacher will tell you what they say about you.

5 PRONUNCIATION prefixes and suffixes

a Underline the stressed syllable.

- 1 jealous ambitious generous
- 2 sociable reliable
- 3 responsible sensible
- 4 competitive talkative aggressive sensitive
- 5 unfriendly insecure impatient

b 1.10 Listen and check. Are *-ous / -able / -ible / -ive* stressed? Are *un- / in- / im-* stressed?

c Practise saying the adjectives.

6 LISTENING & SPEAKING



- a What's your position in the family? Are you the oldest child, a middle child, the youngest child, or an only child?
- b 1.11 Listen to a psychologist talking about the influence your position in the family has on your personality. Complete the chart by writing four more adjectives of personality in each column.

Oldest children	Middle children	Youngest children	Only children
<i>self-confident</i>	<i>independent</i>	<i>charming</i>	<i>spoilt</i>

- c Compare with a partner. Then listen to the four sections again and check your answers. Can you remember any more details?
- d Look at the completed chart above. In pairs, say
– if you think it is true for you – if not, why not.
– if you think it is true for your brothers and sisters or your friends.

7 1.12 SONG 🎵 *We are family*

Appendix D

New English File Unit 1B “Family Life” (2013)

G future forms: present continuous, *going to*, *will / won't*
V family, adjectives of personality
P sentence stress, word stress, adjective endings

Are you seeing your grandparents this weekend?
 No, I'm going to stay at home. I'll probably see them next weekend.

1B Family life

1 VOCABULARY & SPEAKING

family

- a Look at some photos showing family members. What's happening in each one? What do you think the relationship is between the people?
- b With a partner, explain the difference between each pair.
- 1 a father and a parent
 - 2 a mother and a stepmother
 - 3 a brother and a brother-in-law
 - 4 a grandfather and a great-grandfather
 - 5 a nephew and a niece
 - 6 a child and an only child
 - 7 your immediate family and your extended family
- c The BBC recently did a survey of 21st-century families in the UK. Read *Changing – for the better?* and try to guess what the missing percentages are. Choose from the list.

17% 26% 60% 75% 85%

- d (15) Listen and check. Do any of the statistics surprise you? Which ones do you think would be very different if the survey was carried out in your country?
- e Work in small groups. Say what you think and give reasons.

Do you think that...?

- families should have a meal together every day
- children should leave home as soon as they can afford to
- parents should charge their children rent if they live at home and have a job
- parents should be 'friends' with their children on social networking sites, e.g. *Facebook*
- elderly parents should live with their children when they are too old to live alone



Useful language:

Giving your opinion (2)

We often use *should + verb* to say what we think is the right thing or a good thing (to do), e.g.

*I think families **should have** dinner together every day because...*

*I don't think parents **should be** friends with their children on Facebook because...*



Changing – for the better?

Family life is changing in the UK – but not in the way we might think. When the BBC did a survey of families in Britain, they expected to find that family relationships were suffering because of the decline in traditional family structures.

However, some of the results were quite surprising...

58%
of men

and

39%
of women

aged 20–24 still live at home with their parents.

1 _____

think that it is right for parents to charge rent to children over 25 who have a job and are living at home.

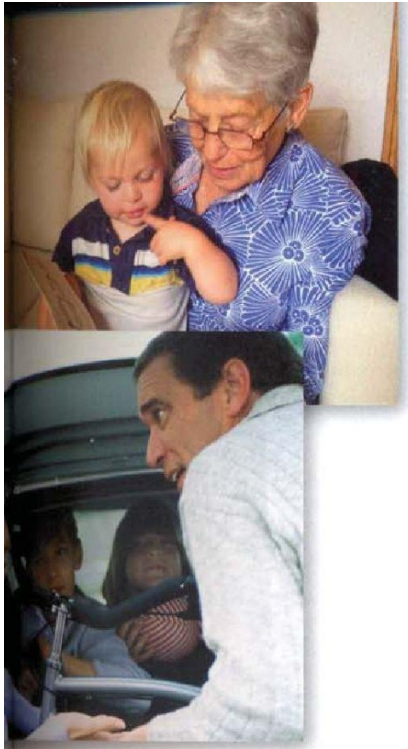
30%

use the internet at least once a week to contact their families.

On average, adults live

130

kilometres from their parents.



95%
of people

say that they have a close family.

2
of people

have a meal with their immediate family every day.

3

say that their families never argue.

4

have family members who they don't speak to any more.

5

think that families should look after grandparents.

75%

of people are happiest with their families.

17%

are happiest with friends.

2 GRAMMAR future forms

- a (116)) Listen to three dialogues between different family members. Who is talking to who (e.g. brother to sister)? What are they talking about?
- b Listen again and match two sentences with each dialogue (1–3).
- A Shall I make you a cup of tea? D I'm staying the night there.
 B You'll drive too fast. E I'll drive really slowly.
 C I'm not going to go to university yet. F It's going to be cold tonight.
- c With a partner, decide which sentence (A–F) is...
- a plan or intention a prediction an offer
 an arrangement a promise
- d ➤ p.133 Grammar Bank 1B. Learn more about future forms and practise them.

3 PRONUNCIATION sentence stress



Sentence stress

An important aspect of speaking English is stressing the words in a sentence which carry the information, and not stressing the other ones. This will help you to communicate better and to speak with good rhythm.

- a (121)) Listen to the rhythm in these three dialogues.

- 1 A Are you **coming home** for **dinner tonight**?
 B **No**. I'm **going out** with my **friends**.
- 2 A **What** are you **going to do** in the **summer**?
 B We're **going to rent** a **house** with my **sister** and her **husband**.
- 3 A Do you **think** they'll **have children soon**?
 B I **don't think** so. **Not** for a **few years** anyway.

- b Practise them with a partner. Copy the rhythm.
- c Ask and answer the questions below. Give as much information as possible.

ARE YOU...?

- having dinner with your family tonight
- or is anyone in your family getting married soon
- doing something with a family member this week
- visiting a relative this weekend

ARE YOU GOING TO...?

- have a new nephew or niece soon
- have a big family get-together soon
- go on holiday with your family this year
- buy a present for a member of your family this month

DO YOU THINK...?

- the number of people getting divorced will go up or down in the future
- the birth rate will go up or down in your country
- anyone in your family will live to be 90 or more
- you will move away from (or back to) the area where your family live

4 (122)) SONG *Our House* 🎵



1B

9

5 READING

- a Which do you think has more advantages, being an only child, or having brothers and sisters? Why?
- b Work in pairs. A read *The younger brother*, B read *The only child*.
- c Tell your partner about 1 and 2 below. Whose childhood sounds happier?
- other family members who are mentioned
 - how the writer's experience as a child affects him / her now

- d Look at the **highlighted** words in the two texts. Try to work out their meaning from the context. Then match them with definitions 1–12.

- _____ *adj* ill
- _____ it's no surprise that
- _____ *noun* competition between two people
- _____ *noun* the time when you were a child
- _____ *noun* a meeting of people, e.g. family
- _____ *noun* people who are fully grown
- _____ *adj* knowing about or being conscious of sth
- _____ *noun* a school where children can live during the year
- _____ *verb* think that sb or sth is important
- _____ *verb* divided sth between two or more people
- _____ *verb* try to hurt sb else
- _____ *noun* a group of friends

each other

When brothers and sisters get older they value **each other** more.

Use **each other** to talk about an action between two people or groups of people, e.g. *I don't get on very well with my dad – we don't understand **each other**.*

- e Talk to a partner. Do you have brothers and sisters, or are you an only child? Do you feel positive or negative about it?

Younger brother or only child?

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

THE YOUNGER BROTHER NOVELIST TIM LOTT

Rivalry between brothers is normal, but there was a special reason for the tension between us. I was very ill when I was born, and spent three months in hospital with my mother. My brother did not see her at all during that time, as he went to stay with an aunt. When our mother returned home, it was with a **sick** newborn baby who took all the attention. **No wonder** he hated me (although if you ask Jeff, he will say that he didn't – we remember things differently).

My brother and I were completely different. We **shared** the same bedroom, but he was tidy, and I was really untidy. He was responsible, I was rebellious. He was sensible, I was emotional. I haven't got any positive memories of our **childhood** together, though there must have been good moments. Jeff says we used to play Cowboys and Indians but I only remember him trying to suffocate me under the bedcovers.

My relationship with Jeff has influenced my attitude towards my own four daughters. If the girls **fight**, I always think that the younger child is innocent. But the good news about brothers and sisters is that when they get older, they **value** each other more. Jeff is now one of my best friends, and I like and admire him greatly. For better or for worse, we share a whole history. It is the longest relationship in my life.



THE ONLY CHILD JOURNALIST SARAH LEE

I went to **boarding school** when I was seven, and the hardest thing I found was making friends. Because I was an only child, I just didn't know how to do it. The thing is that when you're an only child you spend a lot of your time with **adults** and you're often the only child in **a gathering** of adults. Your parents go on living more or less the way they have always lived, only now you are there too.

I found being an only child interesting because it gave me a view of the world of adults that children in a big family might not get. And I know it has, at least partly, made me the kind of person I am – I never like being one of a group, for example. If I have to be in a group, I will always try to go off and do something on my own, or be with just one other person – I'm not comfortable with being one of **a gang**.

My parents are divorced now and my mother lives in the US and my father in the UK. I feel very responsible for them – I feel responsible for their happiness. I'm the closest relative in the world to each of them, and I am very **aware of** that.

Adapted from a British newspaper



6 VOCABULARY

adjectives of personality

- a Without looking back at *The younger brother* text, can you remember who was *tidy, responsible, and sensible* and who was *untidy, rebellious, and emotional*? Do you know what the adjectives mean? Would you use any of them to describe yourself?
- b ► p.153 Vocabulary Bank *Personality*.
- c Write down the first three adjectives of personality that come into your head. Don't show them to your partner. Now go to ► Communication *Personality* p.108.

7 PRONUNCIATION

word stress, adjective endings

- a (126) Underline the stressed syllable in these multi-syllable adjectives. Listen and check.

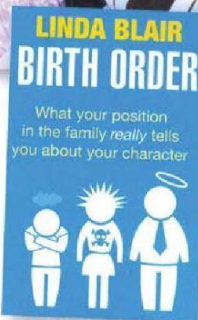
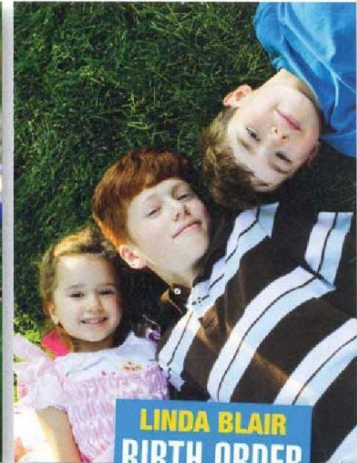
- 1 jea|lous an|xious am|bitious
ge|nerous re|bellious
- 2 so|cia|ble re|li|a|ble
- 3 re|spon|si|ble sen|si|ble
- 4 com|pe|ti|tive tal|ka|tive
ag|gre|ssive sen|si|tive
- 5 un|fri|end|ly in|se|cure
im|pa|tient il|ma|ture

- b Listen again and answer the questions.

- 1 Is *-ous* pronounced /aus/ or /əs/?
- 2 Is *-able* pronounced /əbl/ or /eɪbl/?
- 3 Is *-ible* pronounced /əbl/ or /ɪbl/?
- 4 Is *-ive* pronounced /əv/ or /ɪv/?
- 5 Are *-ous* / *-able* / *-ible* / *-ive* stressed?
- 6 Are *un-* / *in-* / *im-* stressed?



8 LISTENING & SPEAKING



- a What's your position in the family? Are you the oldest child, a middle child, the youngest child, or an only child?
- b (127) Look at the cover of Linda Blair's book. Now listen to a journalist talking about it on a radio programme. Complete the chart by writing four more adjectives of personality in each column.

Oldest children	Middle children	Youngest children	Only children
sensible	relaxed	outgoing	self-confident

- c Compare with a partner. Then listen to the four sections one by one. Check your answers. What reasons or examples does the journalist give?
- d Look at the completed chart above. In pairs, say...

...if you think it is true for **you** – and if not, why not?

...if you think it is true for **other people** you know
(your brothers and sisters, friends, etc.)

9 WRITING

- p.113 Writing *A description of a person*. Write a description of a friend you know well.

Appendix E

New English File Unit 1B “Modern Families” (2018)

1B

Modern families

Are you seeing your grandparents this weekend?

No, but I'll probably see them next week.

G future forms: present continuous, be going to, will / won't
V family, adjectives of personality
P sentence stress, word stress

1 VOCABULARY & SPEAKING family

a Talk to a partner. What's the difference between...?

- 1 a father and a parent
- 2 a mother and a stepmother
- 3 a brother and a brother-in-law
- 4 a stepsister and a half-sister
- 5 a grandfather and a great-grandfather
- 6 an adopted child and an only child
- 7 brothers and sisters and siblings
- 8 your immediate family and your extended family

b Read the article about modern British family life. In pairs, try to complete the gaps with the numbers from the list.

2 10% 14% 17% 30 32 40% 45%

c 1.14 Listen and check. Are there any statistics in the article which you think would be very different in your country? Why?

d Read the questions and think about your answers. Then ask and answer in pairs or small groups.

Do you have a big family? Who do you live with? How often do you...?

- have a meal with your family
- go out for a meal or to the cinema, etc. with a family member
- see your extended family

Do you spend more of your free time with family or friends? Why?

Are there any members of your family who you have very little contact with? Why?

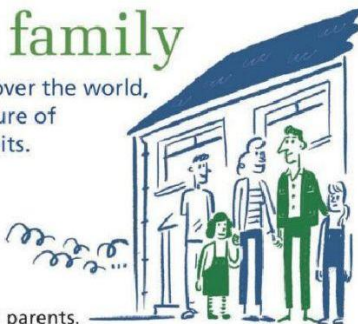
What do you and your family mainly argue about? Do you ever argue about phones or tablets?

Politely refusing to talk about something
Occasionally, you may be asked a question that you feel uncomfortable answering. Respond politely with *I'm sorry, I'd rather not talk about that.*

The modern family

Family life is changing all over the world, and it's not just the structure of the family, but also its habits.

A recent survey of British family life showed some surprising statistics.



Family structure

60% of families have married parents.



22% are single-parent families. Only ¹ _____ of the single parents are men.



² _____ of families have **one** child, ³ _____ have **two**, and **15%** have three or more.

11% of families have stepchildren.

On average **women** get married at ⁴ _____, and **men** at ⁵ _____.



Family habits

20% of families only eat together once or twice a week, and ⁶ _____ never eat at the same time.



They visit friends or extended family **twice** a month.

⁷ _____ of people have family members who they **never speak to** or contact.



75% of people are happiest with their families, and **17%** with their friends.

The average family has ⁸ _____ **rows** each day, and the most common cause is children or teenagers refusing to put down their phones or tablets.



2 GRAMMAR future forms

- a **1.15** Listen to three conversations between different family members. Match them to cartoons A–C. What are the people talking about?



- b Listen again and complete two sentences from each conversation.
- a I'm not _____ to university.
b _____ you a cup of tea?
 - c I _____ the night there.
d It _____ cold tonight.
 - e You _____ too fast.
f I _____ really careful.
- c With a partner, decide which sentence (a–f) is...
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a plan or intention | <input type="checkbox"/> an arrangement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a prediction | <input type="checkbox"/> a promise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an offer | |
- d **1.133 Grammar Bank 1B**

3 PRONUNCIATION & SPEAKING

sentence stress

1.19 Sentence stress

In spoken English, we stress the 'content' words – the words in a sentence which carry the information. We don't stress the other words. Being aware of this will help you to speak with a natural rhythm and understand spoken English better.

- a **1.20** Read the sentence. Do you think the pink words are stressed or unstressed? Listen and check.

I'm going to look for a job.

- b **1.21** Listen to four more sentences. Write the stressed words in the pink boxes.

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- c Look at the stressed words and try to remember the unstressed words. Then listen again to check and write them in.
- d Listen again and repeat the sentences. Copy the rhythm.
- e Ask and answer the questions with a partner. Try to get the correct rhythm.

Is anyone in your family...?

- getting married in the near future
- travelling abroad this month
- having a baby this year
- celebrating their birthday soon

Are you going to...?

- do something with a family member this week
- have a big family get-together soon
- go on holiday with your family this year
- visit a relative this weekend

Do you think...?

- more couples will have just one child in the future
- more young adults will live with their parents in the future
- anyone in your family will live to be 90 or older
- you'll move away from (or back to) the area where your family live



4 VOCABULARY adjectives of personality

- a Complete the opposite adjectives in sentences 1–5.

Opposites attract



- 1 She's extroverted, but he's sh .
- 2 She's generous, but he's m .
- 3 She's hard-working, but he's l .
- 4 She's talkative, but he's q .
- 5 She's funny, but he's se .

- b **V** p.153 Vocabulary Bank Personality

5 PRONUNCIATION word stress

- a Underline the stressed syllable in the multi-syllable adjectives.

- 1 an|xious am|bi|tious ge|ne|rous
re|be|llious
- 2 so|cia|ble re|li|a|ble
- 3 re|spon|sible sen|si|ble
- 4 com|pe|ti|tive tal|ka|tive sen|si|tive
- 5 un|fri|endly in|se|cure im|pa|tient
im|ma|ture

- b **1.24** Listen and check. Then listen again and repeat. Are prefixes (e.g. *un-*, *in-*) and suffixes (e.g. *-ous*, *-ble*, *-tive*) stressed?

6 READING

- a What's your position in your family? Are you the oldest child, a middle child, the youngest child, or an only child?
- b Look at four groups of adjectives. Which group do you think goes with each position in the family (e.g. the oldest)?
- 1 outgoing, charming, and disorganized
 - 2 responsible, ambitious, and anxious
 - 3 self-confident, independent, and spoilt
 - 4 sociable, sensitive, and unambitious
- c Read the article and check your answers.



How birth order influences your personality

Nowadays, it is an accepted fact that our position in the family – that is, whether we're an oldest child, a middle child, a youngest child, or an only child – is possibly the strongest influence there is on our character and personality. So what influence does it have?

The oldest child

Firstborn children often have to look after their younger brothers and sisters, so they're usually sensible and responsible as adults. They also tend to be ambitious and they make good leaders. On the negative side, oldest children can be insecure and anxious. This is because ¹ H.

The middle child

Middle children are more relaxed than the oldest children, probably because ² . They're usually very sociable – the kind of people who get on with everybody. They are also usually sensitive to what other people need, because ³ . For the same reason, they're often quite good at sorting out arguments, and they're always sympathetic to the ones on the losing side, or in general, to people who are having problems. On the other hand, middle children can sometimes be unambitious, and they can lack direction in life.

The youngest child

Youngest children are often very outgoing and charming. This is the way they try to get the attention of both their parents and their older brothers and sisters. They are often more rebellious, and this is probably because ⁴ . They can also be immature and disorganized, and they often depend too much on other people, because ⁵ .

The only child

Only children usually do very well at school, because they have a lot of contact with adults. They get a lot of love and attention from their parents, so they're typically self-confident. They're also independent, as they spend so much time by themselves. And because ⁶ , they're often very organized. Only children can sometimes be spoilt, because ⁷ by their parents. They can also be quite selfish and get impatient, especially when things go wrong. This is because ⁸ .

Appendix F

How Birth Order Affects People's Personalities

Transcript

T1.9

- I** So, Jessica, could you tell us about other things that affect our personality?
- J** Yes, well of course your position in the family isn't the only thing that counts. It also depends on your sex and the sex of the other children in the family. For example, if you're a first child and you're a girl you will be more jealous if the second child is a boy, and vice versa. This is partly because mothers tend to show more interest in the second child if they're a different sex from the first.
- If you're a girl in the middle of three girls, you will probably rebel against feminine things and want to wear jeans and play football. On the other hand, if you're a girl in the middle of boys you'll probably do exactly the opposite and like dolls and pretty dresses.
- The parent you spend most time with or who you have the closest relationship with will also have an influence on your personality. Girls who have a lot of attention from their fathers in the early years are usually more extrovert and confident. A good example of this is the ex-prime minister of Britain, Margaret Thatcher. And boys who spend most of their time with their mothers, maybe because their parents are separated, are often better at communicating and more sociable than boys who spend most of their time with their fathers.