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Forging new pathways for research on language learning motivation

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Abstract

Research on motivation in the field of applied linguistics seeks to better understand how and why learners become involved in learning activities and maintain their efforts in this regard. Dörnyei provided a seminal model drawing essentially from cognitive and social psychology (Dörnyei, 2001). In the wake of his reflection, and after investigating motivation in a range of academic contexts, we are now able to present our own model, which is dynamic, weighted, and polytomic (Raby, 2007). After presenting cognitive ergonomics as a new pathway for research in second language acquisition, we shall present the results of our investigations in foreign language learning motivation in technologically enhanced contexts, outlining major methodological difficulties pertaining to this sort of this grounded research.

Keywords

Motivation, cognitive and social psychology, instructional design, cognitive ergonomics, epistemology and methodologies, triangulation.

Introduction

The question of ICT's motivational impact has paradoxically seldom been tested or investigated (Raby, 2009). The reason is that most writers on CALL impact tend to acknowledge their motivational function as something so evident that it doesn't really require in depth analysis. Considering this need for more research-based evidence, we have been conducting a series of empirical research, from 2001 to 2009, with a view to identifying the motivational impact of technology in academic settings-French schools and universities, taking into account different European languages. The aim of this paper is to present this interdisciplinary work, carried out in the University of Grenoble (the two research laboratories which have housed these programs were the educational science laboratory and the LIDILEM: laboratory of linguistics and first and second language didactics) by an ergonomic research team whose final aim was to analyze the impact of technologies on teachers' and learners' activities. The team consisted of two educational scientists, two cognitive psychologists; one

statistician specialized in statistics for education, one social psychologist and one CALL specialist (several PHD were achieved and master dissertations. The work started in the educational sciences laboratory of Grenoble and is now continued in the LIDILEM still in Grenoble). In the wake of this collective work, the author of this paper has been able to build up an ergonomic motivational construct dynamic, polytomic and weighted. The focus of this paper is centered on methodological and conceptual issues that are to say on the elaboration of a motivational construct suited to CALL activities and not only on research findings. For this reason, the author has sometimes felt it necessary to resort to the first pronoun when she was expressing her own point of view, construction, method or findings and not a collective or general neutral standpoint.

The first part of this paper will briefly introduce main concepts of cognitive ergonomics in relation with the question of motivation in CALL contexts. The second part will present the ergonomic research procedure which we have progressively elaborated to carry out our empirical investigations and which falls in the new paradigm of triangular and blended methodologies (Dörnyei, 2008). In the third part we shall describe the evolution of our motivational CALL construct which was, to begin with, dynamic, process and task oriented and gradually became also polytomic and weighted. In conclusion, we shall reexamine this construct in the light of the recent developments of the ideal self-theories of motivation.

The Cognitive Ergonomic Approach: an overview

Ergonomics comes from the Greek *ergon* (work) and *nomos* (law, rules). Ergonomics seeks to establish the rules that govern people's activities while at work. Everywhere, in firms, factories, services, and in the educational world too, machines are becoming more and more sophisticated. Ergonomics is a unifying methodology which seeks to describe and interpret human and machine interactions (Cornfield & Randon, 2001) in work situations.

Ergonomics studies operators in their workplaces, which means that they study their operative activity (Thorne, 2009a, 2009b) in a technological world. There are two main schools in ergonomics: the American and the European. Although they may seem contradictory in their approach, they are, in fact, complementary.

The user-centred cognitive approach

Cognitive ergonomics is a hybrid discipline. It is not so much a science or an academic field as a methodology to carry out research about actual work

situations. Cognitive and ergonomic psychology constitute the core theories, since the question at stake is what research can contribute to the elaboration of work situations/work places, training situations which will help the agents to develop and implement appropriate work knowledge, skills, competences (Rasmussen, 1993). Depending on the task domain (in our case L2 learning) and the workplace which are investigated (in our case self-access rooms) and on the research questions (in our case strategies and rules of usage), all sorts of specialists may be called up to participate in the research team -engineers of course, but also linguists, doctors, lawyers, sociologists and social psychologists, there is no limitation to the variety of participants. The ergonomic approach makes it possible to integrate different theories and points of view as will be shown later about CALL motivation.

The user-centred cognitive educational ergonomics which we have elaborated during the past 15 years belongs to this research paradigm. Our goal has been to analyze and model the operators/agents activity in CALL actual academic settings, specific and real work situations.

Theoretical foundations

Mediated activities

In most ergonomic surveys carried out by the French school, the study of work environments is grounded on the theories of mediated activities (Leontiev's activity theory, 1988; Vygotsky's theory of the instrument, 1986; Piaget's genetic psychology, 1963.1965, Anderson, 2001). From these theories we receive the notion that we learn and change due to our interactions with our environments, in other words, that knowledge is socially and culturally embedded (Bandura, 1997, 2002; Rabardel, 1995a; Vygotsky, 1978, Elin, 2005). Vygotsky's (1988) and Rabardel's (1995a, 1995b) These theories claim that in any training environment the subjects' cognitive systems are never directly "connected" to the target domain and that the use of instruments during the working process generates a mediating process which affects the very content of the language which is being acquired (Bruillard, 1998; Chapelle et al, 2003, Levy,). Their theory of the instrument encompasses material objects, artefacts, tools and instruments and seeks to explain how the appropriation of learning instruments brings into play collective schemes of usage within specific environments. Schemes express the biological capacity of any subject to assimilate new objects and new situations. A scheme is both a biological structure and an active organization of our experience that integrates the past

and that evolves as it becomes adapted to new situations. When moving from the traditional language class to the self-access room or from class interactions to online interactions, learners build up new learning schemes. Because schemes are biological structures, they cannot be approached directly; the researcher has to hypothesize their presence indirectly.

The process through which teachers and learners (agents) turn artefacts (material objects) into instruments (that is to say a teaching or learning system) has been called instrumental genesis by Rabardel (1995). It is this process that we have tried to identify in self access L2 learning. In this process, cognitive factors play a major part but, as will be shown later in these paper, motivational, affective, cognitive factors are equally of paramount importance. We have sought to build up a construct which would encompass these different factors.

The user centered ergonomic method

First, it should be clear that there is nothing original about the data extracted and processed in educational ergonomics, since all researchers who desire to carry out an empirical research on CALL will either observe, or interview, or look at productions and interactions (Chapelle, 2000). Yet, the method that we use has specific traits:

- We start with descriptive constructs, what people do, not what they think or feel, which comes later since we believe that the only data we have a direct relation to are behaviours;
- We then, build up inferential interpretative models to tentatively make sense of what the agents are doing (or not doing, by the way).
- We take into account non-linguistic variables especially the physical, social and psychological ones.
- We try to work as much as possible on rather long periods, which mean a minimum period of 6 to 8 months, more if possible to confirm and stabilize our findings.
- We try to establish the local validity of our results. By local validity we mean that quantitative results should be controlled using statistical tests which are suited to small scale measurements (Peers,) and that qualitative procedures should be rigorously conducted. (Dornyei, 2008).
- As often as possible we associate qualitative and quantitative studies since we believe that they are complementary: performance and process are of interest.

- Finally, we use a triangular or blended methodology to solidify or improve our findings and to overcome the weakness that comes from single method, single-observer, single-theory studies. (Jacob, 1990; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Wiggins, 1998). In the social sciences this method is often referred to under the label of triangulation.

1) *Behavioural data*

We usually start with behaviours recorded either thanks to human observers or, better nowadays, to video recording. They give us a first set of results in the form of patterns of behaviours. All investigations started with an observation of physical behaviours. Here are the different kinds of behaviours that we had selected to observe students working autonomously (Raby, Baillé, Bressoux & Chapelle, 2003).

Media selection	Instrumental behaviours	Work duration in min
Computer Video Didactic printed documents Newspapers	Preliminary inquiry Makes pauses Takes notes Communicates with peers Seeks for content help Seeks for material help Uses a dictionary	W1= less than 5 W2 = between 5 and 10 W3=between 10 and 20 W4=more than 20

Table 1: Instrumental behaviours displayed while using educational technologies

We, then, process the grids into descriptive statistics:

Occurrences of media selection in	Students in guided autonomy	Students working on their own	TOTAL
Computer	33	23	56
Video	28	36	64
Audio	11	5	16
Printed documents			

Table 2: Descriptive statistical analysis

We may also process the grids into navigation charts which enable us to identify the selection of media and the student's instrumental behaviours in a dynamic way. Navigation charts allow us to represent in a single graph rhythmical and temporal data. These variables are very important if we want to analyze the different ways in which students regulate their task. These charts are

analyzed in two ways: variability among and inside learners and task/activity discrepancies. It is, in fact, the study of those charts that convinced me, in the first place, of the interest of the concept of task redefinition and motivation. Students who were externally motivated by passing the Cambridge First Certificate behaved according to a specific pattern, those who were working their English for its own sake (i.e. mainly watching videos) followed another pattern and those who were pursuing both goals followed a third pattern.

2) *Traces of the subjects' activity*

Notes

They consist of the linguistic studies of the traces left by the students in the form of note-taking, drafts, or screen captures or verbal productions. Screen captures, for instance, make it possible to retrieve the different screen pages accessed by a student while working on the computer and this contributes to a better understanding of how students have regulated their task (Raby and Penilla, 2008).

Performances

The second sort of behavioural data consists of the written and oral productions of the learners: essays, exercises, dialogues, web pages, oral interactions, etc. They are a visible concrete "expression" of the language capacity of the learners and they can be analyzed from different viewpoints (discourse analysis, interlanguage, language comprehension, cognitive difficulties or linguistic difficulties, for instance). However, the great bulk of recent studies in work analysis converge in saying that the way in which subjects redefine their task all along the working process weighs a lot on the mental processes in progress (Almaberti, 1991; Chambers and Davies, 2001; Levy, 1997; Chapelle, 2001). Therefore, we need to build up a third sort of data pertaining to the subjects' motivational and affective factors.

3) *Mental data*

To extract what the agents' mental representation of their work before, during and after activity, we resort either to questionnaires, such as the ones broadly used to study language learning strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) or motivation (Dornyei, 2000; 2001). They give us a preliminary view of the issue at stake and put us on the track of relevant further investigations. Usually, this leads us to carry out interviews in order to probe into one question in detail and to allow implicit ideas or feelings to emerge. We use questionnaires to extract two different kinds of information: one the one hand we try to know how students or

teachers have redefined their task; on the other hand we try to know how they feel about the achieved task. In the first case we use pro-active questionnaires which are passed just after students have received instructions and just before they set out to work. Questions roughly take this sort of form:

- What do you have to do or are you going to do know?
- What instruments can you use to do this task?
- What constraints do you have? (length of your production and time available)

Then, we use retro-active/post-actional questionnaires to see how students evaluate their tasks. They are given right after task completion. We analyze them in the light of attribution theory (Weiner, 1980). Attribution theory assumes that all individuals use a number of ascriptions to explain what has happened to them and to interpret past events ("I failed because I did not read the instructions carefully") and to predict the results of achievement-related events ("Therefore, next time I will be more careful and I will succeed").

Yet, generally speaking, questionnaires yield a rather limited view of what teachers or students actually think and feel about their work. For this reason, we also use interviews or journals which we analyze in the framework of content and discourse analysis. Recently we have started using an approach based on the combination of two theories: discourse analysis and social cognitive psychology (Ghiglione et al, 1998). These researchers have developed a computer application: Tropes, which carries out an automated analysis of discourses (For more information, see Acetic's home page). Thanks to *Tropes*, we are able to extract implicit messages that would have escaped us if we had analyzed interviews or journals in an *ad hoc* manner; besides, it allows systematic comparisons of different discourses.

On the upper right box, the text that is being analyzed has been broken down into sentences. The words in red correspond to the linguistic categories examined in the left box. The menu, in the upper left box describes the different categories which can be analyzed (semantic and syntactic). The graph in the lower box, on the right, represents the proximities between two linguistic categories in the passage that is being analyzed and which can be seen above.

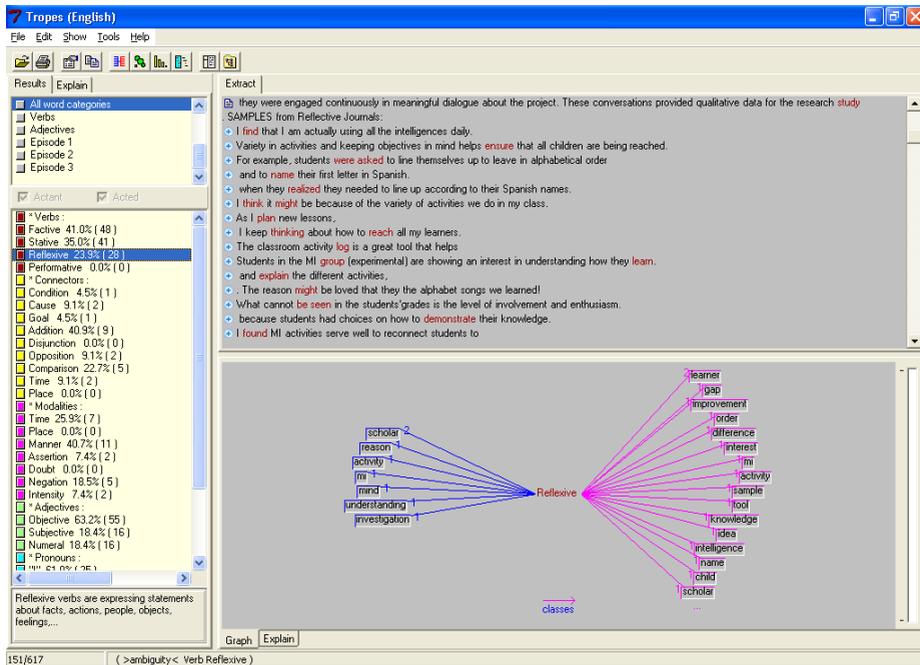
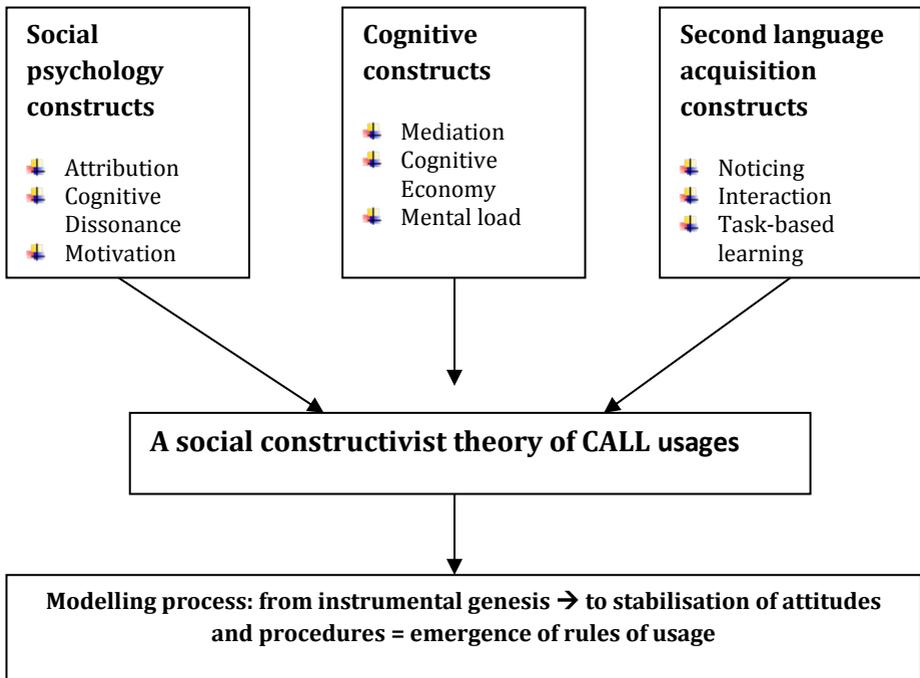


Figure 1: Tropes interface, a semantic and syntactic process

4) Data confrontation

Assuming researchers have been able to gather the different data mentioned required by the triangular method, they might find themselves faced with two difficulties. The first one lies in the very different nature of the data: you can't add behaviours to representations any more than you can add feathers to lead; the second difficulty lies in the fact that often the different data do not corroborate (and sometimes clearly contradict) one another (Maxwell, 1996). In one survey, we had interviewed learners just after the realization of their communicative task (a chat on the web); as it happened, some learners were quite happy with their work although they had hardly engaged in a real communication in the foreign language; while others were very critical of their productions whereas they had, in fact, done quite well from the teacher's point of view, considering the task difficulty. In such situations the difficulty is solved

thanks to a theory which makes sense of the contradiction. Often, several theories are needed because learning or teaching seen not only as achievements or performances but also as a psychological and social processes, call for a superior comprehensive social constructivist construct:



On the way to motivation

Generally speaking our investigations were focused on the cognitive mechanisms at work in autonomous language learning and carried out in different language centres or schools. Most of the time the research took place in the self-access room but we also often observed the same agents (teachers, tutors or learners) in traditional settings and in the self-access room. Progressively, as we were discovering how often the students' or the teachers' activity diverged from the designers' expectations, we found that cognitive explanations were not sufficient to account for these discrepancies or to explain the agents' strategies or

rules of usage. Original beliefs, creeds, idiosyncratic representations, heuristic procedures emerged from our observations and formed a motley, heterogeneous picture of the self-access rooms as learning systems or arrangements (devices). It was not that this picture did not make sense but rather that actual users displayed a variety of rationalities which depended on their past experience, their goals and their competences (knowledge and skills). Gradually, we became convinced that the best possible accounts of language memorization, language comprehension or language production offered by cognitivists or CALL specialists would not work if a teacher or a learner was unwilling to work or ceased to work. Motivation thus became to emerge as an essential element of the language learning or teaching process not just a side issue reserved to social psychologists or socio-linguists (Van Lier, 2007; Norton, 1995).

The Dynamic Polytopic Weighted Construct

Cognitive and affective traits interact in the creation of a CALL work arrangement

Six language teachers, teaching five different languages, were observed during twenty months in two work situations: a traditional language class versus a tutored language class in the self-access room. They were supposed to deliver the same course since they had collaboratively conceived it: a remedial course for intermediate learners in the traditional situation; a tutored course, named “guided autonomy” for the CALL course.

Since those teachers had been trained to teach in the traditional way and the tutored way was the new pattern, traditional teaching strategies were considered as the norm to which new strategies could be compared.

The comparison of the two situations bore on three main variables: the time variable (how much time was devoted to a given activity) the interaction variable (what form of interaction with the pupils had taken place) and finally the media variable (what sort of media did they use while teaching). In the light of Piaget’s genetic theory, two cognitive schemes of usage (assimilation+accommodation) emerged from the findings, to which we have added another stage derived from the motivational analysis of the interviews: the *refusal* scheme.

Following the ergonomic methodology, we have confronted each teacher to the findings and asked them to try and explain the various strategies they used, particularly how and why they used any given medium, if any. Then, we interviewed them about they saw their role in that language centre, whether they liked it, what improvements they would make, what worried them, etc.

Three patterns emerged which did not exactly match up with the cognitive patterns. The accommodating/motivated teacher was also enthusiastic and internally driven. He seemed to derive a lot of self-esteem from the fact that he was able to assist the students and not pilot their work. On the other hand, the assimilating/mixed feelings teachers showed a blended motivational profile. On one side, their *ought to be* professional selves were strong: to become innovators, to become more and more experts in their use of the technology, to imagine a pedagogy better curtailed to each students' profile and to lead them on the path of autonomy. Yet, on the side, they were reluctant to adopt the role of tutors because their *ought to be* selves somewhat contradicted *their ideal professional* selves (Maher, 1986; Julkunen, 2001). The first reason was that the technology induced a loss of control over the learners' action. They expressed the feeling that the computers somehow created as a sort of physical and mental barrier between them and their students preventing direct interaction. The second reason was that the tutor role meant a change in their professional identity which they had not been prepared for. They had been trained as language teachers, the very embodiments of language knowledge and correction and cultural enrichment. Turning into tutor meant a change of the goals to be pursued since the autonomous form of work and the mastery of the technology occupied a large place in their interactions with the students, greater than the foreign language itself.

More interestingly the assimilating/refusal teacher who completely ignored the learning system was also clearly internally driven, which proves that internality is not a guarantee of a strong motivation in **any** learning environment.

The symbolic value of technology and its motivational impact during goal setting and task transposition

A serendipitous trip to the world of demotivation

It is not often that researchers dealing with task motivation make demotivation the object of their research. The problem is precisely that once participants have dropped out it is difficult to get in touch with them to interview them about their reasons for dropping out or reluctance to continue with the project.

The Tell Me More project (Raby, 2004) offered me a serendipitous trip into the world of demotivation. That sojourn has deeply marked my reflections on motivation since for some participants the experience ended in a complete breakdown. As a matter of fact, the project involved two sorts of learners: teacher training students and members of staff of the teacher training colleges.

The latter were working either in the *accountancy* department or in the *personnel* department and it is with those participants that the project utterly failed. With the passing of time, I am now convinced that the final reason for that failure was the fact that the different actors in that project, namely the management of the college, the research team and the employees, were not pursuing the same goal.

A six month self-assisted language learning project was built up involving: Tutor-assisted language learning with TMM in the self-access room, self-assisted work at home and distance-based assistance by mail with each tutor being in charge of 8 employees and the use of the beta version of the network TMM programme.

Motivation in CALL contexts is dynamic, unstable and fragile

Motivation was high before and at the start of the project. At the beginning, employees had to wait because the engineers had not finished installing the tutoring functions. We knew that such a delay could undermine the employees' motivation, so the firm agreed to provide them with a normal version of the program which they could freely use at home. They were quite happy with this although they found it quite hard to manage on their own.

Later, the tutorial version was installed and they were able to correspond with their tutors by mail.

After 2 weeks, one member of the personnel department asked me if the network version could be installed in the department's offices. The reasons were that the time slots available when they could go to the self-access room were not convenient, and although they had too little time to work on their project at home, they could work in their office at lunch time instead of lunching at the canteen.

I asked AURALOG if it was possible and they equipped all the offices of the personnel department with TELL ME MORE.

A few days later, I was asked to go and see the head of the college on account that there was an urgent problem to be solved. He explained that he had recently received a letter from the college staff union and had had a discussion with the leader of the Union. There was a big problem with the TMM project.

The problem was as follows: it had been impossible to equip the accountancy department with the software (a fact that I was unaware of) and the Union letter denounced the project in general, and me specifically, for not treating employees fairly, favouring some of them at the expense of others.

The symbolic value of technology: it participates in forming an “ideal-professional self”

The head of the college soon organised a meeting during which the engineer explained to the employees that the beta version of TMM could work with PCs (installed in the personnel department) and not with Macs (installed in the accountancy department) and that was the only reason why accountants had not been offered it.

In the end, it was decided to uninstall the network version in the personnel department in order to fend off denunciations over the inequity of treatment. However, employees from both departments started deserting the self-access room. The accountancy staff claimed they had too much work preparing the budget to carry on with the course; the personnel staff claimed that it was great when they could work at lunch time, but now without the program in their office, it was not convenient at all. The project ended up a total failure. The interviews we conducted with a few “drop-outs” confirmed the idea that processes taking place in work situations are deeply rooted in socio-cultural influences (Dörnyei, 2009; Norton, 1995). In these valued-loaded environments the technology takes on a specific, symbolic value. In the case of our experiment, interviews showed that the actual drive triggered by the technology was not related to its primary, basic function of cognitive mediation but to a value function linked to theories of the selves: *self-image, self-confidence, self-esteem*, and above all, *future, ideal, selves*. There exists a *professional idealized self*, embedded in the general personal *ideal self*, defined by Marcus (1986), Higgins (1987) and Higgins & al. (1985). It is very much related to the way in which an employee perceives himself or herself as a member of an institution in general and perhaps even more, within this institution, as a member of a department, a faculty, a school, a team, etc. This self-representation commands the social cognitive act of future planning. In the TMM experience, by learning how to use the software employees were bound to become computer literate and foreign language literate. Since in most firms or institutions, such opportunities are usually offered to the managerial staff not the English Executive Senior Management project was likely to satisfy an ideal future self in a way that no-one had imagined might become a reality. This was perhaps the gist of the project, rather than the goal of mastering a foreign language. When they found out that it did not seem so important to the managerial staff that some employees should do without the technology, their self-esteem was undermined. As a consequence, suddenly a second rank

motivational factor – “equipment in the office” – became a first rank factor – “without the equipment in the office, we can’t work” – of symbolic nature.

During the discussions a significant misunderstanding took place. We (the research team) apologized about the casual way in which we had organised the registration. We explained that we had let them freely apply on a personal basis because this program had been set up to satisfy personal motivations – independently of the work these employees were performing in their department. But to the employees, things were quite different. They felt that this language training program was an actual part of their work, that they were doing this on a professional basis and not on a personal basis, on behalf of the teacher-training college and not on their own behalf. When they found out that the program had been launched rather haphazardly, at the initiative of AURALOG and the research team and not really at the initiative of the college's managerial staff. They realized that the goal of the managerial staff was more to please them, to satisfy their expectations rather than to improve their linguistic competence. As a consequence, because their goals were different, the constraints imposed on the project were seen differently. For the head of the college, they would not attend the language-tutored class during their normal work time, whereas for them (and for us, the research team) it was clear that they would be freed from work. It showed that once the project had been voted, each party had begun to transpose the task, building up their own fantasy-driven arrangement, and a lack of goal negotiation was certainly the ultimate reason for the failure of this project.

To sum up, the TMM project showed that in CALL professional contexts the technology is fraught with values which help to create an ideal professional self. It also hinted that motivational factors should not just be distinguished only from in terms of their nature (Self-esteem, goals, action control, etc.) but also in terms of their weight. A goal or an instrument which may be seen as essential to motivation at one point, or in one experiment, or for one participant, may become a second rank factor, not essential at other times. In this way, the TMM project puts us on the way to a weighted model of motivation (Raby, 2004, 2007).

A weighted construct

The ESCALE project confirmed the weighted characteristic of motivational factors. Essentially, we had planned to test a sort of *motto* in CALL literature that a web-based L2 scenario is necessarily more motivating than a traditional scenario based on printed documents. In addition, borrowing from mainstream

theories, we had listed a number of factors whose existence was deemed to predict a strong motivation.

Technology is a first rank motivational factor

The statistical findings yielded by the questionnaires proved this assertion wrong. Pupils working with the printed scenario and the Web scenario had the same level of expectation (respectively 47% and 46%) and appraised the project in much the same way (respectively 70% and 72%). They were also both ready to engage in a new one (respectively 82% and 85%). Their performance (intermediate language tasks and creation of the home/front page of their papers) were of the same quality.

These results and many others in ICT literature show that it is not the technology in itself that is actually motivating; it is the pedagogical project which usually goes with it since most of the time CALL teachers propose meaningful, socially relevant tasks in keeping with the European Framework recommendations.

Yet the technology may greatly enhance motivation

The "hook" function attracts agents (Raby, 2007), but its motivational impact may soon wear off if the technology is not user-friendly and if the agent lacks training and is unable to use it in such a way that it efficiently assists them in the execution of their tasks. I have examined the different ways in which the technology as such (not the task) may enhance or undermine motivation and established five motivating functions (Raby, 2008, 2008): The hook function, the regulative function, the restore function, the creative function and the communicative function.

A polytomic construct

All investigations have shown that the technology is like Aesop's tongue: It is not good or "right" or "efficient" in itself: the same factor may act in a *positive* /motivational or *negative*/demotivational way, or even have no impact at all *neutral*/amotivational. In all three investigations, we found that the characteristics of the project which the literature had predicted as motivational happened to appear as demotivational or neutral to some learners. Here are a few examples:

1. The fact that the web pages would be published on the school/university site, a socially meaningful goal, was deemed to be a source of motivation. In fact it

was often said to be a source of stress instead of motivation by many learners, while for other learners it had no particular influence.

2. The fact that the web pages would be assessed and marked was either a source of positive or negative reinforcement for the learners, depending on their linguistic self-confidence (Noel, Pon & Clement, 1996), or again had no influence at all.
3. The fact that in some cases the learners were offered the opportunity to collaborate was usually found to be very stimulating (Mangenot & Bouchard, 2001; Deudelin & Nault, 2003; Levy, 2006), but for some learners, it was a waste of time and would prevent them from doing quality work.
4. The fact that they were given a lot of learning aids (linguistic, cultural and computer, and all sorts of templates) was found motivating by some learners but the majority of the pupils and students did not even look at them if their tutor did not insist that they might be useful

Those findings led me to coin the notion of a polytomic construct. Polytomic meaning that one factor (variable) may take on diverse concretizations, depending on whether its impact is positive (+), negative (-) or neutral. Some statistical models such as Multiple Correspondence Analysis (Benzecri, 1992) are particularly interesting to use when processing the data in this perspective (Raby & al, 2003). It seems to me that in a qualitative approach to CALL, it is important to be aware that a negative effect, or the absence of an effect, is as meaningful as the positive effect of a motivational factor. Mental states of denial or refusal of a potential source of motivation often explain why an expected motivating factor provided by the environment does not perform motivation functions.

Provisional conclusion

The bulk of modern research focuses on the self and internal factors. I believe that working in professional situations and technologically enhanced situations compels researchers to pay attention to the external factors. From Otto and Dörnyei we have borrowed a dynamic model because this model was concerned with education/task/work motivation. Later, they elaborated a new model aiming at synthesizing diverse theories, which could be applied to any L2 environments

The new construct – the “L2 Motivational Self-System” attempts to synthesize a number of influential approaches in the field (e.g. Gardner 1985; Noël 2003; Ushioda 2001) and at the same time broadens the scope of L2 motivation theory to make it applicable in diverse language learning environments in the current, increasingly globalized world. [Dörnyei, 2009, p. 212]

The consequence of the enlargement of the model is that the motivational factors of the learning environments tend to lose ground to the *self* factors. With this modern trend, I believe that external sources of motivation in professional contexts do not receive sufficient attention for two reasons. The first one is that since Gardner's seminal, pioneering work, most theories see the extern (external, extrinsic, externally driven) motivation as the *wrong* motivation, the one which doesn't last and doesn't really fuel actual language enjoyment and progress. It seems to me that this is due to confusion between the sources of motivation and motivation itself. Motivation being a mental state, there is no external motivation, it can only be internal. Motivation doesn't exist as a real objective reality dormant in the individual's' mind and waiting to be unveiled by researchers. Motivation is a construct built up by scientists to account for a specific individual's behaviour. Many constructs claim that the subjects' cognitive factors are more important than the work environment. This dichotomic vision seems to me (and other writers) wrong because it rests on a homeostatic model. Piaget (1967), Bruner (1983), Vygotski (1978) and Nuttin (1980) all agree that human beings develop through their interactions with their environment. Without external sources of motivation there would be no motivation; without the individuals' cognitive and social processing of these sources there would be no motivation. As a consequence, it seems to me that the dialectical approach best serves motivational research. It is through interacting with peers, teachers and people and machines thanks to the internet that pupils and students will learn and develop an L2 or fail to learn. To reject the importance of external factors comes down to denying all development theory, in particular the motivational one. Dörnyei seems aware of this when he writes in his latest book (Dörnyei, 2014).

To conclude, the web 2 revolution is coming as a challenge for ergonomic researchers since the frontier between professional/work situations and everyday life/home situations is fading away. In some countries, perhaps in a few years, the very notion of academic or institutional L2 learning will lose its significance. In other countries it will jeopardize ruling pedagogical models and the technology will be seen as an evil weapon in the hands of globalizing forces. To meet the challenge of understanding and analyzing the revolution that is taking place, it is necessary to alter our research methods and models – a process which is already underway (Lasagabaster & al, 2014).

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Becoming an English language teacher: *Continuities and Discontinuities*

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to report a three-year phenomenographic study conducted on seven EFL Polish teachers with the focus on presenting how they experience different aspects of language teaching at three crucial stages: 1) the time of ELT theory studying, 2) the time of school placement, 3) the time of first-year working as professional teachers. Each stage of the study is presented from the perspective of affordances standing for the respondents' expectations (*continuities*) as well as constraints (*discontinuities*). The article concludes that discontinuities, rather than continuities, can prove invaluable in language teacher identity development.

Keywords

language teacher identity, phenomenography, continuities and discontinuities, Poland

Introduction

Becoming a teacher seems a never-ending process which is by no means final on receiving teaching credentials. It is continuously constituted, never fully completed or coherent. It usually starts very early with a person's desire to enter the teaching profession and may last well into their retirement period. The process of formal learning to teach is only a phase which brings a person closer to the process of 'becoming' a teacher, although a very important one. It can be the time when previous expectations and imaginations of candidates for the teaching profession are given rational explanations through theoretical tuition. It is also the time when their teaching abilities are tested during school placements. This period of 'learning to teach' is formative but can be transformative through providing contexts for innumerable changes with regard to pre-service teachers' preferences, self-perceptions, choices or even job-related decisions. Learning to teach is, therefore, a process of professional identity construction rather than the acquisition of knowledge or collection of new skills.

In this article I intend to take a look at the process of becoming a teacher through the concepts of 'continuities' and 'discontinuities', both acknowledged as contributors to learning. The former which stand for smooth fillers or seamless transitions from ignorance to knowledge are more popular in the common

understanding of learning (English, 2013, p. xix). The latter which mean confusions, doubts, perplexities, struggles or simply anxiety before the new and unfamiliar are in line with thinking that “learning necessarily involves discontinuous moments” (ibid.). It seems that explicit targeting the selected periods of the process of becoming a teacher (the time of studies and the first working year) through the perspective of continuities and discontinuities may help in advancing our understanding of learning teaching. The current study explores the building of seven English pre-service teachers’ professional identities at three crucial stages: 1) the time of university tuition, 2) the time of school placement, 3) the first year of working as professional teachers with a view to illuminating their conceptualizations of language teacher becoming experiences.

Theoretical background

The following paragraphs describe the theoretical background for this study starting with the representations of continuities and discontinuities in the teacher literature, followed by their renderings in the studies on teachers as students, school placement mentees, and first-year teachers.

I understand *continuities* as physical, mental, social, and symbolic aspects that provide ‘positivity or (sometimes) neutrality in experience’. They on the whole facilitate a person’s (teacher-to-be) interaction with the environment and make learning to teach a goal easy to achieve. Continuities are rooted in familiar habits, trusted routines and fixed dispositions, thereby providing stability, comfort, and somewhat adherence to the status quo. In this respect, continuity reminds various definitions of the concept of “attractors” (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 49; Sade, 2011, p. 45) or “affordances”, as understood by the originator of the term (Gibson, 1979), and present scholars adapting his idea to the applied linguistics ground (i.e. Deters, 2011; Aronin & Singleton, 2013; Murray, 2013). The difference is that Gibson considers affordances of the environment in the sense of what it offers the animal for good or ill, whereas my understanding of continuity is placed on non-disturbing, to a certain extent predicted and taken-for-granted aspects provided by a teacher’s environment. What is stressed in the word ‘continuity’ is the lack of an interruption in action leading to the goal attainment. This meaning is important in the sense that a candidate for the teaching profession is all the time following the chosen and well-trodden direction in the process of becoming a teacher, finding and making use of positive ‘conductors’ or acknowledging neutral aspects, with no setbacks, doubts,

obstacles whatsoever withholding her on the way. If the conducive mechanisms turn out to be positive emotions, positive personality traits, or positive social institutions (Seligman, 1999), the concept of continuity can be located almost in the vicinity of positive psychology assumptions gaining in popularity in applied linguistics studies (Gabryś-Barker, 2014; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014) right now.

By way of contrast, *discontinuities* are on the surface pejorative due to the fact that they provide 'the negativity in experience'. I borrowed the word from English (2013) who, inspired by Herbart and Dewey, assigns discontinuity the central importance in learning and teaching processes. Originating from negative physical, mental, social, or symbolic experiences, 'discontinuities' constrain a person's (teacher-to-be) predetermined interaction with the environment and make a goal more difficult to achieve. Encountered with discontinuous moments such as anxiety, doubt, ignorance, discomfort, difficulty, disorientation, disagreement, to name but a few, a person's ability to learn teaching is likely to be interrupted and therefore hindered. On the other hand, there is ample evidence that negative experiences can be valuable in making a person stronger, more understanding and reflective (Barcelos, 2001), and ultimately lead to a change. This is so because things are not totally black or white, and failure to perceive 'the greys in between' may lead to failure in the appreciation of the educative value of discontinuous moments. Discontinuities can be said a necessary condition for a teacher's growth or a basis for her change. Arriving at a limit of her knowledge, beliefs or expectations, a teacher goes through an internal struggle and opens up for a self-transformation. Therefore, despite the pejorative connotation of the word "negative" as it is in colloquial English, 'negativity in experience' here can be used to describe difference, otherness, something unfamiliar yet that may end up with a positive effect.

In the literature, references to both pre-service teachers' continuities and discontinuities can be indirectly grasped through studying beliefs, in particular how stable or prone to changing they are (i.e. Mercer, 2011; Werbińska, 2012; Crhova & Gaona, 2014). For example, popular statements related to language learning beliefs offered by Lightbown and Spada (1995, p. xv) may generate disagreements among pre-service teachers who tend to rely on common sense beliefs or what they have experienced in their language learning pasts (MacDonald et al., 2000; Peacock, 2001; Inozu, 2011; Michońska-Stadnik, 2013). Likewise, there are numerous studies on the persistence (continuity) or malleability (discontinuity) of prospective teachers' beliefs about a teacher's role (Lofstrom & Poom Valicks, 2012). Studies on the change (discontinuity with a

positive effect) of future candidates for the teaching profession after attending a critical EFL teacher education course (Abednia, 2011), on teachers' perceptions of language skills (i.e. da Silva, 2005; Manchon, 2009; Woods & Cakir, 2011) language subsystems (i.e. Andrews, 2003; Borg, 2003; Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010), or target language use in the classroom (i.e. Kang, 2012) are examples of cases in point.

Studies on pre-service teachers during their school practicum present equally insightful findings. They emphasize positive elements pointing to continuity, i.e. building resilience in pre-service teachers (Le Cornu, 2009), making use of imagination and reflection so as to facilitate teaching practice (Walkington, 2005). Also, some of them examine negative experiences: the antagonisms between mentors and mentees (Burn, 2007; Trent et al., 2010), disassociations between the demands of placement schools and their universities (Smagorinsky et al., 2004) suggesting discontinuity, as well as apparently negative experiences culminating in positive effects: international teaching practicum (Kamarul Kabilan, 2013), significance of open and supportive school environment (Yuan & Lee, 2013), experiencing emotions (Timotsuk & Ugaste, 2010). In a like manner, studies on first year teaching produce a gamut of experiences, ranging from overall success stories (Hebert & Worthy, 2001), through focusing on particular positive factors, such as pupil success (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2006) or negative factors, such as unexpected workload (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2006) or problems with the legitimacy of access to language teaching practice (Tsui, 2007). Interestingly, in teacher education literature, there is numerically more reference to discontinuity, although encountered under 'tensions' (Alsop, 2006; Smagorinsky et al., 2004), 'challenges' (Farrell, 2003, 2012) or 'dilemmas' (Barcelos, 2001; Werbińska, 2009), than continuity of experience, especially during the most critical periods of the process of becoming a teacher, such as school placement or novice teaching. In fact, Pluskota (2014, p. 1) claims that "for every twenty articles with negative emotions ... there is only one which deals with positive emotions...".

The study

The present study aims at extending understandings of novice (pre-service and first-year) language teachers' identities and their longitudinal development from the angle of continuities and discontinuities in their language teacher becoming experiences. It will address the following key questions related to the same seven participants:

1. What continuities and discontinuities are experienced by pre-service teachers as a result of attending teacher-oriented theoretical courses at university?
2. What continuities and discontinuities are experienced by the same pre-service teachers as a result of their school placement?
3. What continuities and discontinuities are experienced by the same now first-year teachers as a result of working in real school settings?

Methodology

Recent approaches to studying different psychological constructs including identity have pointed to the benefits of using qualitative approaches (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006). They are more successful in ‘personalizing’ a person under investigation and generating thick, detailed and contextualized data than quantitative ‘depersonalized’ understandings. A particularly promising method in this respect is a phenomenographic study that is useful in illuminating people’s conceptions, understandings and perceptions of phenomena on the basis of their experiences. Phenomenography implies that phenomena can be referential and structural. The referential aspect is understood as the meaning assigned to a given phenomenon, which makes people aware that they are experiencing something as such (Gonzales, 2011, p. 70). The structural conception aspect is understood as “how people go about something in the way they do” (Marton & Tsui, 2004). A phenomenographic investigation has been credited as a valuable method in exploring qualitatively different ways of experiencing that addresses the contextual influences (Tan, 2013). Differences in ways of experiencing the investigated phenomena lead to the creation of hierarchically arranged categories of description (categories of that phenomena) which culminate in an “outcome space”. The “outcome space” is a set of structured categories designed in the form of a map ‘drawn’ by the researcher on a range of understandings of an investigated phenomenon (Marton & Booth, 1997). A thing of note is that the categories of description can never be perceived as an exhaustive list of experiences although they should be complete for the given group of participants at a particular point in time. The criteria for judging their suitability involve 1) standing in clear relation to the aspect under consideration, so that each category contributes something distinct about the investigated aspect, 2) standing in logical and often hierarchical relationship with one another, and 3) parsimony which implies that there should be as few categories for capturing the critical variation in the corpus as is reasonable. The final categories of description and the outcome space they create is a presentation of variation on a collective level

in which individual 'voices' are not heard, but the categories with which people would identify are retained.

Participants

The phenomenographic study imposes guidelines with respect to participants of the study. Their number is usually restricted to several people, which clearly shows that phenomenographic research does not highlight the participants' representativeness. Instead, it can be based on their exceptionality.

The present study is part of a larger study but here the experiences are limited to three years of only seven participants who agreed to participate in the whole study (comprising three years for different participants from 2008 to 2013). Although all of them were EFL pre-service and then first-year teachers in their early 20s, they originally came from various places in the north of Poland (large and small towns, as well as rural villages), differed in sex (there were six women and one man), willingness to become a teacher (one of them very much wanted to work as a teacher, four considered language teaching as well as other options, and the remaining two were rather against being teachers in the future), students' cohorts to which they belonged (they were representatives of three different groups who studied in different years), schools in which they had their teaching practicum, and schools in which they worked after the studies (primary and lower secondary schools). All this information differentiating the participants is useful in defining 'the place' from which they voice their feelings. In line with the adopted phenomenographic methodology, the study adds to the understanding of the participants' experiences, rather than explaining it.

Data collection instrument

The data collection tool employed in the present study is an in-depth semi-structured interview conducted with each participant several times. In contrast to a traditional interview, a phenomenographic interview requires from the researcher constant interpreting of obtained responses, including the 'here and now' formulation of questions, requesting for clarifications, repetitions, confirmations. Therefore, there are only a few prepared opening questions and a number of additional ones that can but do not have to be used. In fact, the most frequent questions to be used in a phenomenographic interview are such as *What does it mean for you?*, *How did you experience this?*, *How can you understand this?*, etc. Such a way of formulating questions is purposeful because it can encourage an interviewee to verbalize their experiences and express their personal stands or their personal relation to an investigated issue.

The interviews lasted from 15 minutes to 2 hours. During the period of formal studying (stage one) all the interviews were held in my office room at university, during school placements (stage two) on the premises of schools and then at the university office, and those from stage three at neutral places (cafe, restaurant, university, or if the teacher was unable to afford much time, at his or her school in an unoccupied classroom). Being aware of the fact that talking about personal experiences is difficult for everyone, I tried my best to create a warm atmosphere, full of trust, understanding and patience. At all times, I took up the role of an active listener assuming that the narrator is best oriented in his/her own experiences, and therefore should be allowed full liberty in the presentation of his/her story.

Data analysis

The analysis of the interviews started with intensive multiple listening to the interview data and transcribing them. Since there are various methods of transcription ranging from more detailed ones attending both linguistic and prosodic features of language to less detailed transcripts focusing on thematic issues that appear more like a written text than a spoken one (Elliot, 2005), a decision had to be taken which transcription way to choose. I decided already at the beginning of the study that the transcripts would be made as soon as possible after the recording, and the first transcriptions included pauses marked by dots, fillers, hesitations. After a few transcriptions conducted in such a way, I decided that simpler transcripts would do, especially that the focus of the study was less placed on how they say what they say but more on the content presented. Therefore, most prosodic features were omitted and only the main content was preserved, however without changing the basic structures or words.

An additional burden throughout the whole of the study with some of the participants was the necessity of translating their utterances into English. That was because almost half of the interviews were conducted in the participants' native language, Polish, at their request. Although my initial reaction to the choice of language was not positive, it transpired that with some of the respondents the possibility of expressing themselves in Polish was the only way of obtaining really valuable information. That was dictated by their anxiety of using English due to their, as they said, inability to express more complex ideas in English. It had to be noted, however, that in cases of doubt I came back to the issues asked on the previous occasion to make sure that the right word or phrase was used in translation, or occasionally asked for confirmation via emails. That was also the reason why it was so important to transcribe the data as soon as

they were obtained. Both transcription and translation proved critical in the process of data analysis because, however lengthy and tiresome they were, they led to such 'intimate' and deep engagement with the data (cf. Hayes, 2013) that I felt no need to use qualitative data analysis software.

Since phenomenography aims at discovering people's individual conceptions, understandings or interpretations of different aspects of reality, attempting to reproduce individual kinds of thinking about a concept, it is reconstructive in nature. In order to reconstruct the participants' experiences related to what they regarded as continuous or discontinuous moments at different stages of the study, I went through the following stages:

- Reading the transcripts to identify initial patterns in the participants' responses.
- Reading the transcripts the second time while looking for similarities and differences in the senses of the participants' responses and marking the paragraphs with illustrative examples.
- Grouping similarities and differences with a view to naming the general concepts and formulating initial categories of description.
- Reading the transcripts once again against the initial categories and reexamining (modifying, deleting, adding) the categories to make sure they adequately represent the data.
- Contrastive comparing of the categories and referencing back to the data;
- Formulating outcome spaces.

The result of a phenomenographic study can be a map (but does not have to be) illustrating different ways of understanding an investigated phenomenon. Such a presentation is transparent in terms of the multiplicity and diversity of stances, or the plurality of ways of experiencing the world (Męczkowska, 2002). It is formed by procedures of the second order because the respondents not only verbalize the existence of certain facts (the first order) but also how they understand and justify them. Under the umbrella of popular descriptions of phenomena, the participants' understandings can amount to considerable reserves of knowledge, and however invisible to themselves it may be, this knowledge can constitute a good foundation for creating categories of description leading in turn to outcome spaces of research. What follows are the results of these analyses.

Results

Thirteen categories of description and one category of relation were made in total. In the following sections, all description categories created from the data are supported by the participants' quotations for illustrative purposes. The letter at the end (from A to G presented alphabetically) points to the study participant, simultaneously keeping him/her anonymous.

Stage one

The first stage of the study as described here takes place in the second year of the participants' BA studying at pre-service teacher university. They have been confronted with English language teaching methods theory, practical language classes, and most probably their previous expectations and imaginations about language studying at university from the times before the studies. From the data analysis for stage one four categories of description (one for continuities and three for discontinuities) emerge.

Continuities:

- **Experiencing English language studies as imagined community of practice**

To a certain extent, opting for language teaching studies can stand for an indicator of a future community of practice. The choice of English as an object of studying suggests that students are interested in languages and show language job preferences with regard to their future. The choice of a teaching profile also indicates that they do not preclude the possibility of a teacher's profession for which they will obtain formal qualifications. This is what they say in the interviews:

I wanted to get to university to study sport and then I didn't treat English seriously. Unfortunately, because of too much basketball training I had a serious injury and despite a long rehabilitation I wasn't able to come back to intensive sport training. This is why I concentrated on English because languages are very important. [A]

My first English teacher was my father who managed to implement the willingness to learn languages in me as a child. He was an ideal teacher: nice and understanding, and at the same time demanding. I owe him a lot. [B]

I have always liked learning languages, even by myself. ... I don't know what I want to do in the future but for sure I want to do something with languages. I would like to work in a company which has contacts with foreigners but I don't exclude the work as a teacher. [D]

I have chosen language studies because I have always been interested in languages. I also thought I was good at them but now I can see more and more often how much I don't know. I would like to be a teacher because in my family there are a lot of teachers. ... I was inspired by my teacher in secondary school. He had extensive linguistic knowledge, he was even a sworn translator, and I was really impressed by him. I would like to be like him, but I can also do other things in the future. [E]

As far as my adventure with English is concerned, I need to say that it wasn't until high school when I found it very interesting. I had a great teacher and eventually that led me to study English philology. I love English and German now. I have made my passion a way of life. I've been working as a private tutor and I'm certain this is what I would like to do in my future. [F]

I have always wanted to be a teacher. My dream was to instill knowledge in young people. I have also been attracted by the power that teacher holds – she, to a great degree, decides what a young person will think or will know. [G]

In many cases the students are encouraged to begin language teaching studies by the significant others although it is not only the advice offered by their former teachers or family members that makes them study English. They also feel attracted to the language itself and the idea of being a language student, probably noticing, albeit in their imaginations, the benefits that they may enjoy. They produce imagined communities in which they create attractive images of themselves (cf. Kanno & Norton, 2003), such as a confident language user or an exceptional and powerful language teacher. Although the identification with an imagined community supports a person's perseverance in the achievement of the aim and positively affects self-perception, self-assessment or readiness to act, thinking about him/herself as a member of community of practice only, in terms of a problem-free perspective can prove to be one-sided in the long run, lead to blind decisions, and consequently turn into a "miseducative experience" (English, 2013, p. 100).

Discontinuities:

- **Experiencing ELT methods as disagreement**

The theoretical input obtained during teacher preparation courses, such as language teaching methodology or second language acquisition can be quite insightful into what pre-service teachers think about ELT theory. The participants openly criticize certain principles of language teaching methods, in particular overuse of students' native language and no focus on the speaking skill

(Grammar Translation Method), no room for individual opinion (Audio-lingual Method), learners' exhaustion (Silent Way) and boredom (Suggestopedia), or lack of explicit correction (Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning). Since there is little chance that contemporary teachers subscribe to teaching a language according to a particular language teaching method in its pure form, the responses point to these forms of teaching or teachers' behaviors that the participants disapprove. The answers supporting such opinions are as follows:

What I find least appealing in some of the methods is that teachers are using mother tongue of the learner. ... When learner is on a higher level of learning, it [language] may help to develop their knowledge of language and about it. [B]

When Latin was considered as Lingua Franca, Grammar Translation Method might have been a good way to teach that language. But I find a lot of things not appealing: vocabulary learning in isolation, out of context, speaking and listening practically not developed, little engagement of students, no communication. Terrible...[F]

- **Experiencing Practical English classes as disappointment**

In recent times, more and more students in Poland have seemed to perceive the language teaching studies in terms of learning English courses. In a like manner, the participants in this study seem to hold their own, sometimes deeply ingrained beliefs about what language learning should be like. The teaching experienced by them at university probably makes their prior knowledge and beliefs about language learning questioned, which gives vent to the following quotations illustrating this category:

Speaking English with teachers and classmates certainly help us develop our confidence in using the language. We can open up to express our opinions. But, on the other hand, teachers don't correct students' errors. Some of the students, like myself, feel dissatisfied with such language learning because nobody wants to learn with errors, for example in pronunciation. [C]

If I made a mistake I would like to hear the grammatically correct equivalent of my statement and have an opportunity to repeat it correctly or was taught if I didn't understand the structure. [F]

- **Experiencing language classes as astonishment**

In contrast to discontinuities produced by upright rejection of certain issues from the perspective of an ELT theory learner or a language user, some participants experience the feeling of surprise as a result of teaching practices used by university lecturers. Basing on their former secondary school

experiences they, for example, did not expect that pronunciation or listening as a skill could be taught, that students were supposed to select the reading texts, that grammar was not part and parcel of practical language course, or there was hardly any correction or emphasis on vocabulary checking. Selected quotations illustrating moments in which the pre-service teachers' learning is interrupted by astonishment are presented next:

In previous schools I always had to cope with unknown words by myself. I had to translate them with the help of a dictionary and learn by heart. I didn't like learning new words, quite the opposite I treated it as a punishment. At university we are learning words in a proper context, which makes me develop. [B]

Listening is neglected by many school teachers. When I attended secondary school there were only few times when we practiced listening. I can imagine that this sounds strange but I wasn't taught listening then almost at all. That led to my conviction of unimportance of this skill while learning a foreign language. At university I was first surprised at the amount of listening tested, and then changed my mind. Now, I'm strongly convinced that listening should be kept as it highly increases our general language skills. [F]

Stage two

The second stage of the study takes place during and after the teaching practicum of the same study participants. It seems that school placement provides opportunities for learning that can happen nowhere else. What can be experienced is a sample of authentic teaching with real students, classes, and school problems and, more importantly, the relations between student teachers and other groups with which they liaise. Continuities and discontinuities in this stage are conceived of as:

Continuities:

- **Experiencing school placement as pre-service teacher recognition**

The conception of being recognized as a teacher can be regarded as a sine-qua-non condition for constructing teachers' professional identities. It implies not only who they think they are but also who others think they are. Therefore, any signs of acknowledgement for being a teacher, be it by others or pre-teachers themselves, can prove crucial in their further development. In the data, the signs of recognition by learners and other teachers are recalled in the main but the participants also express how they understand, and therefore recognize, their belonging to language teaching profession. This is what the participants say in the interviews:

I very much liked the fact that during checking homework my mentor asked the pupils to come up to me, as well. ... After the practice I was invited by Teachers' Board to take part in a solemn dinner organized for teachers on Teacher's Day. It was very nice. I felt as one of them. [C]

Today I felt as a real teacher. Children said 'good morning' in the hall, came up to me and said what they had learnt at home, even asked if I would be teaching them all the time. ... there are also pupils who come to me and ask if I am from England. They must assume that since I use English in the classroom all the time, I must be from England. Such situations are very nice. I wish there were more of them. [D]

- **Experiencing school placement as personal gains**

As continuity means 'positivity in experience', school placement can be conceptualized in terms of what people gain. The participants in my study also pay attention to this fact. The gains resulting from their school placement experience are noted:

At first I didn't pay attention that it was studying English with a teaching profile. But I liked ELT subjects and then school practice the most. The practice taught me the most. I thought it was something that gave me pleasure, something for me and I would like to be a teacher. [B]

The practice was a wonderful experience for me. I understood that teacher makes future for all the kids. ... It's important how you convey your knowledge. When I was finishing my practice on the last day, and the kids were leaving the classrooms, I felt I did something important. It may not have been something great, I was only a practitioner but I think it's worth becoming a teacher for such things, for such emotions and moments. [D]

What did practice give me? I gained a lot of self-confidence. I have learnt the job of a teacher from the inside. It's not a job for me but 'my passion'. It gives me pleasure and satisfaction. I hope I won't change my mind. [F]

Discontinuities:

- **Experiencing school placement as confrontation with school ills**

However, the experience of being placed at school proves to be the time generating more discontinuities than continuities. Of particular importance is the category of school ills focused on the students' perceptions of the Polish school reality comprising criticism of school teachers' behaviors, their use of ineffective language teaching methods and obligatory language teaching policies prevalent in Poland. It seems that this category involves the largest number of the students'

experiences, and thereby the most variations in their conceptualizations. Two illustrating quotations refer to their perceptions of teachers, language teaching and ills of the system:

To be honest, I didn't like the lessons in the 3rd grade at all. From the beginning till the end they were conducted in Polish. The teacher often discussed unnecessary things with the kids. And half of the class was spent on coloring pictures in activity books. No wonder, their language level is so low. [D]

I learnt that for all the teachers at that school English was the second major subject. They graduated from three-year private higher schools to obtain English teaching formal qualifications. They tell me: "Don't worry, you'll finish BA studies and get the 'paper' [qualifications]. It's strange to me because none of them says anything about the level of their knowledge after such 'fast' studies. I'm terrified that some of them can teach three foreign languages or teach English because they ceased to be teachers of economics after several years. I don't know why but I don't believe in the professionalism of these teachers. [G]

- **Experiencing school placement as interaction with mentor**

While being placed at school, the person with whom a pre-service teacher establishes the closest contact is probably the mentor. The relationship with mentor can determine the mentee's behaviors due to the fact that his/her counterpart is regarded both as a person to teach and assess, which can imply a person to imitate. Discontinuities arise when what mentors offer and demand from a mentee brings about an encounter with a remarkable difference and a consequent break with oneself. The contents from the interviews presented below illustrate the ruptures experienced by the respondents during their school placement period:

My mentor? I didn't feel being taken care of. I was because I was, and nothing more. I expected more mentor's engagement. [E]

Unfortunately, my mentor imposed stiff frameworks for conducting the lessons and the way of introducing the content. I thought there would be more room for creativity, unfortunately I have to cover the course book. [G]

- **Experiencing school placement as unfavorable self-perception**

The perception of school placement as learning about oneself also emerges in the students' interviews. Sometimes the moment of experiencing one's deficiency can be revealing to such an extent that it can fall short of retaining a person to opt for the teaching profession. The category of self-perception does not appear in all interviews but those who refer to it understand themselves during this period of

becoming a teacher as people with unreliable language competence and somatic problems:

I remember the first day with the 4th class. They asked me lots of questions connected with the history or geography of Britain and the USA. To be honest, I didn't know some of the answers. ...I felt ashamed of the fact that I myself learnt some information from my pupils. I then realized how much general knowledge not only about the language but also about the target language culture a language teacher should possess. [A]

I don't know if this is a job for me. After seven lessons I have mixed feelings. I have a sore throat again. If this continues, I will have to reject this job as a potential future for me. [D]

Stage three

The last stage of this becoming-a-language-teacher project falls upon the construction of professional identity of the same, now first year teachers. This stage in teacher becoming can be a real test on a person's professional identity. Statistics show that most teachers experience attrition after the first year and drop out of teaching, possibly unready to shoulder so many new expectations from students, parents, colleagues, supervisors, the community (Pillen et al. 2013). The categories of description for continuities and discontinuities at this stage of the study are as follows:

Continuities:

- **Experiencing first-year language teaching as in-service teacher recognition**

Likewise in the school placement period, the category of recognition emerges in the first year of working as teacher. In the interviewees' accounts, just like in stage two, there are themes referring to self-recognition and those related to the recognition by others. Being recognized as a teacher is a positive experience that is somewhat expected by those entering the profession. Therefore, in-service teacher recognition is again a category created within continuities, and the following quotations illustrate the participants' experiences about it:

Some parents come to ask how their kids are doing. They accept my arguments, they are nice. [D]

Other English teachers in my school didn't major in English. When I heard one of them speak English-[sigh] lots of kids have better pronunciation. She has been selected to be my mentor (*N.B: first-year teachers in Poland employed on work contract - not replacement teachers employed on a temporary basis - are assigned*

a mentor to help them prepare for professional promotion grade, achieving the status of contract teacher after one year of working), but I don't observe her classes. There's no point. She is stressed, and I'm not learning anything. Other English teachers are afraid of me.[F]

Nothing to complain about. No problems with discipline. I feel respected. ... I have regular contacts with them. If I notice a pupil works less than before, I call the parents, and advise how to help and work with the pupil. [G]

- **Experiencing first-year language teaching as language teaching decision taking**

Apart from becoming a professional and acknowledged-by-others teacher, the first year of work is also a period in which one's own decisions concerning the way language teaching can be taken. What this implies is the fact that in-service teachers can to a certain extent decide by themselves what is to be taught in their classrooms and what can be left out, what is worth repeating, and what can be totally ignored. My study participants express this variation of the discussed category in the following way:

I do believe in projects. Yesterday I gave 3 topics: choose a role-play, choose who you want to be, act as if you would like to, take 15 minutes preparation time and present it to the rest of the class. ... I take care of their vocabulary knowledge in contexts, not in isolation. I also draw their attention to grammar. I often use memory games. [A]

I use a lot of listening. It disciplines them. They get quiet to hear well. As for vocabulary I tell them to copy into notebooks and translate. Once I brought a phonetic alphabet to show them how to read. When they are good, we play their favorite games.[D]

The question of course books? I had to decide whether to change, or keep the same ones. The course book hasn't been changed but I modified it, rejected the activity book and left the grammar book with lots of exercises. [F]

Discontinuities:

- **Experiencing first-year language teaching as difficult interactions with others**

One of the categories of discontinuity during the first year of language teaching emerges as interactions with others. This time, however, it is not confined to learners or one colleague (mentor) but a whole spectrum of other people: supervisors, colleagues, parents, learners. The relations with colleagues are perceived as negative due to the conflict of values between the novice

teachers and 'the other' person. This is what the participants have to say about this:

I have good contact with only one English teacher. When he was organizing a party he invited all the staff, including me. I didn't go but it was nice to be invited. Another English teacher is funny and likes joking but that's all. Still another likes when I consult him about some linguistic uncertainty. [A]

I have mixed feelings about my colleagues. They are my former teachers. Only one person didn't teach me. It's very hard to introduce something. Everyone treats suspiciously any new idea. The best thing for them is to come, sit down, open the book and assign exercise one, two, three four and that's it. Good if nothing happens and nothing is done. Perhaps if they were younger, there is only one young teacher but I don't have much contact with her. [B]

I mix with everybody. But in reality I'm a bit of an outsider. There are cliques like everywhere. I don't want to have anything to do with it. [F]

When during a teacher's meeting, I expressed my opinion about a possibility of retaining a pupil in the same class for another year, one senior teacher said aloud: 'I won't be listening to an apprentice'. But I only tried to suggest something to prevent aggression at school. [G]

The relations with learners often involve the most common problem of new teachers – discipline. A handful of quotations below seem to illustrate the problem:

One class is very difficult. They always object to my ideas, they compare me with the previous teacher, they say aloud: 'Oh, no. English again!'. Once I lost my voice because of them. [A]

Teacher as a friend—that was my intention: mutual understanding, playing, respect. It doesn't work. They have no respect. Teacher as a 'torturer' is probably the best. After finishing school we remember with fright those who shouted, demanded and made us learn. But is there any golden mean? [E]

If they misbehave I give 1s (1 is the fail grade in Polish schools). Nothing else seems to work. Remarks don't work, translations of texts don't work—like it or not I have to do something to make them quiet. It used to be better. Now, it's the only way.[F]

In the described category, the new 'other' is a parent the relations with whom can produce a lot of disquietude, as well. A few excerpts from the interview transcripts may show the participants' experiences related to their problems with students' parents:

Once a parent came to me after I lowered the grade for a test and said that I shouldn't be a teacher and only I have problems with her son. It was so bad for me. I couldn't say anything. It's a private school so parents interfere a lot. [A]

A parent came to me with complaints. I was told I require too much, I am young and too ambitious. [E]

- **Experiencing first-year language teaching as overwork**

The other category of description pointing to discontinuity emerging as a result of first year teaching experiences is the perception of teacher's work. This variation relates to what they think they do on a daily basis, the image of the work itself, or their conception of school reality. The themes emerging in this category provide gloomy images of a novice teacher's work:

I start at 7.50., children come to school earlier. The worst thing is my hall duty. I have to be 10 minutes earlier. If I have a break duty, I don't have time to write the topic because the kids from 1-3 grades come, they are so intrigued that I don't even open the register book. The moment I enter the classroom, it starts. No time for quiet entering, sitting down, writing a topic, telling them what the lesson will be about – no time. And it's only 45 minutes once a week. [B]

I still feel terrified by paper work. Filling in so many documents, creating syllabuses for pupils with special needs, documents for headmaster... The worst aspect of school teaching. [C]

I am always very tired. Too many things overlap. I used to check homework assignments or tests every day but now I feel overworked after a whole day's work. I do it at the weekend. [F]

Relating category:

- **Role of a teacher**

The relating category that seems to affect all the categories of description are the participants' beliefs on the role of a teacher. Reading the interviewees' responses carefully, it can be noticed that the role of teacher is present in all of them.

In the first stage, the participants look at the role of a teacher from the perspective of learner. Imagining themselves as successful members of communities for whom communicating in English is the norm, they primarily value the role of teacher as a language expert. Such a conception exists in their imaginations, and even though some of them still do not know what job to perform in the future, their imagined communities of practice vividly feature themselves as very competent linguistically. Their belief in the necessity of

learning language elements like listening or pronunciation is immediately accepted, despite the fact that they were not taught those skills or language subsystems deliberately at their previous schools. They are convinced now that their improvement of especially oral skills is a gateway to achieving greater legitimacy as language users. From the repertoire of English language teaching methods they seem to select only those techniques that directly influence their acquisition of good communicative competence in the fastest possible time. Therefore, they ask for teacher error correction, which proves that the role of teacher as an assessor seems also rational to them.

It must be acknowledged that the conceptions of language teacher as an expert and an assessor are very much determined by learners' backgrounds. Although English is no longer considered an elite language to study in the contemporary Poland as it was in the socialist times, reputable schools or well-educated English language teachers in smaller towns or villages from which most of the participants come are very few and far between. Those who attended better schools with more ambitious teachers in the past come for fewer surprises at university, their opinions are more divergent, and on the whole seem more inclined to believe that they themselves are primarily responsible for the way and their ultimate level of language competence (i.e. teacher D). By contrast, those who were used to being provided information in a transmission-like manner understand language teaching studies as another school in which teachers' role should be focused on providing and testing information (i.e. teacher C), although now about communication. Therefore, beside the roles of a language expert and a language assessor, the conception of teacher as a knowledge provider is still vivid.

In the second stage of the project after experiencing school placement the role of language teacher seems to be shifted from learner to teacher perspective. Now, the participants look forward to their 'teachership' recognition on the part of school learners and mentors. They seem to identify mentally with everyday work of a practicing language teacher, which usually brings them a great deal of satisfaction. The variations in the conception of school placement are very much affected by role of a teacher assumed by their mentors. Authoritarian mentors demanding complete subordination of mentees generate more resistance and criticism surfacing in the interviews. This is the case because the imposition of teaching in exactly the way the mentor tells produces a great deal of self-questioning in more autonomous mentees. The reflection brings about confusion, sometimes distance to the issue at hand or doubt in what they think they knew or

learnt at university, but on the whole entails the critique of the school system that validates such a state of affairs. This also testifies to the participants' altered awareness that now allows for more complex understanding of a teacher's role – a critical thinker and deliberator of school ills. It can be noted that school criticism is not difficult for the participants to produce, especially for those who still do not know what professional path to follow.

At the same time, teacher 'contactability' comes to the fore since communicative skills implying friendliness, helpfulness, tolerance and understanding of another person guarantee good interpersonal relations with others, especially with the mentor. It must be stressed, however, that good interpersonal skills are required from everyone, and mentors deprived of them are openly criticized. The role of teacher as a language expert is still present, especially in private schools where the level of pupils' English is high and a good command of language is expected on the part of a language teacher. It can be inferred that language teacher now should possess an impeccable knowledge of language and good communication skills on a par.

The role of teacher with regard to the first year of teaching is similar to the period of school placement although all three roles (a language expert, an assessor, and a communicator) are experienced more intensely. The professional work is now performed in earnest, so the willingness to be recognized as a legitimate member of teacher community is far more important than it was at the previous stage. Good language skills bring them recognition in others, the role of a good communicator is now expanded through the inclusion of supervisors and learners' parents, and day-to-day school practice seems to offer more issues to reflect upon. The first-year teachers represent another shift in the understanding of their roles. On the one hand, they would like to have a say in what and how they teach, but on the other hand they become more and more aware that most things related to their job do not depend on them. The atmosphere of school in which they work, both in terms of learning outcomes and mutual respect, can affect what kind of teachers they become, how they are treated by other members of the teaching staff, what they give up and what they assume. In smaller far-away schools there is more inequality among teachers, more prescriptiveness, and less parent interference. In schools in bigger places, learners and especially their parents are more aware of language issues, and therefore more critical. The role of teacher as a critical thinker can be spotted, although most of them represent it at a declarative, rather than agentive level.

Conceptions of the language studies, school placement and first-year teaching are presented in a hierarchy in Table 1. The hierarchical structure was naturally dictated by the chronology of this longitudinal study, starting with the time after the participants' receiving some theoretical input (stage one), through their school placement (stage two), and finally the first year of their working as English school teachers (stage three). The categories of descriptions denoting their experiences of continuities and discontinuities at subsequent stages of exploration were influenced by the perception of teacher role as the relating category. It seems worth adding that in the creation of the map I assumed the methodological reduction postulate of *epoche*, according to which the researcher's beliefs are kept in suspense.

	CONTINUITIES	Categories of relation	DISCONTINUITIES
	Categories of description	Beliefs on teacher role	Categories of description
University courses	Imagined community	Communication preparer	Disagreement
		Language assessor	Disappointment
		Language expert	Astonishment
School placement	Recognition	Critical thinker	School ills
	Self-perceived gains	Good communicator	Difficult interaction with mentor
		Language expert	Unfavorable self-perception
First-year teaching	Recognition	Good communicator	Interaction with others
	Language teaching decisions	Critical thinker	Overwork

Table 1: Hierarchical relationship among categories of description

Discussion

This study has attempted to investigate three crucial stages of the process of becoming an English language teacher – formal courses at university (stage one), school placement (stage two) and first-year of teaching (stage three) of the same seven individuals through the conceptions of continuities and discontinuities

with the application of phenomenography as a methodological approach. It is found that the three investigated stages are uniquely experienced by individual teachers who have different biographies and social backgrounds and who, in stages two and three, establish new relationships with their surroundings and create slightly new teacher identities, thus altering themselves. At the methodological level, the study has provided empirical support for the phenomenographic perspective for two reasons. Firstly, the participants' understandings of the successive stages of teacher development drawn on their attitudes, feelings and emotions over a prolonged time were documented, showing the complexity of their experiences. Secondly, the conceptions created on the basis of their understandings can be presented as related to their perceived role of a teacher. But what role can continuities and discontinuities surfacing in the project assume, apart from providing the backdrop for the formation of categories of description? What can we learn from them?

As noted before, the decision of becoming a language teacher can be considered in terms of continuities. Governed by language and sometimes teaching interests, candidates join English language philology in the hope of securing their access to the formerly imagined community of successful English users and sometimes English teachers. The time of school placement and the resulting signs of acceptance of themselves as teachers by those around is an important, yet foreseeable aspect of recognition, indispensable for developing a person's professional identity. This acknowledgement –recognition by others and him/herself- can be treated as acquisition of symbolic teacher legitimacy qualifying a person to professional teacher membership group which, in turn, contributes to perceiving personal gains, including the right to take own decisions with regard to what language teaching in the classroom is like. The fact that these decisions can be at times inappropriate or too heavily influenced by individual prior beliefs does not seem to matter to teachers. In this light, continuities presented here in terms of categories of description can be said to represent the "realm of the expected" (English, 2013, p. 25), emphasize what is taken for granted and predicted, and therefore familiar. The pre-determined conceptions in the process of becoming a teacher provide 'warmth', stability and comfort, even the only social reality. This one-sidedness based on the premise that only what is known can be trusted and what is new or different can be ignored, in a way, signifies teacher's self-interestedness. Yet this habitual self-understanding, anchoring the person in positive features of existing knowledge and experience can prove misleading in terms of teacher identity formation due

to its 'simplicity'. To create a complex and multifaceted professional identity, interruptions occurring on the way should not be taken as signs of failures but rather quests for learning which make teacher open up for a change, expand the horizons, and grow cognitively.

Perceived as obstructions causing people to 'pause' and think, discontinuities invite to reflection. If we consider the discontinuous categories of description that emerge, it is clear that most interruptions shown by the participants as disquietude or disturbance can arouse inquiry. In fact, they can be turned into relative, or even poststructuralist questions, such as: *Is boredom always negative in the classroom?*, *Should we teach RP pronunciation in the times of English as Lingua Franca?*, *Should students or university teachers be held primarily responsible for students' learning outcomes?*, *Is there only one way of successful language learning?* (the students' conceptions of the language studies in stage one), or even framed into problems such as *Where do the school ills come from and what can be done to ease them up?*, *What could be done to turn the problematic relations with different school stakeholders into effective cooperation?*, *Why is the relationship with mentor ineffective?*, *Has the mentor been prepared to her role?*, *How can the drive to teacher accountability be turned into teacher identity development* (the students' conceptions during the period of school placement and first-year teaching in stages two and three), to name but a few. Addressing negativity of experience and subjected to reflection, such queries make room for the change of perspective, discovery of what may be true and what not, and provide a sound basis for a teacher's self-transformation. Then, discontinuities do not have to be understood as black areas only, but shades of greys are allowed into them. Consequently, an 'alien other' (Trent, 2014, p. 60) in the school context is not positioned as antagonistic, and the 'us and them' divide is no longer valid. Discontinuities in experience may encourage to explore poststructuralist questions, such as "who is speaking, from what position, in what contest and with what effect" (Trent, 2014, p. 61). Then, it may turn out that in a given position, a criticizing pre-service teacher might behave in some aspects similarly to the one that is criticized. This ability to see the otherness within ourselves is referred to as 'hybridization' (Bhabha, 1996), or occupying a 'third place', (Kramsch, 2009) – the adoption of a position which stands beyond strict binary divisions, between and beyond what is right and wrong.

Naturally, the sole existence of discontinuities is insufficient in developing teacher identity. What is needed, as noted before, are pre-service teachers and their autonomous and responsible educators who are aware that falling out of

step to analyze negativity, distancing on the comfortable and the secure to problematize what the experience has brought can open up the beginning of a deeper perspective on language teaching. Language teaching students can first be encouraged to uncover such moments by their university educators (during stage one and stage two), and then continue (during stage three) the exploration of possibilities offered by their experience of discontinuities on their own. Questions such as *What is missing in my understanding of school?*, *How does this experience relate to the beliefs that I used to hold?* or *How does it affect the choices I have made or those that I have to make?* (English, 2013, p. 124) can serve as examples. By asking questions like this they can start thinking differently than they used to think and question predetermined concepts of correctness to which they were accustomed. In this way, they can become stronger, more resistant to future difficulties and frustrations, and “open up an in-between realm for new and purposeful learning” (English, 2013, p. 104). Resisting the kind of only taken-for granted practices represented by continuities, they can shape their own teacher selves through critical reflection, ongoing dialogue with others and herself, and standing back from who they are so as to find out who they might become (Clarke, 2003, p. 169). In a word, addressing the negativity of experience in their teacher becoming trajectories, can be educative and self-transformative for both pre-service and first-year teachers. Therefore, acknowledged as limits to one’s ability or understanding, discontinuities are vital for learning teaching provided they are noticed and reflected upon.

Conclusion

In focusing on the experiences of just seven Polish teachers, this study naturally limits itself in terms of generalizability. However, the themes that emerge through the whole study, anecdotal evidence from other pre-service and first-year language teachers as well as a growing body of research that specifically address the formation of teacher identity suggest that the experiences of the participants in the study may be frequent. I hope these analyses have shown that continuities understood as positivity in experience may prove insufficient in transforming a person into a ‘multifaceted’ teacher due to their ease, simplicity and predictability. Discontinuities revealing negativity of experience, on the other hand, have consequences in altering people’s horizons. They can be positive (we learn from them) and negative (we learn the hard way) at the same time (English, 2013, p. 118). They do not necessarily make teachers agree with what teachers find ‘counter-happening’. Instead, their role is to

acknowledge 'the other', be these disillusionments, conflicts, or simply encounters with new concepts. Perhaps, future studies that explore the issues raised here in other contexts and with other participants might contribute to a more thorough understanding of how language students become language teachers. While working on this project, I deepened my understanding of teachers' experiences during the periods that were the objects of investigations here. This finding thus raises the question of how teacher identity is formed as the teachers constantly experience continuities and discontinuities.

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The perception of readiness for teaching profession: a case of pre-service trainees

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Abstract

Pre-service teacher training offers various opportunities for trainees to become aware of and understand the qualities of good teaching. Towards the end of their training they should be able to identify clearly the criteria for measuring their readiness for teaching profession as well as identify their own strong and weak areas.

The author of this article presents the results of the study where the aim was to focus was on the trainees' perception of themselves as English language teachers based on the criteria of the EPOSTL at the end of their training when trainees receive their diploma for teaching the English language.

Keywords

self-efficacy, teacher beliefs, pre-service teacher training, self-perception, educational change

Introduction

The importance of continuous teacher development throughout the entire teaching career seems to be an indisputable necessity. Especially if one takes into consideration the changing world and lifestyles, education cannot be left aside and pretend that the changes around do not have any relevance for the way people learn. Teachers of new millennium need to be equipped with skills which would be inconceivable to most professionals in the field twenty years ago.

Change, although vital and inevitable, is never easy, whether we look at the change of a life habit or any educational aspect. Fullan (1993) explains that educators should be viewed as experts in the change dynamics or even as agents of changes. Head and Taylor (1997) see them as powerful examples to their students that change actually brings opportunities which should not be neglected. This means that teaching profession requires not only the skills of being able to cope with the change around us; moreover it requires the skills of being able to teach other people to be ready for change and to cope with it. To gain qualities like these teachers need to be involved in continuous development themselves but what seems to be even more important they need to be aware of this need already during their pre-service teacher training. As Woolfolk Hoy and

Spero (2005, p. 343) explain “once efficacy beliefs are established they appear to be somewhat resistant to change”.

Readiness of trainees for their future profession is traditionally measured by the means teachers of tertiary education usually have at their disposal – exam grades, teaching practice feedback from supervisors as well as final evaluation at the final state exams. This study, however, aimed at looking closer at the concept of readiness from trainees’ perspective based on their own experience during the teaching practice or during the methodology seminars. The aim was to measure how ready the trainees felt for the practice after they had experienced field placement and whether they felt they were prepared for the changing school reality.

The knowledge and skills the trainees gain in Methodology courses where they focus on their future profession most, are evaluated by the standard means – written tests, oral examinations, topic presentations, micro-teaching sessions, literature review papers, research papers, essays, a discussion chairing, etc. Still there remains the question whether all these components contribute enough to the feeling of readiness for the profession or eliminate the feeling of uncertainty in teaching and whether the structure of Methodology courses respects the changes in school environment.

This area has been a focus to many research studies although most of them defined efficacy or self-efficacy as their prime field of interest. Some research studies focused exclusively on pre-service teacher training (e.g. Gavora, 2010) while some investigated the correlation between self-efficacy of trainee teachers during the training programme and the first year of teaching (e.g. Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Self-efficacy is mainly understood as beliefs that a person holds about personal skills, capabilities or decision-making process one is able to perform. One of the first professionals who paid attention to this construct was Bandura (1977) and he researched the nature and structure of self-efficacy beliefs as well as the processes through which such self-beliefs operate (Pajares, 2002). Together with self-efficacy it is interesting to mention the concept of uncertainty which is not commonly the focus of the research although some studies have noted the strong influence on teacher’s discomfort since they need to learn how to live with constant uncertainty concerning many aspects of their job (Jackson, 1986; Labaree, 2000; Cohen, 1989). However, by the term readiness we indicate rather the feeling of being ready for the job with the consideration of all aspects and elements which contributed to that feeling during pre-service training.

Background

Pre-service teacher training in Slovakia traditionally consists of more components – some are oriented theoretically and some focus more on application. The aim of all, however, is to contribute to building up a professional self of future teachers as well as positive attitudes towards their future profession. Methodology courses usually represent that part of pre-service teacher training which focuses mainly on the application of the core knowledge of language and literature within a classroom setting. Trainees learn how to deal with every-day classroom situations and how to design the approach to suit a certain group of learners. This study focuses on the training of future teachers of English language and literature at the Faculty of Arts in the Eastern Slovakia. Trainees have to go through several compulsory courses of EFL Methodology (e.g. single majors have six compulsory courses while double majors have three compulsory courses of EFL Methodology and they also receive training from the other subject) as well as several electives which they can choose from depending on their interest areas (e.g. using technology in the classroom, teaching young learners, using drama, using CLIL, teaching children with specific educational needs, etc.). Trainees also go through teaching practice under the supervision of qualified and experienced English language teachers at elementary and secondary schools. The amount of time they spend at schools is nine weeks altogether but it is divided into three blocks – elementary school practice, secondary school practice and the final teaching practice which takes place at both elementary and secondary schools and lasts for five weeks.

The aim of this study was to identify the level of readiness for teaching profession from trainees' perspective or how they see themselves ready to take over the duties of an English language teacher. The study thus sought the answers for these questions:

1. How do trainee teachers feel ready for their profession after the Methodology courses and the field placement?
2. Which areas/skills are left uncovered by the Methodology courses and should be given more attention?

The target group for the purpose of the study was a group of pre-service trainees in their final year of pre-service training. They have completed all compulsory and elective courses as well as their teaching practice at both elementary and secondary level. The number of respondents within the target group was 37.

Methodology

Since the aim of this study was to focus on trainees' perception of readiness it was necessary to choose such an instrument for data collection that would allow them to reflect on the direct teaching experience in order to reveal their self-evaluation of their performance as a language teacher but still would take into consideration a wider scope of aspects involved in teaching profession. Therefore, it would not be sufficient to use regular self-evaluation sheets which trainees usually produce as a log after each lesson they teach.

The studies mentioned earlier used mainly Bandura's Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (1977) or Gibson and Dembo's 30-item scale (1984). However, these focus mainly on teaching profession in general while we were interested in foreign language teachers instead. Therefore, we have decided to use an instrument which defines and describes such skills and capabilities that are specific for foreign language teaching. Already a decade ago the Modern Centre for European Languages in Graz designed a project aimed at producing a tool for guiding trainees' understanding of reflection – European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL). The main objectives of the EPOSTL were stated with the focus on the trainee as follows:

1. *to encourage you to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and on the underlying knowledge which feeds these competences;*
2. *to help prepare you for your future profession in a variety of teaching contexts;*
3. *to promote discussion between you and your peers and between you and your teacher educators and mentors;*
4. *to facilitate self-assessment of your developing competence;*
5. *to provide an instrument which helps chart progress* (Newby et al., p.5).

We have had a prior experience with this tool since it was piloted as a supplement of a teaching practice portfolio (for more details see Straková, 2010). The EPOSTL, thus, seemed to be the instrument which might guide trainees through the process of revealing their own perception of teaching qualities at the end of their pre-service training identifying the areas where they felt strong or weak. For this study we used the second part of the EPOSTL, the set of 195 'can-do' descriptors. These descriptors are grouped around seven areas:

- **Context** – Decisions relating to teaching are strongly influenced by the educational and social context in which teachers work. This context is mainly predetermined by the requirements in the national and/or local curricula. However, there may also be international recommendations and documents,

which will need consideration. Institutional constraints are another factor to be considered as they may have considerable impact on the work of teachers. A further dimension of the language learning context includes the overall aims and specific needs of learners, which, when identified, determine what the teacher does. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can understand the requirements set in national and local curricula.*

- **Methodology** – Methodology is the implementation of learning objectives through teaching procedures. It is based on principles deriving from theories of language description, language learning and language use. Methodology may focus on how teachers can deal with the four main skills of speaking, writing, listening and reading, as reflected in the categorisation of this section. However, in written and oral communication in the classroom two or more skills will usually be integrated and are rarely treated in isolation. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.*

- **Resources** – This section is concerned with a variety of sources teachers can draw on in the process of locating, selecting and/or producing ideas, texts, activities, tasks and reference materials useful for their learners. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can select those texts and language activities from coursebooks appropriate for my learners.*

- **Lesson Planning** – Planning activities depends on both learning objectives and content and requires teachers to consider how learners can reach the objectives through the material chosen. When planning a lesson, the teacher’s knowledge of language learning theory, a wide scope of methodology, resources and learner activities are as important as knowledge of the individual learner’s abilities. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can plan specific learning objectives for individual lessons and/or for a period of teaching.*

- **Conducting a Lesson** – The section on conducting a lesson focuses on what teachers do in Modern Language classrooms and on the skills required. The first of these, expressed as a broad category, is the implementation of a lesson plan. This section also identifies as significantly important teachers’ interactions with the class during the teaching and learning. The final group of descriptors focuses on the teacher’s use of the target language in class. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can start a lesson in an engaging way.*

- **Independent Learning** – Language learning in a school context is both a matter of learning individually and in cooperation with peers, as well as independent learning with the guidance of a teacher. This means giving the

individual learner or groups of learners a chance to take charge of aspects of their own learning processes in order to reach their full potential. Autonomous learning is an integral part of learning foreign languages, not an additional method of teaching. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes.*

- **Assessment of Learning** – This category is concerned with the choices which the teacher has to make when assessing learning processes or outcomes of learning. These choices relate to broad questions such as what to assess, when to assess, how to assess and how to use the information provided by the assessment process to support learning and to improve one’s own teaching. A sample “can-do” descriptor: *I can identify strengths and areas for improvement in a learner’s performance* (Newby et al., p. 14-51).

The trainees were given the EPOSTL when they attended the final teaching practice and they were supposed to take a note of how successful or ready they felt within individual descriptors. Since the EPOSTL is meant for self-reflection and since it understands the development as an on-going process, the bars accompanying each descriptor indicate this development by the way the trainees are expected to fill it in: “Each descriptor is accompanied by a bar, which will help you to visualise and chart your own competence. You can colour in the bar according to your own assessment. This may take place at different stages of your teacher education” (Newby et al., 2007, p. 6).

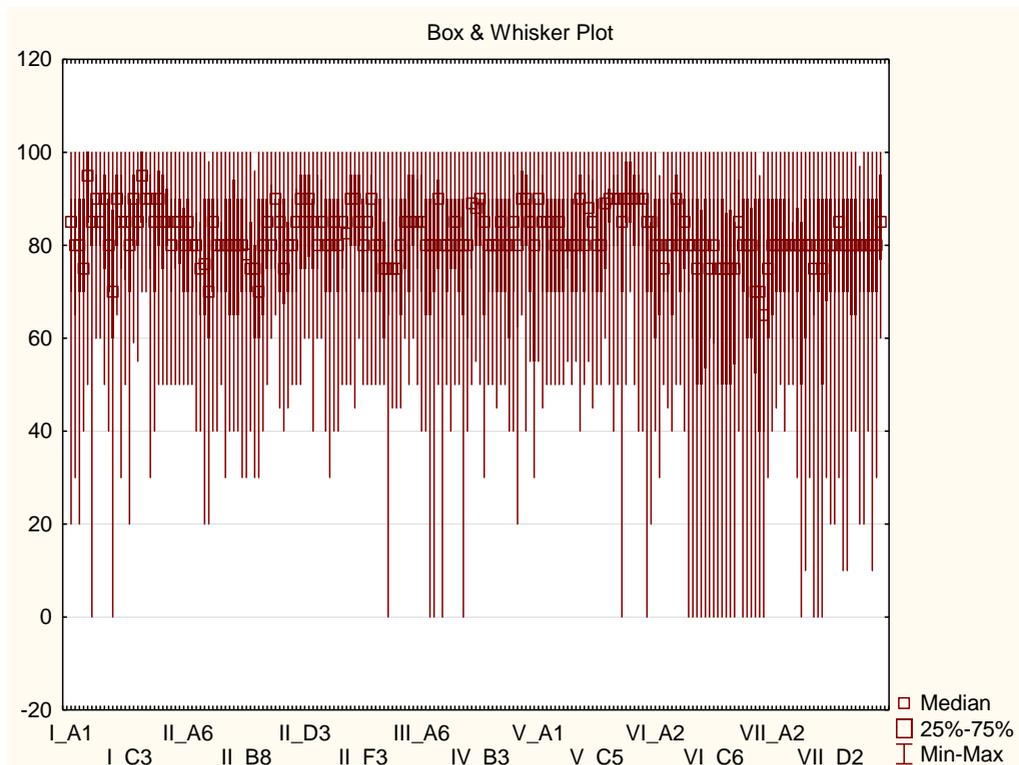
Since we aimed at making the level of readiness as clear as possible the trainees were asked not only to colour the bars but also to rate their feeling of readiness by the number. That should make it clear how they evaluated their skills and abilities based on the immediate teaching experience on the scale of 0 to 100.

Discussion of the results

In general it can be concluded that trainees perceive themselves very well prepared for teaching profession and they gave themselves an average rating of 79 on a scale of 0 to 100. What is even more surprising is that as many as 72% of trainees involved in the study recorded at least one descriptor at 100. The general evaluation within this group varied from 56 to 96 for all descriptors. The average for all descriptors within this group is 96 which seems to be extremely high.

On the other hand 27% of trainees recorded all descriptors at lower level than 100. Their general score ranged from 60 to 85 and the average for this group was

70. This could lead us towards the conclusion that trainees feel quite confident before starting their career which can contribute to positive attitudes towards the profession in general.



Graph 1 Box and Whiskers Plot for all variables

- Median
- 25%-75%
- ├─┤ min-max

As can be seen from this graph 1 most descriptors scored very high values even though the diversity in evaluation was extremely high as well. 75% of the scores fall below the upper quartile and 25% of scores fall below the lower

quartile. Several descriptors ranged from 0 to 100 and it can be especially seen within the area of *Independent learning* and *Assessment*.

The individual areas demonstrate the correlation between the focus of Methodology courses and the perception of trainees how ready they feel within seven individual areas (defined by EPOSTL):

Context	82	Resources	79
Conducting a Lesson	82	Assessment of Learning	76
Lesson Planning	80	Independent Learning	71
Methodology	79		

It can be implied that the highest scores for *Context* and *Conducting a Lesson* might be a result of the attention which is being paid to these aspects during the training. The least scored areas – *Assessment* and *Independent Learning* – at the same time indicate that trainees do not have enough space to practise the decision making skills in developing learner autonomy as well as evaluating their progress. This seems to be a logical conclusion bearing in mind the content of the pre-service training and still it seems that trainees have overestimated their skills since 76 and 71 scored for these two areas do not really give a true and corresponding reflection of how the trainees really are able to perform. Some of the lowest scores were as well connected to extra-curricular activities, such as school trips, school projects, etc. which students do not normally have a chance to experience during their field placement.

Looking closer at individual descriptors within each area it might be interesting to notice which descriptors received the highest and which the lowest rates.

The highest rates within individual descriptors were reached in the area of *Context* and *Conducting a Lesson*, e.g.:

<i>I can accept feedback from my peers and mentors and build this into my teaching.</i>	91,9
<i>I can understand the personal, intellectual and cultural value of learning other languages.</i>	91,4
<i>I can decide when it is appropriate to use the target language and when not to.</i>	90,0
<i>I can conduct the lesson in the target language.</i>	89,1
<i>I can observe my peers, recognize different methodological aspects of their teaching and offer them constructive feedback.</i>	89,1

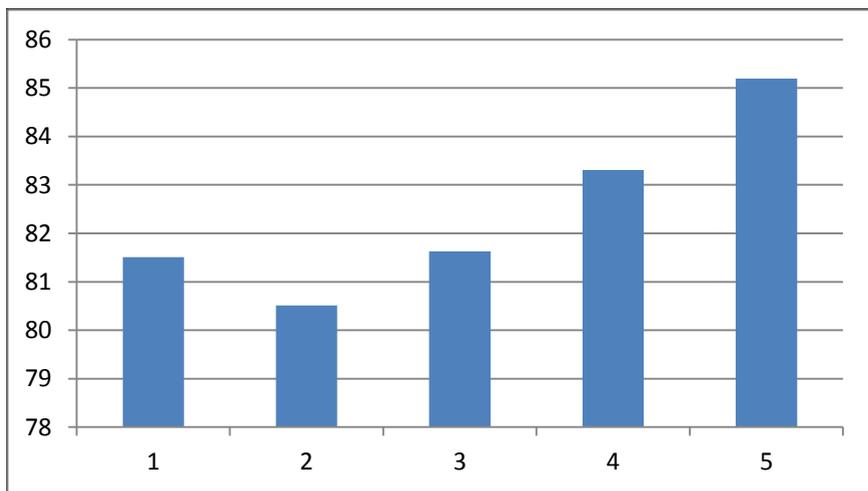
Table 2: The highest rated descriptors

The lowest rates in individual descriptors were located around the area of *Independent learning* and specifically in connection with school trips and school projects.

<i>I can evaluate the learning outcomes of school trips, exchanges and international cooperation programmes.</i>	60,3
<i>I can help to organise the school exchanges in cooperation with relevant resource persons and institutions.</i>	61,3
<i>I can set aims and objectives for school trips, exchanges and international cooperation projects.</i>	63
<i>I can plan and structure portfolio work.</i>	63,8
<i>I can plan and organise cross-curricular project work myself or in cooperation with other teachers.</i>	66,3

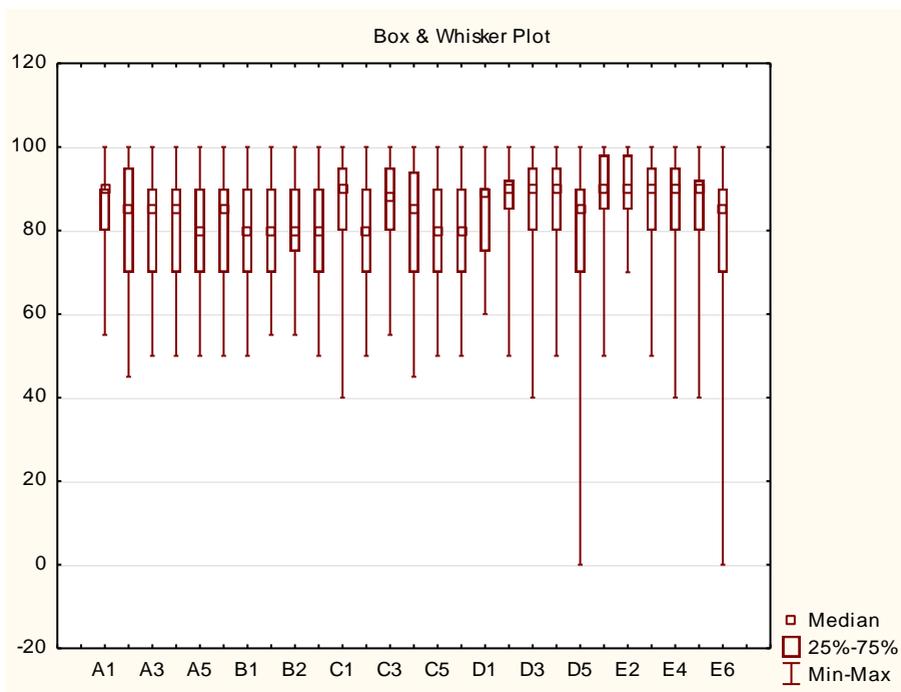
Table 3: The lowest rated descriptors

When we look at the area of *Conducting a Lesson* which can be interesting for us as a feedback on which elements of Methodology courses need more focus we can see that in this area descriptors are divided into subcategories: A – *Using lesson plans* (1), B – *Content* (2), C – *Interaction with learners* (3), D – *Classroom management* (4), E – *Classroom language* (5).



Graph 2: The average for each area of the EPOSTL

Individual descriptors within the area *Conducting a lesson* provide more details on where exactly trainees feel confident and thus it brings more information on how to modify the focus of seminars in individual Methodology courses. For instance, within the descriptors D5 (*I can supervise and assist learners' use of different forms of ICT both in and outside the classroom*) and E6 (*I can encourage learners to relate the target language to other languages they speak or have learned where and when this is helpful.*) it is interesting to note that the scores varied from 0 to 100 but 0 rates were not awarded by the same student in both cases.



Graph 3: Box and Whisker Plot for the EPOSTL area Conducting a Lesson

The descriptor E2 (*I can decide when it is appropriate to use the target language and when not to.*) suggests that most students feel confident here and this can be also said about the descriptor D2 (*I can create opportunities for and*

manage individual, partner, group and whole class work.). It is also evident from the graph 3 as well as from the data given in table 4. The least value was 70 and maximum 100. The average value was 90,05. The box plot is comparatively short what suggests that overall students have a high level of agreement with each other. Here we can also mention the lower and upper quartiles with borders at 85 and 98, where 50% of respondents can be located. Median value is 90, what means that half of the students evaluated themselves between 90-100 (the other 50% in the range 70-90).

Variable	Descriptive Statistics (EPOSTL_kat)					
	Valid N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
V_A1	37	84,54054	90,00000	55,00000	100,0000	11,34214
V_A2	37	82,43243	85,00000	45,00000	100,0000	14,88762
V_A3	37	80,81081	85,00000	50,00000	100,0000	15,08649
V_A4	37	81,18919	85,00000	50,00000	100,0000	14,74569
V_A5	37	80,24324	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	13,73642
V_A6	37	79,83784	85,00000	50,00000	100,0000	14,30717
V_B1	37	79,24324	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	13,51215
V_B2	37	82,43243	80,00000	55,00000	100,0000	12,01744
V_B3	37	80,16216	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	12,67875
V_B4	37	80,21622	80,00000	55,00000	100,0000	11,02052
V_C1	37	86,32432	90,00000	40,00000	100,0000	13,51553
V_C2	37	79,64865	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	14,04203
V_C3	37	84,89189	88,00000	55,00000	100,0000	13,10594
V_C4	37	81,89189	85,00000	45,00000	100,0000	15,28577
V_C5	37	78,78378	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	15,04278
V_C6	37	78,24324	80,00000	50,00000	100,0000	15,46574
V_D1	37	83,13514	89,00000	60,00000	100,0000	12,13847
V_D2	37	86,43243	90,00000	50,00000	100,0000	11,46623
V_D3	37	85,62162	90,00000	40,00000	100,0000	14,44213
V_D4	37	84,70270	90,00000	50,00000	100,0000	13,57257

Variable	Descriptive Statistics (EPOSTL_kat)					
	Valid N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
V_D5	37	76,64865	85,00000	0,00000	100,0000	23,21065
V_E1	37	89,10811	90,00000	50,00000	100,0000	11,56331
V_E2	37	90,05405	90,00000	70,00000	100,0000	8,83788
V_E3	37	85,62162	90,00000	50,00000	100,0000	12,44399
V_E4	37	84,45946	90,00000	40,00000	100,0000	14,38285
V_E5	37	84,81081	90,00000	40,00000	100,0000	12,77767
V_E6	37	77,10811	85,00000	0,00000	100,0000	22,42987

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for for the EPOSTL area Conducting a Lesson

One interesting fact that can be noticed from the table above, is that as many as 11 items show median at the level 90,00 which means that more than 50% of trainees rated themselves at this level or even higher.

Correlations (EPOSTL_katego.sta) Marked correlations are significant at $p < ,01000$							
N=37 (Casewise deletion of missing data)							
Variable	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
I							
II	,9467 p=,000						
III	,9432 p=,000	,9978 p=0,00					
IV	,8421 p=,000	,9008 p=,000	,9162 p=,000				
V	,8727 p=,000	,9289 p=,000	,9363 p=,000	,9773 p=0,00			
VI	,6180 p=,000	,6680 p=,000	,6732 p=,000	,6999 p=,000	,7132 p=,000		
VII	,7573 p=,000	,8069 p=,000	,8170 p=,000	,8367 p=,000	,8037 p=,000	,7657 p=,000	

Table 5: Correlations between individual areas

Looking at correlations (see Tab. 5) it might be said that in general there are strong correlations between the areas, e.g. there is nearly perfect correlation between the area II (*Methodology*) and III (*Resources*). The weakest level of relationship can be noticed between the area I (*Context*) and area VI (*Independent learning*) although even this relationship can be seen as a moderate correlation between the variables (0,6180).

Conclusions

Being ready to take over the duties of teaching profession at the beginning of the career seems to be very important in order to start building and maintaining positive attitude towards someone's job. Especially when it comes to educators it seems that due to many factors affecting the teaching profession it faces the risk of disillusion, feeling a high level of uncertainty and burnout effect.

Uncertainty of how to act as a teacher or feelings of not being prepared well for the profession did not seem to be present within the group of pre-service teacher trainees at the end of their training. It might be interesting to check on their progress after one year of teaching in order to see whether their strong belief in themselves had changed or got affected by the real life of a teacher. Novice teachers seem to enter the profession with the courage which might later decline due to the complexity of tasks and administrative agendas and school requirements. This fact was highlighted in the Woolfolk Hoy and Spero's findings (2005) and might be relevant also for this study.

However, even though it can be concluded that trainees overestimated their abilities in some areas, and that the perception of their self-efficacy is at very high level, the aim of the study was oriented more on the content of the Methodology course and the consideration whether trainees during their training get what is useful for them in the practice. For tutors it brings the feedback that the structure of the Methodology courses and the content which these courses focus on match the needs of every day teaching practice and reflect up-to-date reality. There is still a lot to consider especially within two areas which scored the lowest grades – *Learner independence* and *Assessment*. There might be more space created for the development of these aspects.

Last but not least using the EPOSTL as an instrument for measuring their self-efficacy disclosed that trainees considered beneficial the reflection on individual aspects of teacher's work. Their feedback supported the decision to use EPOSTL as a part of the teaching practice portfolio since it brought them closer to thinking about their own strengths and weaknesses: „it was kind of clearer to me

which things to think about in connection to my teaching. Before in the self-evaluation I just stated that it was fine and I achieved my aims, but this time I had to be really specific...”, „ there were too many things I could not answer properly because I had no experience with it (e.g. about school trips) so I just guessed...”

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Teaching language as communication in Polish primary school: Theory and practice

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Abstract

The subject of the analysis is teaching Polish language as a native language in a Polish primary school. The author starts with presentation of a structural concept of teaching a language, which is rooted in teaching methodology, and which is focused on description of language architecture and the consequences of this approach for teaching goals and methods. Next, she presents modern approaches to language education, which emphasize a communicative aspect of the language, its social and individual characters. She recalls the sources for the Polish proposition of teaching Polish language in a communicative way – the series of “To lubię!” [“This is what I like!”] textbooks – where the results of different scientific disciplines and methodologies of foreign languages were applied. The text also presents the elements of the maturation process of Polish education resulting in a qualitative change – a discussion on purposefulness of teaching descriptive grammar. The evolution of the document which is a basis for the educational system – the core curriculum presenting the scope of pupils’ obligatory knowledge and skills – was also important. The evolution emphasized teaching functionality and limitation of encyclopedic learning. It takes into consideration the necessity to teach not only linguistic knowledge but also the communicative one as it is a condition of effective communication and building comments adequate to the situation. Describing a today’s Polish primary school, the author pays attention to the return to traditions. It can be noticed both in the assumptions of the core curriculum and the construction of textbooks where grammar seems to be quite important. It is not always provided in a functional way, emphasising the possibility to use it in everyday language practice. However, the reform of the educational system adopted in the nineties, although it was not successful from the point of view of followers of the communicative concept, left some permanent traces in a form of different exercises emphasising the communicative language aspect which accompany traditional tasks of language description. It also resulted in many textbooks which can be selected by teachers who create their own vision of teaching the language.

Keywords

communicative competence, language teaching, Polish language teaching

Introduction

The goal of the treatise is an effort to characterise the basic tendencies in teaching Polish language as a native language in a Polish primary school. Its

influence covers pupils at the age of six to eleven. During the first three grades they are taught by one teacher who can freely combine range of problems typical for different fields. At this age we talk about integrated teaching, with no clear division to different subjects. The fourth grade is a kind of a caesura because this is the time when the lessons are divided to different school subjects which are taught by different teachers – specialists. This is the stage (4th – 6th grades) which is the subject of the work. One of the most important subjects at this stage is teaching Polish. Polish language is an official name for this school subject but the name does not reflect all the tasks that a Polish language teacher must face. The teaching goal is, first of all, to create some circumstances for pupils to get to know culture in broad-brush terms. So the subject covers film, painting, theatre, advertising, posters and pop culture... All these things appear usually in the context and with reference to literature – cultural texts are the context, the point of reference for reading or understanding literature. But because the conversation is carried in Polish the language skills are also very important. And this is where the main problem comes – how to teach this language, what should be emphasised: using the language, communicating, or describing the language structures. The long-term competition between these two tendencies I would like to make the centre part of my analysis.

Teaching Polish language as a native language in a Polish primary school has been balancing between two sides for many years. On one hand, communicative skills are thought to be a primary goal, but on the other hand, the importance of linguistic knowledge is emphasised, related to an ability to describe language structures.

Structuralist tradition

Since the beginning of the 1990s the structuralist concept was dominant in teaching Polish language as a native language (This is the perspective applied in the entire text so I will not repeat this information further), placing description of the language architecture and all its elements at the forefront. It resulted from Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism and it was deeply rooted in Polish didactics. Its strong position made the whole language teaching subject to 'collecting' the knowledge about the language. It also resulted in dominance of one type of characteristic lesson procedures, in the specific way of formulating questions and commands, and also in pupils' tasks/exercises that matched the concept.

The description of comprehensive structuralist concept of language teaching was made by Zenon Klemensiewicz, professor of the Jagiellonian University, at

the beginning of the previous century. He suggested a division of teaching goals to:

- theoretical-cognitive – paying attention to knowledge, the way it is transferred, terms, definitions, ability to describe language structures separated from the context,
- practical-normative – presenting the language norms and how to use them, it was about the rules relating the right word combinations, inflection and conjugation, creating sentences, etc. (Klemensiewicz, 1995).

He also presented the structure of a grammar lesson which is still present at school in its grotesque form. According to this concept, a grammar lesson should include three stages:

1. **introduction** that was supposed to arouse interest relating the presented issue;
2. **work** on new material when pupils, observing selected constructions, formulated conclusions relating the language structures and its functioning;
3. **consolidation** that was supposed to check the understanding of the issue using new materials and introduction of the acquired knowledge to the system already existing in pupils' minds (Klemensiewicz, 1995).

There is not enough place to describe details of the concept suggested by Klemensiewicz. However, although it paid special attention to structure description, it tried to show that knowledge of language structure can result in its correct usage. This idea, deeply rooted in Polish language didactics, made teachers concentrate too much on descriptive grammar knowledge and it was reflected in school teaching by presence of definitions, terms from the field of linguistics and textbooks full of tasks emphasising, first of all, presentation and transformation of ready sentence constructions with no clear practical goal. These actions were focused, first of all, on expanding knowledge about the language system. Opinions that we can try to teach grammar in a different way were rare and not popular.

Functional teaching

A suggestive analogy representing uselessness of the popular teaching concept was presented by Tokarski (1972). He questioned the sense of teaching grammar rules that do not influence practical language usage, comparing the school system to dismantling a watch in order to know what elements it is made from. But names and classification of watch parts do not make this watch work and show

the correct time and this is the real reason why the watch was made for. Only reassembling the watch make our actions rational. This comparison shows that teaching a language at school (definitely limited in the previous content) makes sense only when it makes pupils' speaking more efficient, mainly with respect to language stylistics. Because the reason for language existence is to use it in everyday life, and not only to be analysed and described. However, there were needed a few more years so that Tokarski's revolutionary opinions could have their followers, and even more years so that they could be applied in school practice.

The next proponent of this idea was Maria Nagajowa. The author's intentions are reflected in the title of her book – 'Study on the Language to Study the Language' – which clearly emphasises useful, functional teaching of descriptive grammar (Nagajowa, 1994). The author presents a model of functional grammar lesson, based on the method of practical activities with educational goal at the first place, when theoretical-cognitive and pedagogical goals are less important. She defines a new primary goal of study on the language as: development of skills of speaking and writing, ethics and speaking aesthetics; introduction to language correctness, spelling and punctuation; excellent thinking skills (Nagajowa, 1994). At the same time, she pays special attention to an ability to construct a written text because it requires better language self-control and awareness. Fluency at this highest and most difficult level shall be, in the author's opinion, transferred to other speaking activities. This broad goal is to be achieved using a method which is based on pupils language activities and grammar theory is only of supportive function.

Open to change

Because the influence of surroundings (also political, economical and social ones) and changes that take place around us affect the shape of education, this could also been clearly noticed in Poland in the 90s. The changes at the government level and general weaker control and censorship created good atmosphere for changes in education. Opening up education and training systems to the world, access to literature, experiences of the West, and also numerous foreign language schools which suggested different language approaches were also important factors. But first of all, it was possible to create new original school programs. What is most important, there could be many of them and it was a great change when compared to post-war Poland. With reference to new school programs, new, and first of all, different suggestions to teach Polish language started to appear, as well. In methodological magazines we could

observe discussions on the way how the language should be taught (Bakuła, 1994, 1996; Gajda, 1996; Nieckula, 1995; Zgółka, 1998). Limitation and even rejection of descriptive grammar at school was advocated because:

1. it is difficult or even impossible to answer the questions: what for and why should grammar be taught at school; what are social, psychological and pedagogical arguments for it;
2. we have inborn grammar and it is reflected in a form of language competence; there is no need to learn it but we should create conditions to use the language;
3. grammar is provided with a mother tongue so there is no need to learn it or to work on it;
4. grammar is natural so nobody works on it, nobody is aware of it; the need to talk about grammar is created by school;
5. only linguists force the rest of the society (the school society) to observe language structures; however, this knowledge is highly specialist and it should not be taught on a universal scale;
6. teaching grammar is not effective;
7. grammar nature (especially the structural one) is not of didactic character; it is object oriented and not subject oriented, as teaching should be;
8. in case of school grammar we teach notions without care for development stages, phases of shaping the notions, without taking into consideration the pupils' abilities to think in an abstractive way.

It was decided that, first of all, the range and arrangement of descriptive grammar was the problem, as well as its anachronism and lack of links with new subdisciplines of linguistics. The teaching methodology, that in case of grammar was usually limited to the already provided knowledge, was thought to be of poor effectiveness. The attention was paid to the old structure of textbooks, and first of all, to lack of functional perspective of teaching.

However, there were also some reasons mentioned why it was good to learn grammar:

1. it is the mother tongue's grammar;
2. language informs pupils about history, tradition and culture;
3. it helps to learn other languages;
4. it develops the ability of logical thinking;
5. grammar knowledge is an important element of education;
6. school should support children in meta-linguistic reflections;
7. language is a cultural good that should be protected (Szymańska, in print).

This discussion and sharing different opinions were particularly important for didactics of Polish language. First of all, it was a proof there were many things to be discussed. All the people who clearly stated that study on the language should be a part of school education could see some imperfections related to the issue, at the same time. They noticed the imperfections at different levels. They were discussing both the knowledge amount and its quality, and the quality of education (in case of pupils and teachers), formulation of goals and methods selected to achieve the goals were the reason of the most serious doubts.

The entire discussion, economic and social and political changes, better possibility to know other people's experiences and studies from the fields of language philosophy, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, linguistics or applied linguistics were the reasons why Polish school didactics paid more attention to the language which is a complicated multidimensional phenomenon, and not only a complicated structure.

Most often linguists emphasize two language aspects: its social and individual character. Although this combination seems to be contrary, it shows that in a language we can separate elements which are common for a given community and the ones which are typical for individual groups or even single individuals. With regard for numerous varieties, the language offers a speaker some possibilities to choose different language forms depending on the situation in which the speaker's utterance is created. Evaluation of the language is also different depending on the aspect which is thought to be more important. I will use de Saussure's division to *langue* (language) and *parole* (speech). The language architecture, discovering rules which allow building more and more complex sentences were more important for structuralists. And speech was more important for pragmatists. As Herbert P. Grice said: "speech is a special case of a deliberate, rational behaviour" (Grice, 1980, p. 96). Pragmatists emphasize the relation between grammar and pragmatics which are language components. This relation was characterized by Geoffrey Leech: "The language consists of grammar and pragmatics. Grammar is a formal abstract system which allows creating and interpreting messages. Pragmatics is a collection of strategies and rules that facilitate effective communication using grammar. At the same time, grammar is functionally adjusted, which means it has some qualities that allow pragmatic rules to work" (Leech, 1983, p. 76). So we can say that pragmatics makes de Saussure's concept complete. It introduces discussions on the role the language plays in everyday interactions, conversations and creating social relations. The description of the spoken, live language with individual characteristics was

possible thanks to philosophic categories, and especially the theory of speech acts (Austin, 1962, 1993; Searl, 1975) and, as a consequence, the communicative approach that allowed presenting the language in a more dynamic, anthropological and processual way. It was different than the previous one – the language as an existing, permanent and static structure which is less or more complex.

The development of communicative approach was influenced by one more theory – hermeneutics or art of interpretation. The starting point is the basic assumption that the world is of linguistic character from the hermeneutic point of view. The linguistics of the human world is expressed in the language which allows crossing the borders of places and time. Thanks to the language, humans can experience the world and define their place in the surrounding world. We can repeat what Hans-Georg Gadamer used to say – the language is the thing which makes humans different in the world, we “live in the language” (Gadamer, 2003, p. 24). Phenomenological hermeneutics goes one step further stating that language is not only a tool used for communication but it is something that helps to experience different things and learn about the world. This thesis is confirmed also by Gadamer: “Language is not one of the means by which consciousness is mediated with the world. It does not represent a third instrument alongside the sign and the tool, both of which are also certainly distinctively human. Language is by no means simply an instrument, a tool. For it is in the nature of the tool that we master its use, which is to say we take it in hand and lay it aside when it has done its service. That is not the same as when we take the words of a language, lying ready in the mouth, and with their use let them sink back into the general store of words over which we dispose. Such an analogy is false because we never find ourselves as consciousness over against the world and, as it were, grasp after a tool of understanding in a wordless condition. Rather, in all our knowledge of ourselves and in all knowledge of the world, we are always already encompassed by the language that is our own. We grow up, and we become acquainted with men and in the last analysis with ourselves when we learn to speak. Learning to speak does not mean learning to use a preexistent tool for designating a world already somehow familiar to us; it means acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with the world itself and how it confronts us” (Gadamer 2000, p. 55-56).

So we can think about a language as a structure which can be described but we should also emphasize the social context of language existence as it is a

phenomenon which allows communication. We can also look at the language as, first of all, a product of culture and an element of human existence.

Communication model

The tendencies observed in the didactics of foreign language teaching and the studies on achievements of different fields of science led in Poland to creation of the textbook series based on the concept of communicative teaching – “To lubię!” [“This is what I like!”] (Kłakówna et al., 1999) The teaching programme, that accompanied the textbooks, was one of the first programmes created at a grass-roots level, without the ministry’s initiative, and in a way, it confirmed the political change that took place in Poland in the 80s. The series was developed for a few years and it resulted in a proposition for all teaching stages. The textbook for every grade consists of three parts: one of them emphasises cultural-literary aspect and the other one is focused on the cultural-linguistic aspect, and third one is the book for teacher, although it is only an apparent division. The authors of the series, in the face of cultural and civilization changes, think the role of the Polish language subject is to fulfil two goals: to teach independence and art of communication which allow pupils to find their own place in the cultural world and to engage in a dialogue with culture, its products and other people. Working with the programme and the textbooks should result in integration (co-existence in one system) of the contents of different fields learnt during all Polish lessons – it was described as finding one thing in multiplicity and diversity and, in this way, it should support formation of pupils’ integrated personality. The necessary qualities of effective teaching included freedom for teachers and pupils to choose topics and work on them in their own way – of course it should be in line with the requirements of the core curriculum – and also functionality which means creative usage of the skills and knowledge acquired by pupils.

Focusing on the way of working with pupils’ language, designed by “To lubię!” curriculum, one can say that this work is action-oriented and it emphasizes pragmatic aspects. Communicative teaching is based on the theory of speech acts, according to which the language system is to build intentional utterances which can change the reality during speaking to a specific recipient, always in connection with the context. It means that when we speak we act; our utterances have some driving force. Thus, a school lesson shall mean observation, analysis and modification of pupils’ verbal behaviours in such a manner that they should meet intended functions, express the speaker’s intentions in specific circumstances. Children, working at various acts of speech, in written and oral forms, doing different exercises, learn consciously to construct effective

utterances relevant to the situation of communication. There is a tip to select the right behaviours in the form of pictures which can motivate and lead to utterances. All the time the attention is paid to the social aspect of speaking – pupils accept different roles and they change them in different interpersonal situations because only active participation in a dialogue can help them to work out the proper language behaviours, necessary for efficient functioning in the world.

Developing pupils' communicative competence through gradual separation of utterances from their external context is supposed to lead to ability of reception and understanding of the world presented in literary texts with only internal contexts. That is the reason why pupils should be taught to stay at a distance to their own utterances, using a didactic situational technique. It consists in current work on oral and written texts, produced by pupils during the lesson. Each language awkwardness or mistake require the teacher's attention and help to overcome difficulties. In this way the pupils become aware of the problem's nature and make an effort to solve it – to construct the utterance in a correct way, to find the right words which result in a natural development of the language. In the course of time, the pupils shall develop an ability of self-control and accurate speaking in any situation, an ability to interpret any element of reality verbally and to express themselves.

Situational teaching means also performing real events from social life during lessons, when children participate in these events or witness them. A school class becomes a "laboratory" where pupils, acting different roles, test behaviours possible in a given situation and build relations with other participants. These actions are useful from educational point of view, they teach valuing of emotions and behaviours, they teach to adapt to social roles and to conform to universal norms.

In the presented concept there was also some space for language theory. The authors did not create a model lesson scheme with a permanent moment of introduction of rules because the assumption is to prevent schematisation in any possible ways – the lesson form is always decided by the teacher's initiative although in the pupil's workbook and the teacher's book there are some suggestions and tips on how the lesson can be organized. Grammar knowledge is not completely ignored although the introduced material is significantly reduced and only the most important issues are selected. Pupils learn notions but with no definition at the beginning. It is to prevent mechanical remembering of the knowledge and is related to the human mind development – ability to think in an

abstractive way starts shaping up at the age of 11. So gradually, through observation of numerous language behaviours, pupils start to be aware of the phenomenon nature, they create a notion in their minds which is given the right definition by the teacher. Pupils, working in this way, are able to build this definition on their own and it is a natural consequence of acquisition, and what is more important, of understanding the notion. So it reversed the previous order: first the rule and then it can be used, but multiple use leads to the rule formulation. The rules, and the knowledge they need, pupils acquire only thanks to language actions.

A lesson model which is in line with the communicative concept was created much later and it resulted from the construction of the language textbook and school practice (Leszczyńska, 1998; Szymańska, in print). The classes always start with speech acts, i.e. creating/performing a situation that pupils know from their own experience. Of course, the situation can never be completely natural in the school surroundings but it does not mean we should not try to make it as close to the performed pattern as possible, we should let pupils take specific social roles with all their consequences for interpersonal relations. In this way, the pupils can feel their communication difficulties and the need to improve the created utterances in order to build best possible understanding with their interlocutors. This technique involves observation of pupils language behaviours and reflections related to them, their correctness and accuracy, resulting in correcting the things that could be improved. Communication skills shall be practiced later during the classes. Observing the language, changing and creating their own utterances, pupils learn to express their intentions in the most accurate way. Of course, pupils can be provided with a ready utterance template but in most cases the best results can be achieved if they are encouraged to formulate their thought on their own. Further work during the classes consists in independent creation of texts which are presented to the class after they are corrected.

The language education model, suggested by the authors of "To lubię!" idea, became an element of the Core Curriculum which was in force in the whole Poland – the document which presents obligatory range of education and is the reference for all other school programmes and textbooks. It involved also different, much broader, understanding of teaching a language and moving the emphasis from providing knowledge to education, improvement and development of abilities. It was the time of the reform of the 90s when it was emphasised clearly that knowledge should be the background for development of

different skills, such as speaking, and especially the language behaviour because teaching a language was expanded with the general context. The core curriculum of 1999 formulated the educational goals in the following way: "Supporting pupils communication abilities and introducing them to the world of culture, especially through: developing the ability to speak, listen, read and write in diverse situations of private and public communication" (Core Curriculum, 1999, p. 11).

The following tasks, set out for schools, were also the confirmation of the new language education approach:

1. **"Language education** and awakening aesthetic sensitivity.
2. **Improvement of communication competence, i.e. ability to speak**, listen, read, write, understand diverse cultural texts.
3. **Creating situations when the language is learnt while being used in a conscious and reflective way** (without gathering theoretical, abstract knowledge on the language system)" [bold letters made by MS] (Core Curriculum, 1999, p. 12).

Paying attention to development of communication competence, teaching the spoken language and using utterances in their context resulted in changes in the teaching methods, and, first of all, in introduction of the methods which emphasized learning through action, processing and active participation.

Developing Competences

One of the effects of the changes noticed in Polish didactics relating to teaching Polish language at schools was emphasis on development of various skills. In case of Polish language these were mainly language and linguistic skills, and later also communication, cultural, interpersonal skills, etc. Nonetheless, the important thing was that the changes made precise distinction between language awareness and linguistic awareness because there is a fundamental difference between these categories and it meant a lot for the teaching process. Talking about developing language awareness is useless if school emphasizes construction description, remembering names and definitions, and these things are tested. Such actions can be called, of course, the development of language competence but it does not change the fact that linguistic awareness, concerning structure, is the most important for school.

Three names to describe skills necessary to be achieved in the educational process function in Polish didactics. In the past we used to talk about language, system or communication skills. The term "competence" was more often used during the last decade of the previous century, although we can see in the

literature that both “skill” and “competence” are used. Communication competence was and it still is one of the main notions in the described curriculum and “To lubię!” textbooks, therefore understanding of this term was important for the authors of the concept. One of the basic teaching goals, according to “To lubię!” idea, is to develop children’s language. So a child-pupil and development of his/her language skills are the most important factors here. The next signals are: “abilities and knowledge”, following exactly this sequence. Abilities include language practice, testing language behaviours in new and different configurations, using diverse materials; always thinking about improvement of children’s language and a tendency to make some habits. “Language practice” is one of the crucial notions for this approach and, to a certain extent, it can be a synonym of communication competence. It is confirmed also by the teaching programme where the necessity to develop communication competence, understood as increasing repertoire of language behaviours which are adequate to communication situations, is clearly emphasised (Mrazek, 1998, 2001). Thus, we can say that practicing a language means using it in a functional way in a specific language situation. It involves appropriate lesson activities which prepare and create specific possibilities. Shaping and developing communication competence takes place at school, during lessons, when real situations – those remembered, experienced, probable and possible ones – are imitated.

It is easy to find in the described concept some influence of Hymes’ theory who writes that “acquisition of language competence is not a process which takes place in an abstract community but it works in a specific situation which is typical for environments where children’s integration into society takes place” (Hymes, 1980, p. 51). Treating an act of speech as an element of communication process allows us to analyse relations between an utterance and social and cultural conditions. Thus, language competence is not the same as learning the language grammar. It covers also social interactions between communication participants. Presenting the acquisition process of communicative competence in case of children, Hymes takes into consideration not only acquisition of specific number of sentences which are grammatically correct. They also should match the situation: “Speaking is governed by suitable rules that go beyond grammar, the acquisition of the rules is an element of the person’s competence and also meanings associated both with individual forms of speech and the act of speaking itself” (Hymes, 1980, p. 49-50). Hymes suggests that, studying competence, we should pay attention to five aspects:

1. system potential – how much we are aware of something; knowledge of system structures;
2. suitability – how effective something is; adequacy of utterance in a specific context;
3. occurrence – to what extent something is realised;
4. practicability – how possible something is if there are favourable external conditions;
5. ability – how much a speaker can use the knowledge in practice (Hymes, 1980, p. 51-53).

Children acquire also the ability to evaluate if and when they should say something, what and to whom they should say it, where and in what way. In a short time they gain the ability to participate in communication and even to evaluate other participants. “Learning the rules on how to create sentences that are appropriate for a given language does not guarantee a communicative success. In order to achieve this effect one must know to whom, how and what we can say, and what is inappropriate from the point of view of social norms” (Piotrowski, 1980, p. 95). An ability to adjust an utterance to the conditions of the social interaction is called sociolinguistic competence by David Decamp (Decamp, 1971).

An extremely interesting depiction of the problem was suggested by Kurcz (2005). She pays attention to the relation between language and communicative competence. Referring to the concept of division into implicit memory and explicit memory, she suggests we should also distinguish implicit and explicit elements in case of language competence. An implicit element would refer to Universal Grammar and an explicit one would be connected to metalanguage knowledge. Thus, we could say that every language user has some unconscious implicit language competence and we can describe its level on the basis of language behaviours (verbal and non-verbal) of language users. An ability to build a correct utterance is not accompanied by an ability to explain why a given construction is correct. However, conscious language competence (explicit language knowledge) can result from education and it allows pupils to formulate the rules that explain how an utterance is created. Language competence performs, first of all, representative function, being a presentation in relation to reality. From the point of view of didactics, it is necessary to pay attention to language competence property, emphasised by the researcher. It allows us to build correct utterances in an intuitive way, language knowledge is secondary in relation to an utterance/text. I. Kurcz writes: “I mean that nobody (even an

experienced linguist) is aware of these automatic procedures of reception and production of language information” (Kurcz, 2005, p.111). Kurcz suggests to describe communicative (pragmatic) competence in an analogous way to language competence. “Undoubtedly, also in this case we can talk about a form of explicit knowledge – let us call it metapragmatic knowledge – that allows us for conscious use of discourse rules or conscious formulation of appropriate oral or written texts” (Kurcz, 2005, p. 112). I. Kurcz suggests to use the name ‘language holistic knowledge’ for the combined competences (language and communicative ones).

Integration of language and communicative competences, suggested by Kurcz, shows important stages of learning to use a language. She pays attention to an inborn starting point of learning a language that can be also used as a base for education. However, it seems that the suggested name reduces this element of competence notion which emphasizes abilities, skills. And if we treat metalanguage knowledge as ability to name and describe language structures and their relations we seem to favour educational and school activities, instead of broadly-understood social conditions. In social life usually these types of language description are not made.

Summarising, we can say that communicative ability/competence consists of different abilities: language system ability, and social, situational and pragmatic competences. Only acquisition of all the above abilities can guarantee full and effective participation in social communication. It is conditioned also by unconscious elements that do not depend on a language user.

Emphasising the importance of language in every person’s life, Witold Doroszewski (1982, p. 24) wrote: “Homo Sapiens – an individual with mind, and Homo Faber – an individual effective thanks to manual labour. The Homo Sapiens and Faber could not be sapiens or faber if, at the same time, he could not be Homo Loquens – a speaking individual because if there were no speaking we could not shape mind and it would be impossible to convey messages, and thus, it would be impossible to expand experiences in any life area, in any scope of work”. W. Doroszewski pays attention to an extraordinary important ability of a man at every stage of evolution. He emphasizes that human development, although we have highly developed brains and we can use different tools, would not be possible if we could not communicate using a language. This is the speaking ability that makes our brains really meet, it allows us to share thoughts, meanings and opinions. This exchange takes place in natural environment for human life – the world of culture full of signs. Thus, it is obvious that one of the

most important skills of a man is using a language. And it does not only mean “I can speak”, “I speak”, “I make sounds”, but it does not mean “I can describe structures I use” either.

It seems we do not have to convince anybody about the importance of communicative abilities in the modern world. It is good if the abilities are accompanied by some awareness of the language means that are used. We can expect from educated people also the ability to build some reflections about the language they use. However, it does not seem to be justified to expect the same thing on an advanced level from primary school pupils who are at the age of 11 when they graduate. We can also think of effective participants of social interaction who communicate with no problems, although they do not have linguistic knowledge.

Observation of changes taking place in language teaching and studying different works related to the fields important to education, and first of all, important to the subject (linguistics, language didactics, and also philosophy, anthropology, psychology or neurobiology, among others) allow us to argue that teaching grammar is not in conflict with shaping communicative abilities. It is possible to combine knowledge on language structures with teaching approach aiming at communication in different situations and roles. One does not exclude the other. However, it would be best to set out the goals in such a way that the knowledge becomes an element that supports understanding the background. An element that is important for great, very good and maybe even for good pupils but it is not important for an average pupil. In the latter case the most important things are using the language and awareness how messages should depend on a speaker, recipient or context...

Observation of reality in Polish schools is not very optimistic in this field. It is easy to notice the importance of educational documents that are followed by specific textbooks and guidebooks in order to provide and systemise linguistic knowledge to develop linguistic competence. Functionality of the provided knowledge is often superficial. This reversal from communicative tendencies in teaching is confirmed also by the exam form applied after the 6th grade where more and more often we can find some questions on terms and definitions which strengthens teacher’s belief that there is no need to change anything.

Conclusion

The atmosphere of acceptance for a qualitative change in Polish language education did not last long. In fact, already at the beginning of the 20th century we could observe a slow reversal and going back to the old system, at the same time.

There is nothing to hide, this old system was always present in school textbooks and, first of all, in teachers' minds. An analysis of most of the modern textbooks proves that language structure description is extremely important again, from the point of view of teaching goals. But there is a trace of the battle for different ways of teaching Polish – almost in every textbook we can find exercises emphasising a communicative aspect of the language, although we cannot say there is a coherent concept. Very often they are only a kind of decoration. They are also a problem for teachers who are not willing to use situational methods during lessons. This reversal from shaping communicative competences is also visible in the most important document that organises the entire education in Polish schools – the core curriculum. Its numerous notes include a section called “Utterance reception” where the following issues are understood as the ones that are part of language awareness:

1. distinguishing basic member functions of the words used in utterances (subject, predicate, object, attribute, adverbial);
2. distinguishing in a text single sentences, compound sentences and complex sentences (adverbial and subordinate clauses), verbless sentences – and understanding their functions;
3. distinguishing basic parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, numeral, pronoun, preposition, conjunction) in utterances and pointing differences between them;
4. distinguishing in a text different grammar cases, forms of numbers, person, tenses – understanding their functions in utterances;
5. distinguishing the meaning of non-verbal means of communication (gesture, face expressions, mimics, body poses).

There is no sense to enumerate further examples. It is good the curriculum notes include goal operationalisation (“distinguishing”, “pointing”, etc.) because they point to an activity pupils should do and to the ability that is to be practiced by pupils. However, it does not change the fact that school reality (also the one designed by textbooks) is accompanied by defining, distinguishing, pointing, underlining, so simply remembering – it is as it used to be. To make it simple, sometimes we can say that an ability which is practiced most often is the ability to underline.

The conclusion is rather sad. We can say that in Polish schools communicative teaching of Polish language as mother tongue is conducted only in its residual form. It is rarely an effect of a well thought out concept but often it is only decoration. Working on development of communicative competence is limited to

filling gaps and building dialogues but it often lacks discussion, explanation why these actions are taken and reflections over language possibilities and stylistic value of the sentence transformations that were made. Observations prove that teachers are not willing to choose tasks which require situational methods, efforts to play different roles or to build communicative situations. Some of them do not understand the goal of such activities and some are afraid of disorder during lessons. This tendency is confirmed by rare presence of communication oriented "To lubię!" textbook at all educational levels in Polish schools, although in the 90s it was quite popular. It is preferred to provide and test "hard" language knowledge. It seems enthusiasm of the most creative teachers, who could attract more traditional pedagogues, is lost. After the times of progress and novelties education started to go back to traditions and habits. Maybe we should be glad that the textbooks have any communicative exercises. Maybe we will be able to save it.

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Portfolio-work and its effects on listening comprehension of very young learners

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Abstract

At elementary school the focus often lies on listening and speaking. While listening comprehension is the basis for learning a new language, children often feel differently about that. Many measure their success in their ability to speak. Some become frustrated, because they initially are not able to express much, not noticing how much they understand already. In my research I tried to find a way to help such children appreciate more what they have achieved so far. Through portfolio-work (self-evaluation and reflection) I wanted them to see what is 'unseen', as well as get them to think about strategies that improve listening comprehension, as the following study report shows.

Key words

portfolio, listening comprehension, very young learners

"I don't understand a word!" How frustrating for a child who has to learn a new language – and how frustrating also for the teacher. At elementary school level the main focus lies on oral communication, and thus on speaking and listening. Reading and writing are only of secondary importance, appointed a supplementary role by the current curriculum of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany (see MSW, 2008, p. 8). In the first weeks or months (or for some teachers even years) the implementation of the written form is frowned upon, if not rejected outright. Thus students in grade one and two have only the spoken form to rely on. And even those teachers who confront their students with the written form earlier on do so only sporadically. Thus much of what children accomplish in their first years of learning a language goes undocumented. This in itself is not necessarily bad, but it might be a disadvantage for students who need something more permanent than a functioning class discussion to be reminded of their accomplishments, those who need reassurance of what they have achieved so far, or who want to show their parents what they are able to do already. While speaking can be shown at home, its precursor listening cannot, at least not that easily. This is not the only fundamental difference in listening and speaking (see Wiedmann, 2005, p. 101). Listening develops much faster than speaking (see

Kierepka, 2012, p. 7), because it relies on different memory processes than speaking. The skill of listening comprehension uses recognition memory (see Böttger, 2005, p. 27) which is much more effective than the recall memory used for speaking (see *ibid.*), since it only needs a few important aspects to recognize a complete unit, and depends on analytic skills (see Hecht & Waas, 1980, p. 122), whereas for speaking every single part of a unit has to be present (see Böttger, 2005, p. 28) and synthetic skills are necessary (see Hecht & Waas, 1980, p. 122). Piepho (2005, p. 24) shows that it can take a very long time until words and chunks can be produced spontaneously. These structures have to be repeatedly heard and activated before they can be transferred from recognition to recall memory (see Böttger, 2005, p. 28). Thus children might know many words long before they are able to actively use them.

While this is only natural – in acquiring one's native language there is also an immense lapse of time between understanding and producing language – children (and often parents or even teachers) expect that young learners progress much faster. This can be discouraging for two reasons. For one, listening comprehension at beginners' level does not mean that a learner has to understand every single word. If a child, though, thinks that this is expected of him/ her, disappointment will soon set in. Another problem would be if a child focuses on his/ her productive skills as the only true indicator of accomplishment in language learning. Either view is unrealistic, but unfortunately not inexistent. In my own small scale study I wanted to investigate possibilities of improving listening comprehension in mixed grades, as I was teaching mixed classes of 3rd and 4th graders (at a time when English lessons were taught in grades three and four only). Within this research project I found that some of my 3rd grade students who claimed not to understand a word actually did understand quite a bit. This intrigued me, and so I focused my next research project on improving students' attitudes toward listening comprehension. My main interest was how to motivate such students, since literature research had brought to my attention that my students were not the only ones who underestimated their skills (see Joiner, 1986; Kolb, 2007; Oxford, 1993), and motivation is said to be one of the main factors for successfully learning a language, the force behind putting forth effort and not giving up (see Elsner, 2010, p. 23; Harmer, 2007, p. 98; Skehan, 1998, p. 38). Students with low self-esteem, such as the one mentioned in the outset, "*are likely to give up*" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 87). If, on the other hand, students experience success, or perceive what they can do as having accomplished something, they will stay motivated (see Bleyhl, 2005, p. 6; Harmer, 2007, p.

101). Demircioglu even goes a step further and counts recognition of students' successful performance on the teacher's part as part and parcel of raising or maintaining motivation (see 2008, p. 52f.).

Yet listening comprehension is "invisible" (see Rampillon, 1985, p. 69), taking place inside the head, and thus not to be observed directly (see Hermes, 1998, p. 221). It is thus not always obvious to the teacher, and with wrong expectations also to the students, what they have understood. Recognition, though, needs to be based on observable results. These observable results are often actions that students have to perform, or answers given to questions. Yet "[i]n listening there is no simple correlation between the student's answering a question correctly and the level of comprehension achieved by the student" (Flowerdew & Miller, 2006, p. 184). That is not to say that listening is not active. Underwood's definition highlights this aspect: "*Listening is the **activity** of paying attention and trying to get the meaning from something we hear*" (1989, p. 1, P. L. highlights), but for onlookers the one participating in a conversation seems to be more active than the one "just listening".

Rampillon (2000, p. 124) could show that a wide range of possibilities can lead to a student's correctly answering a question, ranging from complete guesswork to thorough understanding. Since the teacher can only assume the cause, be it due to the intonation, facial expression, speed of answering, overall proficiency, etc. but not be sure of what really led to an answer, the student's view can be helpful in rounding out the picture. To get the students view of how well he/ she understands classroom discourse individuals could be asked. Yet this is again not permanent, nor is it realistic to get all the students' opinion. Thus a learning diary or portfolio is a suitable alternative, which could also focus the students' attention on how they pay attention. While speaking in class can only be performed by one student at a time (and only when it is the students' turn, not the teacher's or the CD player's - in partner work more than one student can speak, but even in such conversation it is still limited to one of the partners at a time), listening is generally accomplished by all in class, save the ones who do not pay attention. To recognize this accomplishment, a portfolio or learning diary that is worked on by each single student, even by those who did not or could not participate actively, can help to acknowledge everyone's involvement. For students who think of having learned something in the new language in terms of being able to speak only this nicely leads the focus to more basic accomplishments and could thus raise motivation.

Another reason why some students might get discouraged as regards listening comprehension is the “*ephemeral nature*” (Gómez Martínez, 2009, p. 30) of listening itself. Once something is spoken it is usually gone. Comprehending a listening text, or spoken language in general, is thus an act of the moment and nothing that can be looked at later on, or brought home to show the parents. Of course, there are many listening exercises of the *listen and tick*, *listen and connect*, *listen and circle* kind, especially in course books for beginners, which children could show at home. Yet for onlookers it is often not obvious what the real task was (e.g. understanding single words, sentences, or complete texts; the speed or the difficulty of the input, etc.). Speaking (e.g. a poem or little dialogue), reading (e.g. a story book) or written texts (e.g. a self-made pocket book) can generally represent these respective skills much better. Additionally, though there are many of the above-mentioned kinds of tasks, observation has shown that the majority of tasks used at school were rather *listen and point* ones, which is just as transient as the listening text itself. Again, having something more permanent to document the students’ listening skills could help keep up the motivation. A portfolio would be especially helpful in this regard, because it is designed to make progress more obvious, for students work on the same pages at least twice. As someone who is growing usually is less aware of this fact than someone who sees that person only at intervals, so a language learner might not notice how his/ her language competence is growing, unless he/ she reviews certain aspects from time to time. For the aforementioned two reasons a portfolio (not a learning log or diary, or simple interviews) was chosen as a research-basis. Another reason could also nicely be tied in with portfolio work, as successful listening comprehension has to do with strategies as well.

It is a well-known fact that students, though all receiving roughly the same input, progress at different rates. Differences in success in language learning might be attributed to different learner types or personalities, or even, as hinted at before, different degrees of motivation, where someone who has stronger motivation puts forth more effort (compare Brehm & Self, 1989, p. 111). On the other hand, there might be students who have already had to learn a foreign language and thus know what to expect and how to go about learning yet another language. This is often connected to (language) learning strategies, “*the moment-by-moment techniques that we employ to solve “problems” posed by second language input and output*” (Brown, 2007, p. 132). Of course, it is not only children who have had to learn another language who use strategies, but it seems that strategy use is not evenly distributed among all learners, and that it is the

more proficient ones who use strategies best (compare Holden, 2002, p. 18; Chamot, 2004, p. 15), above all metacognitive strategies (see Kirsch, 2009, p. 174). There is no agreement in literature as to how strategies should be categorized (see Leeck, 2014, p. 62ff.), but since Chamot's and O'Malley's concept is a widespread one I will stick to it as well.

This already points to an important issue: can less proficient learners or even young children in general be taught strategies? As to the latter part of the question the age-factor certainly does play a role. The prerequisites for being able to use learning strategies develops with age (see Vanderplank, 2008, p. 718f.). The same holds true for memory strategies, which depend on meta-memory (see Holland Joyden & Kurtz-Costes, 1997, p. 282f.), something that, again, develops with age (see *ibid*, p. 286f.). On the other hand, children of elementary school age have long been underestimated as to what they can achieve (see Kolb, 2007, p. 309). And studies with older students (see Chan, 2000; 2001; Chau, 2006), who have not been trained in strategy use imply that *"the ability to use language learning strategies efficiently do[es] not happen automatically"* (Kirsch, 2009, p. 171). Rather, students benefit from strategy training, the weaker ones even more so than the others (see Goh & Taib, 2006, 222; Chamot, 2004, p. 25).

There is one potential downside, though, that needs to be considered: *"Good learners may do certain things because they have the prerequisite abilities to do so. Even if poor learners tried to do these things, they may not be able to and might have to improve their second language skills before they could use these strategies"* (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 386). This does not contradict the other sources that say teaching strategies is beneficial, especially for weaker students, but Gass and Selinker emphasize the need to help students discover which strategies work for them in which situation (see *ibid*; compare Flowerdew & Miller, 2006, p. 16). This seems important, because there is a wide range of possible strategies (see Leeck, 2014, p. 72), and not every student will use all of them. There might be individual preferences. Different tasks might also call for different strategies. In connection with listening comprehension different levels of understanding require different strategies as well. For this it is equally necessary that students know what is expected of them (see Hermes, 1998, p. 226). A look at the curriculum reveals that in grades one and two only basic comprehension is required (see MSW, 2008, p. 14). In literature this is often referred to as 'global' understanding, opposed to 'detailed' understanding. Rampillon (1985, p. 72) divides

comprehension even into three different levels (adding one between global and detailed understanding).

While most agree that effective strategy use does not develop automatically, but has to be trained, the question remains *how* this should be done. In literature differing opinions can be found, ranging from outright warning against overt strategy training, claiming this would turn out *“either a turn-off or a distraction”* (Holden, 2002, p. 18; see also Bleyhl, 2005, p. 4), to encouraging exactly that: *“Strategy training needs to be direct, overt and explicit. [...] Pupils are unlikely to develop strategies, if they do not understand how the teaching activities contribute to their learning”* (Kirsch, 2009, p. 183). To find out if direct and overt training can help improve listening comprehension for 2nd graders a portfolio that includes “strategy pages” was chosen, because part of the research was also to investigate how students could become better listeners, and it seems obvious that weaker students do not absorb what better students can do by osmosis. Kolb (2007) also pointed out that portfolio work encompasses more than training students’ self-evaluation skills. She highlights the need for recurring reflection phases (see *ibid*, p. 21).

In summary, it can be said that for the purpose of this research working with a portfolio seemed useful for several reasons: to motivate students the focus should be on what a student has already accomplished, not on the grade he/she might get. Portfolios focus on competences already reached (see MSW, 2009, p. 3), and through repeated work on specific portfolio pages this is even made more obvious. While documenting what a student has accomplished so far can boost his/ her motivation, increasing one’s skill in listening comprehension certainly does so as well. If teaching strategies help improve these skills then reflecting on strategies in connection with a portfolio should prove useful, too.

There are, of course, many different types of portfolios from which to choose. For this project the European Language Portfolio (Council of Europe, 2007), a course-book independent one, was chosen, mainly because the curriculum for North Rhine-Westphalia suggests it (see MSW, 2008, 23), and because research was done at different schools where different course books were used, which would have made using a course book bound portfolio impractical. (It should be mentioned that there is not one single European Language Portfolio, but all national versions and all versions addressed to different age-groups have to be accredited to be called European Language Portfolio, see MSW, 2009, p. 3). Besides, many course book bound portfolios are custom-made for each unit or set of units of the respective course book (see e.g. PLAYWAY), not allowing to

work the same page again at another point in time. Another advantage is that the ELP includes pages for reflecting learning strategies, which was the second focus of this research. As mentioned above, students were asked to reflect on what helps to improve listening comprehension, especially because “*teachers frequently expect students to develop their listening capabilities by osmosis and without help*” (Mendelsohn, 1984, n.p. in Oxford, 1993, p. 205; compare Brewster, 1991, p. 158), instead of teaching them to listen effectively (see Vandergrift, 2007, n.p. in Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2009, p. 63). Obviously it is assumed that since we are quite proficient in this skill in our native tongue and often take it for granted (see Hermes, 1998, p. 222), strategies for successful listening can simply be transferred to other languages. Unfortunately this is often not the case (see *ibid*, p. 223), likely due to the artificial language learning situation in school-like contexts (see Wolff, 1983, p. 291). It thus seems of utmost importance that children be taught basic listening strategies when learning a foreign language at school. It could be argued that this defies the very purpose of starting early, that young learners are not yet able to learn in such a way, or that teaching strategies to beginners is fruitless because they might still lack certain abilities “*and might have to improve their second language skills before they could use these strategies*” (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 368). Two research questions thus evolved:

- *Does regular portfolio work with its reflection phases improve elementary school students’ listening comprehension for the better, also as regards listening strategies?*
- *Does regular portfolio work improve the self-evaluation skills of such young learners?*

This led to the following hypotheses: Assuming benefits, the following is possible:

- H1: Regular portfolio work improves listening comprehension competences of even young learner.
- H2: Regular portfolio work enables these students to consciously think about and name different listening strategies.
- H3: Regular portfolio work enables these students to use different listening strategies.
- H4: Regular portfolio work enables these students to evaluate themselves more accurately.

These hypotheses are not new in a general context. They have already been proven to hold true for older learners (in a wider context, not applying to

listening in particular). Yet there might be a certain age-limit, under which it is not possible to train self-evaluation and strategy use. Thus the following hypotheses have to be considered as well:

H5: Despite regular portfolio work young learners show no significant improvement in listening comprehension.

H6: Despite regular portfolio work young learners cannot name different listening strategies.

H7: Despite regular portfolio work young learners cannot use different listening strategies.

H8: Despite regular portfolio work young learners cannot evaluate themselves more accurately.

The differentiation between H2 and H3, as well as H6 and H7 is an important one to make, because there is a difference in knowing about something and being able to use it. This is supported by Tings (2007, p. 4) who observed that especially younger children often did not notice which strategies they really used, though they could name useful ones.

To find answers to these questions it first needed to be decided on how to collect relevant data. To see whether improvement is not (only) due to natural development, the research design called for a comparison of a so-called *treatment-group* with a *control-group* (see Lettau & Breuer, n.d., p. 4). This is normally done in quantitative research, requiring a large amount of participants (see Winter, 2000, p. 3). On the other hand, there was not only the interest in checking improvements at certain intervals, but also in the overall competences of listening and in the reflection phases, which did not take place at prior arranged dates, but as need arose or as they fit into a lesson. This called for a research design of the qualitative kind – ongoing observation. The idea to observe the students listening skills during the regular lessons was based on the following two assumptions: For one, the ability to listen and comprehend is basis of every English lesson, since the better part of the lessons are kept to English. Thus checking comprehension only a few times a year would misrepresent the real picture. Another reason was that listening in “regular” lessons often requires different skills than “pure” listening comprehension in tests. Being present regularly would also allow one to see how students truly perform in comparison to what they evaluate in their portfolio. Especially at the beginning students’ own evaluation might not represent what they can really accomplish (see also Friebertshäuser, 1997, p. 371). Furthermore, being in constant attendance also

allowed to pick students for interviews based on their performance in class, not at random.

It has to be acknowledged that combining different methods based on different schools of research can make the actual research design complicated if not outright difficult. Quantitative research, such as comparing a *treatment-group* to a *control-group*, as mentioned above, usually requires a large amount of participants, where being part of one group or the other depends on coincidence (see Winter, 2000, p. 3), whereas qualitative research, such as observation and interviews, uses a much smaller amount of participant, which are usually hand-picked to have a heterogeneous but representative (see Bohnsack, 2005, p. 76) group of “types” (see Winter, 2000, p. 4). In this research there was one decisive difference between the main *treatment-group* and the *control-group*. There were children with different handicaps (aural perception problems, down-syndrome etc.) in the *treatment-group*. Thus the results were analyzed with this in mind (in the tables and graphs HA).

For this research a relatively small group of participants was chosen (all in all seven classes at three different schools, two of which could be observed regularly for a year and six months), where one class at each school was used as *treatment-group* while its parallel class(es) served as *control-group*. This design enables one not only to observe the students working on their portfolios, but also their reflection phases and how well they could follow the lessons in general. In literature, a combination of such kind is often referred to as *triangulation*, the idea being that such combining helps to improve the applicability of data, minimizing each research-immanent disadvantage while highlighting its advantages (see Kelle, 2001, p. 2). Thus, despite the conflict that arose in combining different research methods the advantages were found to outnumber the disadvantages, above all in covering different aspects of a student’s skill of listening comprehension.

To fine-tune the research design first a pilot study was started for about six months with three 2nd grade classes all taught by the same teacher. The main study was conducted at two other schools, again starting in the second half of grade two, but continuing until the end of grade three. In short, the research design consisted of the following constituents: a *treatment-group* that was taught by the same teacher as the *control-group* (to exclude differences in progress due to different teaching styles or methods) and had not worked with a portfolio before. The ELP (European Language Portfolio) was introduced to the *treatment-group* and worked on in combination with reflection phases. To compare the

ability to evaluate one's own listening skills, the *control-group* got to evaluate themselves with the same portfolio pages as did their counter-parts in the *treatment-group*, yet other than that the students of the *control-group* had not been involved in portfolio work.

A little adjustment had to be made as regards self-evaluation of the students. English sample sentences were read in jumbled order after each student had noted down whether they thought they would understand statements like "*Ich kann verstehen wenn mich jemand begrüßt*" (Council of Europe, 2007, G-21) (I can understand if someone greets me) or "*Ich kann verstehen, wenn mich jemand fragt, welche Hobbys ich habe*" (ibid, G-22) (I can understand if someone asks me about my hobbies).

The students in the *treatment-group* were regularly asked what helped them to understand. Strategies were called 'tips', as this word was known to the students. The *treatment-group* also worked on the strategy page in the portfolio (see ibid, G-14) and was, towards the end of the research, additionally asked to note down listening comprehension tips that they found most useful. The portfolio self-evaluation pages were worked on after completing one or two units each, amounting to a total of four occurrences.

Results

In this partially quantitative, partially qualitative study different hypotheses had been investigated. All in all there were four positive and four negative hypotheses each, which will be presented one by one to see which ones are supported by this study.

Regarding *performance* the following could be observed: at the beginning of my study the situation was quite similar in both groups, certainly due to the teacher teaching the same content with the same methods (except for the portfolio work in the *treatment-group*). Boys and girls could be found all over the performance-scale. Non-native speakers could also be found on different levels of performance, though most of them were at the lower end (see Tables 1 & 2).

The first portfolio-check (PF1) showed a small overall advantage of the *control-group* (see Graph 2), which the teacher had mentioned beforehand. This held true even for the regular students in the *treatment-group*, if the results of the disabled students are not counted. Yet regular portfolio work soon showed its effects. The *treatment-group* could improve their performance continually. Of course, that is what is to be expected even in any regular course, but comparisons of both groups brought out that already at the 2nd date (PF2) the *treatment-group*

had caught up with the *control-group*. If taken by themselves, the regular students even surpassed their counterparts of the *control-group*.

Taking a closer look at the results reveals that regular portfolio work helped especially the girls to move up in the performance-scale. Similarly the non-native speakers moved up, though among them there was no distinction between boys or girls. This advantage was kept up during all the following checks, whereas nothing changed in the *control-group's* original combination.

The improvement in performance that could be observed in the *treatment-group* is certainly partially due to the improvement of the girls and non-native speakers, though with a reservation. The disabled students (whether boys or girls, whether native speakers or not) could not catch up with their fellow students. The gap between the regular students' performance and that of the disabled ones became wider and wider (see Graph 3).

Hypothesis (1) *Regular portfolio work improves listening comprehension competences of even young learner* can thus be proven for regular students, especially for girls and for non-native speakers (among whom no difference could be made out between the sexes). For disabled students hypothesis (5) *Despite regular portfolio work young learners show no significant improvement in listening comprehension* seems to be more adequate.

These results give rise to several questions. The disabled students were left behind by the regular students in all aspects, in the portfolio-work, in regular listening comprehension questions, as well as overall performance during the lessons. Was this due to special demands of the foreign language, or can the same be observed in other lessons as well? Would a different approach to teaching such students a foreign language be of help?

Furthermore, the improvement of girls leads to further research questions: What could be the reason for such an obvious advantage of the girls over the boys? And would the boys catch up later on, or would the girls keep this advantage? It seems that the girls benefitted more from the reflection phases because they did not think as high of their performances as the boys and might thus have accepted help more readily (*strategies* were not named such, but either *tips* or *help* for listening comprehension). On the other hand, it might also be true that boys use different strategies from girls. This would have to be researched in another study. Some studies seem to suggest just this, at least as regards older learners, as Nyikos (2008) found out, while it also has to be mentioned that one of the studies by Ehrmann and Oxford could find no such proof (see *ibid*, p. 78).

The fact that it was mostly non-native speakers that benefitted from the reflection phases could be traced to the students' experience of already having learned another language. It could be assumed that these students bring with them prerequisites for learning another language that the others do not have yet. If that were true these students would be in what Vygotsky called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978 in Pinter, 2006, p. 10f.), a stage at which aid from outside helps to reach the next level. The conversations about strategies might have made the strategies that were subconsciously known to the students obvious and thus helped to improve their performance. Another study would have to investigate this aspect. At least it shows that what was mentioned before holds true for non-native speakers among the regular students: strategy training benefitted the weaker ones even more so than the stronger ones.

Another interesting aspect of this research results was that the otherwise proven disadvantage of Turkish students learning English (see Elsner, 2007; Groot-Wilken et al., 2007) did not hold true for the majority of the students in this study, because most of the Turkish students benefitted from portfolio work and could move up to the upper third of the performance scale. Of course, this was a small-scale study due to the qualitative aspects. Thus the number of Turkish participants is too small to make assertions of universal application. This would have to be tested with a larger amount of participants.

Regarding *strategies* newer research highlighted how even elementary school children actively work at learning a language (see Kolb, 2007; Tings, 2007), yet mostly this is still done subconsciously. The need to make strategies obvious was hinted at in literature, and in this connection reflection phases were made out as the single most important factor to raise the necessary awareness (see Kolb, 2007). Kolb (ibid.) found that young learners are often underestimated. Others also report that even with elementary school children processes for raising awareness can be used (see Palmer Parreira, 2011, p. 19), yet this is not due to simple natural development (see Kirsch, 2009, p. 171). Reports from other countries in which autonomous learning is of lesser importance show that e.g. metacognition (see Chan, 2004), as well as readiness to take on responsibility for one's own learning (see Chan, 2001) was only developed rudimentary even among university students, due to a lack of promoting these aspects. On the other hand, a large-scale study suggests that the best time for introducing the portfolio work in elementary school is the 2nd half of the 3rd year (see Drese, 2006). The above mentioned reports and studies were based on work with older elementary school students because at the time given English was taught in grades three and

four only in most federal states of Germany. This has changed, and with it the question whether an early start would not include an earlier starting point for portfolio work as well. (This research was purposefully concentrating on grade two instead of one. If there is an age-level under which no benefits can be reaped despite training, this has to be explored step by step.)

To find out which possibilities for development regarding strategy use (for this research confined to listening comprehension) could be expected with even very young students different types of data were made use of: portfolio pages, notes made during the regular lessons and the reflection phases, as well as interviews. This was to serve a two-fold purpose, namely to find out which strategies the students were already aware of and which ones they were made aware of during the reflection phases; secondly to see which strategies the students really used and if these coincided with the self-report of the students.

Comparison of the different data gathered revealed that in either group there were students that used strategies to improve their listening comprehension, independent from whether these strategies were talked about in class or not. How many students in each class used various strategies could unfortunately not be counted statistically. For one, this is due to the fact that not all strategies are observable. Then again, not all students participated equally, some hardly ever at all. It could not be made out whether these students would have used strategies had they be called on to show their comprehension somehow, or whether they did not participate precisely because they were lacking the ability to use strategies.

What was easier to ascertain was whether the students were aware of strategies or not. The first reflection phases showed that the students were to a large extend oblivious of strategies. Even though some of them already used some strategies, hardly anyone could name even one. This was true also for the students of the *control-group* in which the teacher had included once a reflection phase contrary to the planned research design about nine months after the start of the project. The actual research design did not allow for any further examination of the development of the *control-group* in this regard, but the *treatment-group* showed a steady improvement, not only in naming strategies, but also in evaluating their usefulness.

Additionally, analyzing the written documents on strategy use in comparison to the class discussions brought out that many more students could name useful strategies. Only one student could not say whether the reflection phases had helped him and two more said the tips were not useful at all. All three of them

were students at the lower end of the performance scale, two of them being handicapped. This highlights what Gass and Selinker (2001, 368) supposed, namely that there might be something less successful students have to acquire before they could benefit from any strategy training. On the other hand, the relatively long observation period showed that the majority did actually profit from the reflection phases, because they could not only name strategies, but became aware of which ones were more useful for them and which were not (compare Kolb, 2007).

Hypothesis (2) *regular portfolio work enables these students to consciously think about and name different listening strategies* can thus be assumed to be generally correct. For some weaker performers the opposite hypothesis (6) *despite regular portfolio work young learners cannot name different listening strategies* might be more applicable, though.

Hypothesis (3) *regular portfolio work enables these students to use different listening strategies* can be confirmed only partially, since not all students could be equally well observed in their use of strategies (or lack thereof). Not participating in classroom discourse is certainly not only due to a lack of strategies but also personal factors, lack of interest in the topic at hand or the like. Since some strategies are to be observed more easily and more accessible also to the children, a further research project could concentrate on singling out some of these strategies. One of the strategies that was quickly noticed by the students was *looking for similarities in German and English*, though this was later rejected by many as less useful.

Generally the results showed that children were able to work with a portfolio long before the “ideal time” for introducing it, since the cognitive abilities of the children allowed conscious discussion of strategies and their usefulness. It would thus be important to find out what exactly weaker students need to benefit from these reflection phases as well. Another aspect would be to test this kind of portfolio work already in grade one to see whether 1st graders would also benefit from it, or whether their cognitive development would not allow working with a portfolio appropriately.

A final criterion that was to be investigated within this study was *self-evaluation*, especially since this requires metacognition which younger elementary students are often said not to have. At least the honesty of the students in self-evaluation is often called into question.

Before portfolio work was initiated the students of the *treatment-group* (as well as all others observed and found in literature) tended to underestimate

somewhat good to excellent performances, while weak performers overestimated what they could do. The *control-group* in the main study was in this regard an exception, because most of the students in this group overestimated their performance by far.

During the study an interesting development could be observed. At the second self-evaluation the students of the *treatment-group* evaluated their performance lower than at the first date. This tendency has been described in literature and points to the fact that students first have to become aware of what it means to understand a word/ sentence. Many students having to estimate their performance the first time equate having covered a topic in class with knowing the words (see Kolb, 2008, p. 202). As time went by, though, the students learned to evaluate themselves more accurately. This was first observed among the regular students (at the 3rd date), yet at the last date (PF4) even the disabled students could evaluate themselves more realistically. A comparison with the *control-group* highlights the influence of the portfolio work. Whereas the students of the *treatment-group* had learned to evaluate their performance the students of the *control-group* still overestimated what they were able to do. This goes in line with earlier studies done with a little bit older children that showed how portfolio work helps to build up language learning awareness and strategy awareness only if accompanied by regular reflection phases (see Kolb, 2007). The fact that even disabled students, who could not improve their performance, had learned to evaluate themselves more realistically equally supports earlier studies. In them regularity was shown to be more important for successful implementation of reflection phases than a student's IQ (see Pressley et al, 1991; 1992).

Hypothesis (4) *regular portfolio work enables these students to evaluate themselves more accurately* holds true for regular students as well as for handicapped ones (see Graphs 3, 4). It thus supports the general impression that portfolio work is useful and beneficial even for very young learners.

At the outset it was mentioned that while the focus of learning English at elementary school lies on listening and speaking, most students would think of learning a new language only in terms of being able to speak that new language. Some might get frustrated, if expressing themselves in that language might not work as they would hope. This research was designed to make students aware of what they could already accomplish, as well as ways of improving their listening comprehension. The results of the study point to a clear benefit of using portfolio and reflection phases in a combined portfolio work to support students, though it

also raised some questions. One that was not mentioned in this study report is the time factor, though the results seem to justify any time spent on additional aspects. There are also many more benefits that could not be mentioned in this short study report, yet I invite all elementary school teachers to start early and introduce portfolio work even in beginners' lessons of English (and any other foreign language).

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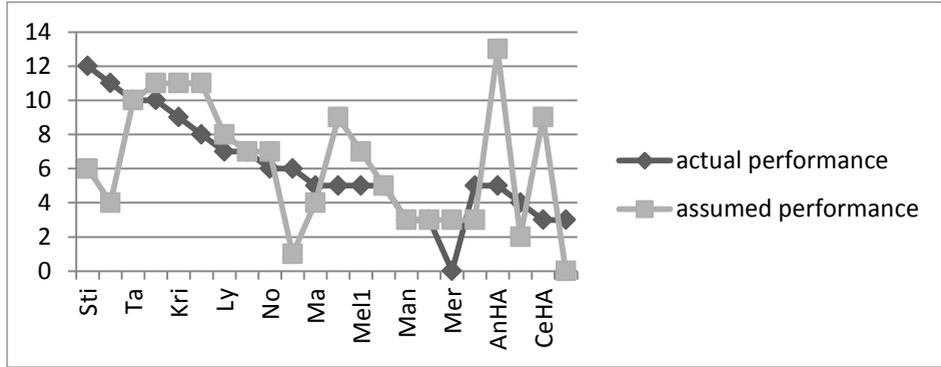
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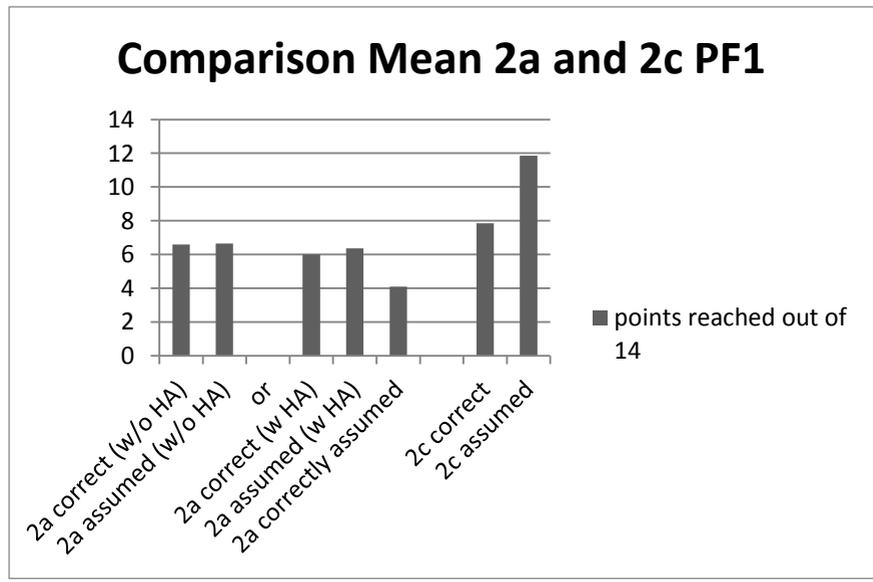
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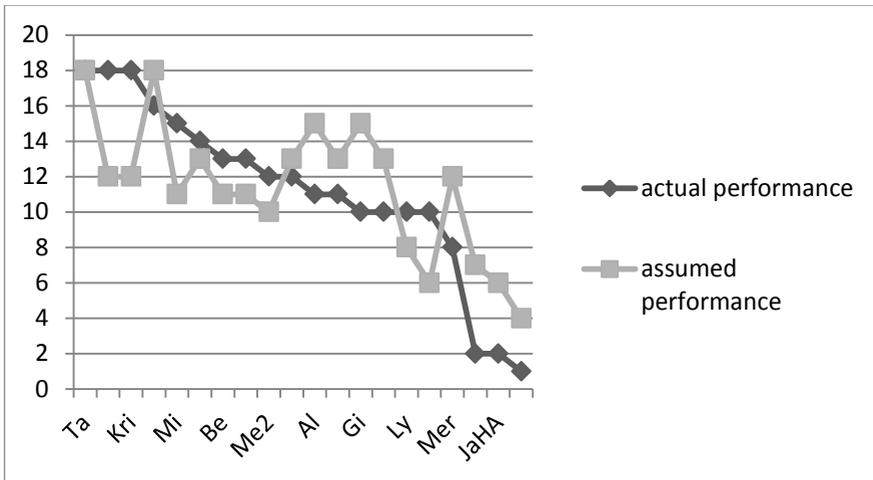
Appendix



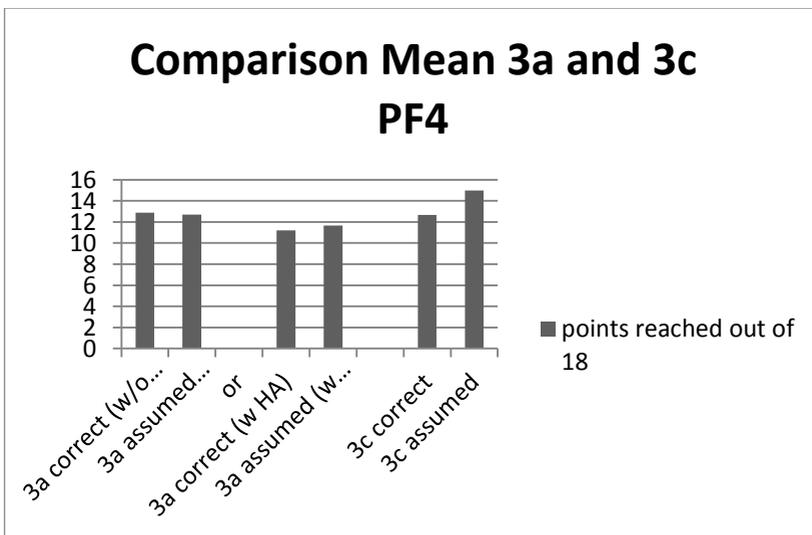
Graph 1: Comparison of assumed and actual performance in listening comprehension of *treatment-group* 2a, PF1, 04.05.2011



Graph 2: Comparison of Mean of both groups; first portfolio evaluation PF1



Graph 3: Comparison of assumed and actual performance in listening comprehension of *treatment-group 3a*, PF4, 06.06.2012



Graph 4: Comparison of Mean of both groups; last portfolio evaluation PF4)

PF 1	f	m	f	m	f	f	m	m	f	m	f	m	f	f	m	m	f	f	m	m	f	m
PF 2	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	m	m	m	m	m	m	f	m	m	f	m				
PF 3	f	f	f	f	f	f	m	m	m	m	f	m	m	f	f	m	m	m	m			
PF 4	f	f	f	f	f	f	m	m	f	f	m	m	m	m	m	f	m	m	m			

Table 1: *treatment-group*, analysis of performance in portfolio work according to sex and native tongue; f = female, m = male; * = disabled student; grey = non-native speaker

PF 1	m	f	m	-	m	m	f	m	f	f	m	m	f	f	m	f	m	f	f	m	m	m	m
PF 2	m	f	f	m	f	f	m	m	m	f	m	m	f	m	m	m	f	f	f	m	m	f	
PF 3	m	m	f	f	m	m	m	m	f	m	f	m	m	f	-	m	-	m	-				
PF 4	m	m	m	f	m	m	f	m	m	f	f	m	m	m	f	-	m	f	f	f	f	f	m

Table 2: *control-group*, analysis of performance in portfolio work according to sex and native tongue

Note: For the graphs (see graphs 1 and 3 in this article) the best performance was placed on the left side, getting lower as one proceeds from left to right. This pattern was kept for tables 1 and 2. The tables thus show that at the first date (PF 1) girls and boys were evenly distributed among all levels of performance in both groups. Similarly, children with migration-background could be found all over the distribution scale. The *treatment-group* shows a different pattern from PF2 onward, showing the effects of portfolio work. There are no similar changes of pattern in the group without portfolio work.

Digital portfolio in building teaching efficacy of pre-service teachers

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Abstract

The paper discusses the role of e-portfolio in development reflective thinking in a group pre-service English as a foreign language teachers. It stresses the benefits it can bring (e.g. autonomous learning, cooperative learning - the author highlights the social context of e-portfolio) as well as presents the threats and risks it might bring based on the own experience of the author. The results of this case study showed that the process of e-portfolio building can enhance professional development, self-confidence and the ability to self-reflect own work and progress. The author indicates also the possibilities of its use not only in the groups of pre-service teacher trainers but also in the groups of in-service teachers.

Key words

e-portfolio, self-reflection, self-confidence, cooperative learning

*We cannot teach people
anything; we can only help
them discover it within
themselves.*

Galileo Galilei

Introduction

Essential teaching skills are frequently discussed issue. Kyriacu (2007) summarises (based on other researchers, e.g. Child, Perott, Waterhouse, Wrag) seven essential teaching skills – lesson planning, lesson presentation, lesson management, classroom climate, discipline, assessing pupil's progress, reflection and evaluation (self-evaluation). Self-monitoring and self-assessing, evaluating of own current teaching practice has a significant impact on the educational process, learner and mainly the teacher/himself/herself. We have mentioned (see above) seven essential teaching skills and it is especially the ability to receive and perceive objective self-reflection, accepting constructive criticism is one of the basic skills that are necessary to develop the six other skills.

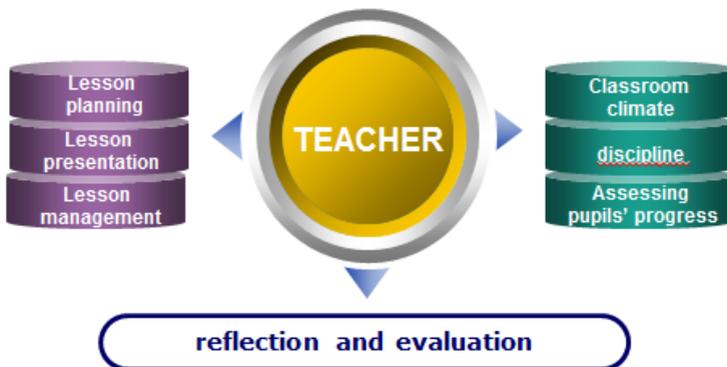


Fig. 1 Essential teaching skills (Kyriacu, 2007)

Černotová (e.g. 2010) have mainly been interested in questions concerning teacher trainers at schools, mentors, the quality of teaching practice and cooperation between the universities and teacher-training schools. She provides in-depth analysis and draws our attention to significance of reflection and analysis of the lessons on the efficacy of pre-service teachers. In her studies she reported that the biggest problems students (pre-service teachers) see in insufficient number of lessons and insufficient analysis of their lessons; and supervisors would like to receive more support from the university, especially methodology teachers.

Teaching practice and self-development

Reflection is closely connected with feedback, ability to analyse our activities and to deduce the conclusions leading to improvement of future practice. In educational process, every lesson is a source of information about the way we teach, about the way learners learn as well as a source of information about us.

Self-reflection and self-evaluation belong among the key components of a teacher's personal and professional development. The significant part of this process is the analyses, evaluation of the process and drawing the results followed by the conclusions and setting the aims for further teaching practice. Self-reflection enables teachers to reflect their performance, to learn more about their strengths and weaknesses. The analyses and evaluation of the situation

contributes to the satisfaction and brings new challenges. The process itself leads towards self-development.

It has been mentioned that self-evaluation is a significant component of self-development. There are various Self-evaluation conceptions and here we bring Petty (2009, p. 517), who discusses the experiential learning cycle (see also Kolb) cycle and defines four phases:

1. **Concrete experience.** Petty stresses the importance of experience of teaching. At the same time he mentions that lack of practice „is often not the major difficulty in learning to teach“.
2. **Reflect on experience.** Petty highlights that „Reflection involves a systematic and objective evaluation of the student’s ‘concrete experience’“ (2009, p. 338)
3. **Abstract conceptualisation.** In this phase teachers should answer the questions such as – Why was the lesson effective? or Why did I fail to achieve one of the set aims? The result of this phase are the generalised reasons of the success and failure.
4. **Plan active experimentation.** “Bearing in mind what you have learned from experience, you ask questions such as ‘What would I do differently if I taught that lesson again?’, ‘What shall I do differently next lesson as a result of what I have learned?’ and ‘What new methods, styles or techniques should I try out in order to improve my teaching?’” (Petty, 2009, p. 517)

Learning as such is a cyclical process and thus every lesson leads us towards further experimentation, gaining new experience that must be analysed and the further steps should be suggested and verified.

Hupková and Petlák (2004, p. 33-34) define six steps that lead from self-reflection to self-development:

1. *self-reflection*
2. *self-evaluation*
3. *self-confidence*
4. *self-control*
5. *self-regulation*
6. *self-creation*

Perceived teaching efficacy

In this context the terms *personal teaching efficacy* and *general teaching efficacy* should be mentioned. Gavora (2010) defines them as follows:

1. „*Personal teaching efficacy (PTE)* represents a teacher’s belief that he/she possesses the skills and abilities to facilitate student learning, that is, it is the

teacher's overall sense of his/her own teaching effectiveness". It is represented by the statement *If a pupil's grade improve, it is because I found a way how to adjust teaching him/her.*

2. „General teaching efficacy (GTE) represents the belief that teaching (as an organisational form of education) can affect pupils positively, even in light of external factors or conditions such as low motivation or poor home environment". He provides a sample item for the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) instrument: *A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because it is the home preparation that shapes a pupil's motivation.* (Gavora, 2010, p.22).

Gavora (2008) claims that the way teacher perceives his/her abilities is the most significant self-regulation feature in his/her work – teacher's self-evaluation has an influence on his/her approach and attitude towards pupils and the quality of his/her activity in the class. The teacher activates his/her academic and professional competences based on the level of self-regulation and acts accordingly. Based on the academic studies and research he summarises the basic findings about the teacher perceived efficacy:

- teacher himself/herself creates his/her perception about his//her efficacy and it is not given
- it is created relatively early - as soon as in the stage of preparation for teaching profession at the university and is gradually developed at the beginning of teaching
- it is to certain extent a subconscious, normally teacher does not intentionally analyse it.
- it is relatively firm (permanent), does not change rapidly and based on accidental moments
- it can reach different grades. It can be perceived as a scale from low to high persuasion (belief)
- it is specific in particular situations. It can be discussed as a teacher perceived efficacy according to the type of school, subjects taught, and the particular educational situations (Gavora, 2008).

Pajares (2002, n. p.) states that "Teacher self-efficacy has become an important construct in teacher education, and teacher educators should continue to explore how these beliefs develop, what factors contribute to strong and positive teaching efficacy beliefs in varied domains, and how teacher education programs can help preservice teachers develop high teacher self-efficacy."

Gavora & Majerčíková (2012) point out that the personal efficacy is the persuasion about the ability to reach something in one's profession without regard to his/her real competences. It involves such constructs as the ability to influence the pupils' results, their discipline, ability to solve the learners' learning problems at school, etc.. The perceived efficacy effects teacher's decisions in what and how (s)he acts in the class. High self-efficacy results in selecting more difficult task, high level of employment and involvement, and good emotional attitude. On the other hand teachers with low sense of efficacy are frequently described as those who emphasize rigid control of classroom behavior, and rely on extrinsic inducements and negative sanctions to get students to study (see Pajares, 2002).

Concerning the teacher efficacy and its impact on the educational results it has been mentioned that it is created in the phase of pre-service preparation. The research showed that „Pre-service teachers have reported an increase in teacher efficacy after their student teaching experience (Hoy, 2000; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Woolfolk, 1998). However, the length of the student teaching experience, whether one semester or two semesters, does not appear to impact perception of teacher efficacy (Chambers & Hardy, 2005). Egger (2006, p. 15) reported that „Novice teachers' perception of teacher efficacy tends to decline during the first year of teaching with increasing concerns about student discipline (Hoy, 2000; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Onafowora, 2004).

Numerous studies have attempted to explain the significance of efficacy beliefs and Pajares (2002, n.p.) suggests that the efficacy beliefs of teachers are associated to their instructional practices and to various student outcomes and we select some of them:

- “Teachers' beliefs of personal efficacy affect their instructional activities and their orientation toward the educational process.
- Preservice teachers' sense of teacher efficacy is related to their beliefs about controlling students.
- Teacher self-efficacy also predicts student achievement and students' achievement beliefs across various areas and levels”.

As it has been indicated teaching efficacy is linked to self-regulation what is a part of self-development, similarly as self-reflection and self-evaluation. The results of the researches draw our attention to a group of pre-service teachers who form their attitudes and beliefs during their university studies.

Portfolio in language teaching

The term *portfolio* is traditionally explained as a collection of investments that are owned by a person or organisation. This term nowadays is more broadly understood and it also defines the term as a set of pictures or other pieces of work that an artist, photographer etc..

Granberg (2010) understands portfolio as a tool that can be used in education and identifies three borders between e-portfolio discourses - portfolio as an archive, portfolio for assessment, portfolio for learning (see fig. 2).

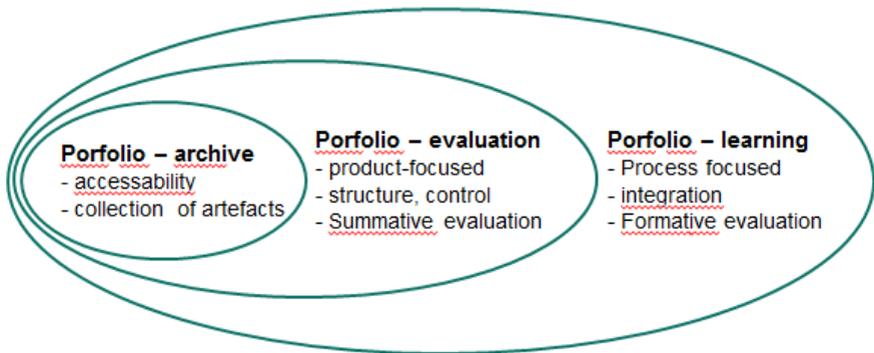


Fig. 2 Three identified borders between e-portfolio discourses: as an archive, for summative assessment and as a portfolio for learning (Granberg, 2010).

Crow and Mitchel (2006, p.12) categorise 5 types of portfolio:

1. assessment portfolios (examples of the owner's work for viewing by others for assessment purposes);
2. showcase portfolios (the best examples of the owner's work, usually formatted in date order);
3. development portfolio (allows the owner to monitor and plan their own development);
4. reflective portfolios (allows the owner to review their own development; typically shared when the owner is applying for a job, or wanting to highlight work to other);
5. hybrid portfolios (combination of two or more of the above).

Use of portfolio is not a new topic at our schools. European language portfolio has been used since 1997 when it was experimentally introduced to Slovak schools. It is a collection of pupil's materials that document his/her language abilities and at the same time it provides a space for recording one's own language progress. Compilation, organisation and work with portfolio is inevitably connected with the process of material evaluation and self-evaluation what is connected with the learner autonomy and development of critical thinking. The language portfolio consists of Language biography, Language passport and Dossier.

Ten years later EPOSTL (The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) was introduced to University students - pre-service English language teachers (the document is available online at <http://www.ecml.at/epostl>). The EPOSTL is a document intended for students undergoing their initial teacher education which encourages them to reflect on the didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages, helps them to assess their own didactic competences and enables them to monitor their progress and to record their experiences of teaching during the course of their teacher education (see Newby et al, 2007a, 2007b) and its aim is to encourage students to reflect on their competences, to help prepare students for their future profession in a variety of teaching contexts; to promote discussion among students, and between the teacher and students, mentor, supervisor and students, to facilitate self-assessment and to provide an instrument which helps chart progress.

The main components of EPOSTL are personal statement (philosophy and motivation, general questions related to teaching); second part is a self-assessment section mapping what students can do, facilitating reflection and self-assessment (the items can be found in ELP in the form of 'can-do' descriptors, see figure below) and the third section is Dossier in which students collect their materials that form the evidence of progress and it enables to record examples of work connected with teaching, e.g. lesson plans, feedbacks (from students, mentors, teachers).

Students' portfolios are used at the teacher training faculties (especially to map their progress and problems during teacher training but also as the outcomes in other subjects). We received an interesting feedback from Lucia, our student, who answered the question about the possible use of portfolio after graduating university as a novice teacher positively but added *Yes I will, but I am happy, nobody reads it anymore and I do not need to follow the prescribed structure*. It is surprising as the students were informed that portfolio is written

for them and not for the mentor or methodology teacher, that it is not necessary to type them etc. On the other hand we tried to help them by suggesting the possibilities how to solve particular situations, to encourage them if needed. This was done with the aim to teach them how important and beneficial communication and open discussion, sharing experience with the colleagues can be. Compiling portfolio leads students to critical thinking, rational and pragmatic approach to problem solving and to building the competence to setting the clear aims.

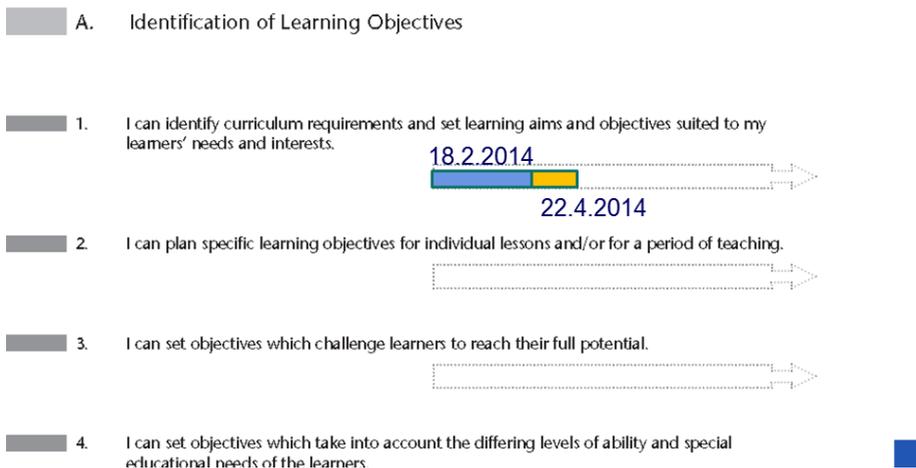



Fig. 3 EPOSTL. Self-assessment section

Teacher trainees are, compared to in-service teachers, constantly forced by their situation and context to learn, observe, analyse the lessons as a part of their compulsory education. Students must systematically self-reflect their work and draw conclusions for their future career. They keep records, documents about their work and progress in portfolio. They describe the context of their teaching,

lesson plans and the analysis of their lessons, self-evaluation, material description, learner profiles etc..

The in-service teachers must be intrinsically strongly motivated to realise those steps regularly.

This part describes portfolio and its benefits for teaching practice what Blake et al. (1995, in Takona, 2002) summarises as „... a systematic and organized collection of evidence used by the teacher and student to monitor growth of the student’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a specific subject area”. Portfolio helps to create and build own teaching philosophy, methods, approaches. At the same time it enables to present the quality of teacher and at the same time it documents his/her professional development. In case of objective reflection and analyses it can identify and formulate the areas for improvement. Next part moves on to describe in greater detail electronic portfolio and the phases of its compilation.

ePortfolio and phases of its compilation

Electronic portfolios can be created using different technologies. Here we mention the selected possibilities:

- Digital portfolio (e.g. CD, materials digitalised to electronic media)
- Blog (standard blog, that enables the entrance of the community to the content, still there is usually a fixed structure and its recording and keeping may sometimes be difficult)
- ePortfolio websites – portals, web sites created for this purpose (frequently as a result of projects)
- iWebfolio – electronic portfolio management system, commercial software (student aimed)

Edgerton, Hutchings & Quinlan (1991, p. 4-6, in Kaplan, 1998) summarise advantages of teacher portfolio in 4 points:

1. Captures the complexity of teaching (portfolio contains evidence and reflection in the context of what is being taught to whom under what conditions; portfolio can present a view of a teacher’s development over time, etc.)
2. Places responsibility for evaluation in presenting their own teaching accomplishments so that evaluation is not something done “to” them (teachers present results of their work and thus they are directly involved in evaluating their own work; portfolio enriches the evaluation and extends the evaluation beyond the classification of learners, etc.).

3. Encourages improvement and reflection (portfolio creations automatically leads to reflection, what enables comparison of the expected and real outcomes; in case that portfolio is accessible to other teachers, it enables the mutual enrichment).
4. Fosters a culture of teaching (portfolio can provide a rich and contextualised source of evidence about teaching achievements that can be used for a variety of purposes, including evaluation, improvement, summary of faculty careers, and defining “good teaching” in a department” (Kaplan, 1998, p. 4).

Portfolio goes beyond the regular evaluation as it covers the evidence from different sources, as e.g. syllabus, student work samples, self-reflection, research reports, teaching and teacher development. The process of material selection leads teacher to think about his/her teaching, methodology, approaches what leads to the improvement in teaching practice.

As one of the main benefits we see that it enables colleagues to mutually enrich each other. Making portfolio accessible to other colleagues enables them to comment it, to discuss its content, evaluate it and learn from each other.

Ur (2009, p. 6) based on the Kolb's theory suggests the so-called enriched reflection. Kolb defines four modes of learning, namely: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection that lead to and are followed by abstract conceptualisation and generalisation. This cycle is further closed by an active experimentation in concrete situation. This cycle entails further concrete experimentation. Ur (2009, 7) also suggests to enrich the model, resp. every mode by “external sources of input”. She highlights that this process of reflection can be shortened in case of use of experienced teachers, experts, researchers and from reading, video recordings etc. (see Fig. 4).

To create space for enriched reflection we may use virtual learning environment (VLE) where one of the components is ePortfolio. Teachers have to realise not only advantages but also drawbacks and risks that use of technologies bring, especially certain technical skills is a must, problem with internet success, availability (and price) of a system.

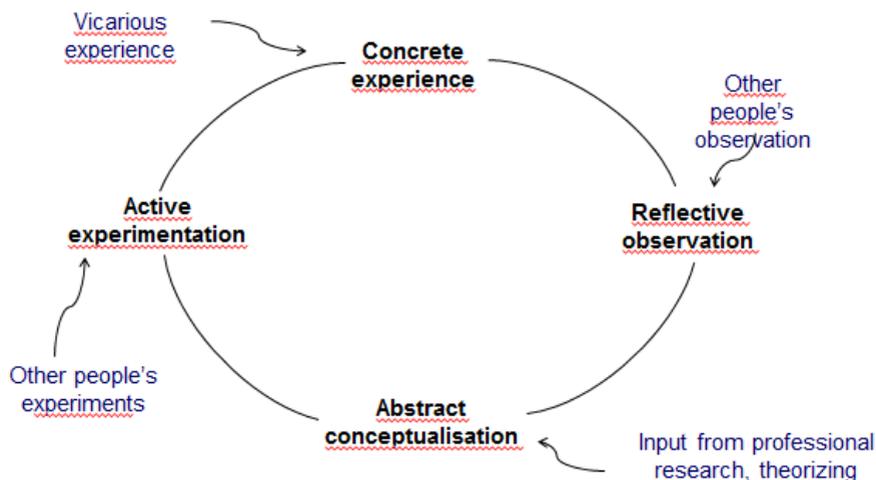


Fig. 4 Enriched reflection (Penny Ur, 2009)

Use of e-portfolio in pre-service teacher training

One of the main rules in portfolio compilation is not to create materials for portfolio but to use portfolio to organise materials that were created for teaching. Portfolio compilation is not a short-term activity; it has been already mentioned that it is a document that maps the process and progress and thus it is not possible to create it ad hoc. Trunda (2012) defines four phase of teacher portfolio compilation. The first phase presents data collection. The second phase is self-evaluation of a teacher. Based on the collected document he/she should be able to reflect his/her activities and set the areas of possible improvement. In the third phase the portfolio should be presented to the institution (e.g. school management in case of in-service teachers, methodology teacher in case of pre-service teachers). The open dialogues leads towards the clarification of attitudes, values, aims, tools and instruments for their achievement. The questions of usually structured dialogue are known in advance. The teacher sets the plan of professional development in the fourth phase. Plan can be done together with some more experienced teacher.

Currently, there are many institutions that develop their own environment for creation digital portfolios and/or recording materials directly into the developed system. At the University of Presov we use (as an alternative to face to face

communication and/or to support in-class lessons) learning management system (LMS) Moodle. Regarding EFL classes and communication the tools that are most frequently used are forum (sometimes wiki) where students e.g. can write feedbacks on their lessons, observations and then community (methodology teacher and classmates) can comment on it, and chats where student synchronously discuss the topics (chats are recorded and available for later retrieval). In this way they enrich the self-evaluation by their opinions, recommendations and alternatives.

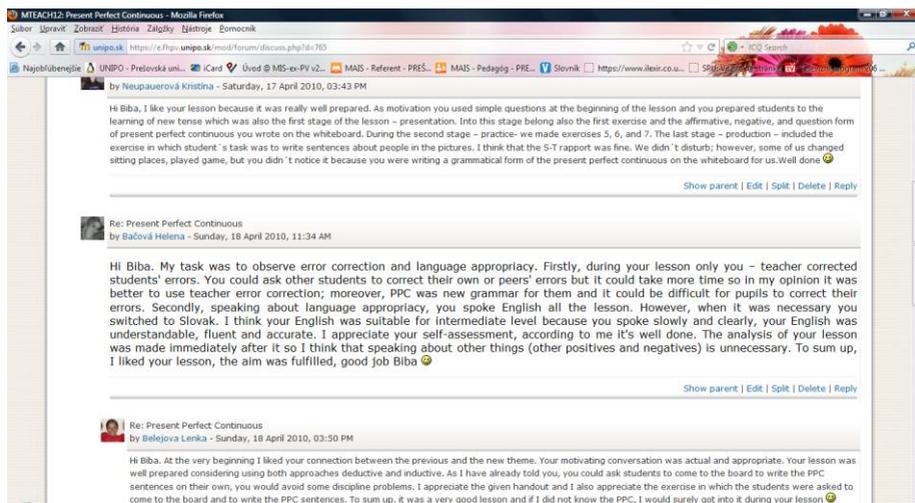


Fig. 5 Sample of feedback in LMS Moodle

Similarly, the forum can be also used for academic debates. Asynchronous communication provides a space for discussion but also it is persistent and thus anyone in a group can reach data also afterwards. Different tools enable teacher to lead statistics about the students' performance. The fact that the messages are permanent leads learner to higher attention (compared to in-class discussion) and thus they think more about what to publish, how to formulate it, how to sound academically, how to contribute to a discussion.

ePortfolio in perspective

Essential teaching skills must be developed in the pre-graduation preparation and students must understand the necessity of self-reflection and feedback for

their personal growth and teacher development. It is equally important for them to learn to direct, to face, to take constructive criticism (both, positive and negative).

VLE creates the space for enriching the dimensions of traditional paper portfolio with further components and/or tools that help to build autonomous development of future teachers but also provide an access of the community to their materials. Using VLE provides the space for forum implementation (discussed above), introduction of the e-courses that can be used for self-study (the courses can also be identified based on the self-evaluation), e-reflection as an individual component (based on the structure of VLE and e-portfolio).

The screenshot displays a Moodle discussion forum interface. At the top, there are controls for displaying replies in a nested form and a 'Move' button. The main content consists of three posts:

- question** by Lenka Štramová - Friday, 1 February 2013, 10:05 PM: "My student has ADHD and although it is hard to keep him focused on something for a long time, he works very well when we switch activities quickly. I even believe he does remember many things while we have our sessions, yet everytime I try to repeat things that we have learned in the previous lesson (either grammar or vocabulary) he does not remember almost any of these things. What should I do to help him not forget things he has already learned?"
- Re: advice :)** by Vlasta Aľušková - Sunday, 3 February 2013, 03:03 PM: "I would say that you should try to give him some short and easy activity or exercise as homework. In this way he will be compelled to look at things you did with him and maybe it will help him to memorize it better."
- Re: question** by Zuzana Matejova - Wednesday, 6 February 2013, 01:15 PM: "In my opinion, in the future sessions like these, you should base the lessons on the repetitive principle. For instance, you can involve games or other kinds of activities (on previously learned vocabulary, phrases, etc.) into every third or fourth lesson."

Each post includes a user profile icon, the post title, author name, date, and time, the main text, and a set of action links (Edit, Delete, Reply, Show parent, Split).

Fig. 6 Sample of discussion in LMS Moodle

One of the most important benefits is that VLE and e-portfolio offer is the possibility of the entrance of the teacher training supervisor into the reflection and self-reflection process (see Fig. 8). Discussion is thus open not only to the trainee, his/her student-colleagues, methodology teacher but also the person

who may have a significant influence on student and his attitude towards future profession who is his/her teacher training supervisor (an in-service teacher).

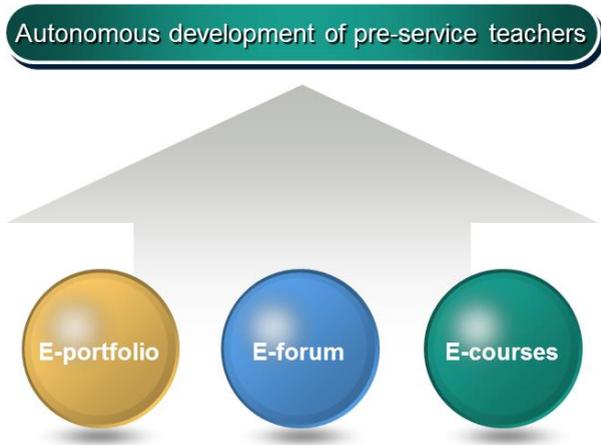


Fig. 7 Possible components of VLE for teacher trainees

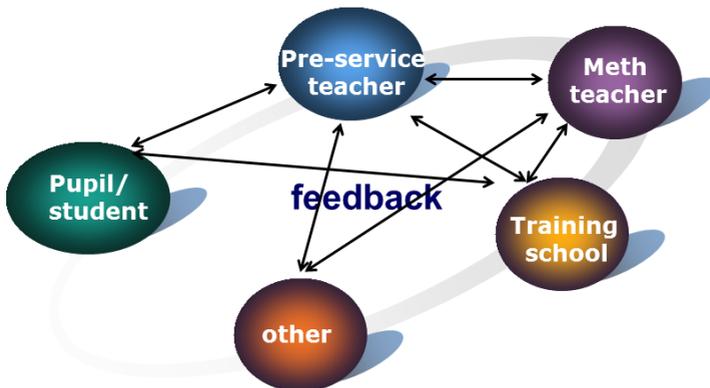


Fig. 8 Enriched feedback in LMS Moodle

Usually students who come for teacher training to schools are tabula rasa for supervisors. The e-portfolio with its components and artifacts such as lesson or study plans, critiques of the lessons, personal writings and reflections, student work samples can be useful tool for acquainting a student before he/she comes for teaching practice. This means that traditional reflection and discussion before and after the lesson student has to teach can be enriched. The additional value is that it is also a space for communication between the methodology teacher and supervising teacher.

This relation is an important connection of the academic and real world.

Conclusion

Teacher portfolio is the evaluation tool that can present the qualities of teacher. In case the portfolio should become a part of the institutional (school) culture it is necessary that teachers understand its value and do not perceive it as another burden or bureaucratic issue in their work. It might be useful not to set, prescribe the form (electronic or paper version), on the other hand it might be beneficial to set the compulsory sections (items), recommended and elective ones.

What is probably more important is the biggest strength of portfolio (as a source for self-reflection) what is that teacher has to set the mirror to his/her work and to critically and constructively look at his/her activity. Its gradual improvement (recorded in the portfolio) is a motivating factor for his/her further development what is also reflected in his/her work, classroom atmosphere and their results. What more, VLE enables the broader community to enter the university space and thus to increase the objectivity of the owner's evaluation. This helps also to build teaching efficacy that influences teaching and learners. It is important to form the attitudes towards self-reflection (as a basis for self-evaluation, self-control, self-regulation, self-development) in the phase of pre-graduation period as those beliefs and habits have an effect later on their teaching efficacy and teaching itself.

Acknowledgment

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Prolegomena to the epistemology of languages for non-specialists: the example of CLIL

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Abstract

CLIL has attracted the attention of LSP teachers worldwide and generated much literature. As a teaching and learning tool, it is frequently referred to in pedagogy, but a lot less in the epistemology of didactics. The present contribution aims to show how CLIL is an interface between conceptual research and practical implementation but that it cannot serve as a conceptual tool in the shaping of didactics as a field of research. Instead, concepts should be understood as context-dependent; they also vary with the subject matter to which language is connected (English for law differs from English for science) and therefore need the contribution of human sciences to emerge in their own rights.

Keywords

LSP, CLIL, concepts, epistemology, interdisciplinarity

Introduction

In the research field of language teaching and learning, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) plays a central part in that it combines the theoretical features of cognitive theory and the practical characteristics of a pedagogical tool. It appeals to teachers because it does not necessitate the acquisition of a scientific background in order to implement it; in fact, it seems to have emerged from a hands-on experience of teaching and learning a language by resorting to activities instead of drills and grammar exercises. As to students, even if CLIL does not automatically result in the real mastery of a language, it appeals to their sense of motivation to a greater extent because it aims to imitate real life experience of language use, thus emphasizing the importance of context in the learning process.

Saying that any research project begins with providing definitions is commonsensical, but such a process must overcome several obstacles and is limited in scope (Soler, 2002). According to Wittgenstein, the form of the *a priori* definition is purely analytical: indeed the traditional proposition $S=P$ is equivalent to saying $A=A$, since resorting to words, which are signs, in order to

define a word, also a sign itself, leads to a tautology and, thus, to a *regressio ad infinitum* (1922, p. 49). There are however other paths to the definition of a concept or an object, one of them consisting in an *a posteriori* description that resorts to the analysis of practices. This bottom-up procedure corresponds to what specialists of language teaching and learning do when they need to assess the impact of teaching instruments like CLIL in the classroom in terms of language acquisition. Another method consists in adopting a more normative, top-down approach by using key concepts borrowed from other fields of knowledge and research; this is what the authors aims to examine in the present contribution.

But to justify this approach needs further examination of an epistemological kind that entails a thorough introspective analysis and criticism (Piaget's "internal epistemological criticism") carried out by the specialists of the target domain. The aim of such an analysis is to legitimize our practices because what is at stake is crucial to the development of the didactics of languages: it ranges from student's language acquisition to the building up of a scientific knowledge based on teaching instruments or tools like CLIL that are still in need of more foundational justifications. Researchers in the area of language and language for specialists use tools and methods borrowed from social sciences, notably sociology, so as to reach the highest scientific standards as in hard sciences. Yet, it seems that they have neglected to take the epistemological dimension – which differs from mere theory - into account (De Bruyne, 1974), something that social sciences have done by integrating the theoretical, epistemological and practical approaches in their research domains. As De Bruyne puts it, "in every researcher there is a philosopher; and there is a necessity for it, due to the problems encountered in any research process, viz. the nature of the explanation, of the facts, the validation of procedures, etc." (ibid., 41).

Like all cognitive and pedagogical experiments, CLIL has generated a lot of literature, and a lot of different denominations corresponding to its various local applications, and so far no less than 33 of them have been identified (Eurydice, 2006, p. 7) and designate a bi-/multilingual approach in which the target language is used to teach and learn a subject matter on a complementary basis (Garcia & Baetens Beardsmore, 2009, p. 208). Among them, there are numerous acronyms in the English-speaking sphere, like Dual Focussed Instruction, Teaching Content Through a Foreign Language, Content Based Language Teaching, Bilingual Content Teaching, etc.

Context (which comprises the subject matter, the institution in which it is implemented, teacher training, exposition to the target language, duration of the exposition) is in fact of paramount importance with CLIL, since the latter has emerged in the 19th century in countries with several official languages, like Luxemburg (bilingual education was implemented there as early as 1843, and trilingualism – French, Luxemburger and German - was adopted in 1913) and Malta, or, later on in the 1950's, where minority languages were given some status as well as the possibility of being taught at school (this was the case in Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, or the UK, especially Wales and Scotland).

The variety of context and application makes a complete recension difficult to carry out, and it is also hard to see where it may lead in terms of scientific output: we know what loosely connect all these implementations, but we have no clear idea of what result would such comparisons yield. Yet, one cannot help but think that CLIL, by bridging the gap between cognitive theory and pedagogical practice, may be used as the cornerstone of the epistemology of the didactics of foreign language teaching and learning precisely because both are theoretical and practical. What needs to be done is to analyze how CLIL can be instrumental in the creation of a concept that could both describe what didactics consists of and how it operates on the field. More importantly, it is crucial to show that a purely didactic approach tends to neglect the role played by the subject matter in the analysis of CLIL's impact on teaching and learning.

The present contribution aims to provide a three-tier approach to concept-building and to epistemological analysis in the following manner: first, by assessing how CLIL can be defined as an instrument, a tool. Because they are purpose-built and context-dependent, tools have no existence of their own but connect to each other by means of analogy; what they point to is not their particular efficiency and performance, but to the design that lies behind their use: beyond CLIL, there is a conception of language teaching and learning that comprises rules in changing contexts, more than it deals with the particular connection with the subject matter to which the target language is associated; in that perspective, references will be made to Heidegger's concept of "Tool" (*Zeug*).

Our second point will examine how this underlying conception of teaching and learning can be defined as a « language game », as Wittgenstein puts it, that remains just what it is, an experiment in language teaching and learning, specially designed for classroom scenarii, because it only imitates real life experience of language use. The utility of the « language game » lies in its capacity

to encapsulate a classroom experience and differentiate it from the complexity of the « forms of life » (to quote Wittgenstein again) to which it is attached. This will lead to our third and last point, which will show how these language games can only take any special significance when seen in connection with the subject matter they aim to teach, and assume a more ancillary function. For what really matters is to focus on the territory (as Deleuze and Guattari have defined the term) formed by each discipline so as to determine how language teaching and learning adapts to their particular culture; this will enable the researcher to establish correlations between languages for non-specialists (Language for Law and Language for Science) so as to determine its key characteristics and how to adapt teaching and learning techniques to its requirements, and, for each language, how the local, historical, institutional contexts impact the teaching and learning process in different countries and school systems.

The limits of CLIL as an epistemological instrument

The variety of CLIL-like implementations in language teaching and learning testifies to its connection with context and particular situations. A recension of all the forms of CLIL teaching will serve a limited purpose, which is to find the common points in all of them beyond the surface differences. However, finding the constant features gives the appearance of unity, when CLIL is a rather flexible, umbrella term, and is more interesting in its differences than in its common characteristics. The reason for this lies in what it aims to encapsulate, namely a particular type of exposition to a foreign language through the mediation of a given subject-matter. And the term which epitomizes best what CLIL is all about is “Integration”, which is more or less present in many of its parent acronyms. This process is not specifically studied “either out of political and institutional necessity, or out of didactic and scientific ignorance” (Gajo, 2009, p. 18).

“Integrated learning” refers to the purpose of CLIL, that is, the manner in which it connects language teaching to the experience of language made by the learners. In a very concrete way it also states what is being done, how it is done, and with what results, on an *ad hoc* basis. A tool, according to Heidegger, has no meaning in itself except that it creates connections with other tools so as to form a chain of meanings that constantly refer to one another and signals the “tool-like” characteristics of other objects. The ultimate function of tools is to create an ambient world, dominated by a sense of purpose and of utility; it is thus a particular way for beings (also referred to as *Dasein* in Heidegger's terminology)

to relate to the world according to a specific modality called *preoccupation* (1925, §16, p. 107); in our case, this world of preoccupation reveals itself as such through the following connections and layers: language teaching techniques connected to subject-matter teaching (teacher's competence), language and subject matter knowledge acquisition (cognitive gains for learners; all this constitutes what Heidegger calls the "wobei der Bewandtnis", ie. the aim of the activity and of tool usage), real-life experience of language that necessitates verisimilitude in classroom scenarii and activities, something akin to "project-based teaching and learning" ("Womit der Bewandtnis", ie. the means by which the activity is carried out). So if CLIL contributes to the creation of a world that shares features with real life, but remains attached to the social codes of school, it does not refer to anything else but itself and its avowed purpose; in that sense can it be said that CLIL, like other tools, is self-referential and cannot speak or points to anything beyond itself. Even the concept of "integration", if it is analyzed from the practical classroom implementations or the institutional programs, can only be measured in terms of "balance", "degree", or "complementarity" between language and subject-matter. One particular issue it does not address is that of teacher training, and the type of combination needed to effectively balance out the cognitive benefits of subject-matter teaching and language acquisition. Indeed teachers of CLIL are either specialists of the subject-matter and have enough skills to teach it through the medium of the target language, or they are trained as language teachers and they adapt their teaching to the terminology of the subject-matter, but do not initially have much in-depth knowledge of the topic. What this entails is that one of the two fields will remain in an ancillary position, while the other will dominate, to the extent that the status of CLIL in the teaching landscape is seen either as a language class with some cultural references to the subject matter, or a math/ history/ literature, etc. class taught in a foreign language. Is it meant to foster immersion in that language or to signal the importance of that language in many different contexts? All these answers lies beyond what CLIL can say about such issues. What nevertheless emerges from these remarks is that there is a strong correlation between CLIL and a game, the goal of which is to use a particular type of narrative in order to teach language in context. More specifically, the second point of this contribution will show how the notion of "language game" as defined by Wittgenstein, can broaden the scope of analysis and foster a better comprehension of the relation between language and subject-matter in a social and institutional context.

CLIL as a language game

In his *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein defines language games as the association of language and any given activity (§23), which includes most of what we do in our daily life, and expresses the essential features of any given society, something that Wittgenstein calls “forms of life” (§19). The language game is also made of rules that cannot be described outside the performance of the activity itself (§75). Another characteristic of “language games” is their autonomy from material states of affairs: for instance, cooking a dish is a game; it is linked to language if one follows a recipe, but it has a pragmatic purpose, that of preparing food that will be eaten. By contrast, a game of chess has no other purpose than itself, and the rules of chess do not influence life in any concrete manner. Now language is what enables humans to create a world of reference, but in so far it takes the form of the proposition, which can be attributed truth values: a proposition means something when its truth can be assessed. Now, if we apply this definition to CLIL, what strikes immediately is its relative autonomy from the professed institutional aims it purports to reach:

1. It claims to improve language acquisition by grounding this process in a real life activity (learning through a different subject-matter); however, if field research clearly indicates that learners feel less inhibited and can use the target language in a greater variety of circumstances, there is no evidence that acquisition will automatically reach the higher tier of the CEFR grid (i.e. the C1/C2 levels). In fact, the Common European Framework is also a tool that facilitates language skills assessment in order to allow a better integration in the target “form of life”, but at varying levels. Besides, it does not even mean that language usage will be increased outside the classroom, which, after all, should be the main goal of language acquisition. Yet, in the classroom, it functions like a game, with its rules, and it may function quite well.
2. The degree of integration of language teaching requirements and subject-matter teaching procedures is difficult to evaluate, to the extent that attributing facilitated acquisition to one or the other is not easy to determine: the operation by which learners reach the point of acquisition remains unclear, and hard to harness to any particular rule or game.
3. This result can only be reached through a preliminary agreement between teachers and learners, just like when a game is being proposed, and the rules, artificial as they may be, are accepted as such and implemented (O’Connell, 2013, p. 28).
4. The multiplicity of CLIL programs (to the extent that an -S should be adjunct

- to the acronym) does not permit any further analysis other than stating their superficial similarities, what Wittgenstein calls “family resemblance” (§67).
5. From an epistemological point of view, this last point means that CLIL, as a language game, does not refer to any form of didactic reality, that is, the mechanism by which acquisition is reached, and in what kind of manner it harnesses language to social reality. In Wittgenstein's words, rules are made up “as we go along” (§83).
 6. Finally, using language to assess the truth-value of a language game like CLIL and its efficacy in terms of language acquisition is clearly aporetic, since there is nothing outside and beyond language to attribute meaning (§119).

But maybe the main issue is to determine the perspective to adopt when analyzing the impact and place of CLIL in the research on language teaching and learning for non-specialists.

We saw that CLIL is characterized by the integration of language and subject-matter teaching. If one adopts the point of view of language teaching and learning, subject-matter must be seen as a variation that does not affect the kind of didactic and pedagogical process at work in CLIL: the framework is identical (projects, exercises in context, scripted sequences of teaching with particular emphasis on the syntax and lexicon). Conversely, if one tries to define CLIL by focusing on the specificity of each subject-matter associated with language teaching and learning, the analysis will take a different turn: variation will be a key criterion, which should favor comparative studies between apparently unrelated fields of knowledge, each one associated with a particular epistemology, which gives less importance to language acquisition, at least apparently. What shall be contended in the third point of this contribution is that variation is what characterizes best what CLIL aims to implement, as well as its impact on language teaching and learning as a research path.

CLIL as the expression of territoriality

Why variation matters

If life can be compared to a continuous flow, it winds its way through social activities and territories governed by the rules imposed by a State apparatus, in Deleuze and Guattari's words. Territories may take different shapes, but they form units around a nexus of activities characterized by habits: the family circle, the workplace, school, the economy, politics, war, international relations, etc. Life is thus a succession of movements through which individuals change territories (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 386). Besides, territories differ in rhythm from one

another, which can be defined by their activities; in turn, these activities generate their own tempo, themselves determined by the concepts that preside over their performance and equally emerge from them.

In teaching and learning, this can be exemplified by the specific culture (ideas, processes and epistemology) developed and nurtured in each subject-matter taught at school, something that may be akin to the legitimacy of the forms of knowledge. In other words, apprehending CLIL through the culture of the subject-matter that is taught in the target language may yield interesting results in terms of research.

An approach to variation

Remarkable attempts at typifying languages for specific purposes (also known in France as “*langues de spécialité*”) have dealt with such idiosyncrasies by resorting to fiction. Scholars like Petit (1999) believe that using popular fiction that incorporate the thriller genre to a professional and cultural environment well-known to the author (it is known in French academic circles by its acronym FASP: “*Fiction À Substrat Professionnel*”- lit. “fiction based on a professional context”) may promote a better comprehension of specialized language in action, in a context that owes much to real practices of the profession that serves as a backdrop and as a key player in the plot. While this may provide some elements of comparison with CLIL programs, the latter can be distinguished from its more literary counterpart in the usage that is being done of the subject-matter, in that it takes center-stage importance in the whole process.

Now, stating that, for instance, teaching sciences differs from teaching law may appear too obvious to mention, in the same way it their respective languages differ from one another. More importantly, the manner in which the domain forms a territory (its connection with the State apparatus) within a social context influences the language it speaks and also the manner in which its tenets, or core knowledge and procedures, are taught. This is the reason why teaching science through French may differ from teaching it in English, and, again, whether this takes place within a French or English institutional context. It looks more evident with law, so interwoven it is with the shaping of local political institutions. The territory of law is self-centered, idiosyncratic, particular, while the language of science seems to lack borders, to be transnational, more detached from political considerations; scientists form another type of territory, structured around exchanges, travels, and the quest for a universal language to express their concepts; if this language is not mathematics, as Leibniz would have had it, does

it make any difference whether it be English or French or some other language? And to what extent the domination of one language over the teaching of science (generally speaking) impacts its future development? These are a few questions that are entailed by a double comparison: a horizontal one, between two apparently antithetic domains in which CLIL may develop in different directions, like science and law; a vertical one, in the long evolution of each domain and the manner in which its language was formed and transmitted. What remains to be studied is the type of approach that should preside over such studies that aim to influence the way in which language teaching and learning is apprehended.

Some epistemological issues

Learning the language of a subject community (of knowledge, of “culture”) is synonymous with learning the way a community thinks; one cannot be learned without the other (Lemke, 1989; Mortimer & Scott, 2003; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Learning the terminology, however, is only the beginning of understanding. Acculturation into and appropriation of the discourse and practices of a subject requires time, for “there is a difference between talking about a practice from outside and talking within it” (Lave & Wenger, 2000, p. 29). Learners need opportunities to construct their own understanding of subject community knowledge, using appropriate frames of reference and vocabulary under expert tutelage. Further integrating those teaching content into the discourse about how language mediates content (subject-matter) learning would provide complementary insight into the language practices relevant to CLIL; the latter requires an in-depth reflection on how language as a teaching tool and specialist language interact, and how they differ in kind with the subject-matter. The following criteria may provide a key to the structuring of the epistemology of CLIL and specialist languages:

Context: in itself, this word does not bring much to the discussion unless there is an agreement as to how it should be devised. Indeed, context is not so much a matter of direct interaction between language and activity, but a question of scale: should one analyze CLIL experiments in one university, nationwide, internationally? As sociologist Bernard Lahire puts it, it is vital to become aware of the variation in scales of observation used in field studies, of the varying levels of social reality that are aimed and of the nature of the facts that under scrutiny (2012, p. 226).

Culture: CLIL has often generated a lot of interest in the language, the content and the teacher involved in this process, without insisting too much on “culture”,

albeit a key factor in CLIL (Bonnet, 2012), since “content is never culturally neutral” (Sudhof, 2010). But what does culture exactly mean in this particular context? Taillefer (2004) refers to the existence of a “professional culture” as well as of an “academic culture”, and assessing to which degree these interact within CLIL is essential. Indeed it is generally admitted that language and culture cannot be dissociated in foreign language teaching and learning, so much so that French academics have coined the expression “culture-language” to designate this conceptual compound (Porcher, 1995, p. 53; Galisson, 1998, p. 110). Yet there are many disagreements as to the integration of culture at large to specialized languages that are usually very good candidates for a CLIL implementation. If the language of law is closely connected to the history of the institutions that have fostered its development and given it a different turn from one nation-state to another, the language of science has always privileged clarity in academic exchanges. In doing so, have the scientists sacrificed their personal social-cultural sense of belonging to adopt a so-called universal language, considering that some academics maintain that there is no substantial language input in math classes taught through English, for example? One can wonder whether this statement has any influence on the formation of the concept of “specialist language”, and on the manner in which this language should be taught in a dedicated course by a language teacher (Piaget, 1970, p. 5). These are but a few of the epistemological issues that the use of CLIL in certain, specific domains generates; taken together or separately, they only indicate the degree of complexity required in order to articulate the diversity of their interactions.

Complexity

Morin defines complexity in reference to Pascal’s aphorism that states “I hold it impossible to know the parts if I do not know the whole, and impossible to know the whole if I do not know the particular parts” (*Pensées* – 1657, 1962, p. 120) in order to promote what he calls “Complex Thought”. In the domain of education, maybe the idea of subject-matters that divide up entire regions of knowledge should be put aside in favor of a more holistic approach, something that CLIL hints at by means of its “integrative” nature. This offers an interesting contrast to the constant fragmentation of knowledge into specialized niches that create an apparently unbridgeable gap between domains of knowledge. One consequence of that phenomenon, which has been well analyzed by Lahire (2012), is to hide the fundamental questions asked by research, something that Kant and Deleuze have tried to answer by establishing its connection with the

issue of the legitimacy of knowledge: the relation between individuals, society, types of territories governed by areas of knowledge should be approached in all its complexity, something that CLIL can provide a starting point in the analysis.

Conversely, if it is presupposed that CLIL (and language teaching) can provide an insight into the epistemology of domain-specific knowledge, how can it contribute to the epistemology of its own domain? Piaget exhorts educationalists and pedagogues to carry out their own “internal epistemological critique”, but the obstacle to this process is great because the issue of perspective is of paramount importance. Evidently, sciences, medicine, law have all developed their epistemological tools, but most of them have been borrowed from other fields of knowledge, philosophy being the most frequent contributor. In the same way as the Heideggerian tool can only point to another tool and, from this constant crisscrossing of the environment that harbors them, creates a world of artificial reference for the *Dasein*, knowledge cannot ask itself questions concerning its legitimacy, its foundation; Wittgenstein does not write anything different when he logically supposes that hypothesizing a world that can be discussed from within is nonsensical. Language can describe facts, objects and processes only when they are sufficiently distant from it, which also points to a logical impossibility. Nevertheless, what cannot be said can still be shown, and asking the question of the foundation of a domain can be done, but from outside its own perimeter; thus language teaching and learning should benefit from the input of social sciences (sociology) and humanities (philosophy) to build up the connection between teaching instruments like CLIL and the constitution of an epistemological discourse on that domain, which is still dominated by experimental psychology, linguistics and educational sciences; our contention is not to dismiss their contribution, but to caution against resorting to domains that are precisely too close to it to avoid direct transpositions or the repetition of descriptions borne out of field studies without much scientific distance; in short, the didactics of foreign languages should gradually detach itself from its parent domains in order to become a fully-fledged autonomous branch of knowledge.

Conclusion

In fundamental research it is crucial to determine what is being talked about in language teaching and learning and to take complex interactions into account, e.g. the relation between language and specialist domain, and the various communicative dimensions conveyed by language (Lévy-Leblond, 1994, p. 239). As Gravé Rousseau showed, “language is not simply the object of learning, but it

has become a key that opens access to general knowledge and specific know-how" (2009). And it is precisely within the teaching/learning community whose aim is to give better, simplified access to knowledge that the skills and competences that are necessary to train efficient researchers is fostered; this has a deep impact on their discourse and exchange views. Thus if this knowledge is formed in a language devoid of any cultural grounding, like international English for mass communication, there are serious risks for this thought to be oversimplified, even distorted beyond recognition. This would prove catastrophic in education at school and for the global community at large. Language, be it for specialists or for the educated layperson, is the only way humanity has to organize and produce thought and knowledge (Mocikat & Dieter, 2014), and educationalists and researchers in teaching and learning have a central part to play in its diffusion.

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The ancient art of «debating» and it's usefulness in the foreign language classroom: the case of the French Debating Association

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Abstract

We will examine the ancient art of debating in the foreign language classroom using findings based on current action research in French third level higher education institutions. In this paper we will focus more particularly on the French Debating Association format of debate, which is currently used in many classrooms all over France where English is being taught in language classes for specialists of other disciplines. The target institution is ISAE Supaero Graduate Engineering School in Toulouse, France. The FDA style of debating was specifically created and designed twenty-one years ago in Paris for the English as a foreign language classroom. It has now spread all over the country. In French Debating Association style debates, teachers challenge students in critical thinking, communication skills, confidence and cultural awareness but also, in grammar, vocabulary and fluency. The overpowering enthusiasm expressed by students doing debating in both discussions and through the questionnaires distributed, motivated us to learn more about how debate is used in teaching and learning and especially how students learn language, academic and professional skills in record time thanks to this activity. We can conclude that language debate in class and in tournaments has a positive outcome on language learning and acquisition, critical thinking and communication skills.

Keywords

debating, communication skills, rhetoric, critical thinking, language learning, adjudication criteria.

Introduction

In this paper we will first address why debating is so popular in educational institutions today and why has it been thus in so many cultures worldwide and for so long. We will then look at the research methodology and some results obtained on the question of the usefulness of debating in the foreign language classroom from a learner's perspective. We will also zoom in on debating in France and its specificities.

In today's global and fast moving society, the latest news stories and events from all over the world, along with the opinions of others, are the subjects of

constant debate. Internet and social media flood our screens and our minds daily with messages from millions of sources. These means of communication have brought people from different walks of life and different cultures to discuss, criticize and comment in a way that was not possible before. Individuals almost everywhere are able to join in and make their opinions heard. This places new demands on our students. They need to be able to understand and analyze information rapidly. They also need to know how to communicate knowledge effectively. Writing alone in front of a screen is one thing. Communicating in school, in the workplace and/ or in front of an audience requires different and more effective communication skills.

In this context debating has a key role to play in all cultures and languages because this activity trains students in communication, critical thinking and rhetoric. It is therefore a useful activity as students first learn and then immediately put into practice what they have learned. According to Akerman and Neale (2011) research in debate activities has shown that there is an expectation that by practicing skills, students are likely to see improvements in these areas. This is referred to as an intuitive link and has been used in research to evidence the nature between debating and student achievement in other areas. Much of the literature in this field discusses the fact that there is an amount of testimonial evidence and some anecdotal evidence on the value and impact of debating in the educational sphere, but there is little work and analysis on the empirical evidence base. To our knowledge no substantial research has yet been carried out on the use of French Debating Association format of debating and its impact on participants in higher education institutions and beyond in France. This is where our research should provide valuable findings in the field.

Debating prepares students at all levels in the communication skills they need for professional, public and personal life. This is why it is such a popular in-class and out-of-class activity in many countries. Now in France where this activity has mainly developed in the English as a foreign language for specialists of other disciplines classroom setting, the students also see this activity as a way to improve their English language skills. From the coach's/ professor's perspective, there is also a great amount of enthusiasm in observing one's students grow, mature and improve so many skills thanks to one activity, that is debating.

Brief background and history

Debating is an ancient activity that exists in every language, culture and on every continent. It has been around for thousands of years and on every continent. Egyptian princes debated agricultural policy at the pharaoh's court in

2080 B.C. and Chinese scholars were having philosophical debates during the Zhou Dynasty (1122-255 B.C.). According to several sources scholastic debate began about 2500 years ago when Protagoras of Abdera, often called, the “father of debate”, conducted debates among his students in Athens. He enjoyed getting his students stirred up and students flocked to his classes where they learned to argue. Another famous Greek debater was Demosthenes (384-322 B.C.) most well remembered for the fact that he overcame his lisp by practicing his speeches with pebbles in his mouth. Ancient Greece paved the way for the development of the art of rhetoric. The ‘agora’ or ‘forum’ was where people gathered to debate with philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. The Romans too adapted the tradition and expanded on it bringing debating into the law courts, the senate and the assembly. Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), illustrious lawyer and teacher, is probably the best known of all the Roman orators. Cicero’s books on rhetoric have been inspiring for generations. Debating remained popular down through the ages because it was identified as the most effective teaching and learning activity.

Public formalized debates in Latin, known as “disputations” were held in universities all over Europe in the Middle Ages. These debates were mostly focused on religion, the sciences and philosophy. It was with the Age of Reason in the 18th century that debating societies emerged in English speaking countries as a platform for voicing criticism and for developing new ideas. These debating societies were not only academic and the public also enjoyed the entertainment of public debates in London. Meanwhile the first student debating society was created in Scotland in Saint Andrews University in 1794 and others followed quickly all over Britain. Their model was the parliament in London at this time. With colonization, debate also made its way to America, India and South Africa and most of the US’ founding fathers were skilled orators and debaters. They were generally educated in colonial colleges like Harvard and Yale where they acquired the skills of speaking in public.

To conclude on the background and history of this ancient activity we can say that if once debate was the pastime of princes and ancient scholars, today debating and public speech are popular activities in which thousands of colleges, universities, secondary and even primary educational institutions actively participate all around the globe. From this, it seems clear that debating is a very worthwhile activity in teaching and learning in all languages. The goal of my study here is to see how much more useful it can be to debate in a foreign language context and my research ‘laboratory’ is the French Graduate

Engineering School, ISAE Supaero where students are debating in English every week and have been for the past four years.

Method

Participants: 70 students (age range: 19–23 years) learning debating at ISAE Supaero, a French Graduate Engineering School in Toulouse. I see many of the participants myself on a weekly basis; 25 of them in the context of a Debate Club that is run on a voluntary basis on Wednesday evenings (students come when they please) from 5pm to 7pm; 30 participants who chose to take a compulsory debate class on Monday mornings from 9.30am to 12.15pm with two teachers working on complimentary aspects of debating, one on theatre and improvisation and the other on language and rhetoric. Teachers change groups every second week and organize an interclass debate session every third week. The remaining 15 debaters are taking a compulsory debate class on Thursday mornings for 2.5 hours. During each debate session, the debates are filmed. Students are then invited to drop by my office individually when it suits them during the week to view and comment their performance. Together we pinpoint some specific areas to work on (gestures, eye contact, rhetoric, voice, pronunciation, grammar...) and so on.

Procedure: We used a Google doc questionnaire (30 questions, Appendix 1) with both closed and open-ended questions. It was designed to obtain feedback on student perception of debating as a learning activity in the academic environment. The participants answered the questionnaire on a voluntary basis. They were informed that responses and other information would only be used for academic purposes. Debaters completed the questionnaires on-line. Participants were made aware that the questionnaire would take less than ten minutes. Not all questionnaires have been completed and returned at this date so in-depth findings will be further developed at the Conference. There will however be a 100% response rate.

Early Results: Some information was asked in order to establish a profile of those who responded and to determine if the sample reflects what is more commonly perceived by a larger and more geographically widespread debating population in surveys, which will be carried out at a later date. All respondents are students, of various different nationalities but none of them are native English speakers so they all correspond to the target group of learners of English as a foreign language. Native languages of participants include: Arabic, Farsi, French, German, Indian, Italian, Mexican, Portuguese, Serbian, Slovene and Spanish. All the participants chose to do debating either in the class or club

format. At ISAE those students who choose debating as a compulsory class module do so from a selection of approximately fourteen different classes. Attendance is compulsory, once you have chosen the class. In the Debate Club, participants are free to come and not come as they please. Seventy percent of the students who have so far completed the questionnaire said they chose to attend the debating activity to practice speaking English in public and the majority (90%) of respondents so far gave multiple reasons for attending either the class or/ and the club. The students rate very highly (100%) the fact that they improve their oral expression skills in English while debating and a similar percentage agrees that you also learn to speak in public while learning to debate. In their answers to the questions the respondents clearly acknowledge that debating goes beyond language learning. For now, a clear majority give a definite 'yes' to the question on debating being fun. As far as language skills are concerned 100% of respondents agree that debating improves speaking and listening skills and to a lesser degree (40%) that debating improves reading and writing skills. Debating at ISAE is rated highly as a learning experience and a valuable competence. Answers to questions pertaining more to the FDA format of debate will be dealt with at a later stage. Concerning question 26, how studying debating compares to other English classes, the activity rates very well. 70% of respondents chose the figure '5', giving debating top marks. The main adjectives that best describe the debating "learning experience" are: public speaking skills, critical thinking and valuable feedback. The research shows that students own perceptions add weight to the argument that participation in debate activities leads to improvements in these areas.

All these results will be complete and therefore further developed at the Conference and subsequently included in the article.

Discussion

Debating is a form of extended argument and it is language at play but when we say argument we do not mean a fight or a quarrel. We mean argument in the sense described by Walton (2006) as "the giving of reasons to support or criticize a claim that is questionable, or open to doubt". It's primarily an oral activity and is based on discourse. We debate about many different topics, issues and taboos. Generally the activity can be described as a formal discussion where two opposing sides follow a set of rules to engage in an oral exchange where different points of view on an issue emerge. A teacher or university lecturer sets a topic/ motion for debate and assigns positions 'for' and 'against' to groups of students. Students then conduct their own research into these issues and debate them in

class. The fact that there are systematically opposition teams in this activity is another factor that stimulates the students to do in-depth research on the motion and creates strong team dynamics whether students work collaboratively or independently. The student is motivated by the process of researching, preparing and debating in a team *against* another team. In a classroom debate students are assessed on their contribution and motivated to perform so that their team will win the debate.

The French Debating Association format which is also known as “FDA” or “Paris Fives” or even “Paris-style” debating and which is the format that this paper is more particularly focused on, is modeled on the British Parliamentary Debate style and debates are held in English. This format, “British Parliamentary Debate”, is the most popular form of educational debate in the world. It is lively and energetic and enables learners to develop numerous, valuable skills such as argument construction, refutation, rhetoric, organization, delivery and in the case of debating in a foreign language, language acquisition. Two teams of five students debate on a given motion. They have time to prepare. This depends on whether it is a classroom or a tournament debate. The former can be given more or less preparation time depending on the class format while in the tournament debates, all teams must have equal preparation time which can vary from 15 minutes to a week. One side is supposed to defend the motion while the other side must oppose it. The first speaker of the Proposition (Prime Minister) opens the debate, followed by the first speaker of the Opposition (Shadow Prime Minister), then the second speaker of the Proposition and so on. Every speaker speaks consecutively for 6 minutes and may be interrupted during the second and sixth minute by a point of information (POI) which is made a by a member of the other team who stands up with one hand on his/ her head or a hand outstretched. The speaker may or may not accept the point, but according to the FDA rules, the speaker should accept at least one POI and is expected to accept two during his or her speech. Acceptance or refusal of a POI should be made clear, either verbally or through a gesture by the speaker. POIs are included in the timing of the speech. They are weapons that can be used by the opposite team to destabilize the speaker and highlight the weaknesses in his or her argumentation. They must be short, concise and usually open-ended questions. This moment of interaction in the debate is often very stressful for the debater who is under pressure and must try to seize the opportunity to dismiss the point as incorrect and irrelevant.

Language learners need help in engaging in communication where information exchange is immediate. Research has shown (Ferris & Tagg, 1996) that interactive listening and speaking were the major problem areas. In debating, students learn these skills. Thanks to a survey of the language needs of nonnative English speakers in US universities, it was found that ESOL students ranked formal speaking and listening comprehension skills as their two biggest difficulties (Ferris, 1998). In every debate in class or out-of-class and in tournament debates too, there is always a chairperson who introduces the debate, the rules, and the speakers. The Chairperson also makes sure all the speakers follow the rules. At the end of a debate, when the jury retires to deliberate, the chairperson opens the debate to the floor and encourages audience participation. There is also a bell-person who is the timekeeper for the debate. The jury is composed of three or five members and in class can be made up of both students and/or the coach. Involving students as judges increases the number in the class participating in the debate, as does the discussion that follows every debate. When students volunteer to participate in a debate, it also guarantees full student attendance in class. It gives them an active role and they have a responsibility towards the other debaters to come, prepare and so on. In tournament debates the jury is composed of one coach-judge and two former debaters. The judges not only choose the winning team but also give a best speaker prize and provide individual feedback for each speaker of the debate. There are four equal criteria on which this format of debate is assessed: arguments, presentation, teamwork and strategy and star quality (see Appendix 2). So language is not formally assessed as part of the adjudication criteria in FDA debating even though the students are non-native speakers of English but feedback on language can be given in the classroom and also in tournament debates if teachers and students agree. It is not however an official element in the FDA adjudication criteria.

Conclusion

Debating in one's own language has always been considered useful and challenging. Akerman and Neale (2011) conclude that: "Both qualitative and quantitative research suggests that participation in debate activities improves critical thinking. In particular a meta-analysis argues that participation in communication skills classes can increase critical thinking skills by as much as 44%". We would argue that in France, debating in English for specialists of other disciplines is an even greater challenge that holds valuable learning outcomes, not only critical thinking, rhetoric and communication skills but also language.

Since research in the area of teaching and learning has shown that students need more opportunities for verbal expression in class and active research has in turn demonstrated that debating helps students develop and master content, argumentation and communication skills (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999; Bellon, 2000) then we know that debating is helpful for students. Debating trains areas such as: interpersonal and nonverbal communication, persuasion and argumentation, rhetorical criticism, public address and communication development. The concepts and skills provided by this activity are useful across the board in areas including business, law, politics, teaching, public relations and other professional fields that require an understanding of the dynamics of human communication and proficiency in oral expression. Employers want to hire graduates who listen effectively, present ideas clearly, think critically and ethically and understand global realities. In non-English speaking countries, debate has crept into the setting of the language classroom and is gaining ground quickly since students are anxious to acquire increased competence in communication in English as well as all the other competences that debating brings. The research we are undertaking at the French Graduate Engineering School bear witness to this.

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Appendix 1**Questionnaire Debating Paris Fives Style at ISAE**

This questionnaire will be used only for academic purposes. Please answer all questions by choosing the answer which best explains your opinion. Please tick more than one if a single answer does not match your perception. In the case of open questions you may answer in English or in French. Thanks very much. Anne

1. Student ID

Please fill in your name, year of study and valid email address.

2. Please state your level of English. If you are not sure what these CECRL levels correspond to, take it that B1 is intermediate, B2 upper intermediate, C1 advanced and C2 proficiency.

3. What is your nationality?

4. What is your mother tongue?

5. What debate group did you join this year (September-December 2014)? LV1, LV3, Club

6. How long have you been debating at ISAE? If you debated before coming to ISAE please tell us about it in 'other'.
more than 1 year,
you started recently,
Other:

7. Why did you initially choose to come to Debating? You may choose more than one answer.
- to practice speaking English.
 - for fun.
 - to overcome being shy and gain confidence.
 - to learn to express your opinion on a variety of subjects.
 - to learn to think quickly.
 - to master the art of rhetoric.
 - to hear what others have to say on different current issues.
 - Other:
8. How did you learn about Debating at ISAE?
- language department.
 - posters.
 - a friend/ friends
 - a professor.
 - e-mails.
 - a presentation given by a student.
 - Other:
9. Before doing debating at ISAE had you heard about the activity or done it elsewhere in any other format?

In the following statements please try to rate what you value most about the activity.

10. In Debating you improve your oral expression.
11. You learn how to speak in public.
12. You learn rhetorical devices (how to use metaphors, anecdotes, repetition etc effectively).
13. Debating is fun.
14. You learn English.
15. You improve your non verbal communication.

16. You relax and enjoy the moment.
17. Debating improves your reading skills.
18. Debating improves your writing skills.
19. Debating improves your speaking skills.
20. Debating improves your listening skills.
21. Debating enhances your intercultural communication skills.
22. How best would you describe Debating now? You may choose more than one answer.
 - a learning experience.
 - a stressful 2 hours.
 - fun.
 - something to look forward to.
 - an obligation.
 - a valuable competence.
 - an English language lesson.
 - hard work.
23. The Paris Fives/ FDA assessment criteria are:
 - adapted to your needs.
 - perfect.
 - too focused on style.
 - not focused enough on arguments.
 - Other:
24. The rules of the FDA style of Debating are:
 - part of the game.
 - fun.
 - necessary to the art of debating.
 - too strict.
 - an obstacle that prevents the speaker from truly expressing what he/she thinks.

- Other:
25. Debating should be compulsory for all higher level students. You agree, You disagree.
26. How would you rate what you learn in Debating compared to the other English classes you have had in the past?
27. Having a jury assess your performance in debating is:
- stimulating.
 - scary.
 - makes no difference.
 - interesting for feedback.
 - pressure.
 - Other:
28. Tick three boxes below that, in your opinion, best describe the Debating "learning experience".
- English language learning.
 - self confidence.
 - fluency.
 - public speaking skills.
 - teamwork skills.
 - the art of rhetoric.
 - listening skills.
 - speaking out loud and clear.
 - critical thinking skills.
 - valuable feedback
 - gain knowledge and awareness on subjects
 - Other:
29. Please give some examples of motions you enjoy or would enjoy debating?
30. If there is anything else you would like to add about Debating, please do so below. Please feel free to write what you really think here in English or in French.

Appendix 2

French Debating Association Adjudication Criteria

1. ARGUMENTS

This regards both the content of the speech and the research done for it. As far as the arguments are concerned:

- Ask yourself how consistent the speech is.
- How pertinent or logical it is.
- Is the speaker easy to follow?
- How original is he or are his arguments?
- Has substantial research been carried out for this speech?

Also pay a lot of attention to the examples used:

- Quality of the examples or anecdotes used to illustrate or justify the arguments
- Pertinence of the examples
- Does the speaker go the “extra mile”?

2. PRESENTATION

You also have to judge how the content is put over. This includes several elements:

- Speaking style
- Structure of the speech
- Timing
- Use of rhetorical devices
- Humour (very important in FDA)
- Eye contact: the speaker shouldn't read his/her notes too much
- Body language

3. TEAMWORK AND STRATEGY

The teamwork regards the linking with one's team, the presence of a coherent team line. Strategy gathers the handling of points of information/of order, the line of attack adopted etc.

TEAMWORK

On an individual level:

There should be a sense of progression; speakers should refer back and forward. Speakers should respect their roles. More precisely, let's stress the specific roles of the first and fifth speakers:

- First speaker: three important elements: defines and interprets the motion, describes his/her team line, introduces his/her team and gives a foretaste of their arguments.
- Last speaker: gives a summary speech, in which he/she points out the clash between the two teams, ties up the rebuttal, briefly sums up their side's arguments, and ... underlines how much better they were than the other side's!

Collectively:

- Speakers must never contradict other members of the team
- There has to be a clear party line and a sense of cohesion

STRATEGY

Handling of the Points of Information:

- Is the speaker destabilized?
- Is the answer satisfactory?

NB: a poor question deserves a dismissive answer, as long as it's witty

Does the speaker participate actively in the debate by ASKING points of information?

Rebuttal:

- Are the arguments of the opposing team acknowledged and dealt with.

NB: If a speaker knows that a point raised by the previous speaker (opposing team) will be dealt later by a team-mate, he/she can simply point it out, but ALL new arguments must be acknowledged and ultimately answered.

Remember: the better team is not the collection of the five best speakers. We must feel that a team has worked together, that it clicks together and that it creates an overall atmosphere of understanding, cohesion and spirit.

4. STAR QUALITY (THE famous "je ne sais quoi")

Dear Judges, it is probably this quality, this famous « je ne sais quoi » that we all enjoy so much. It is probably all the more hard to judge. Just to help you, you should pay attention to the overall impression you have of the candidates, of the team. Notably, teams should be awarded extra credit:

- If they were particularly entertaining
- If they managed to destabilize their opponents
- If they did a good job of defending the harder point of view (be careful about the extremely subjective nature of this criterion)

On the reverse, teams should be penalized:

- If they did not ask enough POI's, or poor ones, or badly formulated ones
- If they were unclear or boring
- If they contradicted each other, failed to rebut
- If they did not respect the rules or the spirit of the game

B. Final Mark

Let us also remind you must also give a mark out of 20 to each team. Half marks are accepted. This is *absolutely essential* as it will be taken into account in the event of a tie once all judges' votes have been added up.

To avoid major discrepancies and to ensure fair adjudication, please check that your final marks comply with the following scale :

- 18-20 Exceptional
- 15-18 Very impressive
- 12-15 Quite good but with serious lacunae in certain fields
- 10-12 Average with some moments of brilliance
- 07-10 Below average - many limitations.
- 00-07 Need to seriously rethink approach to FDA debating

C. Vote

Each judge has one vote. The final decision of the jury does not have to reflect how close the debate may have been, i.e. if all three judges believe one team was slightly better than another then this should be displayed by a 3-0 vote. A 2-1 vote is entirely possible but must be based on one judge disagreeing with the majority on the outcome of the debate.

(<http://www.frenchdebatingassociation.fr/paris-style-debating/adjudication-criteria>)

Developing intercultural openness – how students describe and interpret cultural texts?

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Abstract

The paper concentrates on axiological and cultural aspects of learning languages and communicating with others. Multicultural societies create many opportunities to enlarge our cognition and develop our attitude of openness. To widen the cultural context from which we start our relations we need to practice and know how to interpret facts/cultural texts around us. Good and moving cultural examples should be accompanied by some theoretical presumptions, frameworks, or templates. Teachers may use a combination of: contents of strategic European Union documents, VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubrics, Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, and FREPA (Framework of References for Pluralistic Approaches). The author referred to those tools to make a research among students of philological faculty. The results will be presented in the final part of the paper.

Keywords

key competences, cultural text, VALUE Rubrics, Bennett's DMIS, FREPA and multicultural descriptors, openness to the Others

Introduction

Learning languages is a process of multidimensional entering into different cultures. It is not enough to know words, tenses, semantic constructions, and all the other "grammar challenges". All those elements are with no doubt indispensable to communicate with others, but to speak fluently in a language you need "to think" in it. In Poland we've used to ask: "How far do you know that foreign language? Can you already think in it?" In other words: you need to learn and understand the culture of people who use the language. "Feeling the culture" means to be able to differ the nuances of words, terms, or notions which derive from some special contexts (historical, linguistic, social, or political) of that culture; to be able to read out symbolic meanings of some cultural facts, to understand proverbs, or to laugh at jokes, sketches, or comic situations/media programs characteristic for that society. In other words: you are able to interpret cultural texts according to the authors' intentions, and at the same time in accordance with one's own cultural background, experiences, and from the place

of her/his contemporary existence. Such hermeneutic way of uncovering world not only enhances personal development, but actually creates a responsible inhabitant of the global, and closer – European community. When you “feel the culture” you also feel free in using the language in different situations. You become confident about yourself, and eager to show openness to others, to cooperate with them, to engage yourself in activities/projects which await honest and intensive engagement. The most optimal state is when you can move from one culture to the other with no harm to your personal and cultural identity. Such aim proves the need to develop multicultural competences in various forms and on different levels. Fortunately in Europe we have that special opportunity to develop our language and intercultural abilities/competences. As a result of political decisions we already create a multicultural, pluralistic society. Now, the time has come to make it a closer and understandable society where nations respect each other and are keen to add to that multicultural European mosaic a part of their culture. Mutual/common cultural openness and at the same time – invitation to one’s own culture, should be a main condition to feel comfortable and safe in Europe. That may happen thanks to wise education of languages where cultural background is widely penetrated and learnt.

In the first part of this paper (Rogalska-Marasińska, 2014b) I was concentrated on presenting philosophical foundations of holistic interpretation of cultural texts. Now my intention is to refer to strategic aims stated in some significant European documents, and then show possible implications in educational practice. Thus I would like to present another perspective of motivating Europeans to build one society, which treats its’ cultural complexity as an advantage, and being aware of it, develops actual communication and better mutual understanding.

1. European documentary background for developing the attitude of openness

Education in strategic European Union documents. Contemporary Europe has vast and ambitious plans of constant development, leading to the wealthy future. According to the multicultural character of European society the challenge of intercultural understanding and cooperation becomes one of the most important elements to build such a prosperous place of living. That is why in some principal European documents we find statements confirming such conviction. We read: “The Union shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary,

by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity”(Official Journal of the EU, 2010, p. C 83/120). Then we find: “The Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (Official Journal of the EU, 2010, p. C 83/121). In another basic contemporary document – “Europe 2020: Europe’s growth strategy” we find standpoints of European growth assuming and anticipating a sustainable and job-rich future (*Smarter, greener, more inclusive?...*, 2013). But to gain such state of well-being many shortcomings should be surmounted. They have been grouped in 5 ambitious objectives – employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy (*Smarter, greener, more inclusive?...*, 2013). EU has also identified the most important areas of action recognized as a framework for seven ‘flagship initiatives’ (*Flagship initiatives*, 2012). One of them is “Youth on the Move” initiative presents the conviction that to increase young people’s education and improve their employability education and training should be more relevant to their needs. In addition young people should be commonly encouraged to take advantage of European grants to study or to train in another country (*Youth on the move*, 2012). In such circumstances it becomes clear that developing intercultural competence comes out to be one of the most urgent educational goals. The transition towards sustainable, equitable and “happier” world (*Shaping the future: Six global goals*, Club of Rome) needs vast practical actions which should be planned with the help of theoretical approaches and which should refer to proper methodological frames. The latter should clearly refer to the set of European competences finely formulated in 2006 with the hope of their constant development, while theoretical approaches should find the solid ground in common human values mainly accepted by all cultures in the world.

Values. The term “value” as a symbolic imagination of something precious for a man (a fact, thing, object, process, phenomenon, thought, person, nature, environment, culture, language, tradition etc.) has accompanied and developed human cognition since Ancient times. The attempts to reach the core interpretation of value or to find the essence of its meaning resulted a huge amount of propositions. “Value” can be referred to interpretations of different historical times, or different ideologies/philosophies. Such presumptions make conditions in which long lists of values can arise, being grouped according to

various preferences. We can also place values in relation to other notions and human activities/professions/subjects of science, or vocational interests. Such huge polarization of possibilities indicates many problems, especially: which of them should be chosen, and how to embrace them with the sense of responsibility. As educators (academicians, researchers, teachers of different levels of educators) we should look for the most adequate interpretation of values referring to contemporary times and challenges, especially social and cultural challenges. In human education we represent the standpoint that values constitute the foundation of goals and objectives which shape human attitudes, behaviours, and practice.

Thus with no doubt we should recall the set of universal values which should exist as a frame for any further actions. Those values, written down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations, have been accepted and implemented in legislation policies by most countries. As Ian Johnson, the Club of Rome General Secretary, said, people mostly: “value honesty over dishonesty; ethical behavior over unethical behavior; a decent life for themselves, their family and their children; decent health and education afforded to all; a cleaner and safer environment within which to live; a level of prosperity that takes them out of poverty; a sense of belonging to community; and a strong sense of social capital and purpose in life” (Johnson, 2011). If we look from the global perspective the most challenging values to be undertaken are the ones which have influenced the Millennium Development Goals (*Millennium Development Goals Report, 2014*). MDGs include eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and global partnership for development. Now we should add another list of global aims which come out of MDGs, and are to be undertaken after 2015. I read and interpret them as clear attempts to transform basic for humankind values into tangible actions. A global society represented by United Nations formulated 16 issues. 16 goals to be realized beyond 2015 include: better job opportunities, support for people who can't work, a good education, better healthcare, affordable and nutritious food, phone and internet access, better transport and roads, access to clean water and sanitation, reliable energy at home, action taken on climate change, protecting forests, rivers and oceans, equality between men and women, protection against crime and violence, political freedom, an honest and responsive government, and freedom from

discrimination and persecution. Each of us – the Earth inhabitants – can get acquaintance with them, and give her/his vote in the survey called “MY World” (*Have your say*, 2013). The global society has been asked to choose 6 issues out of 16, to express common concern about the future. Up till now over 5.000.000 people have taken part in the survey (*The UN global survey for a better world*, 2014).

According to the voters “education” is the most desirable value among global needs and hopes. We may call it a contemporary fundamental value. On its basis other human values may develop and flourish. To make it happen we should think how to implement those values into people’s lives. First of all we need to learn what values and attitudes are accepted and developed during school education. To get a global image of the situation I have chosen 4 countries: Poland, Australia, India and Singapore. In Polish curriculum we find a lot of important values written down in the language of attitudes. Those are: honesty, truthfulness, responsibility, endurance, self-esteem, respect for other people, learning/cognition curiosity, creativity, entrepreneurship, good manners/high personal standards, willingness to participate in culture, to take initiatives, and to team working. In addition school shapes attitudes of citizenship, respect to national tradition and culture, and at the same time to other cultures and traditions. School undertakes appropriate steps to prevent any acts of discrimination (*Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 30 maja 2014r*, 2014). Australian schools promote values like: care and compassion, doing your best, fair go, freedom, honesty and trustworthiness, integrity, respect, responsibility, understanding, tolerance, and inclusion (*National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*, 2005). Indian education promotes values that foster peace, humaneness and tolerance in a multicultural society (National Curriculum Framework, India, 2005). Thus Indian schools are centered on developing such values as: cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of sexes, protection of environment, removal of social barriers, observance of small family norm and inculcation of scientific temper. Education motivates younger generations for international cooperation and peaceful co-existence, and for a commitment to democracy and the values of equality, justice, freedom, concern for others’ well-being, secularism, respect for human dignity and rights. In Singapore education of all levels focuses on six core values: respect, responsibility, resilience, integrity, care, and harmony (*Character and Citizenship Education*, Singapore 2014).

All those examples confirm that there are commonly understood values, though they may differ in a level of exemplification, or in a range of meanings according to the historical or cultural/multicultural background/context of each nation. In spite of those differences we may say that there are huge and promising possibilities (a common value platform) in developing ways of understanding nations, cultures, and individuals. People regardless of their race, gender, place and standard of living, should be able to create hospitable environment for mutual learning, true cognition, and acting. Openness as a means of true and vital multicultural contacts and interactions is an indispensable dimension of all relations. Thus education should work on developing it using many tools and ways of enhancing to create good and peaceful contacts between all nations. Such contacts enable the realization of aims important to humankind, influence the condition of individual and common well-being, give a lot of satisfaction, and raise the level of happiness. To fulfill these expectations they need to be transformed into action/practice language – into a dimension of competences.

Competences. In this sub-chapter it is my intention to refer to key competences for lifelong learning which were formulated by European Parliament and the European Council for European inhabitants in 2006 (RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, 2006). These chief EU institutions recommending a set of competences explained them as a compilation of knowledge, skills and attitudes used properly in a specific context. That compilation is to serve each individual to her/his life fulfilment, active citizenship, social inclusion, and employment. In today conditions all of these 4 fields should be observed in the perspective of multiculturalism and active development of intercultural relations. As European citizens we should develop 8 key competences: “1) communication in the mother tongue; 2) communication in foreign languages; 3) mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; 4) digital competence; 5) learning to learn; 6) social and civic competences; 7) sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and 8) cultural awareness and expression”(RECOMMENDATION..., p. L 394/13). Looking for elements which can proof a multicultural awareness of European society we should pay special attention to first, second, sixth, and eighth competences. There we find (all bold fragments made by ARM): 1) for communication in the mother tongue – “Communicative competence results from the acquisition of the mother tongue, which is intrinsically linked to the development of an individual's

cognitive ability to interpret the world and relate to others” (RECOMMENDATION..., p. L 394/14); 2) for communication in foreign languages – “Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and **intercultural understanding**. (...) A positive attitude involves the **appreciation of cultural diversity**, and **an interest and curiosity in** languages and intercultural communication” (RECOMMENDATION..., p. L 394/14-15); 3) for social and civic competences – “These include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals **to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life**, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. (...). **Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity** is essential. (...). Full **respect for human rights** including equality as a basis for democracy, appreciation and understanding of differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups lay the foundations for a positive attitude. This means displaying both **a sense of belonging to one's locality, country, the EU and Europe in general and to the world**, and a willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels. It also includes **demonstrating a sense of responsibility**, as well as showing understanding of and **respect for the shared values** that are necessary to ensure community cohesion, such as respect for democratic principles. Constructive participation also involves civic activities, **support for social diversity and cohesion and sustainable development**, and a readiness to respect the values and privacy of others” (RECOMMENDATION..., p. L 394/16-17); 4) for cultural awareness and expression – “Cultural knowledge includes **an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world**. (...). It is essential **to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life**. (...). A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be **the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression**” (RECOMMENDATION..., p. L 394/18). The last bolded thought clearly refers to my theme “openness”. All of citations also prove my conviction of a crucial need to constant work and the development of intercultural education, as an indispensable factor of actual multicultural, multileveled communication and creation of a better world.

To build and foster an intercultural competence we need to engage ourselves in a constant process of learning about ourselves and the Others. A creative movement round the hermeneutical wheel of experience and interpretation elevates us on a higher level of mankind. Thanks to qualitative cognition we become more open-minded, we feel the need to interact with others, and exchange good with them, not evil. Intercultural openness as a crucial element of intercultural competence invites us to enter into other cultures, makes us more sensitive to different cultural impulses, and enhances our desire to cope with new situations, thus to become more competent. Well known models of interaction and even expected ways of our own reactions may fail. We can be seriously surprised by them. But that is just a hermeneutical fusion of horizons, which we should await with curiosity, not fear. Such intercultural dialog inspires us to search for new solutions, thanks to divergent thinking where one stimulus awaits/accepts many responses. People learn that there are many possible ways of interpretation (in theory and practice), of being themselves, though if they agree to build a prosperous global community, they have to respect the framework of universal, and at the same time intercultural values. Wise multicultural/intercultural education is a real challenge. But we should not treat it in the categories of a must, an imperative, or a negative result of previous XIX/XX c. decisions, but as a chance and opportunity to make our lives more interesting, even fascinating. Each time we can extend our experiences and expectations, multiply our ideas and dreams, and add new cultural realizations to our global and multicultural society.

2. Educational frameworks and strategies to develop the attitude of openness

Education towards intercultural competence. If we agree that intercultural competence need to be widely developed to ease our intercultural contacts, schools (and other forms of non-formal and informal education) should be prime institutions to undertake such a work. Multicultural educational practice, as any other, has to be planned, divided into some parts, steps or stages, with clearly formulated aims and objectives, stated problems, chosen materials, and texts. In other words we need an intentional and developmentally sequenced program design (Bennett, 2011). Another element which a teacher has to face is an ability to balance between intercultural challenges and a student's support if she/he feels lost or inconvenient. Teacher's role is also to facilitate student's learning: before, during, and after intercultural experience. The educator may use different

methods, prepare intriguing materials, or state difficult, even weird, or philosophical questions. Such intercultural didactics may be very creative for both sides/partners of a teaching-learning process. Teachers also need to be eager to look for new multicultural tasks or forms of their transmission. That is why constant or periodic intercultural competence training is indispensable. All those elements should lead to cultivate curiosity and cognitive flexibility among students and their teacher. Such knowledge and corresponding attitude should be supplemented by accepted possibilities of various interpretations depending on cultural, time, and situation contexts, and on previous experiences of participants of such an educational event. These elements constitute the value of openness which should be “declined” by different examples, in various contexts, educational situations and school tasks.

VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education)

Rubrics. In 2010 Association of American Colleges and Universities published a worth mentioning VALUE Rubrics which is a campus-based assessment initiative. It consists of 16 templates which enable students and academics to assess learners’ progress toward graduation-level achievement in learning outcomes/competences important in their future work (VALUE Rubrics, 2010). One of the templates is an Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Value Rubric (INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE VALUE RUBRIC, 2010). There we find 6 values (key criteria) – 2 for 3 distinct levels (knowledge, skill, and attitudes) that are: 1) Knowledge/Cultural self-awareness, 2) Knowledge/Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, 3) Skills/Empathy, 4) Skills/Verbal and nonverbal communication, 5) Attitudes/Curiosity, and 6) Attitudes/Openness. The rubric is a kind of a framework to serve evaluators while scoring students’ development of intercultural competence. There are four vertical sections (1 – 2 – 3 – 4) of approaching to multicultural “proficiency” grouped in 3 stages: Benchmark – section 1, Milestones – sections 2 and 3, Capstone – section 4. Each value possesses its characteristics at appropriate level-section crossing. For the purpose of the paper the most interesting is the last value on the list – attitude of openness. The description of “openness” through sections comes as follows: **Benchmark – section 1:** Receptive to interacting with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, but is unaware of own judgment; **Milestone – section 2:** Expresses openness to most, if not all, interactions with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any

judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, and is aware of own judgment and expresses a willingness to change; **Milestone – section 3:** Begins to initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others. Begins to suspend judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others; and **Capstone – section 4:** Initiates and develops interactions with culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.

Milton Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. The Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Value Rubric template clearly exploits two elements: the depth/range of intercultural interactions, and the judgement in valuing of interactions with others. For me “openness” needs to be more emotional, “spiritual”, and personal. Thus my first connotation refers to the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Bennett (Bennett, 2004; Rogalska-Marasińska, 2014a). Thanks to that framework a teacher can follow changes in increasing abilities of her/his students in interpreting multicultural situations. The model is organized into six stages which correspond to different ways in which people may react to cultural differences. The framework shows possible increasing sensitivity thanks to cognition and emotional experiencing of other cultures. The attitude towards different cultures changes from “cold”, unimportant, neutral, and even hostile, to sophisticatedly inclusive and assuming creative integration. The first three stages are “ethnocentric” (denial, defense, minimization) – an individual sees her/his own culture as core to reality. Three other stages are “ethnorelative” (acceptance, adaptation, integration) as individual experiences her/his culture in the context to other cultures. Each of the stages may be characterized as follows: 1. Denial to difference (aggressive ignorance – “I don’t need to know”, stress on the familiar); 2. Defense against difference (same-culture segregation, possible support for supremacist groups); 3. Minimization of difference (active support for universal moral, religious or political principles); 4. Acceptance of difference (acquisition of knowledge about cultures including one’s own culture); 5. Adaptation to difference (taking international perspective, empathy); and 6. Integration of difference (cultural mediation) (Bennett, 2004). In the context of European multicultural changes and challenges Bennett Scale (DMIS) is an inspiring tool, and may be very helpful and worth consideration. But in the process of developing student’s abilities to create multicultural society a European teacher should be careful and deeply reflective. One of the arguments is that, the idea of

the DMIS scale has been born on American land, and it perfectly corresponds with their social situation/conditions, same as in Canada or in Australia. All those countries went through similar self-formation processes. On the contrary, European situation has been totally different. We have old, historically formed cultures which now are host cultures to immigrants' ones. That is why a reflective educator should post some questions, like: 1. What stage of DMIS are my students at, thus what is the level of their intercultural competence?, 2. How far do we want to proceed on Bennett scale?, or 3. What could be revised in the model to make it more suitable to European conditions?

FREPA (Framework of References for Pluralistic Approaches). As we could read on previous pages of this article, half of the European key competences refer to the need of developing cultural/multicultural background for various social activities, first of all for effective communication. The conjunction of intercultural and language competences seems to be indispensable, especially if Europe wants to realize 2020 strategy of smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive growth. Such aim cannot be fulfilled only by constant moving on linear Bennett scale. It should be widened and extended by some new approaches corresponding to European tradition and scientific situations. The latter are understood as literary contexts of scientific writing which create professionally described educational, research, and methodological situations/needs (Duraj-Nowakowa, in press). One of the most interesting and inspiring approaches is a FREPA framework. FREPA project was presented to public audience in 2012. It is a tool, or better – a kind of taxonomy (structured taxonomy of competences) which offers an enormous amount of possibilities to compile foreign language learning with rational and emotional development, understood as entering and penetrating other cultures with comparison to one's own cultural background. The tool offers pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures being used simultaneously in didactic practice in various situations and on every level of education. The publication (Candelier et al, 2012) and the website (FREPA/CARAP, 2012) present a comprehensive list of descriptors (KAS – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills) considered as necessary or possible to use, within the perspective of multilingual and intercultural/multicultural education. Each descriptor consists of many aims/suggestions arranged in an understandable order, and written down in a language of effects. To make FREPA framework more handy authors implemented it with easy to learn graphic convention. Knowledge descriptors are green, attitude descriptors are orange,

while skill descriptors are blue. In edition all of the aims/effects are marked with small keys. A key in full colour (orange and green) is “essential” – one cannot attain that aim without pluralistic approaches. A half-coloured key (only orange) is “important” – it can be attained without pluralistic approaches, but much less easily. The third key (only a black-and-white shape of a key) means “useful” – resources can be attained without pluralistic approaches, but the contribution of them seems useful enough to be worth mentioning. Such clear structure helps teachers to concentrate on the merits of cultural or language problems. They can treat FREPA as a priceless help in planning class activities, looking for didactic materials, provoking reflective learning, formulating ambitious and uncommon/untypical problems. Let’s present some of the resources which I find crucial for developing multicultural/ competence in the perspective of “openness”, and in the perspective of my research done with the students of Linguistic Faculty (see Tab. 1).

3. Learning about students’ abilities of developing intercultural openness – research report

Research procedure. Methodology. The idea of my research arose from the inspiration of FREPA framework. The lecture of chosen descriptors and competences (aims of multicultural education) encouraged me to post questions which could manage to embrace some ideas from FREPA along with interpretation of the value of “openness” found in VALUE Rubrics and build in relation to Bennett’s DMIS scale. I also wanted to trace the elements of “openness” (in the form of awaited values and developed attitudes) in some national curriculums. I assumed that my responders would start an individual dialog with a cultural text (a photo of an cultural object done by myself) and hermeneutically try to find the meaning of it. Personal and qualitative interpretations has composed a huge research material. It clearly shows that my responders’ interpretations refer to their personal experiences, uncover subjective values, and also present objections to some contemporary existing and forced models of social behaviour. Planning the research I decided to refer in some elements to textual analysis method. I expected my responders to “anchorage” their interpretation by writing down a suggested title, which clearly showed the direction of their thinking (Brainbridge, 2011; Rogalska-Marasińska, 2014b).

Responders. Preparing my research procedure I have taken under consideration students of the I and II year of philological studies at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Lodz, Poland. Those students decided to undertake

the pedagogical course to become broadly educated teachers of languages. In the face of new, multicultural challenges the attitude of openness seems to be an indispensable virtue of each teacher, pedagogue, and educator. So I've decided to check their abilities and will to enter into multicultural world. Two hundred and thirty (230) students participated in the research. Students were working individually.

They had 1 hour of time to write down their standpoints and interpretations about an example of a cultural text in the form of a photography (there were 8 various images – each student had to refer only to one of them). For the requirements of that paper I only present a sample of the results (10 examples) of semantic (descriptive) and semiotic (basic on interpretation) analyses.

Aims of the research. The aims of my research I have grouped into 5 problematic areas: 1. Invite young Poles to the meet and experience other cultures, develop the fluency of interpretation of cultural texts, enhance and develop attitude of openness towards other cultures; 2. Supply responders' knowledge about Islamic culture in comparison to Polish culture; 3. Create the attitude of openness to the cultures of the world and stress the significance of positive alterity; 4. Enhance/improve the skills of perceiving cultural diversity which should enrich intercultural contacts; and 5. Develop some key competences for lifelong learning formulated by European authorities.

Research problems. First of all I have formulated the main problem: **How cultural texts help to develop Polish students' attitude of openness?** That thought inspired me to build operationalized problems:

1. How do students describe a cultural text, what elements do they perceive in an external and objective layer?
2. How far and deep responders try to interpret the text? Are their previous experiences seen in those interpretations?
3. What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness?
4. How do students "anchorage" their interpretation, how do they articulate/express their main meaning?
5. How far goes the openness of Polish students in the light of American colleges and universities VALUE Rubrics and Milton Bennett's DMIS scale?
6. How far a contact with a cultural text from a different culture may help to develop European key competences?

Descriptor:	Knowledge
Competences:	<p>Section X. Cultures and intercultural relations</p> <p>K 10.4 Knows that intercultural relations and communication are influenced by °knowledge / representations° one has of other cultures and those that others have of one's own culture</p> <p>K 10.6 Knows that the perception of one's own culture and of the culture of others depends also on individual factors {previous experiences, personality traits...} (Candelier et al, 2012, pp. 32-33).</p>
Descriptor:	Attitudes
Competences:	<p>Section I. °Attention / Sensitivity / Curiosity [interest] / Positive acceptance / Openness / Respect / Valorisation° with respect to languages, cultures and the diversity of languages and cultures</p> <p>A 5 Openness °°to the diversity °of languages / people / cultures° of the world / to diversity as such [to difference itself] [to alterity]°°</p> <p>Section V. Identity</p> <p>A 16.1.1 Readiness to consider one's own relation to different °languages / cultures° in view of °their history / their actual situation in the world°</p> <p>A 16.5 being attentive [vigilant] to the possibilities of cultural °openness / enrichment° that contact with °another / other° °language(s) / culture(s)° may bring about (Candelier et al, 2012, pp. 41-48).</p>
Descriptor:	Skills
Competences:	<p>Section III. Can compare</p> <p>S 3.10.2 Can perceive differences or similarities in different aspects of social life {living conditions, working life, participation in activities of charities, respect for the environment ...}</p> <p>Section IV. Can talk about languages and cultures</p> <p>S 4.4 Can argue about cultural diversity {advantages, disadvantages, difficulties ...} and construct one's own opinion about this (Candelier et al, 2012, pp. 55-56)</p>

Tab. 1. – Some competences crucial in developing attitude of openness used in author's research (source: Candelier, M. et al., *FREPA. A Framework of References for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures. Competences and Resources*, 2012).

Actual research



Image 1: A Turkish carpet (source: author's private photo gallery)

No.	Student's title (Anchorage)	Student's description	Student's interpretation	Values important for responders (researcher's interpretation)
1.	"One's own place"	The image shows a carpet lying on concrete foundation, and being covered with leaves.	My interpretation No. 1: the situation expresses unrealised author's needs to build a house. Nearly everyone has a carpet at home, thus for me that element of furniture symbolises a family and home happiness;	Respect to national tradition and culture, value of family and home happiness, self-esteem, freedom, peace, humaneness, respect for human dignity and rights, independence,

			Interpretation No. 2: a desire to escape (using the carpet).	individualism.
2.	“Banishment”	A carpet may symbolise: domestic calm and privacy, a place where children play, comfort and amenity of life, warm and cosy place. The carpet from the photo lies in an open place, without walls and a roof. In spite of this I see a house/home.	A man who was an owner of the carpet must have been exiled from the house, or maybe he has run away/left the house by himself. Now we can see “the ruins” of the house. But we can also be sure that the carpet has a very symbolic meaning – it is a crucial part of building foundations. So if we want to build a new world/create it in a human way, we need some aesthetic elements in human life (like meaningful carpets).	Responsibility, peace, humaneness, cultural heritage, cooperation and peaceful co-existence, respect for human dignity, harmony, aesthetic values in developing human being, and in creating a better world.
3.	“Leaving something to its own fate”	The photo shows an old, shabby, exposed to weather conditions carpet, covered with leaves. It has been thrown out, and lies on an old balcony or at the backyard.	Some time ago that carpet was an element of a house decoration, and obviously added splendour to a room. The carpet also protected glasses against braking down into pieces while falling down from a table, it served as a surface for children’s games and plays, or simply it was a source	Respect to tradition and culture that influence the future, value of family and home warmth and happiness. Critics of blind desires of following consumer trends, attitude against manipulation.

			of softness under one's feet. Now, when the owners has changed it into a new and maybe a better one, or has chosen a panel floor, an old carpet became useless and unwanted. It lies waiting for its fate. No one wants to remember for how many years it has served the whole family. Treated as a rubbish, junk – it will quickly rot. And no one will remember or mention the old carpet.	
4.	<i>not suggested</i>	The carpet – thick, full of ornaments, decorative, probably of high material value (of high price). It lies on a simple and stone floor, probably in a tiny backyard. It is surrounded by weak greenery, and covered with few dry small leaves and petals. Extraordinary	The carpet may symbolise a sage – dignified and wise man, an erudite person, who feels well in solitude – in his private world. On the other hand the carpet may be that wisdom itself, which has been abandoned and repelled, forgotten by other people. Beautiful, valuable carpet has been changed into a cheaper one, made from worse materials.	learning/cognition curiosity, value of knowledge and sage, independence, freedom; Critics of compliant attitude, attitude of consumerism and mass culture.

		looking carpet doesn't suit to its surroundings.	People leaving the carpet have agreed to leave their wisdom, they don't want to invest and develop it any more. They do not invite it into their souls. They prefer shortcuts – instead of sage and knowledge they choose weak substitutes – commonly available information, gossips, ordinary and everyday problems.	
5.	“Autumn of tradition”	The photo presents a small carpet – very traditional one, with interesting ornaments. The carpet has rather faded colours. There are dry and brown leaves round the rug. But a plant at the left side of the carpet is green and full of life. The whole place is hard to identify, but obviously it is an old, grey, and abandoned place. Maybe	For me the photo represents the idea of a passing by time. An old carpet – because of a colour and its size (previously nobody would cover the whole floor with carpets – they were only used for decoration purposes) is covered with dry leaves. One old thing is covered by another. In literary tradition (as in philosophy) autumn symbolises the dusk of life. We speak about season phases of human life. We may also think about different things (like tradition itself)	Critics of a changing and passing by tradition, not only practical, material, and aesthetical one (like the use of a woollen carpet) but that spiritual as well (like the fading religion).

		those are ruins of a house.	that lose their strength and approach to their end – they exist in their autumn. I also interpret the photo in religious context – Muslim prayers. The direction of the carpet indicates that it has been put like that on purpose, not by accident. It is probable that my title autumn also concerns the disappearance of religion.	
6.	“Dreams swept under the carpet”	The photo shows a Persian carpet lying on a concrete floor. Our attention is attracted by a fragment of a tree seen in the left and bottom corner of the picture.	From my early childhood I link a carpet with fairy-tales, with colourful, carefree, and unreal life. With magic which helps to tear oneself from the prosaic life. In fairy-tales heroes fly on carpets between clouds (a lot of children dream about the same adventure). At the picture the carpet is abandoned, left to be forgotten. For me it symbolises lost dreams – a grown up people’s state of life, the loss of child’s happiness of life.	Value of huge, brave, unrealistic dreams, which bring higher sense to human life. Critics of prosaic life led by grown-up people who forget their childhood dreams and wishes, and sacrifice their lives to technical, routinized, and expected existence.

7.	<i>not suggested</i>	Old Persian carpet inside a small, walled place.	For me that carpet symbolises the multicultural feature of some material objects.	Respect to national tradition and culture, and at the same time to other cultures and traditions.
8.	“Dreams about freedom”	An old, worn-out carpet lying on a roof or a balcony of a house. The place is probably abandoned, as it is left in an untidy condition. The carpet and a floor are covered with leaves. In the left and bottom part of the photo there is a part of a small acacia tree. The whole image is in subdued and slightly gloomy colours.	The carpet and the whole place indicates that an owner is rather a poor man. His poor state of living does not only mean the lack of money, but mainly a lack of freedom. In other words: the lack of rights of self-determination, to decide about oneself and her/his life. The situation brings the feeling of sadness, sorrow, and yearning. Also the carpet from the photo brings to my mind the idea of a flying carpet. To fly means to be free. So the carpet may help us in an escape, in the flight to the place of happiness and freedom. Green leaves of acacia tree symbolise hope, resurrection, and faith – the believe in possible independence, in	Freedom, respect for other people, respect for human dignity and rights, values of equality, justice, and democracy, values that foster peace, remove social barriers, concern for others’ well-being and happiness.

			<p>other words – the conviction that we can tear out/throw off the chains, change our lot, and reach the most important for each human being value – freedom. The interpretation may concern various people, ethnic groups, or nations. There are so many people who live in countries without democracy, equality, and freedom, where military conflicts are a common element of their existence, everyday life is full of fear, awe, and concern for next day.</p>	
9.	“The place of prayers”	<p>The image shows a place surrounded by a little wall. It is probably a part of a house. The place is simple, even severe. It has no roof. A carpet is a central element of the photo.</p>	<p>For me the photo shows a special and unique place for Muslim family. This is a place of their prayers. The carpet is used to enable the prayers, done at home at special hours of a day. The carpet lies obliquely, but in the proper direction to Mekka. The severe and bare character of a place is to stimulate the prayers to</p>	<p>Respect for other religions, traditions, family customs, value of tolerance, observance of small family norms; Protection of environment, esteem for nature and its beauty, a man as a part of God’s world.</p>

			<p>concentrate on God. The lack of a roof also proves that need – the unity with universe, heaven and sky, with nature in its whole splendour, beauty, and infinity.</p>	
10.	“Domestication”	<p>A carpet lies in the middle of a picture. It lies on a concrete floor and in the open air. Light, dry leaves, and a part of acacia tree suggest that the photo was taken in a warm zone of the Earth.</p>	<p>I join the scenery of a picture with an Arabic culture. The design of the carpet is weaved in such a way that brings in mind traditional Persian carpets and rugs. They move my thoughts to magic and flying carpets. But the situation from the photo is completely torn of dreams and imagination. The place is untidy, the carpet seems to be totally useless. But maybe it has been left there by accident, or the rug has been simply forgotten. I feel that the place was earlier full of other carpets, cushions, jars and china cups, to serve the family and friends during their buzzy meetings. The key issue that I perceive and I want to</p>	<p>Value of family and home intimacy regardless of culture, tradition, and geographical place in the world, value of mutual respect, harmony, and care, peaceful co-existence in multicultural world, respect to elders, old generations, other cultures and traditions.</p>

			see is an attempt to make that severe space/room more domestic. It is probable that there was an armchair on a carpet standing for an elder and respectable member of a family, and children playing and laughing on the carpet round the grandma or a grandpa under the loving eye of their mom. I want to believe that the carpet was laid down there to make the space safe, cosy, and domestic.	
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Tab. 1 – Students’ descriptions and interpretations of the above photo in the relation to given titles and values important for the responders *Source: author’s research*

Findings/Results. 1. How students describe a cultural text, what elements do they perceive in an external and objective layer? Responders proved to be good observers. They perceived all of the important elements of the image. Sometimes the descriptions were full of details, sometimes they were rather “basic”. The type of description varied according to student’s individual perception and personal way of interpretation.

2. How far and deep students tried to interpret the text? Was it possible to see their previous experiences in those interpretations? Students’ interpretations were very interesting and personal. Responders were courageous to present meanings they found looking at the picture and imagining situations happening in that space. Senses given to that interpretations show a deep human and social sensibility of each responder. Students wanted to stress the conviction to their standpoint (I want to believe that..., we can also be sure that..., from my early childhood I link..., the carpet from the photo brings to my mind...) and their subjective interpretation (my interpretation..., for me the photo represents..., I

also interpret the photo..., for me it symbolises..., I join the scenery of a picture with..., the key issue that I perceive and I want to see is...). It is easy to state that students' interpretations derive from their previous experiences, especially good ones, like: warm and full of love family, happy home, experience of magic and mysterious stories, and acquaintance of Persian fairy-tales, the presence of beauty and coexistence with aesthetic elements in their life, comfort of living (a carpet as a natural element of home furniture), knowledge about some elements of Islam religion, and natural acceptance of similar family rituals (though having place in different geographical zones, or practised according to different religion rules). The researcher could also find some bad previous experiences, as: coercion, the lack of freedom, or democracy, the participation in unwanted changes in life, in thinking and acting, the experience of various forms of poverty (financial, spiritual, individual, and social), dependence from older and more powerful people, observation that people change into creatures/machines without dreams, happiness, and become awfully pragmatic.

3. What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness? Students show that a lot of the values and attitudes creating national curriculums are close to their convictions. In addition Polish students highly judge such values as: value of family and home happiness, independence, individualism, aesthetic values in developing human being, and in creating a better world, value of huge, brave, and unrealistic dreams, which bring higher sense to human life, respect for other religions, traditions, family customs, value of tolerance, esteem for nature and its beauty, understanding a man as a part of God's world and universe, value of mutual respect, co-existence in multicultural world, and respect to elders/old generations. Students critic: blind desires of following consumer trends, and compliant attitude towards consumerism, mass culture, and manipulation. They are against a changing and passing by tradition, not only that practical, material one, but aesthetical and spiritual ones as well. They do not agree with prosaic life led by grown-up people who forget their childhood dreams and wishes.

4. How do students "anchorage" their interpretation, how do they articulate/express their main meaning? Nearly all of the students tried to express their crucial and most representative thought of their interpretation by giving an adequate title. It is clearly seen that titles act like anchors, stabilizing the sequence of arguments. They correspond to the context, and immediately inform the reader about student's core intension: "One's own place", "Banishment", "Leaving something to its own fate", "Autumn of tradition", "Dreams swept under

the carpet”, “Dreams about freedom”, “The place of prayers”, and “Domestication”.

5. How far goes the openness of Polish students in the light of American colleges and universities VALUE Rubrics and Milton Bennett’s DMIS scale? The criterion of openness in VALUE Rubrics refers to student’s possible progress toward gaining the level of proficiency in intercultural development. Changes in the range of intercultural competence are marked by 4 stages. Evaluating Polish students’ deep, precise, and emotionally positive analyses I may say that Polish students reached the highest level of that template (Capstone – section 4). They do not judge other cultures (or the cultural text itself) in comparison to their own. However a text from the other culture becomes an inspiration to make reflections upon universal, common to all people problems, situations, states, dreams, possibilities, and difficulties. Such text initiates a sequence of reflections, connotations, presentation of facts, and personal meanings, but not valuing judgments. My students have perceived themselves and the others just as a part of one, global, and multicultural society. If we think about Bennett’s model, we can obviously say that students from my research reached “ethnorelative” level of intercultural sensitivity. The question refers only to the precise stage of it. For me they have reached the 5th stage. It is usually explained as: individuals are able to expand their worldviews to understand other cultures and behave in an appropriate manner. It is the ability to act properly outside one’s own culture. At this stage learners say: “I begin to feel like a member of this culture”, or “The more I understand this culture, the better I get at the language” (Bennett, 2004). We can also take under consideration the 6th grade (the last one). But the interpretation of that step is very difficult and problematic, as: individual experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultures (cultural worldviews). People perceive themselves as “marginal” (not central) to any particular culture. They shift smoothly from one cultural worldview to another (Bennett, 2004). In my opinion that stage should be developed very carefully during the process of lifelong learning. If the subjective awareness of possible multicultural menaces is not perceived an individual can lose her/his cultural identity, homeland, place of natural roots, and gain only a misty feeling of belonging to the whole world, which usually means nowhere.

6. How far a contact with a cultural text from a different culture may help to develop European key competences? Not to be lost in the world’s multiplicity one has to constantly work to foster her/his consciousness about who she/he is, how she/he can hallmark her/his existence in contemporary world, and thus what

kind of competences she/he needs most. Multicultural challenges, contacts, and interactions may deeply help in such personal development. Cultural texts from different cultures are especially suitable to the task. My research example – the image of a Turkish carpet – and its interpretation proved that responders: practiced (and hopefully developed) the ability to interpret the world in Polish language (used proper words to the given senses and meanings), developed interest and curiosity, and a positive attitude towards appreciation of cultural diversity. They proved that they fully respect human rights and displayed a sense of reasonable and emotional belonging to all levels of individual existence: from locality up to global dimension of the world. They demonstrated the sense of responsibility and empathy. The old carpet was treated with dignity as an example of cultural heritage. The responders showed a strong conviction of the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life. They positively identified themselves with the life of an imagined Muslim family stressing similar elements of life in both cultures, in other words: expressing acceptance to social diversity, equality, and cohesion.

Conclusion. The thesis I wanted to explore and explain about the attitude of openness, presents the conviction that openness enables a good start or a promising development of mutual, multicultural interactions. In contemporary multi-ethnic and multi-traditional societies, a positive turn towards other people seems to be indispensable. Openness as a means of true and vital multicultural contacts may play a successful role as a leverage of new contacts between people representing different ways of thinking, expressing feelings, building social relations, looking for truth, differently valuing goods and various life situations, even differently interpreting natural phenomena. In contemporary life we still have a lot of social stratification, where main divisions refer to: the rich and the poor, Blacks and Whites, males and females, Christians and Muslims, societies fostering neoliberal economy and societies implementing sustainable development. Social and cultural walls and borders are still very high and hard to cross. In that circumstances developing the attitude of openness becomes the crucial task for contemporary societies. The task should be undertaken by various activities, mainly – by widely understood school practice. All levels of education should incorporate some methods or teaching-learning strategies to encourage pupils/students to build new, more self-confident and safe global society. Textual analysis is one of those methods where openness to individual interpretation is a key element of the whole procedure. Thanks to that premise students from different cultural backgrounds may freely refer to a topic and

present their personal senses and meanings. The most important is to find inspiring, moving students' minds and souls examples of cultural texts, and create a climate of trust and comfortable openness. I am sure that such efforts will bring very positive effects.

Following the answers from my research we can confirm that Polish students are already prepared to build truly multicultural society, at least as the problem of values and attitudes is concerned. Their attitude of openness increases and intensifies its impact on the basis of: sincerity in contacts between cultures, a wish of mutual learning and understanding, strong conviction of partnership and mutual equality, and a belief in sharing mutual goods, cooperation, and co-existence. Students do not make judgments nor have the desire to compete. They refer to universal values, respect national and cultural diversity, and they cherish cultural heritage of each nation. Their openness to diversity is also shown in positive interest towards the Others, in curiosity, and declared trust. Next, responders transform these attitudes into welcoming hospitality, warm family atmosphere, and cultural behavior/good manners. At the same time openness doesn't mean a total elimination of differences and borders. It is important to frame each culture and distinguish it from the others. Thanks to such frontiers we can safely move in and out a culture, and we can be convinced of our own identity. So we can responsibly, and with no fear meet with other cultures. Thanks to that ability we may carry on a successful conversation, effectively communicate, and develop a meaningful dialog on various levels of needs and interests. Openness understood in such a way corresponds with European Union expectations. European inhabitants should form a cohesive organism where representatives of all cultures respect each other and are keen to learn more about themselves. It helps to develop deep and fluent communication in the name of common aims. Usually those aims have practical realization in vocational activities. Multicultural teams can be very effective if the whole creative potential of different cultural backgrounds can be properly utilized. It may happen if workers trust each other, feel safe, and comfortable. The attitude of openness at work may influence the openness to possible solutions in other forms of social life. Multicultural societies may creatively develop themselves in many directions and at various levels. Acceptance of multiplicity brings new possibilities of interpreting world around us, and uncovering/understanding a man standing next to us.

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Enhancing student schematic knowledge of culture through literature circles in a foreign language classroom

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Abstract

Improving student understanding of a foreign language culture is anything but a peripheral issue in the teaching of a foreign language. This pilot study reports on a second year required English course in a university in Japan that took a Literature Circles approach, where students were asked to read short stories out of class and then discuss these stories in class. Although students reported that they did not gain any special insights into the target language culture presented, they did report that reading fiction as source material for classroom activity helps with the acquisition of a vocabulary set that is more closely associated with lifestyle and culture. The results suggest that further study is warranted. Procedures of this pilot study are described and interpreted in the context of the English education system in Japan.

Keywords

literature circles, vocabulary acquisition, intercultural communication, Japan

Introduction

Communicating effectively in a foreign or second language requires more than just mastery of the linguistic code, intercultural competence also underlies effective foreign language communication. Meaning that the study of a foreign language should not simply be a matter of learning an isolated linguistic code as an object of academic study, it should involve practice in using the language in intercultural contexts, leading to the development of real-world communication skills. Communicative events are rarely out of context, and given that cultural conventions shape how communicative events unfold, such events are rarely culture-free. Knowledge of a linguistic code alone is often insufficient for effective communication.

In Japan, English education has undergone a series of reforms over the past thirty years, to address the constant problem of needing workers who can communicate effectively with the world outside of Japan. The word *kokusaika* (internationalization) emerged as a popular expression during the 1980s as Japan expanded its economic might, and today, three decades later, the term is still widely used to describe the ongoing need for Japanese working in

professional fields to cultivate the necessary skills to participate actively within the international community. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEXT) has taken many initiatives to promote the development of more communicative English skills. It has encouraged communicative teaching methods, in place of traditional grammar-translation teaching methods, as one such remedy. In 1994 the ministry introduced a new course of study in Japanese high schools, *English Oral Communication*, in order to foster more communicative speaking abilities. In 2003, MEXT announced the *National Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities* aimed at improving the communicative English abilities of Japanese high school students. In early 2014, MEXT announced the "full-scale development of new English education in Japan" in order to improve communicative English speaking skills for the 2020 Olympics.

However, while there is much discussion about educational reform, many obstacles remain which prevent teachers from taking up these initiatives and trying to help students improve their intercultural communication skills. Gorsuch (1998) has identified three obstacles which act to inhibit the development of intercultural communicative English skills in Japanese high schools and these three factors are still very much relevant today: a heavily grammar-oriented curriculum with too much *yakudoku*, a grammar translation activity where complex English grammatical patterns are rendered into Japanese, the university entrance exam system, which demands that students possess a passive understanding of complex grammatical rules, and finally a lack of teacher training in communicative teaching methods.

High school teachers are constrained by the university entrance exam system in Japan and often feel, quite rightly, that their first responsibility is to help students pass these entrance exams and gain access to an elite education and a chance at a better life. Unsurprisingly, many teachers spend a great deal of the available class time focussing on isolated elements of grammar to help students better answer these exam questions correctly and will often neglect the teaching of English as a tool for intercultural communication.

Students in Japan rarely have opportunities to use English as a tool for giving and getting information, processing information, reporting information, or synthesizing and comparing information; that is, English is rarely used as a tool of academic endeavor. Given the need to both enhance student abilities to use English as a medium of information exchange and also promote intercultural understanding, this study investigates the validity of using a *Literature Circles* approach as a way to improve communicative skills while introducing a cultural

component through the use of target language literature as source material for the class.

With such a clearly defined need, language teachers are being urged to develop curricula that can foster communicative language skills and also intercultural competence. One way to accomplish this is through the use of literature. The Modern Language Association Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (2007), for example, recommends raising intercultural competence by having students read, comprehend, and analyze narratives in the target language.

One way to teach literature communicatively is through the use of Literature Circles (LC), a type of peer discussion class activity put forward by Harvey Daniels, an American teacher and researcher. First of all, reading has long been recognized as a useful pathway to L2 mastery. As noted by Barrette et al. (2010), literature is one type of target language narrative that exposes students to comprehensible input, facilitating language acquisition. Secondly, reading which is followed up with communicative activities that force students to output language has also been found to be highly effective for both vocabulary development and language acquisition in general. (see for example, Altman, 1997; Coady, 1997; Joe, 1998; Ellis and Xe 1999). Lastly, using literature as source material for classroom discussion exposes students to words, phrases and idioms that are more associated with lifestyle and culture than they might otherwise encounter in a typical EFL/ESL classroom.

Source Material

The source material chosen for the class was a story, graded and written for intermediate EFL students. The book was written with simplified grammar and a limited vocabulary set, chosen to match the level of the class. The reading material was selected following the advice of Nation (2001), that adequate comprehension can be achieved when students read materials in which 98% of the running words are known. The book was also chosen because of its format, two short stories, divided into 6 chapters, which made it ideal for use over a 15 class term.

The two stories were both detective stories, and focussing the reading on a single genre can help students develop a better feel for the language, style and literary conventions associated with that genre. Furthermore, there is some research which suggests that having students focus on a single genre rather than a wide variety of genre is advantageous for second language acquisition, as students get multiple exposures to a vocabulary set which is associated with that

particular genre (see Krashen, 2004). Both stories were *whodunit* mystery stories set in Washington, D.C.. The main character in the stories was a female detective of mixed Chinese- Peruvian heritage working for the Washington D.C. police department.

By focusing on the mystery genre, students were repeatedly exposed to words that they might not encounter in a typical EFL/ESL class. For example, some of the words and expressions that were used repeatedly and associated with the detective story genre included: *dust for fingerprints, drugged, wall safe, combination, glance nervously* and so on. Other words more associated with lifestyle included: *prescription, allergic, allowance, fiancé, prescription, sigh, mumble* and so on. The use of these stories gave students exposure to a wider range of words and expressions.

Class Procedure

Students came to each class having read one chapter from the book as homework, typically 7 pages or 2,000 words. In addition to the reading, students had to check their understanding by doing a series of comprehension check questions. In class, students were put into groups of four to do discussion sessions which were then repeated four or five times to build fluency.

Following the advice of Furr (2004), the Literature Circles (LC) were set up as follows:

1. The instructor selected materials appropriate to the level of the class.

Although in L1 educational contexts, most practitioners of LC recommend that students select their own books to read in order to promote interest and raise motivation, in an EFL context having graded texts that are somewhat more easy to read can help students more easily comprehend the story, promoting reading fluency and allowing students to enjoy the text by *getting to meaning* more effortlessly. To make sure students were reading materials appropriate to their level, the materials were selected by the instructor.

2. Small temporary groups were arranged at the instructor's discretion.

In order to better manage the group dynamics of the class and maximize student participation, groups were formed and changed using a random numerical system. Students were not allowed to choose their own groups in an effort to avoid having all the strong students together in one group, or having groups of friends form cliques together. When groups are formed and reformed according to a random numerical system, students get opportunities to interact

with a wider variety of people than they might have had they formed groups by themselves.

3. The whole class read the same material.

In L1 LC, students read different stories. However, in an EFL context, all students read the same story. This means that all students will be familiar with the basic content of all the spoken interaction during the group discussion and can better understand the discussion, leading to improved fluency.

4. Students discussed the source material using a predictable and structured format.

In order for LC to work well, a certain amount of student training is needed. Students need to become familiar with their roles. A structured and predictable format helps students to understand what is expected of them, and what is expected of each role in the discussion.

Within their groups, each student was assigned a role on the day of the class. The roles were as follows:

- a. *Leader*: leads the discussion and asks questions.
- b. *Summarizer*: summarizes the story to date and also the current week's chapter.
- c. *Detail master*: answers questions asked by the leader about details of the story.
- d. *Vocabulary master*: explains the meanings of words using their own words.

5. Students were allowed to use written prepared notes to help with their discussions.

The role of the summarizer demands that students be able to relate the narrative. Allowing students to create story maps, helps the summarizer give a more detailed account of the main story.

6. The teacher played the role of facilitator, not a group member or an instructor.

Once groups have been set up and the students understand what is expected of them, the teacher needs to step back and allow the students to take responsibility for the maintenance of group discussion.

7. Task repetition was crucial for fluency development.

Discussion sessions typically last five to seven minutes. Bearing in mind the value of task repetition, having students do these sessions multiple times leads to improved performance. Students learn from their mistakes, improve their fluency and also gain confidence with each repetition. Repetition can be

facilitated by changing the group membership, so that each group has entirely new members with each cycle. Changing group membership also gives the activity some communicative purpose, as fresh discussions can be had with the new members.

8. *In between cycles, the teacher provided models.*

In between cycles, the teacher gave his own summaries of the story to date, the chapter being done that week, explanations of some vocabulary items and examples of questions and answers to the details of the story as models for the students to emulate should they choose to.

9. *At the end of each story, students did project work to facilitate review.*

As a review project, poster sessions were done by having students present on a specific character from the book in small group poster presentations.

Questions

The present pilot study investigated student opinion about the LC approach from a number of different perspectives. The following questions were asked:

1. Had students previously experienced an LC approach?
2. Was the experience positive or negative?
3. Did this approach contribute to vocabulary learning?
4. Was LC more effective than traditional methods in helping students learn new words?
5. Was LC more effective than traditional methods in helping students learn how to use their new words?
6. Did LC help students to learn something about North American culture?
7. Did students feel that the use of fictional literature as source material helped foster a better understanding of words associated with lifestyle and culture?
8. Did students feel that learning these sorts of words was valuable.

Method

Participants

The participants in the study were 78 second year chemical engineering university students (53 males and 25 females) studying English as a required second year course at a well regarded science university in Tokyo. Most of the students in the class were quite motivated to learn English, seeing English as important for their futures. Although the English proficiency level of the students was not directly measured during the course of this study, given that all students passed a rigorous entrance exam to enter the university, most of the students in

the chemical engineering department could be said to be at an intermediate or *threshold* level (CEFR B1) of English proficiency. There were 78 students registered in the class, however we were only able to use survey data from 62 students due to either incomplete data on the questionnaire or student absences on the day the survey was administered.

Instrumentation

To investigate these questions an 11 item questionnaire was administered at the end of the course. The questions were asked in Japanese and students were encouraged to make further comments in either English or Japanese. A translation of the questionnaire is included in the appendix.

The Results

Most students in the study had not previously experienced literature circles, as 82% of students reported that it was a novel experience for them. In addition, the majority of students felt that the classes were useful, with 75% of students rating the approach as positive. Students gave a variety of reasons for their positive and negative ratings. The most common reason cited for a positive rating was that students were able to use and think in English. Other reasons given were that students were able to actively participate and participate equally due to the defined speaking roles. Others cited the need to preview before class as contributing to an overall positive experience. The two main reasons given for a negative rating were that there were a few students that didn't properly prepare for the class and that there were some gaps in student motivation, meaning that students who didn't participate actively impeded some of the group discussion.

In terms of learning new vocabulary, literature circles was not felt to be superior, however in terms of learning to *use* new vocabulary, literature circles was rated as being more effective than traditional methods. When asked to compare literature circles with more traditional approaches in terms of helping students learning to *use* newly acquired vocabulary, 66% of students rated LC as being superior, 10% rated LC as inferior and 24% rated LC as being equal to other more traditional approaches.

In terms of gaining an understanding of a target language culture, although students reported that they did not gain any significant understanding of the target language culture through the use of LC, they did feel that using fiction as source material is useful for learning words typically associated with lifestyle and culture, with 94% of students reporting affirmatively that reading fiction is

helpful for gaining an understanding of words associated with lifestyle and culture.

The results from the questionnaire are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Questionnaire results

Questions	Yes	Unsure	No
1. Have you previously experienced <i>literature circles</i> ?	11	-	51
2. Was the experience positive?	47	-	15
3. Did the approach contribute to vocabulary learning?	26	28	8
4. Was LC more effective than traditional methods for helping students learn new words?	14	28	20
5. Was LC more effective than traditional classes in helping students develop an understanding of how to use words?	41	15	6
6. Did you feel that <i>Whodunit</i> helped you to learn something about North American culture?	13		49
7. Does literature, (fiction) help 'cultural' vocabulary acquisition?	58	4	0
8. Is it useful to learn words that are associated with lifestyle and culture?	24	37	1

Discussion

The purpose of this pilot study was to identify aspects of this class procedure that might merit further study with respect to language acquisition and intercultural understanding. Secondly, through this study we could identify aspects of the class procedure in need of further adjustment.

That students did not find a role for LC in promoting a better understanding of the target language culture, possibly suggests that a more overt approach to the teaching of culture was needed. Murphey (1988) has suggested four general

approaches to the teaching of cultural content, two implicit approaches, where culture is not taught explicitly but is assumed to *come with* the language, and two that are more explicit. The LC approach used in this study is an example of the former, suggesting that perhaps more attention could have been focused on culture by adding cultural content as an explicit educational objective rather than leaving it embedded within the source material.

Student opinion on the role of LC in promoting vocabulary acquisition was mixed. However, given that many methods of learning vocabulary have been shown to be effective, the results are not surprising. Vocabulary is learned through repeated exposure and deeper levels of linguistic processing. This can be accomplished in many ways, and is not limited to group in-class discussion. For example, in a study comparing integrated and isolated form-focused instruction, File and Adams (2010) found that isolated form-focused instruction can lead to higher rates of learning than integrated instruction. However, both integrated form-focused instruction and isolated form-focused instruction were superior to incidental exposure alone. As LC uses an integrated approach, student opinion seems to match these research findings.

Student impressions of LC was most positive in its role facilitating a better understanding of how to use newly learned words. Words need to be met and met again to facilitate retention and they also need to be used and used again to consolidate learning to a point of being able to use newly learned words with confidence. As Schmitt points out, "the overriding principle for maximizing vocabulary learning is to increase the amount of engagement learners have with lexical items," (Schmitt, 2008, p. 329) and with an LC approach, students need to recall and summarize the story in addition to having to define and explicitly discuss vocabulary items, which increases the amount of engagement students have with the lexical items.

Student opinion about LC in its role promoting vocabulary use once again matches research findings which have shown that learners who have had their attention focused on vocabulary items are better able to recall and use those words. Depth of processing or degree of elaboration has long been associated with more effective learning (see Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) have proposed a task-induced involvement model of vocabulary acquisition named the *Involvement Load Hypothesis* which proposes that words which have been processed with higher involvement loads, defined as being based on the cognitive dimensions of *search* and *evaluation* involving noticing and the deliberate allocation of attention to a word's form-

meaning relationship, leads to higher levels of retention than words which have been processed with lower involvement loads. With respect to LC, the tasks associated with the role of *Vocabulary Master* force students to come up with their own definitions and explanations of newly learned words during group discussion. This focuses student attention on form, and forces students to process words with higher levels of involvement.

The use of literature as source material most certainly provides a vehicle for cultural content. However, the results suggest that cultural differences need to be clearly identified and pointed out to students. The teaching of culture implicitly through literature, without activities to raise student awareness of these issues, might not lead to significant gains in intercultural understanding, at least within the confines of a single school term.

The LC approach, however, does seem to be a useful method for improving basic language competencies. The approach gives students many opportunities to practice the language, leading to language acquisition and improved fluency. The results from this pilot study suggest that further empirical research verifying this finding is warranted. Pre-tests and post-tests of vocabulary items associated with the target language culture would add empirical support for the proposition that the LC approach enhances the acquisition of vocabulary items associated with culture. Furthermore, pre and post testing could also establish to what extent the approach helps students *use* their newly learned words.

Conclusion

The goal of this article has been to put forward the LC approach as a way to introduce cultural content into foreign language classrooms, and to identify aspects of this approach in need of empirical verification. The results suggest that concrete pre and post testing of vocabulary items would be a useful next step. The qualitative data elucidated in this study supports previous empirical studies, however more data is needed to verify the validity of this approach in promoting intercultural understanding, language acquisition and fluency development.

The results also suggested that the cultural content found in the source material should be pointed out more explicitly through awareness raising activities. This suggests that some adjustments need to be made to the current class procedures. That being said, if cultural content is to be added to foreign language curricula, literature circles seem like a promising vehicle to deliver that cultural content while helping students to achieve higher levels of fluency and provide students with opportunities for language acquisition. In the context of

the educational system in Japan, introducing literature circles into the classroom seems like a good way to meet many of the curriculum goals that have been expressed by MEXT. If Japan is looking to the 2020 Olympics as a way to stimulate further educational reform, literature circles could be one option.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

1. Have you previously taken a class that has used a literature circles approach?
2. Do you think literature circles is common in Japan?
3. What was your impression of literature circles? Positive or negative?
4. Could you describe some of the positive and negative aspects of the approach?
5. Was LC useful in helping you improve your vocabulary?
6. Did you feel that LC was more effective than traditional approaches in helping you develop your vocabulary?
7. Did you feel that LC was more effective than traditional approaches in helping you use newly learned vocabulary?
8. Do you prefer fiction or non-fiction?
9. Did you feel that *Whodunit* helped you to learn something about North American culture?
10. Do you feel that reading fiction is helpful in learning words associated with lifestyle and culture?
11. Do you feel that learning words associated with lifestyle and culture is important?

Huntahan* vocab assessment toward enriching mother tongue-based classroom practices

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Abstract

This two-phase action research examined the profile and knowledge level of Grade III pupils about their knowledge on the distinct local vocabularies in order to formulate enrichment or intervention, to address any deficiency or lack of, and to assess whether such enrichment programs are effective for authentic, localized implementation of the MTB-MLE. The research instruments used in the first phase included survey and vocabulary assessment test. The researchers initially employed descriptive statistics to interpret the result. Majority of the respondents have established residency in Lopez, Quezon for at least four years. All of the pupils speak Tagalog only at home. The first phase of the research revealed that the pupils of Lopez West Elementary School Bldg. 1 performed satisfactorily in the language test. Most of them found that the most difficult words are generally content words. The initial results of this study serve as baseline information implying that the pupils' level of understanding of the Lopezeños words needs enhancement and/or reinforcements; hence, there is an urgent need to implement the 2nd cycle of this action research. The second phase once implemented seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and/or enrichment activities that may guide language teachers in the conduct of classroom-based, culturally sensitive, contextualized language instruction.

Keywords

first language teaching and learning or mother-tongue based multilingual education, language assessment, vocabulary enrichment

*Huntahan is a local vocabulary, which means casual talk or conversation.

Introduction

Roughly, there are more than 6000 languages used by 6 billion people in the globe—nonetheless, only about 300 are considered majority languages while remaining 5700 languages are being considered as 'minority or local languages'. Local languages have already found a niche in basic education here in the

Philippines with the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the K to 12 Curriculum. Martin (2008), on one hand, argued that even before the legislation of K to 12 was passed, teachers in the public schools across the nation have already been using first language or mother language in teaching basic concepts to school children. In his article, Granali (2013) reported that teachers were hopeful about the new curriculum but admitted that its first year was a struggle because the instructional materials came late and the week-long training was not enough. Nonetheless, Department of Education (DepEd) issued additional guidelines to respond to this adjustment.

Dekker (1999, p. 103), in her paper on the education of children from Kalinga, an ethnolinguistic community in Northern Luzon, comments on the many different experiences and artefacts that confront children as they enter school: "The first grader is confronted with many things in the school situation that are unfamiliar: the classroom with desks, the flag ceremony, the pictures on the wall representing children from the city and different lifestyles and the textbooks depicting other cultures and, most crucially, even the language used is foreign".

MTB-MLE responds to the scenario posited by Dekker. Much more, the program will also cover the protection and development of minority languages including inclusion of the local languages in the curriculum beginning kindergarten. For this reason, the use and promotion of a local language in schools at the basic education level are required.

UNESCO, from now and then, has strongly rallied that a child should be educated in his or her first language for as long as possible. Unfortunately, this has been a gargantuan task to achieve in many places around the world considering the cost in terms of material production and teacher trainings. The Philippines, with 168 living languages, is within the realm of this macrocosmic educational phenomenon (Dumatog & Dekker, 2003). Responding to the challenge, Dekker and Young (2007) delineate that within the Philippines, language policy makers address the issue on hand by providing multilingual education using the first language of the learners as foundation for quality language education vis-à-vis on meeting the needs of a culturally and linguistically diverse country.

Beginning School Year (SY) 2012-2013, the MTB-MLE has been implemented in all public schools, specifically in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2 and 3 as part of the K to 12 Basic Education Program (DepEd Order No. 16, 2012). Hence, the MTB-MLE aims to develop the following areas: (1) language development, which establishes a strong education for success in school and for lifelong learning; (2)

cognitive development, which focuses on higher order thinking skills (HOTS); (3) academic development, which prepares the learner to acquire mastery of competencies in each of the learning areas; and (4) socio-cultural awareness, which enhances the pride of the learner's heritage, language and culture.

Teaching and learning the first language is not only good for one's local language. Dekker, Duguiang, and Walter's paper (2008) on "The bridge to Filipino and English: 3rd year results of the First Language MLE Program in the Philippines" purported the value of Mother Tongue Education in the learning of the second and third languages. Essentially, they concluded that when children learn in their mother tongue their cognitive skills continue to build, enabling greater ability to handle cognitively demanding study and strengthening learning of other languages.

MTB-MLE includes the learning of local vocabularies. How is vocabulary defined? The definition of vocabulary in the Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (Flexner, 2003) is "the stock of words used by or known to a particular people or group of person." *Word* is, subsequently, defined as a unit of language, consisting of one or more spoken sounds or their written representation, that functions as a principal carrier of meaning." In this action research, Lopezeños' vocabularies (vocab), which are considered part of the mother tongue linguistic repertoire of Lopezeños, transcended from the past to the present generations of the town's history, arts and culture. Traditionally, it is the elders' cultural obligations to hand down these language components to their children and to these children's children directly or indirectly at home or elsewhere within the boundaries of this town. Although the mixing of other dialects from other territories has remained a crucial factor to the development of these vocabularies, conservatives believe that it is in formal education that this language could better find its place for nourishment and usage. Once the students are immersed to their native vocabularies, it is more likely that students will further appreciate their culture and tradition (Huntahan Team, 2010).

Ocampo and Hermosa (1997) tag vocabulary or word meaning as one of the most essential components of comprehension. Their learning modules set (heeding Anderson and Freebody 1981 model) three primary views or frameworks on the significance of vocabulary development. These views are instrumentalist, aptitude, and knowledge position. First, the *Instrumentalist* stance states that vocabulary may be viewed as the cause of comprehension no matter how the vocabulary is acquired where vocabulary should be taught directly rather than isolated. Second, the *aptitude position* regards a good

vocabulary as only a demonstration of a quick mind just like in word drills. And lastly, the *knowledge position* claims that good vocabulary and comprehension are products of abundant knowledge about one's environment and culture; hence providing experiences for students to talk and write about the target vocabularies is the key in enhancing such knowledge.

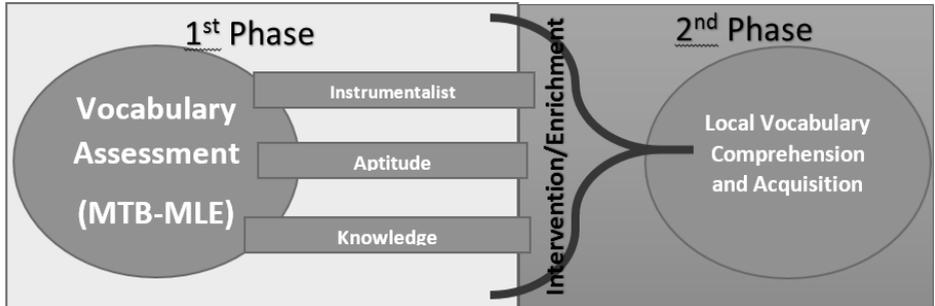


Figure 1: Conceptual and action research operational framework

MTB-MLE, as the integration of local vocabularies in the teaching and language learning of Filipino or Tagalog in relation to their second language, may it be in content subject or the language subject itself is such a fertile soil for action research. In an analysis of vocabulary assessments, Read (2000) identified three continua for designing and evaluating vocabulary assessments: (a) discrete—embedded, (b) selective—comprehensive, and (c) contextualized—decontextualized. At the outset of this action research first cycle, such method of assessment serves as the groundwork. On the other hand, since the MTB instruction covers until Grade 3, incoming Grade 4 pupils were the subjects of this action research to assess how MTB instruction in primary years influenced their vocabulary development. The preceding views, positions, and studies stated in this brief review of literature serves as the backbone of this research. Figure 1 visualizes how this study is framed.

In Lopez, Quezon, the Huntahan Team (2010) of Lopez National Comprehensive High School conducted a community research on its local languages, specifically vocabularies that are still used and some considered dormant. With the Huntahan team's collection of Lopez, Quezon vocabularies as primary reference, the study revealed that on a language test assessment; first year and second year students' generally performed satisfactorily indicating the need for more explicit Lopezenos' language use and instruction in Filipino or

Mother-Tongue related subjects. Will this be the same in the case of elementary students exiting primary grades in Lopez, Quezon? So far, little research or no action research has been done to determine the level of awareness and/or knowledge of Grade Three on the distinct Lopez, Quezon vocabularies or language. Thus, this two-phase action research aims to examine the knowledge level of such students, to devise or formulate enrichment or intervention needed to address any deficiency or lack of, and to assess whether such enrichment programs are effective for the relevant and authentic implementation of the MTB-MLE in the promotion of local language in Lopez, Quezon.

Research Questions

In light of the background information and needs assessment to conduct such study, this two-phase action research cycle sought to answer the following:

A. First Cycle

1. What is the profile of grade three pupil- examinees in terms of:
 - 1.2 Length of residency in Lopez, Quezon; and
 - 1.3 Language/s spoken at home;
2. What is the Grade Three pupils' local vocabulary assessment result when they are grouped according to sections or classes?
3. Based on the achievement test, what are the local vocabularies in which pupils find difficulty and ease in understanding?

B. Second Cycle

1. What enrichment language programs or interventions can be applied to enhance pupils learning and use of such language?
2. What are the effects of such programs or interventions to the vocabulary development and literary skills of the pupils?

Methodology and research design

The first cycle of this action research employed quantitative collection and analysis of data. The use of survey questions and test questionnaires that assess the level of vocabulary knowledge of pupils is applied at the onset. Hence, the pupils' performance is defined as the score, which they earned on a teacher-made vocabulary achievement test administered at the end of the school year. On one hand, the second cycle of the study will utilize a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The study data analysis is based on the action research format proposed by Mills (2000).

Data analysis and interpretation

1st Phase: Based on the review of literature, a language pre-test was constructed by the researchers. The test underwent face and content validation by language experts. Afterward, it was be piloted to a parallel group of students. Item analysis was then be employed. Once the test was validated, the results were subjected to descriptive statistics (mean, mode, range, etc.). Based on the results, 15 most difficult and the 15 familiar words were classified for analysis to respond to the aforementioned research questions.

2nd Phase: After the presentation of the 1st phase results to the concerned teachers, orientation or discussion of the proposed enrichment or literature-based intervention will be done. The representatives of the students' outputs will be critiqued and qualitatively analyzed based on the creative use of the Lopezeño. Post-test will also be given to assess the effect of the intervention. The same descriptive measures will be employed for analysis and interpretation with the combination of qualitative method.

Results and discussions

This part of the paper reports the results of the data analysis and interpretation of the first phase research questions.

A. First Cycle

1. What is the profile of Grade Three pupil- examinees in terms of:
 - 1.1 Length of residency in Lopez; and
 - 1.2 Language/s spoken at home;

The research team was able to cover one hundred seventy Grade Three pupils who were enrolled in Lopez West Elementary School Bldg. 1.

Table 1 shows that a great majority comprising 89% of the pupils have lived in Lopez, Quezon for more than four years. Their parents have established their residency in this municipality. This further illustrates, however that almost 11% of the examinees have transferred in the school for 3 years or less which could be attributed to so many reasons.

Table 2 shows that Tagalog/MT is the only dialect that is used by the Grade Three pupils of Lopez West Elementary School Bldg. One hundred percent of these pupils use this language even at home for they have been used to it since birth. None of them interacts with their family members using English or other variants of language.

Length of Residency	SPED	Panchita	Alitaptap	Subli	Carinosa	Percentage
3 years and below	1	7	3	4	4	11%
4 years and above	32	24	35	29	31	89%
Total	33	31	38	33	35	100%

Table 1: Profile of grade three pupils examinees in terms of length of residency

Language Spoke at Home	SPED	Panchita	Alitaptap	Subli	Carinosa	Percentage
English	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tagalog*	33	31	38	33	35	100%
English and Tagalog	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2: Profile of grade three pupils examinees in terms of language spoken at home

*first language or mother tongue which is exhibited with the use of local vocabularies

2. What is the grade three pupils' Lopezeños vocabulary assessment result when they are grouped according to section or classes?

Rank based on Mean by Section	Number of Examinees	Mean	Interpretation	Standard Deviation	Highest Score	Lowest Score
2.1 SPED	33	16.24	Satisfactory	1.48	23	10
2.2 Alitaptap	38	15.57	Satisfactory	2.12	23	9
2.3 Subli	33	14.32	Satisfactory	1.24	24	9
2.4 Panchita	31	12.93	Fair	1.48	21	3
2.5 Carinosa	35	12.14	Fair	2.14	19	6
Overall Mean		14.24	Satisfactory			

Table 3: Mean of every section

Table 3 shows the mean of every section/class with its general average and range of scores. Fro Three sections garnered scores which are below the median; the researchers could safely generalize that the pupils experienced medium level of difficulty in taking the achievement. Thus, the Grade Three pupils need

enhancement. Overall, the pupils of Lopez West Elementary School Bldg. 1 performed satisfactorily. This further indicates that the pupils' level of understanding the Lopezeño words needs some attention and reinforcements by the school involved. Although there are so many factors to consider affecting the outcome of the measurement and evaluation, the researchers recognize that something must be done to improve the level of pupils' understanding of distinct Lopezeño vocabulary.

3. Based on the achievement test, what are the Lopezeños' vocabularies in which the pupils find difficulty and ease in understanding?

Ranked according to the level of difficulty (1 being the most difficult), the items or vocabularies that were drawn from the achievement test scores of higher, middle, and lower level groups of pupils are presented accordingly. Based from the vocabulary items taken from the test, words were ranked according to the level of difficulty. Most of the Grade Three pupils found *kubakob* as the most difficult word while *nagkukumahog* is the easiest word for them. In general, the most common words classified as most difficult are classified as adjectives, verbs, and nouns respectively.

Conclusion

Majority of the pupils have established residency in Lopez, Quezon over the past 4 years. The researchers looked into this area, because the length of stay in this town may be tantamount to the language exposure of the students although follow up study is deemed necessary. Aside from this factor, the kind of language/s spoken at home may influence the vocabulary acquisition. Pupils' difficulty in comprehending Lopezeño or the local vocabularies may then be attributed to the length of residency in Lopez, Quezon, the language use in school and at home, and in totality—the pupil's individual experiences (Anderson & Freebody, 1981, as adopted by Ocampo & Hermosa, 1997). It is evident that the most of the difficult words are generally content words—adjectives, nouns and verbs. As a rule, pupils who have not been exposed to those words inside and outside the school find difficulty in comprehending their meanings. Thus, the researchers support the role which the environment plays for the learners to experience such vocabularies, which made them to claim that students, whose family members and classroom teachers provide implicit or direct linguistic supports, are at their best advantage for easy word comprehension and acquisition. This research report provides a simple yet meaningful quantitative assessment that will guide language teachers in the conduct of intervention

and/or assessment although qualitative research remains to be done for triangulation. Serving as handy baseline information, language teachers may craft differentiated and localized instruction activities that will enhance the development of vocabulary and foster appreciation of one's culture. It is now in the creativity of the language teachers in addressing the gap toward the promotion of multi-lingual and culture-based instruction. At this point, the second phase of this action research awaits implementation.

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Some remarks on the state of lexicography research

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Abstract

A dictionary is the first thing one buys when he starts to learn a new language. Obviously enough, within each natural language lexis carries more meaning than grammar, let alone the fact that lexical items are indispensable in order to survive in a foreign environment. As *EFL* dictionaries have become an essential tool in language development, consequently this particular kind of reference work has been investigated by linguists. The aim of this paper is to examine the state of research into the contexts of dictionary use as well as dictionary look-up strategies.

Key words

lexicography research, dictionary use, dictionary requirements

Introduction

Both dictionary use and dictionary requirements have been investigated in a number of different ways and from different angles. Hartmann (1987) identified four major categories of investigation:

- 1) Research into the information categories presented in dictionaries,
- 2) Research into specific dictionary user groups,
- 3) Research into the contexts of dictionary use,
- 4) Research into dictionary look-up strategies.

As this work is primarily concerned with the needs and strategies of advanced English language learners that make use of *EFL* dictionaries, the research into the contexts of dictionary use, and dictionary look-up strategies are of greatest importance. An examination of *EFL* dictionaries reveals what type of information is obtainable to the user, as well as the data collection methods. At present, a limited variation in the types of information obtainable within advanced learners' dictionaries can be observed. Clearly, dictionaries vary in their defining styles and the extent to which they use non-verbal data, a factor which could be of importance when examining look up strategies.

1. Questionnaire-based research

One has grounds to maintain that questionnaire-based research is the commonest method of academic enquiry into the realm of *EFL* dictionaries. The investigations that have been carried out concerned both native speakers (see, for example, Barnhart, 1962; Quirk, 1975, and Jackson, 1988), and non-native speakers of English (see, for example, Tomaszczyk, 1979; Baxter, 1980; Béjoint, 1981, and Battenburg, 1989). Since the non-native speakers of English are the main concern of the present study, the presentation of the current state of the research will be limited to those surveys only. To start with, Tomaszczyk (1979) was the first researcher in Polish lexicographic tradition to investigate the dictionary requirements of non-native speakers of English. The author's intention was to obtain information relevant to the production of better dictionaries for non-native speakers (at least for Polish students of English such as those included in his study). In the words of Tomaszczyk (1979, p. 103):

The study was undertaken in the hope that an examination of the ways in which language learners use dictionaries, and of their attitudes and expectations towards them would provide some information about the extent to which various groups of users depend on dictionaries, help pinpoint those of the current lexicographical solutions that are, as well as those that are not, felt to meet their needs, and give lexicographers some clues they might want to use in their attempts to make better dictionaries.

The body of responses that were obtained revealed that dictionaries were used most frequently for translation, with reading and writing coming in second and third place respectively. Significantly, dictionaries were less frequently used for the mastering of speaking and writing skills. In a crucial finding, the survey also revealed that monolingual dictionary use was considerably less frequent than bilingual. Despite this, Tomaszczyk (1979) held monolingual dictionaries in higher esteem, at the same time judging bilingual dictionaries to be as good as monolingual ones (as far as spelling, receptive grammar and function words were concerned).

In turn, Baxter (1980) concentrated on the question of the value of using monolingual dictionaries to a sample of Japanese students. In particular, the author examined the problem of the inability of language learners to express their ideas in an acceptable manner when the precise lexical item does not come

to mind, suggesting that one possible cause of the inability might be the use of bilingual dictionaries. Baxter's (1980) hypothesis is that bilingual dictionary use discourages the development of paraphrasing skills, whereas monolingual dictionary definitions provide a spoken language model for the learner.

It seems that the best-known study on non-native speaker dictionary needs is that conducted by Béjoint (1981) with French students. The majority (87%) of his responders placed meaning among the three most sought-after pieces of information, while only 25% mentioned spelling and pronunciation as their top priorities. Significantly, etymology was the least frequently mentioned information category. Dictionaries appeared to be used more frequently for decoding than encoding, as well as more frequently in the written medium than the spoken. On the whole, the majority of the respondents seemed satisfied with the dictionaries they worked with; naming completeness of coverage as the main reason for their preference. The majority were barely able to recall occasions when the dictionary did not provide the information they were looking for. The reasons standing behind the dissatisfaction of the minority were poor definitions, missing words, unsatisfactory syntactic guidance; excessively long entries, incomprehensible coding, insufficient examples and unclear layout. Béjoint (1981) concluded that students need to be taught how to use monolingual dictionaries.

Béjoint's (1981) survey is very similar to the one carried out by Battenburg (1989). The main result of the survey was that bilingual dictionaries were the ones most frequently in possession of the students who took part in the study, and native speaker dictionaries were owned by the smallest number of speakers. Battenburg (1989) found that one may speak of a certain correlation between dictionary use and ownership: at more advanced levels bilingual and monolingual learners' dictionary use decreased while the use of monolingual dictionaries increased. As a rule, all students expressed a strong preference for looking up definitions, and a notable lack of any interest in etymological information.

2. Test-based research into dictionary use and dictionary requirements

Let us stress at the very outset that test-based research may enable the researcher to prove or disprove hypotheses in a more conclusive manner much more effectively than is possible with questionnaire-based research. In particular, the findings of test scores carried by Bensoussan et al. (1984) are particularly revealing as they indicate those cases where dictionary use does not

seem to improve reading test scores. Also Black (1986) stresses that dictionary examples do not seem to help learners understand word meaning. It is worth mentioning at this stage that, although the major findings of the test-based studies match expectations regarding the value of dictionaries, there are some unexpected findings. For example, even though Knight (1994), Tono (1989) and Bogaards (1991) successfully demonstrate account for the advantages of dictionary use, Luppescu and Day (1993) find that students learn some words more successfully when they have no access to dictionary sources.

It is worth mentioning that test-based studies are particularly useful in cases where there is some inconsistency between observable behaviour and widely held belief. In the study carried out by Black (1986) the target aim was to assess the effect of dictionary use on vocabulary learning, and the results obtained suggested that learners' comprehension of dictionary definitions is unaffected by the presence or absence of examples of use. Although the design of Black's (1986) experiments casts some serious doubts on the validity of the findings, as the subjects were asked to look up words that they did not necessarily need to look up (they were subsequently tested on the words regardless of whether the defining information had played a part in their a comprehension). As Black (1989) found, the absence of examples in the abstract dictionary-style defining condition may have been offset by the presence of abundant contextual clues.

While Black (1989) aimed to measure the students' ability to remember word meaning expressed by different means, Boogards' (1991) goal was to compare the usefulness of monolingual, as well as bilingual, dictionary information and stressed that very little research had been carried on monolingual dictionaries. The author summarized the opinions for and against the use of monolingual dictionaries. Boogards (1991) argued that the dictionaries in question give more complete information about word formation and grammar, and are not constrained by the impossible task of accurately translating single words. Consequently, he set out to investigate the usefulness of a bilingual dictionary. The subjects were divided into four groups (using a bilingual dictionary, *EFL* dictionary, a dictionary for native speakers and using no dictionary), and were asked to underline those words in the text they had looked up. Boogards (1991) found out that users of bilingual dictionaries chose to look up the most words and consequently produced the most successful translation. Note that the results obtained are consistent with the findings of both Luppescu and Day (1993) and Knight (1994). The scholars recorded higher vocabulary test scores for bilingual dictionary users than the ones who do not use dictionaries at all. Luppescu and

Day (1993) and Knight (1994), themselves, did not set out to investigate either the quality or intelligibility of dictionary entries, or users' problems of interpretation. Their primary concern was to find evidence for the fact that dictionary is an aid in language learning. One may say that their findings do show that dictionary use has a positive effect on students' reading as well as vocabulary comprehension. One of the specific conclusions was that the benefit was particularly visible in the case of students with a low level of verbal ability.

Another project devised by Atkins (1984), which received the official sponsorship of EURALEX and AILA commission on Lexicography and Lexicology in 1986 (the project is described in Atkins & Knowles, 1990, and Atkins & Varantola, 1998), aimed to provide answers to the following questions:

- 1) How *EFL* learners used the dictionaries,
- 2) How effective these dictionaries were in helping with encoding, decoding and translating,
- 3) If bilingual and monolingual dictionaries were equally effective,
- 4) Students' attitudes to monolingual and bilingual dictionaries,
- 5) Instructions given to dictionary users,
- 6) How dictionaries may be improved.

Members of the control group who claimed to have been trained in dictionary use do not seem to have used their dictionaries significantly more than subjects who claimed not to have received any formal training. All in all, the use of dictionaries decreased with proficiency. As students' grades for the placement test rose their choice of dictionary type showed a steady rise in monolingual dictionary use along with proportionate drop in bilingual dictionary use, though bilingual dictionary use exceeded monolingual dictionary use at every level.

What is more, the test failed to provide data on dictionary usage, but merely some information on the basic skills needed to encode dictionary information. At the same time, it is worth noting that only a few abbreviations were tested, and these were not the ones that students needed to understand in order to answer the questions provided in the test.

Furthermore, students who were more proficient in English apparently did better without a dictionary than with one. As the majority of subjects used bilingual rather than monolingual dictionaries, the conclusions drawn from a comparison could be nothing more than tentative. It would appear, on the other hand, that look-ups in a monolingual dictionary had a better chance of success than those in a bilingual dictionary, whatever the proficiency level of the user, and no matter what the type of the task.

Subsequently, Tono (1988) examined the natural process of dictionary consultation. As in most studies of this kind, the dictionary-using situations supplied in the dictionary tests did not reflect ordinary, unprompted dictionary use. This holds particularly true for encoding questions while under normal conditions encoders have to draw on their own vocabulary store to encode.

To be more precise, he compared the EURALEX test with the one conducted in Japan in 1985 by Okayama Prefecture, that investigated a much wider range of skills, yet still remained an unsatisfactory means of monitoring *EFL* dictionary users' strengths and weaknesses. As the author points out, there are a number of areas where the test itself might be at fault; he finds the time limitation unnatural, and complains that variations in the conventions of different bilingual dictionaries were not taken into consideration. Certain skills such as locating the words you need to look up and choosing from a number of definitions the most appropriate one, are not easy to assess. As a final conclusion he indicates that future tests should distinguish more clearly between dictionary use for comprehension and dictionary use for productive purposes (as the two purposes actually need different skills).

3. Observation-based research into dictionary use and dictionary requirements

As in the case of questionnaire-based research, observation-based studies are concerned with generating hypotheses, rather than testing them. Yet, while the data regarding students' behaviour obtained by questionnaire may be suspect (as students may misunderstand questions, fail to recall, or behave in a way that they perceive to be desirable), observation-based research is devoid of such problems (by setting subjects observable tasks, and collecting data either during the task itself, or immediately following its completion). Clearly, observation-based research sets out to observe natural dictionary use, rather than contrived behaviour taking place in a controlled experimental setting. In the studies, students were set a variety of language tasks, namely translation Ard (1982) Müllich (1990), composition Hatherall, Harvey and Yuill (1984) and reading Naubach and Cohen (1988).

The goal set in Ard's (1982) study of bilingual dictionary use was to determine how successfully students actually use bilingual dictionaries. The author (1982, p. 18) comments that bilingual dictionary use [i]s one among many methods (of vocabulary learning), including the use of thesaurus. Unfortunately, these alternatives are so rarely mentioned in ESL classes that they

are not really alternatives. Note that monolingual dictionary use is not actually mentioned, although it seems quite possible that some students participating in Ard's (1982) study were *EFL* dictionary users. All in all, the author formulates a general observation that students use bilingual dictionaries more frequently at home than in class, as a consequence of the time restrictions placed on them during lessons. In turn, Hatherall's (1984) study relied on written rather than oral protocols. In this work, the following behavioural tendencies are presented as findings:

- 1) most students do not read the whole text through in advance of translating,
- 2) more advanced students use the dictionary more often than less advanced students,
- 3) students do not look up closed-set items such as prepositions, or common words in verb-noun expressions such as *take the strain*, students look up the nouns first,
- 4) if the students check the verb entry, it is only after they have found the noun entry information unsatisfactory,
- 5) students tend to translate word-for-word, and the dictionaries they use do not discourage this behaviour.

Hatherall (1984) recommends that in future studies adopting this method of data collection, students should not be allowed free access to a variety of types of reference books, but instead they should be allotted one type of dictionary only, or possibly two for the purpose of comparison. In turn, Neubach and Cohen (1988) are interested in variation across levels of proficiency. Their findings could be summarized as the following list of students' problems with dictionary consultation:

- 1) reading only the first definition in a monolingual dictionary,
- 2) encountering a problem with vocabulary in a definition in a monolingual dictionary,
- 3) encountering a problem with terminology in the monolingual dictionary,
- 4) encountering an alphabet order problem,
- 5) encountering a problem with the monolingual or bilingual dictionary entry itself,
- 6) encountering a problem with the format for presentation of the definition in a given monolingual or bilingual dictionary,
- 7) experiencing frustration during the survey,

- 8) arriving at the word meaning but being uncertain about it (in case of monolingual as well as bilingual dictionaries),
- 9) experiencing difficulty in arriving at the correct conclusion on the basis of the dictionary entry.

One of the observations that can be made is that all the students under review had problems with grammatical terms, abbreviations and phonetic script. The list of dictionary use problems that Neubach and Cohen (1988) also noted included looking up words in the wrong places and giving up the search without realizing that the correct meaning had already been found. The researchers found that only advanced students benefited from dictionary use; they formed semantic field expectations before looking words up, they could grasp the main message of the passage, but merely used the dictionary to deepen their understanding. Neubach and Cohen's (1988) study is the first in-depth study of procedures adopted by *EFL* learners when using dictionaries, and their findings both support and verify a number of earlier studies.

First and foremost, it may be assumed that Neubach and Cohen (1988) arrive at the same conclusion as Tomaszczyk (1979) and Bensoussan, Simm and Weiss (1984). Müllich (1990) who examined dictionary using behaviour of *EFL* students found that, on average, only about half of the dictionary consultations were completely successful. Not surprisingly, the difficulty level of the text greatly affected the success of dictionary consultation. Factual texts, which were neutral both in style and register, posed the least difficulty, but the use of irony, colloquialisms, slang and metaphor was „liable to impair the use of monolingual dictionaries by clouding the meaning of lexical units in context” (Müllich 1990: 486). What is more, Müllich (1990) notes the effect of dictionary defining style on successful dictionary use. However, his greatest insight is the observation concerning what he calls *sham use* of a dictionary. This involves a failure on the part of users to assimilate new and unexpected dictionary information, as Müllich (1990, p. 487) puts it:

Students believed that they had found their solution in the dictionary but, in reality, they had only read enough of the entry to confirm a preconceived idea, or simply deviated from the dictionary information on the grounds of interpretation and personal association.

The most recent study is that of Harvey and Yuill (1997) whose work examines dictionary use while writing, and aims to establish why learners consulted the dictionary as an aid to composition, and how successful it turned out to be as an information source. In the majority of cases users were satisfied with the dictionary entries and they found the dictionary information to be accessible (all the learners consulted *COBUILD* dictionary). The authors do, however, make some suggestions to improve the design of *COBUILD*, such as increasing the quantity of cross-references and placing neutral synonyms by marked words.

The lexicographic studies discussed in this section do not provide much directly valuable information for compilers of *EFL* dictionaries as some of the studies are concerned with the behaviour of native-speaker dictionary users, rather than *EFL* learners. Additionally, the findings are ultimately inconclusive because they report on the beliefs and perceptions of dictionary users, rather than on the effect of the dictionary use.

Note that from the above considerations, there seem to emerge three main paths where research is particularly called for. First, it seems necessary to gather more data in order to resolve the question of whether dictionary use improves language learning and language task performance. Tono (1989) reports notably improved reading comprehension for those learners who used dictionaries. Black (1986), Luppescu and Day (1993) and Knight (1994), found that retention of new lexical items is considerably higher in cases where learners have access to word definitions. On the other hand, there have been three pieces of research which cast some doubt on the usefulness of dictionaries. Bensoussan, Sim and Weiss (1984) found no difference in performance in reading comprehension tests between those with access to dictionaries and those without. Neubach and Cohen (1988) arrived at a similar conclusion when they reported that only the most advanced students benefited from using dictionaries.

The investigations into the next area of research, concerning the type of dictionary information most useful for *EFL* decoding and encoding, provides strong evidence that *EFL* dictionary use increases with proficiency, and it seems that in the early stages of English language learning, monolingual dictionaries are far too difficult for learners to be used properly. Baxter (1980) reports that most learners disliked *EFL* dictionaries, as they simply could not understand the entries. In the study by Tomaszczyk (1979) monolingual dictionaries were rated highly, yet the majority of students preferred to use bilingual ones. Likewise, in Béjoint's (1981) study, learners indicated that *EFL* dictionaries contained

unsatisfactory definitions, insufficient examples and syntactic guidance, excessively long entries and incomprehensible coding.

Clearly, *EFL* dictionary entries vary in the style and range of the defining language, as well as the quantity and type of examples they provide. Although the dictionaries provide a significant number of examples of use, surprisingly, there is no convincing evidence that the examples are useful. Miller and Gildea (1987) express their doubts about the value of examples as an aid to creative language production. In Black's (1986) study little difference was found between the scores for words learned with and without examples. Inevitably, more data is needed in the area of possible variation in the behaviour of different types of *EFL* dictionary user. The findings in the literature suggest that students from different language backgrounds may react differently to the same dictionary information, and may have different dictionary needs. For example, the variations in the questionnaire findings of Tomaszczyk (1979), Baxter (1980) and Béjoint (1981) can best be explained as reflecting different attitudes of dictionary users in Poland, Japan and France. Ard (1982) concluded that Spanish students are more likely than Japanese to use their bilingual dictionaries successfully.

Nevertheless, although we can find different monolingual learners' dictionaries to provide for different levels of language proficiency, there is still little dictionary provision for differences between learners from different language backgrounds.

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Stylistic value of English elements in the Slovak language

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Abstract

The paper *Stylistic Value of English Elements in the Slovak Language* is focused on neological Anglicisms having significant impact on colloquial Slovak, especially on lexis of young Slovak native speakers. Unfortunately, Slovak lexicographical works are not flexible enough to notice this dynamic and specific phenomenon in language. That is why electronic Internet sources (e.g. Slovak National Corpus and Slovak electronic newspapers and magazines) are excerpted to analyse English neologisms (i.e. Anglicisms) and their function and stylistic value in the Slovak language. The occurrence of excerpted expressions found in Slovak National Corpus is compared to the Anglophonic corpora (British National Corpus, Corpus of Contemporary American English, and WordNet which is a database of content words created at Princeton University) as well as selected lexicographical works focusing on new expressions. The research is based on the results presented in my latest monograph (Jesenská, 2014c) and international conferences proceedings (Jesenská, 2014a, 2014b): where the lexicographical work *Slovník slangu a hovorovej slovenčiny* (2014), including 12,000 entries, was investigated and proved that nearly 6 per cent of the whole examined material is comprised of Anglicisms altogether. The results of our research confirmed that Anglicisms in the Slovak language are not as dominant as it had been expected. These results inspired further investigation based on excerpted English elements, words, expressions, and syntactic structures which entered Slovak after 2000 and which are now considered new and used in present-day Slovak. That is why the research objective was to compare their stylistic value in both languages (English and Slovak) and subject the comparison to qualitative analysis. To achieve aforementioned goals various heterogeneous sources have been excerpted whereby not the size of sample, but its quality was significant.

Key words

Anglicism, negative language interference, source language, target language

Introduction

Development of society logically implies the development of language, too. More precisely, dynamism of society is immediately reflected in the lexical layer of language, as this one is the most open to new influences and innovations. English is believed to have created or borrowed about 1,000 neologisms every year. Böhmerová (2009), however, is more courageous in her estimations, asserting nearly 20,000 new words a year. Certainly, it is not possible to include

them annually into dictionaries. Although we admit that electronic means of communication makes things much easier in terms of collecting and uploading the data of any kind. Some linguists deal with neologisms only marginally or from specific point of view (Adams, 2001; Arnold, 1973; Lieber, 2005; Szymanek, 2005; Štekauer, 2000; Štulajterová & Jesenská, 2013; Timko, 2014a, 2014b) while others pay a detailed attention to this phenomenon (Algeo, 1993; Bauer, 1991; Böhmerová, 2009; Čermák, 2001; Černý & Holeš, 2004; McArthur, 1996; Mistrík, 1989; Jesenská, 2010, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d; Jesenská & Štulajterová, 2013; Plag, 2003).

The aim of our paper is to present results based on the excerption English expressions borrowed by the Slovak language after 2000 and which are still perceived new in present-day colloquial Slovak. Further objective was to compare stylistic value of new lexical units in both languages (English and Slovak) and subject this comparison to qualitative analysis based on the way the new words have been coined in English. Word-formative processes very often influence the stylistic value of newly coined words (Jesenská, 2014b). For instance, if a word is a blend, there is a high probability (predictability, respectively) that the blended element is to become the member of technical expressions (terms; e.g. *molechism*), literary layer (e.g. *slithy*), or colloquial layer (e.g. *blog*). However, at present, the Internet technical terms are created this way (e.g. *webinar*).

Subject Matter: Neologisms

The term comes from French *néologisme* from Greek *néos* new and *lógos* word (Arnold, 1973; McArthur, 1996; Mistrík, 1989), which can be interpreted as new word or its new meaning (in the sense of its polysemy). Defining the term *neologism* is a very difficult task to do. And it is even rather disputable as many linguists view this differently (and usually enormously vaguely). Mistrík asserts that definition a neologisms is not only vague, but also uncertain, and relative at the same time (Mistrík, 1989, pp. 75-77). Some believe that a word (expression, syntactic structure, etc.) is considered new if it is not included in general dictionaries yet (e.g. Algeo, 1993). By others, however, neologisms are believed to be perceived by the native speakers as something new (Arnold, 1973; Böhmerová, 2009; Crystal & Davy, 1990; Galperin, 1977; Jesenská, 2010, 2014b, 2014d; Mistrík, 1989) absolutely regardless their appearance in a dictionary. Practice proves this to be true – in written discourse (e.g. in newspapers articles) neologisms are usually followed by an explaining/describing expression in brackets. I.V. Arnold goes even further asserting that “neologisms are created for

new things irrespective of their scale of importance" (Arnold, 1973, p. 232). We can agree with her attitude – some neologisms are (post-) modern, functional and economic at the same time (e.g. *app*, *infotainment*, *mobbing*), while others are fashionable, trendy, used occasionally, may be created *ad hoc*, and therefore only temporary, which means they will disappear as quickly as they entered language for any reason (e.g. *noughties* - The years from 2000 to 2009 - referring to a specific time period). Mistrík says that a "word will cease to be new if it becomes part of active vocabulary" (Mistrík, 1989, p. 75) of native speakers. This depends on frequency of use in spoken and/or written communication. Mistrík further asserts that "if neologism is considered something new in discourse, then it must be viewed as a stylistic category" (Mistrík, 1989, p. 75), though he emphasises that some researchers view it as lexicological category in case of unknown word being part of passive vocabulary. According to him this view is more objective, because in particular situations or texts as a neologism may appear also a well-known expression, even an obsolete one, for example with new semantics (referring to new phenomenon) or in new situations. Therefore a neologism can be viewed as a new word naming relatively new notion or a new phenomenon (compare Mistrík, 1989, p. 75).

However, appearance of new words is the evidence of language innovation (compare Čermák, 2001, pp. 144-145; Černý & Holeš, 2004, pp. 89-98; Jesenská, 2010, pp. 107-112) caused by various linguistic reasons (synchronic and/or diachronic changes and shifts within language) and extra-linguistic reasons (social, political, historical, psychological, etc.). The richest source of neologisms in language is borrowing (Čermák, 2001; McArthur, 1996; Mistrík, 1989). In case of English borrowing (usually Americanisms) internationalisation of national lexis (word-stock) must be taken into account when considering the stylistic value of new (lexical) units. Mistrík (1989) asserts that "the international vocabulary usually maintains its original stylistic value in all new target languages" (Mistrík, 1989, p. 90) due to the fact that internationalisation is a processes moving strongly against expressivity (Crystal & Davy, 1990; Mistrík, 1989; Štulajterová & Jesenská, 2013). International vocabulary mainly emerges in publicistic texts bringing new ideas, phenomena (and new naming units) to their readers.

Neologisms in English emerge by means of:

- a) word-formative processes (derivation, compounding, conversion, or by any means of shortening: blending, clipping, abbreviating, or back-forming; they are only scarcely coined *ex-nihilo*); there are linguists (e.g. Štekauer, 2000)

who do not consider clipping a word-formative process arguing that no new unit is created plus the cognitive value remains the same neglecting the fact that the stylistic value can (and usually does) change/shift from the neutral layer to the informal (usually slang) layer of lexis (compare *application* vs. *app*, *doctor* vs. *doc* or *laboratory* vs. *lab*),

- b) semantic change(s),
- c) borrowing from other languages.

The main source of neologisms are naming units denoting new technologies, scientific accomplishments (in the academic and/or research fields), commerce and advertising, politics, fiction (especially science fiction), design, and popular culture (esp. show business), etc. Certainly, every branch of human activity uses neologisms for various reasons. For instance, high technology (e.g. *google*, *podcast*, *skype*) needs the new neutral or technical naming units in order to exactly denote extra-linguistic reality phenomena, while expressions from popular culture (e.g. *Brangelina*, *lol*, *selfie*) usually have features of stylistically coloured vocabulary, such as slang or features typical of other non-standard layer of language.

To sum up: in this paper we are using the term *neologisms* referring to any unit or element of speech (be it an affix, splinter, root morpheme, the whole expression, or multi-word expression) which is by native speakers viewed as brand-new regardless its lifespan in language. In our contribution a special attention is paid to neologisms coined by means of word-formative processes (WFP), as it is a productive way of neologisms entering language. Moreover, the focus is on identifying the stylistic value of English neologisms and its stylistic shift when penetrating Slovak.

Research Objectives and Methods

Our research is based on the results presented in a forthcoming monograph (Jesenská, 2014c) and international conference proceedings (Jesenská, 2014a). The excerption of the lexicographical work *Slovník slangu a hovorovej slovenčiny* (2014) / *The Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial Slovak*, including 12,000 entries, proved that 'only' nearly 700 units in the colloquial and slang layers are borrowed from the English language, what is nearly 6 per cent of the whole examined material. The results of our research confirmed that Anglicisms in the Slovak language are not as dominant as it had been expected. However, they are quite frequently used in everyday present-day colloquial Slovak, especially in electronic communication among young people using and sharing chat rooms,

writing blogs, short telephone messages (SMS - Short Message Service), joining social networks, etc. Anglicisms (or Americanisms, respectively) are more or less used (in Slovak) in a functional way. In other words, the way the English borrowings are used in Slovak is the evidence about Slovak users' necessity, creativity, and language economy. Generally speaking, dominance of English borrowings is a myth without any actual evidence, though one cannot ignore Anglicisms overuse by particular individuals.

Due to the absence of any specialised dictionary of neologisms in Slovak, we were forced to find other ways of gathering material suitable to examination. There are two lexicographical works of neologisms in the Czech Republic published by Academia publishing house (*Nová slova v češtině 1* in 1998 and *Nová slova v češtině 2* in 2004 both based on the corpus available at the webpage <http://neologismy.cz/> of The Department of Current Lexicology and Lexicography, The Institute for Language Research, Academy of Czech Sciences, <http://lexiko.ujc.cas.cz/>). Our aim was to excerpt English lexical units which entered Slovak after 2000 and which are now considered new and used in present-day Slovak. Our next objective was to compare their stylistic value in both languages and subject the comparison to qualitative analysis based on two criteria: a) the way they have been coined in English as word-formative processes may influence the stylistic value of new words (see Böhmerová, 2009; Štekauer, 2000), and b) the concrete usage of excerpted units in a particular discourse, for this can uncover stylistic value of investigated units (see Arnold, 1973; Bauer, 1991; Černý & Holeš, 2004; Jesenská, 2014c; Lieber, 2005; Mistrík, 1989; Plag, 2003; Štulajterová & Jesenská, 2013). To achieve our goals heterogeneous sources have been excerpted whereby not the size of sample, but its quality (character and nature), was also significant.

Excerpted Sources and Research Problems

The Internet (i.e. electronic) sources were chosen to serve our research aim including American, British, and Slovak national corpora. However, these are not regularly upgraded, and that is why other sources were included, such as Princeton project known as *WordNet* and electronic American, British, and Slovak newspapers (either broadsheets or tabloids). TV commercials or commercial leaflets were not excluded either (see excerpted materials below). As a reliable source for excerpting new Anglicisms has been chosen *Slovník cudzích slov / Dictionary of Foreign Words* (2008) including 100,000 entries. Neological Anglicisms uttered in various television programmes have been included into our research sample as well. Various relevant questions must have been solved out

concerning the sample size and availability (free access) of electronic sources. The most important criterion in selection of excerpted units was the appearance and usage of neologisms (coined after 2000) in both languages. Anglicisms, such as *díler* (← dealer), *spiker* (← speaker), *líder* (← leader), *bestseller* or *tínedžer* (← teenager) have not been included because these have already been adapted in the language system of the Slovak language and they are no longer considered new.

The problem that must have been solved out was the perception of WFP by experts (i.e. linguists). What processes are used to coin new naming units? Derivation, compounding blending, and some other ways of shortening are not problematic at all. However, some linguists exclude clipping from WFP (e.g. Štekauer, 2000) not considering them as new signs arguing that they (clips) “preserve the same cognitive meaning as their corresponding full forms” (Štekauer, 2000, p. 6), which is a good argument if one admits that it is “the mere process of form-reduction rather than the naming process which takes place” (ibid.). Štekauer (2000) also argues that clipping is an irregular and highly unpredictable WF process, which is also true. The absence of Slovak lexicographical work on neologisms does not help solving the problem.

To sum up: a) only novel expressions coined by WFP after 2000 were excerpted and b) they are used in both languages as neologisms (in Slovak, English) or as well-adapted units (in English).

Qualitative Analysis of Research Sample

Avatar function as a graphic representation of a person on the Internet, e.g. emoticon (compare to Timko, 2014a, p. 103 and p. 105) based on a semantic shift from a 3D blockbuster. The expression (appeared around 2005) was found in Slovenský národný korpus (SNK – Slovak National Corpus) in the context: *vizuálna reprezentácia hráča, tzv. avatar...* SNK excerpted this expression used in Slovak papers *Kultúra slova* which used the word in 2001 (SNK). However, in English the word already appeared in the late 18th C (SOED, 2007), but *avatar* with the reference to computing technologies appears in English in the late 20th C (SOED, 2007).

Chocoholic and other expressions coined by a full or clipped morpheme combined with the splinter *-oholic/-aholic* referring to any kind of addiction or abuse (having motivation in *alcoholic*) following the pattern noun + *-splinter*: *chatoholic* from *chat(ing)* + *-oholic*, *chocoholic* from *choco(late)* + *-oholic*, *cinemaholic* from *cinema* + *-holic*, *pepsiolic* from *pepsi(cola)* + *-oholic*, *shopaholic* from *shop(ping)* + *-aholic*, *wowaholic* (a person addicted to the online game *World of Warcraft*) from *wow* + *-aholic*, *workaholic* from *work* + *-oholic*. All these are

used to illustrate that neological blends bring a particular expressivity in a coined expression, e.g.: *chocoholic celebrity / choices / heaven, a chocoholic's cup runs over*, etc. *Chocoholic* was coined in English in the 1980s – 1990s (information provided by COCA and/or SOED, 2007) when its occurrences are recorded in British dailies. In SNK the neologism has been found in a particular linguistic context believed to appear between 2001 and 2005: *Lekári a psychológovia dnes už používajú pojem „chocoholic“, ktorý vyjadruje závislosť od čokolády a sladkostí, podobnú alkoholovej*. The nature of novelty is emphasised by means of inverted commas in all SNK occurrences.

Docudrama is a blend coined around 1960 (SOED, 2007) from *docu(mentary) + drama* referring to a new radio and/or television genre appearing at that time. Although, the expression is not new in English, Slovak users perceive it as a neologism (as the term appeared only recently), and other expressions analogically coined as well, e.g. *docufantasy* (a fictional programme presented as a real documentary), *docuhistory* (true historical events presented in the form of a documentary), *docu-musical* (a musical sharing features of a documentary, e.g. a musical about the real writers, producers, etc. of any musical), *docusoap* (a genre resembling a soap opera in the form of a documentary). In SNK the instances of context usage dated from 2005 have been found: *...priniesli kvalitné docusoap, late night show, docudrama a pod. Sme tiež pripravení produkčne ... or V štádiu úvah sú v Česku nové formáty žánrov docudrama a docusoap*. In BNC: *In this case, as in others, television docudrama set itself up as the tidier and balancer of history*.

Glamping denotes a blended expressions *glamorous + camping*, which, according to the online Oxford Dictionary, is “camping involving accommodation and facilities more luxurious than those associated with traditional camping, e.g. *glamping is likely to satisfy any city slicker seeking a little refuge in nature—without foregoing any of life's luxuries*” (Taken from <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/glamping>). Stylistically it is a part of a British informal layer of vocabulary. In other words, the expression *glamping* semantically refers to camping for those who would like to enjoy comfortable camping without inconvenience of common camping experience. In SNK, *glamping* is first used in context in 2012: *Pár pionierov začiatovníkov nájdeme aj u našich susedov v Maďarsku a Poľsku. Ich kvalita a služby sa pohybujú od štandardných „bamping“ (basic camping) až po luxusnejšie „glamping“ (glamorous camping)*. As one can see the expression is used in inverted commas implying novelty and “strangeness”, and it is mentioned together with another neologism referring to a new social phenomenon, *bamping*. When used in Slovak

magazine texts, *glamping* is usually accompanied by an explanation, which is another evidence of novelty for Slovak speakers.

Infotainment and *militainment* are coined on the bases of the same WF principle, blending: *info(rmation) + (enter)tainment* and *mili(tary) + (enter)tainment*. However, *militainment* was coined later, which means that *infotainment* functioned as a motivating word in this case. *Infotainment* is used to refer to the (mostly tabloid) news and/or car appliances (monitor, GPS, etc.).

The examples of usage of *infotainment* in context was found in SNK (first appearance around 1998, however, the regular usage begins much later around 2005 which can be concluded from examples provided by SNK), for example:

Robo Lattacher: Zdá sa mi, akoby dnes aj ostatné televízie začali napodobňovať spravodajstvo JOJky, teda ten infoteinmentový štýl, ktorý je prelínaním informačnej a zábavnej funkcie médií pričom informácia sa podriada logike zábavy. Tak aspoň je chápaný infotainment... Ten infotainment v spravodajstve bol už dávno na NOVE, keď prišiel k nám na Slovensko. Pokiaľ ide o štýl spravodajstva na JOJke, je potrebné si uvedomiť, že táto televízia dorazila na slovenský mediálny trh v čase rozpadu Markízy, rozbehu TA3 a existencie STV. Zvolila si iný štýl informovania. (SNK)

In the context of investigating the language of advertisement, Timko (2014b) sees the *militainment* as a tool to manipulate potential clients by means of twisted facts combined with fiction and myths. The existence of so-called war consumer (present-day passive viewer of war) enables the existence of “entertaining and amusing” news about military operations all around the world. It refers to such a usage of war words and images which are meant to entertain and amuse the readers, listeners, and viewers. The Free dictionary available online (online OED does not include the expression) defines *militainment* as a kind of “entertainment with military themes (taken from WordNet the first dictionary to define this phenomenon in 2003) in which the Department of Defense is celebrated” (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/militainment>) and armed forces are promoted. The term appeared in English in 2003 and within other ten years appears in Slovak, too. In English discourse it is often used in inverted commas to suggest its novelty for languages users. Slovak speakers examine the term in a technical and/or specific discourse, however, it has not become the part of stable Slovak vocabulary yet.

A clip **nick** (← *nickname*) denotes a nickname used usually on the social network to remain anonymous when communicating (chatting) with other members of the Internet networking services. In English it keeps its informality and slang value, while in Slovak *nick* has tendency to move from a specific electronic terminology member to a more neutral layer of language. SNK excerpted its first use in 2001: “Prvý *nick* predstavuje odosielateľa , druhý *nick* umiestnený za prvou zátvorkou je prezývka adresáta” (SNK).

Selfie(s) and later coined expression *belfie(s)* and *telfie(s)*. Motivating word for *selfie* is a *self(-portrait)* photograph taken by a digital camera or a mobile phone camera respectively. OED available online provides the example of its usage: “occasional *selfies* are acceptable, but posting a new *picture* of yourself every day isn’t *necessary*” (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/selfie>). *Selfies* are usually made to be shared on social networks. If one can believe to the Free Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, the first selfie was made in 1839 by R. Cornelius (1809–1893), the pioneer of photography (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selfie>). The first usage of the word *selfie* in modern sense was traced to “2002 when it appeared in an Australian Internet forum (ABC Online) on 13 September in a comment written by Nathan Hope” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selfie>).

The (usually diminutive) suffix *-ie* is attached to the root morpheme *self*. In the case of such diminutives as *auntie*, *laddie*, *daddie* or *leftie* (left-hander, lefty) suffix *-ie* functions as a class-maintaining affix (noun remains noun). Suffix *-ie* (modified *-y*) refers to stylistically marked nouns used in informal discourse, e.g. *wellies* (Wellingtons), *dearie*, etc. However, suffix *-ie* in *selfie*, *belfie*, and *telfie* does not refer to anything tiny, small. Though, *selfie*, *belfie*, or *telfie* are (technically perceived) usually pocket-sized. The “problem” with *self* is that it can function as a countable (selves) or uncountable noun or as a prefix in words, such as *self-centred*, *self-composed*, *self-conscious*, *self-control*, *self-educated*, etc. It is, however, obvious that *-ie* is attached to the noun *self* as other derivational suffixes, e.g. *-ish* as in *selfish* or *-less* as in *selfless*. Stylistically *selfie* is perceived as a slang expression and similarly, words like *belfie* and *telfie* are. *Belfie*, however, is no derivative. In fact, *belfie* is an amalgamation (blend) of *butt(ocks)* + *selfie*. Analogically, blend *telfie* was coined from *tummy* + *selfie* as a result of people self-confident of their bodies. Although, *belfie* and *telfie* are not used (known) among Slovak users, one can predict that this is only a matter of a few weeks’ or months’ time when Slovak speakers discover this phenomenon and borrow the Anglicism as well. It is interesting that a motivating word (or head) of both blends was coined by means of derivation first, and became a background for

blended expressions. The phenomenon *selfie* is rarely translated into Slovak, however, there were recorded cases of using so-called *svojky* in Slovak (Nominative singular: *svojka*).

Webinar is also a blend noun of *web* (shortend form of *World Wide Web* coined in 1990s) + (*sem*)*inar* referring to web conferencing or video conference, which is nothing else but a kind of interactive online conference and/or workshop lasting from 60 to 90 minutes. Online OED dates its origin back to the 1990s and defines it very simply as “a seminar conducted over the Internet”. The advantage rests on the fact that the number of such a conference members is unlimited. As a new expression *webinar* is linked to electronic terminology, but has a potential and tendency to move towards a more neutral layer of language. The term appeared in 2011 according to information provided by SNK: “Zasadanie centrálnych bánk a možné scenáre podrobne rozoberá včerajší *webinár*.” Online OED provides similar example: “I see far too many sales teams focus all their attention toward hosting fancy *webinars* or creating snazzy *web-based marketing channels*.” *Web* has become a motivating morpheme for such blended words as *webcast* (*web* + *broadcast*), *webisode* (*web* + *TV online episode*) or *weblink* (*web* + *hyperlink*). Compounds having *web* in attributive position become quite productive in the present-day English, e.g. *weblog*, *webmail*, *webmaster*, *webpage*, *website*, *webspace*, etc. Certainly, these expressions have a specific reference to a specific phenomenon well-known as a cyberspace.

Cases of *-oholic/-aholic*, *docu-*, and *selfie* are the proofs of “the present-day vitality of stem formations” (Adams, 2001, p. 13). It turns out that some splinters have tendency to higher productivity than others in dependence with the communicative needs of language users.

We have also noticed the usage of calque (loan translation) *indiánske leto* from the *Indian summer* (instead of Slovak *babie leto*) in an advertisement of a Slovak restaurant to make possible customers enter and order a meal typical of the autumn season.

Discussion of results and conclusion

English neologisms undergo various kinds of change in the course of transfer into a target language. The character of change may be of semantic, stylistic, spelling or other nature (or a combination of them). We have focused on new Anglicisms used in Slovak after 2000 which have not become members of a common language core. We have come to the following conclusions:

a) English expressions may not function as new units in a source language anymore, however, a particular expression may function as a neologism in a target language (e.g. *chocoholic, docudrama, infotainment, webinár*);

b) originally stylistically neutral expressions may keep their stylistic neutrality in many cases (e.g. *glamping* or *webinar*);

c) stylistically marked target language element keeps its informality (e.g. *avatar, nick, selfie/belfie/telfie*, etc.);

e) all new Anglicisms, whether stylistically marked or not, share the same two features, and that is – the sense of novelty (language users perceive them new: neologisms are often followed by the explanation in brackets) and the sense of foreignism for language users (their spelling has not adapted target language spelling and maybe will never do so);

f) more and more borrowed Anglicisms are originally coined blends in the English language (e.g. *belfie, glamping, militainment, webinar*) because blending seems to please the language users' economy and language creativity and novelty;

g) specific splinters or stems increase their productivity and become a decisive element in coining new words (e.g. *-oholic, selfie, web*);

h) not all neologisms are recorded in the national corpora (BNC, COCA, or SNK) or lexicographical works (SCS) as depicted in the table 1 below.

The reason why *militainment* and *selfie/belfie/telfie* are not recorded in any of the examined corpora (see table 1) can be interpreted as following – the expressions are brand new and lexicographers have been waiting until they have become the stable part of English (and Slovak) vocabulary. They are simply “too fresh” to be recorded.

As the table 2 depicts there are expressions which keep their stylistic value unchanged, however, in some cases there is a tendency (marked →) towards neutrality. New Anglicisms tend to keep the same stylistic value taken from the source language. This is caused by the fact that all excerpted Anglicisms are international expressions, which entered the target language via media (i.e. publicistic style), and which are not providing any expressive value.

Determining factor influencing our research results rests in the choice of materials examined. It must be asserted that our research focused on electronic sources (corpora) more than on prints. We admit that changing the nature of excerpted and examined resources would change the results as well.

English word	Anglicism	BNC	COCA	WordNet	SNK	SCS	SSHS
avatar	avatar	+	+	-	+	-	-
chocoholic	chocoholic/čokoholik	+	+	-	+	-	-
docudrama	dokudráma	+	+	+	+	-	-
glamping	glamping	-	+	-	+	-	-
infotainment	infotainment	+	+	+	+	+	-
militainment	militainment	-	-	+	-	-	-
nick	nick	+	+	-	+	-	+
selfie/belfie/telfie	selfie/belfie/telfie	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-	-/-/-
webinar	webinár	-	+	-	+	-	-

Table 1 English words and Anglicisms in corpora and lexicographical works

Legend:

BNC – British National Corpus, COCA – Corpus of Contemporary American English, WordNet – lexical database of content (lexical) words created at Princeton University, SNK – Slovenský národný korpus (Slovak National Corpus), SCS – Slovník cudzích slov (Dictionary of Foreign Words) from 2008, SSHS – Slovník slangu a hovorovej slovenčiny (Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial Slovak) from 2014

English word	Stylistic value of English word	Neological Anglicism	Stylistic value of Anglicism
<i>avatar</i>	informal: the Internet lexis	<i>avatar</i>	informal: the Internet lexis
<i>chocoholic</i>	slang → neutral	<i>chocoholic</i>	slang → neutral
<i>docudrama</i>	Term	<i>docudrama</i>	term
<i>glamping</i>	publicistic → neutral	<i>glamping</i>	publicistic → neutral
<i>infotainment</i>	term	<i>infotainment</i>	term
<i>militainment</i>	Term	<i>militainment</i>	term
<i>nick</i>	informal: the Internet lexis	<i>nick</i>	informal: the Internet lexis
<i>selfie/belfie/telfie</i>	informal: slang	<i>selfie/belfie/telfie</i>	informal: slang
<i>webinar</i>	term → neutral	<i>webinar</i>	term → neutral

Table 2 Stylistic value of English words and Anglicisms

To sum up: Slovak native speakers use Anglicisms which function as neologisms at the beginning, though, they might have been used in English for years and as such (they) are not perceived new in a source (English) language anymore (e.g. *webinar* coined in English nearly twenty years ago considered a neologism in the present-day Slovak). Neutral English expressions (*webinar*) mainly keep their neutral character in the target language as well (*webinár*) or originally informal lexis is viewed informally in the target language, too (e.g. *nick*, *selfie*). Some other expressions keep their specific stylistic value having background in the specific phenomenon they are referring to (e.g. *glamping*). This is caused by internationalisation of excerpted expressions which is a processes moving against any expressivity. The sense of novelty of an expression may be supported by using inverted commas or an explanation in brackets.

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“Hurry, hurry and love, what thou shall not see twice”: The Shakespeare Festival at the National Theatre in Prague in 1916

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Abstract

During the Great War, theatre became an effective channel of communication and a means of encouragement. In times of economic difficulties and political paralysis, theatrical productions were designed to arouse Czech national consciousness. The Czech repertoire was oriented particularly towards classical works of national literature (e.g. Klicpera, Tyl, Jirásek, and Vrchlický) and “democratic” drama (e.g. Shaw). Considerable theatrical space was also devoted to Shakespeare’s plays. One of the greatest theatrical achievements was the Shakespeare festival in the spring of 1916, which took place in Prague and in many other Czech theatres. The Shakespearean play cycle naturally had both artistic and political implications in terms of the desire for an independent state. Shakespeare thus became, figuratively speaking, an inspirer and co-creator of Czech national history.

This article explores a connection between significant socio-political events and the choice and rendition of Shakespearean translations in the Czech lands during the Great War. It focuses on Shakespeare festival held at the National Theatre in Prague. A chronological perspective is used to argue that Shakespearean productions and translations at the time acted as a specific reflection of the Czech world of politics. The article furthermore attempts to trace specific aspects of selected Shakespearean productions (e.g. 1,2 *Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, etc.) in the Czech national context. The research is based on data derived from surveys of archival material (period reviews, theatre journals, posters, almanacs, and periodicals). The documents researched are housed at the Theatre Institute in Prague, the National Library in Prague, the J. K. Tyl Theatre Institute in Pilsen, and the State Regional Archive in Pilsen. They represent a necessary complement to any understanding of the crucial socio-political climate of the time as well as the original stage productions.

Keywords

William Shakespeare, Shakespearean drama, Shakespearean tercentenary, Shakespeare Festival, Great War

Introduction: The Czech Lands during the Great War

The Habsburg monarchy had consolidated its central political position in Europe since 1495, and gradually became one of the most powerful dynasties in

Europe. During more than four centuries, it waged 63 wars, most frequently against France, Italy, Turkey, and Prussia (Urban, 1982). Its dominant position on the geo-political map of Europe was redeemed with 227 wartime years as contrasted with a mere 191 years of peace.

The assassination of Franz Ferdinand d'Este, Archduke of Austria and successor to the throne, and his wife Sophie, by the Serbian Nationalist terrorist group known as the Black Hand in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, provided the initial impetus for the outbreak of war. Events quickly accelerated and soon all the great European powers were involved in the war, fighting either on the side of the Allies or the Central Powers. Having started as an Austro-Hungarian military conflict with Serbia, it eventually encompassed almost two thirds of the world.

Czech citizens had initially responded to the outbreak of war with detachment, doubt, curiosity, and patriotic enthusiasm, which gradually changed into an anti-war attitude. (The last military conflict, in which the Czech Lands were involved, took place in 1866.) Although war operations did not take place directly in Bohemia and Moravia, the population had to endure many hardships, such as the shortage of food and coal supplies, the enormous rise in prices, illnesses, and profiteering (Čornej, 1992). In April 1915, a rationing system was introduced to restrict the demand for certain commodities such as bread, milk, meat, coffee, soup, and many others. An extremely wet summer in 1916 caused a catastrophic crop failure, which further increased the cost of grain. Deteriorating economic conditions provoked waves of protests, strikes, and demonstrations. Food riots that broke out throughout the country from 1916 to 1918 were violently suppressed and had tragic consequences.

Following the outbreak of war, both the Reichsrat (the Imperial Council) and provincial councils were closed down (Urban, 1982). Civil rights (freedom of the press, speech, and assembly), which had been granted by the December Constitution of 1867, were suspended. Within a month after the assassination, first a partial (25 July) and subsequently a general mobilisation of armed forces (31 July) was declared. The outbreak of war was also marked by the absence of a common political concept. As Klíma (1993) observes, however, there was a general consensus among the most political parties that the pre-war Austro-Hungarian status quo should be preserved (mostly for economic and security reasons). The only exception was the radical State-Rights Party, which called for the breakup of the monarchy and establishment of a new, independent state. Yet at the same time they realised that the victory of the Central Powers would, no doubt, mean an even greater oppression of subjugated lands. The difficult social,

political, and economic situation subsequently united political parties in a negative view of the possibility of prospective development within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and encouraged the idea of restoring the political autonomy of the Czech nation. A significant factor, which helped to reshape the standpoint of Czech political representatives and intelligentsia, was a “rhetorical conceptualisation of the war as a fight between Germanic and Slavic tribes” (Cabada & Waisová, 2011, p. 5).

As the Czech political representatives were persecuted and forced to express loyalty to the monarchy, the main political activity was transferred abroad. The Czech “exile front” in the Allied countries was led by Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, who campaigned intensively for Czech independence. He also promoted the idea of Czechoslovak togetherness (Cabada & Waisová, 2011). In November 1915, Masaryk, in collaboration with a prominent Russophile politician and an active member of the secret Czech resistance movement “Mafia” Josef Dürich, established a Czech Committee Abroad, which was transformed into the Czechoslovak National Council in February 1916. A significant contribution to the Czech exile movement was also made by two National Council members, Edvard Beneš, Masaryk’s associate and supporter of his nationalist philosophy, and Masaryk’s former student and aviator Milan Rastislav Štefánik, whose political contacts helped Masaryk to further the negotiation process with French politicians. As a result, the French government permitted the formation of the Czechoslovak army in France on 19 November 1917 (Kvaček, 2013). The preparations for the transfer of prisoners of war from Russia as well as volunteers from other areas, which were to be the nucleus of the army, had, however, started in 1916.

The pace of events quickened even more with the Russian revolution and the United States’ entry into the war (the United States declared war on Austria-Hungary in December 1917). Like the Czech exile, Czech domestic politics underwent significant changes and experienced considerable success, too. The Writer’s Manifesto, which called for renewed constitutional freedom, parliamentary democracy and the creation of a democratic state, was signed by 222 Czech writers and intellectuals, and was presented to the Czech Council in May 1917. Moreover, Karel Kramář, Alois Rašín, Václav Klobáček, and other prominent politicians, who had previously been charged with high treason and were arrested, were released under amnesty declared by the new emperor Charles I in July 1917, and further played an important role in upcoming events (in the newly-established Czechoslovak state, Kramář was the Prime Minister).

The so-called Three Kings Declaration, which was signed by Czech politicians in Prague on 6 January 1918, declared “the right of nations to free life and self-determination” (Cabada & Waisová, 2011, p. 10). Czech politicians thus distanced themselves from the monarchy, thereby indicating their intention of coordinating their work with the exiled National Council, which was officially recognised as an Interim Czechoslovak government by France, Great Britain, the USA, Italy, and Japan throughout July and October 1918. France recognised the National Council on 19 June, Great Britain recognised it on 9 August, the USA on 3 September, Japan on 9 September, and Italy on 9 October 1918 (Kvaček, 2013).

The Great War then slowly headed towards its end. The establishment of the autonomous Czechoslovak state was eventually declared by the representatives of the Czechoslovak National Council on 28 October 1918. After four years of fighting and hardship, Czech independence was finally achieved. As McFall and Tucker (2005) observe, the new Czechoslovak state became “a model of democracy in Central Europe with the highest standard of living in the region” (p. 329).

Shakespeare in the Czech Lands in 1916

In 1916, the world commemorated the tercentennial anniversary of Shakespeare’s death. As Calvo (2004) points out, the commemoration of the poet’s death in Britain epitomised the defence of the spiritual property of the nation, which was at the time threatened by a German invasion. Similarly, the Shakespearean tercentenary celebration in the Czech Lands can be understood not only as a great theatrical achievement but, more importantly, as a presentation of the Czech national self-awareness and identity. The commemoration was also an attempt to strengthen the autonomy of the Czech theatre and to demonstrate the pro-Allied attitude of the Czechs during the days marked by the omnipresent hostile exhortation “Gott strafes England”. In Mukařovský’s view (1956), the glorification of Shakespeare on that occasion was immense and incomparable to that of any other European theatrical event of the time.

This article examines how the Shakespearean play cycle was staged at the National Theatre in Prague in 1916 in terms of the critical reception of particular productions, namely, *Richard III*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*, in theatre reviews published in Czech periodicals. I will argue that, in a time of distress, Shakespearean drama served as an effective communication channel by offering spiritual consolation, courage, and a new perspective on the future.

Overall, the research poses three main questions, which will help to clarify the issue:

1. What sort of information on Shakespearean productions staged at the Shakespeare Festival in Prague did the newspapers provide?
2. How was the Shakespearean essence adapted to fit the Czech context?
3. What purpose did the Shakespeare Festival serve in the specifically Czech context?

The research relies on data gathered from a broad range of sources such as period reviews, theatre journals, posters, almanacs, and periodicals. The documents researched are housed at the Theatre Institute in Prague, the J. K. Tyl Theatre Institute in Pilsen, the State Regional Archive in Pilsen, the Pilsen Archive, the Education and Research Library in Pilsen, and the National Library in Prague. They provide a necessary complement to the understanding of the crucial socio-political climate of the time as well as to the original stage productions.

The centrepiece of the celebrations was the Shakespeare Festival held at the National Theatre; however, many other activities were also organised to celebrate the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death. In the period leading up to the celebrations, a number of Shakespearean articles were published. The renowned Czech Shakespeare scholar and linguist Mathesius contributed to the Shakespearean anniversary with a monograph entitled *William Shakespeare: tři kapitoly o jeho životě a hrách* [*William Shakespeare: Three Chapters on His Life and Plays*, 1916]. In the last chapter, he explored Shakespeare's mastery of dramatic art, his characters, and verse. He also made a persuasive argument against Voltaire's opinion, voiced in *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (1734), that Shakespeare "had not so much as a single spark of good taste, or knew one role of drama" (p. 105). In contrast, Mathesius (1916) considered Shakespeare both a great poet and playwright, whose mastery was apparent to any reviewer and spectator. He also took an active part in preparations for the celebrations. Kvapil, the modern Czech director and head of drama at the National Theatre in Prague, asked Mathesius to take part in the festival as early as 1914. Their correspondence shows that Mathesius provided both scholarly (e.g. his essay on Elizabethan theatre) and personal support (he lent his own English song book to the theatre). He also helped the actress Liběna Odstrčilová with Welsh, when she rehearsed the role of Lady Mortimer in *Henry IV*.

In 1915, Mathesius, together with Josef Janko, on behalf of the Czech Academy, invited scholars to contribute their essays on the topic of “Shakespearova dramata na českém jevišti po stránce slovesné a scénické” [Shakespeare’s Dramas on Czech Stage from Both Literary and Scenic Perspectives]. The contributions were meant to be part of Shakespearean tercentenary celebrations. The challenge was accepted by Antonín Fencl, the Czech translator, director, and actor, whose four-volume treatise on the given topic was awarded a Certificate of Honourable Mention. The treatise was, however, never published and remained only in manuscript form. Fencl’s essay, along with other articles, was a worthy contribution both to the Shakespearean anniversary and to Czech Shakespearean studies. Despite the abundance of articles and works dealing with Shakespeare and his dramatic canon, no Czech contribution was included in the multilingual publication entitled *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare* (1916), edited by Gollancz. The book comprised one hundred and sixty-six studies in thirty languages, including the Bechuana dialect. The absence of German articles was bridged over by Herford’s study examining “German contribution to Shakespeare criticism”; however, no mention of the Czech Shakespearean tradition was made. Sporadic mentions of German renditions of Shakespeare occurred also in other articles (by Squire, Blomfield, Gollancz, Robertson, and others). Although the omission of Czech Shakespearean studies seems reasonable from the geopolitical view (the Czech Lands were a part of Austria-Hungary at that time), it is surprising with respect to a long tradition of Czech Shakespearean production/translation. (For more information, please see Herford, p. 231-235).

Apart from scholarly articles and essays, two new translations of Shakespeare into Czech appeared in 1916, which, in contrast to previous, mostly text-oriented translations, took into account the issue of performability. Fencl’s stage-oriented translation of *The Merchant of Venice* premiered at the Aréna Smíchov [Smíchov Amphitheatre] on 8 April 1916 (approximately at the same time as Kvapil’s production in Sládek’s translation was staged within the Shakespeare Festival at the National Theatre). Fencl became the sole creator of the production, functioning as translator, scriptwriter, set designer, and the leading actor (he played the part of Shylock). Theatre reviews were mixed and sometimes even contradictory, suggesting that the quality of the production was uneven and did not probably match its creator’s intentions. While the renowned Czech theatre critic Vodák (1950) praised both the artistic performances and the set design, the translator, theatre critic, and German scholar Fischer (1916) criticised its

apparent simple composition. He was, moreover, critical of Fencľ's attempt to transform Shylock from a figure of tragic dimension into an ordinary, sweet-lipped Jewish businessman: "... [it] is a return to the already outdated aspect, as if Shakespeare's comedies were uncompromisingly joyful: it was a demonstration of primitive naturalism; as seen from a human perspective, Shylock was not brought closer to us [...] I consider all that gesticulation and decoration simply unbearable, and the comic character of the trial scene gave the impression of brutality and disgust" (Fischer, 1916, p. 4, translation mine). Despite criticism and a small number of performances (Fencľ managed just eight productions), it was, according to contemporary aesthetic criteria, considered a success.

Fischer's translation of *Macbeth* waited for its rendition for nine years. Although Fischer translated the play in 1916, it was not staged until October 1925 at the Vinohrady Theatre, when Kvapil chose Fischer's translation for his new production (Mišterová, 2013). Fischer was convinced that rather than presenting a verbatim translated version of the work, it is important to capture the spirit of the original and its overall atmosphere. In contrast to significant Czech Shakespearean achievements in 1916, Kvapil's attempt to establish the Czech Shakespeare Society failed.

The Shakespeare Festival

Prague contributed to worldwide celebrations with a cycle of fifteen productions of Shakespeare directed by Kvapil using Josef Václav Sládek's translations (*The Comedy of Errors* [27 March], *Richard III* [30 March], *Romeo and Juliet* [1 April], *A Midsummer Night's Dream* [4 April], *The Merchant of Venice* [7 April], *The Taming of the Shrew* [9 April], *Much Ado about Nothing* [13 April], *As You Like It* [15 April], *Measure for Measure* [17 April], *Twelfth Night* [19 April], *Hamlet* [23 April], *King Lear* [25 April], *Macbeth* [28 April], *Othello* [30 April], and *The Winter's Tale* [4 May]).

Kvapil was the first modern Czech director. After early work as a poet, journalist, librettist, and translator, he began his directing career in 1906 at the National Theatre in Prague. There he established himself as an impressionistic director of great force. Among his principal theatrical achievements were *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Besides, Kvapil was active in the Czech nationalist movement. He was a member of the so-called Czech resistance movement "Mafia", and helped to organise a group of men of letters behind the Writers' Manifesto (Teich & Porter, 1993).

The organisation of the festival was complicated by the political situation. Festival organisers encountered a series of obstacles right from the beginning. One month prior to the opening of the festival (when all performances had already been sold out), the authorities decided to ban it due to its political overtones. According to censors, Shakespeare represented a hostile national culture. Although Habsburg authorities in fact tolerated the plays by Richard Sheridan and G. B. Shaw, they considered Shakespeare to be “politically tendentious” since his dramatic canon and the translation of his work into Czech were perceived as “an alternative to the German culture” (Nolte, 2002, p. 170). Kvapil, however, refuted the official objections by presenting the invitation received by his drama company to the Shakespeare Tage held in Weimar and also his personal invitation to a subsequent Shakespeare conference. The existence of the German Shakespeare cycle was a strong argument, which finally persuaded the main censor to approve of the festival. Kvapil’s farsighted decision thus helped to save the celebrations. Yet the originally planned exhibition of Czech Shakespearean translations and costumes, which was to be held in the theatre foyer, was not permitted.

The festival commenced on 27 March 1916 with Smetana’s triumphal overture in C major, conducted by the famous Czech composer and conductor Karel Kovařovic, followed by an introductory lecture delivered by F. X. Šalda, the renowned Czech art critic. In his speech entitled *Génius Shakespearův a jeho tvorba: Apostrofa kritická* [*Shakespeare, the Genius, and His Oeuvre: the Critical Apostrophe*], Šalda perceived Shakespearean drama as “the moment of liberation from the determinism of Fate in ancient tragedy, and the establishment of concrete humanity consisting in the fullness and complexity of dramatic characters” (Procházka, 1996, p. 51). Šalda’s lecture was greeted with rapturous applause. With respect to previous problems with launching the festival, it is not, however, surprising that the printed copy of his speech was heavily censored (Vočadlo, 1956).

The play cycle centred on Eduard Vojan, the famous Czech actor, whose *Hamlet* (1906) still represents one of the best Shakespearean renditions on the Czech stage. During the festival he played the parts of Shylock, Lear, Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Richard, Petruchio, and Benedick.

Owing to rigid censorship, though, the initially planned production of *King John*, employing a symbolic image of Austria’s severed head, was banned. The festival opened with *Comedy of Errors*. Compared to the previous production at the National Theatre in December 1915, the director did not make any significant

alterations in the pattern of performance apart from his own participation in the unusual role of the prompter or, rather, conductor (as highlighted by the author), who led his ensemble from the prompt box through motions and gestures without uttering a single word. Sure that the performance went well, he discontinued his task after the first act. Likewise, compared to the previous performance, some scenes were dropped. Though quite moderate in extent, their absence did a disservice to the production (a considerable part of Oliver's opening speech was cut. As a result, the climax of the performance was blunted). The director used a classical stage setting, which showed a ducal throne, a front façade of a house, a wide view of the sea, and a Gothic entry into a monastery in Ephesus. Critics (Vodák, 1916a, p. 3), however, found the front of the house too huge and the set design too complicated to be easily manipulated. Indeed, it was possible to vary the scenery only when lengthy intervals were allowed. In contrast, the coloured Oriental costumes and the yellow-green garments of Jewish businessmen met with a positive response. Despite cuts and lengthy set design changes, Jindřich Vodák admitted that the first-night performance was successful and attracted a full house.

In the increasingly tense wartime atmosphere, the audience's attention was focused particularly on the second production of the cycle, *Richard III*, in which the director laid emphasis on the power struggle motivated by personal ambition and profit. He underscored Richard III's rise to the throne and his inevitable fall through symbolist stage design, using steep stairs covered by red cloth. A similar stage design was used in 1920 by Leopold Jessner, whose production of *Richard III* at Staatliches Schauspielhaus in Berlin was considered to be "the first [German] attempt to relate *Richard III* to the modern politics" (Jowett, 2000, p. 96). The performance was staged under dramatic circumstances. The leading performer's voice hoarsened that night so that he could barely speak. He did not want to cancel the performance, but the indisposition made his Richard even more furious. As a result, he played the part with an intensity which electrified the audience. As the critic observed (Vodák, 1916b, p. 2), Vojan managed to grasp Richard's "Epicurean hypocrisy" in its complexity and to carry it out with extraordinary gusto. In order to achieve a variety of goals, he used a wide range of facial expressions, showing a number of emotional responses. Thereby he revealed the secrets of Richard's character and his true intentions. It would be, however, wrong to attribute Vojan's success only to his nonverbal communication skills.

In the production of *Romeo and Juliet*, the director abandoned his original plain and cold set design, in which the balcony scene was set in an empty garden and, by contrast, made the balcony a dominant part of the stage. However, Romeo thus delivered his passionate soliloquy standing with his back to the audience (Deyl, 1971). Additionally, in *Hamlet*, Kvapil underlined a visual sleight. His new set design was apparently inspired by Max Reinhardt. The scene with players was enacted on the ramp, from which Hamlet, Claudius, Gertrude, and other courtiers watched the play. Facing the audience, their reactions to the player's performance were easily decipherable. Kvapil, moreover, included a triumphant Fortinbras in the final scene, which had in previous performances been dropped. The part of Fortinbras was played by Miloš Nový. In all previous performances (17 October 1915–4 February 1916), his part had been dropped. Considering Kvapil's involvement in "Mafia", it is probable that the re-enacted Fortinbras scene carried a veiled warning against a new ruler's succession to the throne. There is no evidence of such reading, yet with respect to the Czech independence movement the director may have invited the audience to feel it as dangerous and unwelcome.

The twelfth production of the festival, *King Lear*, proved something of a disappointment. As the *Lidové noviny* reported, the performance was cut and the traditional order of scenes was altered in order to stress King Lear's story (Vodák, 1916c, pp. 2-3). In the view of critics, the new order of scenes, along with the omission of Edgar's soliloquy in the wood (II. 3) and the refined academic interpretation, reduced the parallelism of Lear's and Gloucester's stories and weakened the overall impression of the performance. Edmund's intrigue was enacted after Act I, Scene 3, taking place at the Duke of Albany's Palace. On the other hand, the cuts probably focussed the audience's attention on Lear's suffering and helplessness and on the arbitrary nature of justice playing tricks on him.

Macbeth was one of the greatest attractions of the festival. It was staged on an empty plain surrounded by a plastic hilly area with a grey horizon, over which dim shadows of the witches were flying. With Vojan in the leading role, it was immensely successful. A theatre critic commented on Vojan's rendition of *Macbeth* as follows:

"The evening was dominated by Vojan's Macbeth, whose performance was a tremendous success. Each scene was elaborated with respect to a particular situation: a warlike and introverted man in the introductory scenes, both

hesitantly retreating and eagerly flaring up while talking to his wife, trembling and desolate with both murderous daggers, and so forth, soon with his royal magnificence and soon with a sudden collapse into a common humanity" (Vodák, 1945, p. 122, translation mine).

In the view of Rudolf Deyl (1971), who played the part of Malcolm, Vojan's Macbeth's murderous intentions sprang from his own will. His thoughts were imbued with firm determination to achieve his goal. Vojan thus made Macbeth fully responsible for all his acts, yet did not deprive him of his humanity and human nature. Reading the performance against the backdrop of the war, its accent on social or political interpretation cannot be ruled out. According to the Czech scholar Vočadlo (1956), *Macbeth* was one of the most impressive performances of the season.

Vojan used a similar psychological approach, supported by expressive body language, in his rendition of Shylock. Although he accentuated Shylock's Jewishness by means of his hairstyle, gestures, poses, and body posture, his Shylock was first and foremost "a wrongdoer as if cast from one solid piece, a terrible hater and hellish avenger, whose unforgiving, racial wrath threatens and yells with a horrible predatory animosity" (Vodák, 1945, p. 119, translation mine).

The premiere of both parts of *Henry IV* was first allowed as an exception, but later postponed to the autumn (2 November 1916). Though the production was marked by considerable cuts, it still represented a serious threat to the monarchy: the spectacularly staged coronation scenes might have been connected with rumours that the new independent Czech state was to be ruled by one of the sons of George V of England. The cuts led to the downplaying of the major political issue of the play (as the critic observed, Kvapil had difficulty in sustaining the complexity of the play). Instead, the production was dominated by the figure of Falstaff, portrayed in a rather traditional way as a protagonist typical of nineteenth-century comedies. Overwhelmed by Falstaff's monumental presence and his humour, the audience "did not even notice the intricate political implications of the Falstaff-Hall relationship" (Procházka, 1996, p. 50). The production, however, climaxed in the aforementioned coronation scene that symbolised the longstanding Czech aspiration to national sovereignty. The royal inauguration, accompanied by the handing over of the royal insignia, represented a symbolic recreation of the nation.

Through the festival, Kvapil reprised the role Shakespeare's oeuvre had played in the dramatic and political revival of Bohemia in 1864.

Interestingly enough, a Shakespeare production was chosen to celebrate Labour Day in Prague in 1916. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was a tremendous success in part due to the workmen of Athens, who played out exuberant comedy as well as satire of the petty bourgeois and their narrow-mindedness and hypocrisy.

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to examine the reception of the Shakespeare Festival held at the National Theatre in Prague in 1916 in Czech newspapers. The research indicates that a considerable, yet substantially censored, amount of space was given to theatre reviews, as contrasted with political and social events. An examination of the reviews furthermore shows that critics' readings of productions were well-informed and qualified. It is their factual analysis which makes the reviews an important research tool. The pattern of the reviews consists of identification of the director, translator, set designer, and cast, along with a brief but accurate plot description (where necessary) and critical commentary. A majority of the reviews discuss each work in terms of its historical context, as well as its aesthetic qualities. The performance of the leading actor (that of Eduard Vojan in most cases) is another major concern. As the reviews demonstrate, Vojan imbued his characters with psychological motivation and nonverbal communication, and embodied them as complex and multilayered figures. In this respect, the Czech theatre critic Jindřich Vodák deserves a special mention since his reviews provide a valuable insight into Vojan's characters. Although Vojan was one of his favourite actors (he devoted a 1945 monograph to Vojan and his legacy), his reviews are not uncritical, and acknowledge both successes and failings. Vojan's performance of *Macbeth* was, according to critics, the climax of the season and one of the best performances in his career. In *Richard III*, he provided an impressive portrayal of power struggle and dictatorship. Although the performance was not (most probably) understood as a political provocation, it was an apt comment on the current socio-political climate. Of special note is the character of Shylock, who was turned into a monster driven by his racial animosity. As discussed previously, the final scene in *Hamlet* contained Fortinbras's soliloquy, which had been dropped so far. Although the director's intention may have simply been to change the traditional pattern of the performance, it probably encouraged the audience to contemplate

the idea of establishing an independent state. A similar political reading may be found in the production of *Henry IV*.

Vojan's communicative and expressive power lay, among other things, in his eye contact and body language. His Shakespearean renditions wavered between sensitive, romantic acting and psychological realism, leading to a complex portrayal of characters. The Shakespeare festival in 1916 was the climax of his theatrical career (Mukařovský, 1956).

The Czech Shakespeare Festival captured the essence of the Czech national commitment. Its conception, which arose out of war and the related political situation, helped to foster a sense of national identity and independence. It was an attempt to present Shakespeare as a symbol of pro-Allied attitude. The festival should have originally comprised seventeen plays. Yet the production of *King John* was considered unsuitable for wartime due to its political allusions and associations, and was consequently banned by the authorities. Similarly, the production of *Henry IV* was set aside and eventually performed in the autumn. The whole concept of the festival was, no doubt, politically loaded, and served as a political demonstration.

Despite the circumstances of war, the majority of performances were sold out and the newspapers commented on the enthusiastic and responsive audiences. The festival enjoyed great popularity among both a critically engaged audience and the common people. It, in fact, brought together all strata of society. As Šalda aptly noted in his study entitled *O naší moderní kultuře divadelně dramatické* [*On our Modern Theatrical and Dramatic Culture*]:

"During the Great War, the National Theatre had its wings clipped by the censorship; however, a rush made for the box office confirmed how people in this cursed time valued it as the only public institution where one could live, though for a while, a higher spiritual life. The National Theatre understood what was expected from it, when it organised an anniversary Shakespearean Dramatic Cycle in the spring 1916, which ended up as a silent political protest." (Šalda, 1937, p. 240, translation mine)

The political character of the festival was confirmed by, among others, Fischer (1919), who in his study *K dramatu. Problémy a výhledy* [*On the Czech Drama. Problems and Prospects*] observed that the Shakespearean celebrations turned into a political event of considerable extent. Shakespeare's dramatic canon was thus felt as a challenge to express a distinct national standpoint. The festival was an important event in the Czech Shakespearean theatrical tradition, too.

Notwithstanding, however, the attempt to transform Shakespeare's work into cultural capital, due to the traditional character of the National Theatre, rather allowed it to preserve its status as a sacred gift.

As already mentioned, the significance and impact of the festival were not observed only through the prism of culture but also through politics. As it (in part) served to counterbalance the failures of nationalist politics, it incited a critical response, too. The Czech dramatist and playwright Jaroslav Hilbert (1916, p. 9) criticised the festival for presenting Shakespeare as "eternal", and further argued that his plays are "anachronistic" and have nothing to say to the contemporary public. In his negative emotional response, he went even further, stating that Shakespeare can be respected only by "blind literary enthusiasts" or "literary hypocrites" who (in his view) do not deserve a mention. In his view, Shakespeare festivals held at the National Theatre prevented further development of new Czech drama, which had sometimes (and with vain effort) sought to be performed on the first stage. The performers and the public, however, did not share his unfair and biased criticism, as confirmed by a majority of theatre reviews, memoirs of actors, and critical studies by renowned scholars.

At a time of distress, Shakespeare's plays, mediated through Sládek's translations, served as a channel for communication, offering spiritual consolation, courage, and a new perspective on the future. Even though the festival was not exempt from criticism, its importance for Czech history cannot be denied, since it represented a demonstration of anti-Austrian resistance on the home front.

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Changeable tones in the game with tradition: the reception of antiquity in Michel Faber's *The Crimson Petal and The White*

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Abstract

The postmodern novel *The Crimson Petal and the White* by Michel Faber is not only a great example of a prose covering the subject of Victorian times, literature and history but it is also the evidence that ancient values and motifs are extensively exploited by writers of the 21st century. The affirmation of antiquity in the novel takes the shape of an ideal world, represented by perfect surroundings in nineteenth-century London, contrasting with wild and severe, almost naturalistic places where the poor live. Another example of a positive representation of the ancient world is the magic stretching over those who know Latin and ancient Greek. Some of the ancient symbols are used by Faber to mark the importance of discussed topics, like for instance the border on the Rubicon, which in Faber's prose refers to the division of Victorian England into two contrasting worlds: this of the rich and that of the poor. The ancient motifs play a role of perfect models of life and humanity that a nineteenth-century English person is craving for. It is not the destruction of a tradition but its continuation.

Keywords

reception of antiquity, Victorian novel, ancient tradition, ancient ideal

Introduction

Michel Faber was born on 13 April 1960 in Hague, the Netherlands. He lived there until he was seven. Later, in 1967 he moved with his family to Australia. Since 1993 he has lived in Scotland and writes in English. He made his debut in 1999 with the collection entitled *Some Rain Must Fall*. His first book was the novel *Under the Skin*, which was published in 2000. The novel *The Crimson Petal and the White* published in 2002 made him very famous. It appeared to be a bestseller and was translated into numerous languages. It is the story of a young girl named Sugar, who offers her service to men as a prostitute. She is trying to find a way to lead a better life, as well as she is making an attempt to question the position of a female in Victorian world. That is why she wants to write a novel and show that women deserve better treatment from the men. *The Crimson Petal*

and the White presents nineteenth-century England from the perspective of a twentieth-century writer; it also exploits the ancient motifs on different levels such as the references to the ancient ideals and knowledge, as well as using prefiguration and analogy between the ancient and the modern worlds. The presence of ancient motifs is significant, as it helps to strengthen contemporary culture (Stabryła, 1980, p. 9). The novel by Faber constitutes a typical example of postmodern writing. It shows the transformation of Victorian prose on such levels as structure, narration or the image of the characters. The convention of the novel seems to be realistic while its structure is definitely postmodern; the plot is traditional while its form is postmodern. Due to this connection a reader gains an eclectic work which offers a fresh insight into traditional and new Victorian prose. The figure of a narrator is the example of unusual structure of the work; from the very beginning she (as it is a woman) addresses a reader directly, so this is the second-person narration. In this way, the author tries to make the border between the world of the novel and the real world invisible. A reader is not passive but takes an active part in the course of action. The narrator also uses grotesque and irony while anticipating about the future events. She has a vast knowledge about both the Victorian and postmodern epoch. Such mixture of past, present and future is an example of decomposition of time and space, according to Wadowski (2005, p. 51-52). But the narrator often seems to lose his authority, has doubts connected with the course of action, which is another crucial feature of postmodern prose: *Now, who shall we follow? William or Agnes? The master or the mistress? On this momentous day, the master* (2003, p. 137).

She sometimes appears as the person equal to a reader, not having enough knowledge about the characters and events: *Just for curiosity's sake, though, who has come today? (...) Who else has come? (...) and is that Mrs. Abernethy over there? (...) And that child? Who is that child (...)? Sophie Rackham, is it? (...) But where were we? Ah yes, Mrs. Fox. She's looking well, isn't she? (...) She's a staunch advocate of cremation, did you know?* (2003, p. 698- 700).

What distinguishes this kind of prose from a typical nineteenth-century narration is resigning from macrostructure of the presented world and concentrating on microstructure of an individual. But Faber also uses a typical nineteenth-century narration which can be perceived as a hidden comment on Victorian writing. In this way, Faber imitates Victorian prose. Uncertainty, the loss of authority as well as inviting a reader to take part in the plot present the novel as the example of metafiction. This idea is enhanced here by numerous examples of intertextuality. The novel not only exploits other works (Victorian

poems, the novel written by the main heroine), but it also mentions a range of nineteenth-century poets and writers and comments on their writing. The title itself *The Crimson Petal and the White* constitutes a clear allusion to the poem by Alfred Tennyson, and it refers to two heroines: Sugar represented by the red colour and Agnes who is associated with the white colour. The title is of metafictional character and together with the above-mentioned features makes the novel by Faber a typical example of postmodern writing. The presence of antiquity is also one of the elements that influence the perception of the work as postmodern. Faber's perspective linked with ancient and Victorian point of view can be characterized as quite objective, because the story is not presented only by one traditional and omniscient narrator, but by different figures and from various angles. This, paradoxically, helps to achieve the effect of realism.

Ancient world versus Victorianism

In the novel by Faber antiquity definitely acquires a positive meaning; in comparison with the realism of the Victorian world, antiquity becomes the epitome of longing for unattainable models, for real humanity. When the reader is introduced into dark corners of the nineteenth-century London streets and gets to know their secrets, he approaches the border between the realistic Victorian world and a totally different world that starts at Greek Street. This name of the street connected with the ancient country suggests the difference between the "wild" nineteenth-century world and developed antiquity, since *Civilisation begins at Greek Street. Welcome to the real world* (2003, p. 21). Walking on the street resembles the old times: even shopkeepers running their business there are aware of the "pure" times that are gone: *But what use is there, the shop-keepers sigh, in nostalgia for past times? The machine age has come, the world will never be clean again* (2003, p. 22).

Their utterance emphasizes human longing for an ideal that cannot be reached. The word *clean* suggests the pureness and perfection of antiquity in contrast to a "dirty" Victorian world. This symbolism refers not only to the smoke and ash covering the majority of industrial cities, but also in metaphorical sense, to the purity of habits and the idea of humanism. Greek Street is also the place difficult to be reached by simple people: Sugar's friend Caroline is unable to perceive the vastness of the area as if it was on a steep hill (2003, p. 30). When the narrator presents the Victorian world, she frequently uses symbolism typical for European tradition. Following Sugar through the backstreets from the poor district to the Regent Street full of the wealthy mansions and happy people, the

reader is tempted by the narrator to make a determined move: *Stop daydreaming now; cross the shiny Rubicon of Regent Street, avoiding the traffic and the mounds of muck (...)* (2003, p. 44). The reference to this famous move by Julius Caesar has a positive meaning in the novel; the narrator advises the reader to make such decision in order to watch Sugar's further actions.

Literature and knowledge

What is ancient, plays in the novel by Faber the role of an ideal which is distant in time and difficult to be reached. The ability to use Latin and Greek is in the Victorian world like a magic spell, influencing even well- educated people. When William, the main male character in the novel, admires Sugar's wide reading he also pays attention to her knowledge of literature. The inability to use classical languages makes the girl inappropriate to discuss literature: [She is] (...) *lacking only Latin, Greek and the male's instinctive grasp of what is major and minor* (2003, p. 102). Using classical languages by the priest has also got great power; Agnes, William's wife, not fully understanding the words of absolution, leaves spiritual and *lighter than air* (2003, p. 385). The knowledge of classical languages is one of the elements of the idea of *humanitas*. In ancient perception, *humanitas* meant acquiring vast knowledge and self- improvement (Fabianowski, 2010, p. 306-307). William is the example of a human that possesses some knowledge of literature and ancient languages, although as the representative of the nineteenth-century England, he is the example of a deconstructive process that continues the ancient tradition. The human being is no longer the producer of *humanitas* but he is its product. The individual cannot create culture by himself: it is him who is the product of the culture (Wójcik, 2010, p. 372). Although *William keeps up to date with the latest developments in zoology, sculpture, politics, painting, archaeology, novel-writing* (2003, p. 57), he cannot be fully dedicated to any of the above, as he is forced to work hard (2010, p. 57). William seems to be a versatile man, nevertheless he cannot equal his ancient predecessors; duties make it impossible. This situation shows the contrast between tradition and modernity: antiquity enabled people to widen their horizons while Victorianism imposes on humans rather obligatory tasks than pleasures. This confirms the idea of antiquity as the perfect and pure world. This world is beyond the reach of ordinary men such as chimneysweepers, merchants or kitchen-maids. Preoccupied only with earning money for satisfying their primary needs, the workers have no access to education and culture; their financial and social situation do not make them interested in culture. This sad

and depressing vision of a nineteenth-century English working class is accurately depicted by a dialogue between the two well-educated noblemen:

'We got hold of a wide variety of rude working folk (...) and we read them bits of Ruskin's Academy Notes...'

'...and showed them engravings of the paintings...'

'...and then asked them their opinion!' Bodley contorts his face in a caricature of donkeyish intellect (...) *'Wot you say dis one's name wos? Afferdighty?'*

'A Greek lady, sir,' mock- explains Ashwell instantly playing the straight man to Bodley's buffoon. *'A goddess.'*

'Greek? Blimey. Where's 'er black moustache, then?' (2003, p. 755- 756).

Human being and antiquity

Apart from the vision of antiquity perceived as an idealized and unattainable world, Faber presents it in the form of prefiguration which constitutes the presentation of the ancient structure of the world and its modern equivalent. According to Stabryła (1980, p. 7-8), prefiguration is one of the three ways of using ancient motifs in literature. There exist also: revocation (imitation of the motifs and subjects) and reinterpretation (changing the meaning of the motifs, polemics or even the deformation of the motif). One of the examples of prefiguration is the image of William as Narcissus. During his academic years, William used to spend a lot of time on choosing his outfit and commenting on other people's appearance:

William Rackham was very much the sort of man to notice small, even tiny, differences in dress and personal appearance. In his University prime, he was quite a dandy, with silver-handled cane and a shoulder-length mane of golden hair. In those days it was perfectly normal for him to dawdle in front of the flower vases in his own ,set' for half an hour at a time, selecting a particular flower for a particular buttonhole; he might spend even longer matching silk neckties of one colour with waistcoats of another, and his most dearly beloved trousers were dark blue with mauve checks (2003, p. 53).

Unfortunately, as a mature businessman and father of the family William is no longer able to take so much care of his looks. His diminishing fortune caused the negligence in his own appearance become clearly visible even for his servants (2003, p. 53). William's creation as an impoverished Victorian gentleman, represents the fall of ancient ideals. The hero has to face financial difficulties and

resign from his image of a dandy. The eternal pursuit for ancient ideals underlines the difference between the idealized artistic past and industrialized and materialistic presence. Another example of unattainable ideal in the novel is connected with a perfect body. William's brother, Henry Rackham, having woken up, is disgusted with the vision of his body:

He strips naked, shocked as always by the bestiality of the body thus revealed, for he's an exceptionally hairy specimen, and the hair on his body is darker and wirier than the soft blond fleece on his had (...). Adam and Eve were hairless in Paradise, and so are the ideal physiques of antiquity (2003, p. 314).

The vision of a perfect ancient piece of art in the form of ideal body proportions is another element of the idea of *humanitas*. As Aleksandra Jakóbczyk-Gola claims (2010, p. 437-438), the process of anthropomorfisation in art is an indispensable factor reflecting the notion of *humanitas*. The ideal proportions of a model let us understand *humanitas* as the presence of a human being in art. The idea of presenting references to antiquity and to its representatives constitutes the example of a wide panoramic look, but on the other hand, referring these ancient names to the figure of one particular model means narrowing the space to one detail: the perfect masculinity (the role of the expressions connected with the location in the space and the space limitations is widely discussed by Krauz in "Przestrzeń opisu (na przykładzie opisu postaci)", 2005, p. 135-145) which the characters in the novel by Faber desire. The most crucial thing concerning beauty of a body in ancient times was to fit into canon – which refers to measure – the layout of proportions (Tatarkiewicz, 1988, p. 143). In the case of Henry Rackham it could not be fulfilled.

It is not only the appearance that strikes with its poor imitation of antiquity; the behaviour of the main characters also reflects the fall of ancient ideals. During one of the social meetings at William's house, there took place an incident concerning his daughter. William, being not able to cope with it at once because of the lack of sufficient number of servants, experiences a social contempt: *Social humiliation burns on Rackham's shoulders like Hercules' fatal shirt of Nessus (2003, p. 145).*

The social conventions of Victorian England impose on noblemen certain standards, for instance the proper number of the staff, the vast amount of premises and money, some social and business connections. Otherwise, they experience a social death or non-existence.

Narration

Finally, the last representation of antiquity in the form of prefiguration is the structure of narration in the novel by Faber. The main heroine, Sugar, is trying to write a social novel about the oppression of females by males in Victorian society. The major attempt is to take revenge on men, as Sugar claims in her dramatic monologue (2003, p. 234). Because Sugar did not have a traditional family and home, she was forced to become a prostitute in order to survive in a world full of dangers and ruled by men. In her novel Sugar wants to reveal men's true intentions:

All men are the same (...). If there is one thing I have learned in my time on this Earth, it is this. All men are the same.

How can I assert this with such conviction? Surely I have not known all the men there are to know? On the contrary, dear reader, perhaps I have!

My name is Sugar... (2003, p. 229).

The constant repetition of the above-quoted passage as well as other passages from Sugar's novel proves that a woman is able to write literature; it is not only a male domain. According to Głowiński, such quotation can be perceived as allegation (this term was introduced by Mathieu-Castellani who defined in this way those cases, in which the quoted text is given authority. Głowiński gave the quoted text some other meaning then, see Głowiński 2000, p. 22-23). It is using the text by someone else in order to build one's own text up. Such reference that is not connected with dialogues, does not become the factor of polyphony but, on the contrary, confirms monody (2000, p. 23). Frequent reading of the beginning of the novel by Sugar can be defined as the idea of making the prose lyrical. The repetitions make the work by Faber more rhythmic and similar to poetry (Cieślukowska, 1995, p. 26 & 268). They are like a refrain or even more: like a chorus in ancient drama.

The story by Sugar seems to be a tragic one. The girl herself intentionally decides to create a heroine that loses in her life, as if it was an ancient tragedy: *No, one thing is certain: her story must not have a happy ending. Her heroine takes revenge on the men she hates; yet the world remains in the hands of men, and such revenge cannot be tolerated. Her story's ending, therefore, is one of the few things Sugar has planned in advance, and it's death for the heroine. She accepts it as inevitable (2003, p. 229).*

Conclusion

The idea of antiquity is in the novel by Faber one of the elements creating the whole story; the writer constructed the novel on the idea of connecting past, present and future (antiquity, Victorianism and postmodernism). In this way the author tries to comment on all these three spaces to achieve an artistic effect in his work. For Victorians ancient world becomes the model to be imitated, characterized by development and perfection. Knowing ancient literature and languages constitutes also the example of an ideal that in Victorianism is difficult to be reached due to the overwhelming industrialism and omnipresent preoccupation with technology. Antiquity is also the representation of an ideal human being and his perfect proportions; nevertheless, this model seems distant and difficult to be achieved for a nineteenth-century man. Finally, using intertextual references, like for instance the repetitions of Sugar's novel, makes Faber's work become closer to the structure of ancient literature: its structure is similar to ancient chorus or refrain. Antiquity in the prose by Faber becomes the role model to be imitated, a dreamt ideal to be reached.

The end of the book by Sugar is almost analogous with the end of the novel by Faber – the fate of Sugar is unknown, which means there is no happy end, but the reader is left with doubts concerning her further life. *The Crimson Petal and the White* becomes an open space for analysing. The presence of ancient motifs enriches the literary work, contrasting the two distant worlds and glorifying antiquity. One can find not a destruction of tradition but its continuation. Its different dimension presented with slight allusions is not the example of a destruction of traditional values but their deconstruction, which means presenting them in the postmodern novel.

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Review

The past through the present

Buda, A. (2014). *Powieść wiktoriańska i jej dwudziestowieczne życie*. Radom: Uniwersytet Technologiczno-Humanistyczny im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego w Radomiu. 205 p. ISBN 978-83-7351-456-0

Agata Buda's monograph is an ambitious and well written discussion of two important periods in the history of English literature, the Victorian period with its extraordinary "production" of novels, most of which later entered the canon of world literature, and postmodernism with its often extreme and contradictory values.

Of a large number of valuable Victorian novels, she chose for detailed analysis Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* and George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss*, which are then, and this is most valuable about her approach, compared with a contemporary novel treating the same Victorian themes from contemporary, i.e. postmodern, point of view (Michel Faber's *The Crimson Petal and the White*). Moreover, some of her findings concerning the characteristic elements of Victorian and postmodern fiction are also compared with Bolesław Prus's *Lalka* – a novel from a different cultural milieu. One can thus say that it is a comparative analysis not only of two kinds of books, but of two periods and their characteristic features, as well as, implicitly, even of two cultures – English and Polish.

The whole book could be roughly divided into two parts – a general overview of the discussed periods, and the analysis of the novels. In the part of the book dealing with Victorian period, Buda examines its social and cultural characteristics, pointing to the dualistic nature of the times – on the one hand the development of science and technology, philosophy and literature, while, on the other hand, deep social and gender based inequalities. The leitmotif of the whole book is Buda's sensitive criticism of the position of women in Victorian society.

The complex picture of Victorian society is nicely drawn through her discussion of its major representatives and trends in the fields of philosophy, religion, education, arts and literature. Before proceeding to the analysis of the

novels, she briefly discusses history of the Victorian novel, following scholarly literature in its division into the early novels (further subdivided into adventure, sporting, silver-fork and Newgate novels) and late Victorian novels. In general, she pays attention to all important literary figures of the Victorian Age.

The “historical” part of the monograph is supplemented by the analysis of terminology to be used in the interpretation of the books. The most important historical-theoretical concept the author uses is the concept of realism. In several places Buda rightly claims that it should be understood not only in terms of mimesis, as a representation of reality, but that there are many realisms, even during postmodernism which (she agrees with Hutcheon) “realizuje realizm poprzez zastosowanie specyficznego dyskursu, jakim jest intertekstualna metapowieść” (p. 149).

Despite the need to avoid simplistic understanding of literary theoretical categories (the concept of realism falling easily to a danger of simplification), and several examples showing a more complicated relation between art and reality (cf, for example, Henry James’s understanding of realism), making connection between realism and postmodernism is, in my opinion, quite daring. Many scholars of postmodernism would argue that if there is “nothing outside the text”, or if the world is just a play of signifiers without signifieds, the concept of realism loses its sense, since the very binarity lying at the heart of mimesis is done away with. If the concept of realism is too wide, any other literary period could then be realism. Nevertheless, the connection is a challenge, since it brings fresh insights into literary critical thinking, and highlights the subjectivity level in the appreciation of literary works.

In the interpretive part of the work, Buda makes use of theoretical contributions of some scholars to analyse several elements of the works’ structure, especially the Bakhtinian concept of “chronotope”. In the analysed novels, she identifies characteristic time-space configurations and analyses their role in the creation of final effect, seeing them, in the chapter of the same name, as constructional dominants of Victorian realistic novel. She also analyses narration techniques present in the *Hard Times* and *The Mill on the Floss* and compares them with the narration technique of Michel Faber’s *The Crimson Petal and the White*. The latter is described as the so-called “proza autotematyczna”, “w której ważny staje się proces tworzenia a nie sam produkt, ze względu na jej brak linearności oraz mobilność” (210). All in all, it could be said that it displays all the elements of postmodern poetics, i.e. fragmentariness, metafiction, individualism of character, and thus differs significantly from the Victorian novels. There is also

a difference in narration, which is, as she argues, based on the narrator "pierwszo- a niekiedy i drugoosobowy, wciągający czytelnika w prezentowany świat".

In addition to analysing the narration and chronotopes of *The Crimson Petal and the White*, and comparing them with the two nineteenth century's works, Buda has done a good work as regards the discussion of the nature of postmodernism as well. She managed to avoid a typical descriptive approach of listing its characteristic features, and, instead, tried to reflect on the complexity of the phenomenon, pointing to the contradictions of its origin, name, classification, and, in the end, claiming that it is a continuation of realistic assumptions. This is, after all, one of the most interesting claims of the work.

To sum up, the work is a good attempt at an examination of Victorian values and their reflection in literature, carried out through the examination of the narrative structure of two major literary works. It is also a good piece of comparative research.

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