Second Language Learning and Teaching

Janusz Arabski
Adam Wojtaszek *Editors*

Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning

Springer

Second Language Learning and Teaching

Series Editor

Mirosław Pawlak

For further volumes:
http://www.springer.com/series/10129

About the Series

The series brings together volumes dealing with different aspects of learning and teaching second and foreign languages. The titles included are both monographs and edited collections focusing on a variety of topics ranging from the processes underlying second language acquisition, through various aspects of language learning in instructed and non-instructed settings, to different facets of the teaching process, including syllabus choice, materials design, classroom practices and evaluation. The publications reflect state-of-the-art developments in those areas, they adopt a wide range of theoretical perspectives and follow diverse research paradigms. The intended audience are all those who are interested in naturalistic and classroom second language acquisition, including researchers, methodologists, curriculum and materials designers, teachers and undergraduate and graduate students undertaking empirical investigations of how second languages are learnt and taught.

Janusz Arabski · Adam Wojtaszek
Editors

Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning

Springer

Janusz Arabski
Department of Language Acquisition
Institute of English
University of Silesia
Grota-Roweckiego 5
41-205 Sosnowiec
Poland
e-mail: janusz.arabski@us.edu.pl

Adam Wojtaszek
Department of Language Acquisition
Institute of English
University of Silesia
Grota-Roweckiego 5
41-205 Sosnowiec
Poland
e-mail: adam.wojtaszek@us.edu.pl

ISBN 978-3-642-20200-1 e-ISBN 978-3-642-20201-8
DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8
Springer Heidelberg Dordrecht London New York

Cover design: eStudio Calamar, Berlin/Figueres

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

Janusz Arabski and Adam Wojtaszek

In recent decades an interesting dichotomy has appeared in SLA/FLL research, revealing a division between those scholars who focus primarily on the psycholinguistic aspects of the process of L2 development and those investigators who look at the process from a more external perspective, investigating the role of sociolinguistic and culture-related factors shaping the course and nature of L2 acquisition. Within the former paradigm, SLA research has often been classified as a branch of cognitive science, incorporating its theorems and methodologies, treating the process of L2 learning and acquisition as predominantly mental and cognitive phenomena, dependent to a large extent on learner's individual psychological characteristics. Such a strong cognitive orientation has often been rejected recently by some scholars, while others were attempting to incorporate culture-related variables into the psycholinguistic paradigm, treating them as contributors to individual variation. The latter option is, arguably, not very well-founded, as explicated by Dash (2003):

> It is arguable that culture, at often times, is not so readily identifiable, or of priority significance for the specific impact it has on the learning processes of individual students, both in theory and in practice. Excessive consideration of it as a separate and significant factor can cause stereotyping and overly hinder the instructor from looking at each individual student in the broader context of traditionally well accepted and tested models from a range of scholars (Gardner et al. 1979; Schumann 1986; Mangubhai 2002).

What might be a considerable problem for psycholinguistically-biased investigators, however, does not have to constitute a major obstacle for those who opt

J. Arabski · A. Wojtaszek (✉)
Department of Language Acquisition, University of Silesia, Institute of English, Grota-Roweckiego 5, 41-205, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: adam.wojtaszek@us.edu.pl

J. Arabski
e-mail: janusz.arabski@us.edu.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_1, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2011

for a more sociolinguistically-oriented approach. Undoubtedly, language learning is in fact a social-psychological process, in which the role of a wider sociocultural context should not be marginalised. Moreover, the role of English as *lingua franca* in contemporary world, the process of globalisation and increasing role of intercultural communication inevitably enforce the inclusion of such issues as important contributors to the processes of L2 learning and acquisition. With intercultural communicative competence now being the goal of much of foreign language learning and teaching the questions concerning the relationship between language and culture have placed new emphasis in research on second language acquisition and foreign language learning, resulting in an increasing number of conferences and publications focusing on aspects of culture in SLA.

The most prominent volumes published in the recent decade include Byram (2008), which is a collection of essays by a renowned expert in the field, presenting the evolution of the concept of intercultural competence (ICC), advocating the need of adopting an intercultural approach to language teaching in European schools, Byram et al. (2001), a collection of papers by different authors, focusing on development of intercultural competence in diverse settings and on different proficiency levels, Hall (2002), a self-contained monograph, written from the sociocultural perspective, discussing the theoretical underpinnings of contemporary thought on the nature of language-and-culture learning, as well as Lange and Paige (2003), which is a collection of chapters written by American experts discussing interdisciplinary perspectives on culture teaching and learning as well as integrating culture into second language curriculum. Additionally, a separate section devoted to the discussion of identity, culture and critical pedagogy in second language teaching and learning, including illuminating chapters by Thomas Riceto (Considerations of identity in L2 learning) as well as Michael Byram and Anwei Feng (Teaching and researching intercultural competence) can be found in Hinkel (2005), which is a comprehensive overview of SLA research.

The present volume constitutes, on the one hand, a certain supplement to the issues discussed in the above-mentioned works, and on the other hand a suggestion for some future developments and interesting directions in research. It has been divided into four major thematic sections, encompassing nineteen chapters by authors representing different cultural backgrounds (with the Polish majority) and various professional milieus, ranging from theoretically biased scholars to teachers and practitioners in language pedagogy.

In the first part, titled *Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, the first two chapters offer a valuable introduction to the topic, covering different approaches to understanding of culture, the role of English as a *lingua franca* in intercultural communication and the place of cultural factors in SLA theorising, research, second/foreign language teaching and teacher training. The remaining three contributions contain reports on empirical research designed to explore the learners' and teachers' views on the purpose, extent and effectiveness of developing intercultural competence through teaching English as a foreign language.

The second part, under the heading *Cultural differences in language instruction*, brings together experiences of language teachers and researchers from all around

the world. Two chapters contain reports on quantitative research comparing the views on language instruction of EFL learners and teachers from Poland, Italy and Turkey. One contribution is devoted to the problems associated with identification of dyslexia in multilingual and multicultural settings, touching upon the issue of difficulties involved in setting the standards applicable to L2 learning environments. Finally, there are also two insightful chapters focusing on specific cultural contexts and conditions for learning and using English as a foreign/second language in Australia and Brunei.

Papers grouped in the third part (*Culture-related concepts and constructs*) focus on such items as time, modesty, politeness or respect, as encoded and applied in different cultures, in the perspective of potential problems and difficulties inherent in situations of language contact. Apart from the theoretical discussions of the culture-dependent differences in conceptualisation of those notions and their reflection in particular language forms and linguistic devices, all the papers in this section contain an analysis of relevant language data, gathered in majority among experienced and proficient users of L2.

The last section of the volume groups chapters dealing with the culture-related issues in teaching English as a foreign language in Poland, hence its title: *Culture-related issues in Polish educational context*. The first two contributions report quantitative research findings revolving around culture-dependent characteristics of Polish EFL students such as their willingness to communicate, the ideal L2 Self or international posture and their relationship with the subjects' proficiency in English. The remaining two articles deal with the analysis of and teachers' opinion on teaching materials used in Polish EFL classroom vis-à-vis their coverage of cultural/intercultural content.

In spite of their variability of focus and perspective, the papers gathered in the present volume share a common denominator of addressing the issues of L2 acquisition and learning from the sociocultural angle. The contributions demonstrate that any attempts at modeling the process of L2 as purely cognitive and psychological phenomenon are inevitably missing out a vital and essential ingredient. The editors hope that the papers collected here contribute valuable and stimulating insights and that the readers will find many inspiring ideas and intriguing suggestions in the collection.

References

Byram M (2008) From foreign language education to education for intercultural citizenship: essays and reflections. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Byram M, Nichols A, Stevens D (2001) Developing intercultural competence in practice. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Dash P (2003) Culture rejected as an individual difference in the SLA process, Asian EFL J 5 (2), Retrieved April 20, 2011 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/june2003_pd.pdf

Gardner RC, Smythe PC, Clement R (1979) Intensive second language study in a bilingual milieu: an investigation of attitudes, motivation and language proficiency. Language Learning 29:305–320

Hall JK (2002) Teaching and researching language and culture. Longman/Pearson, London
Hinkel E (2005) Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ
Lange DL, Paige RM (2003) Culture as the core: perspectives on culture in second language learning. Information Age Publishing, Greenwich, CT
Mangubhai, F (2002) Principles of Second Language Learning. University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, Australia
Schumann JH (1986) Research on the acculturalization model for second language acquisition. J Multling Multicul 7:379–392

Part I
Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

Chapter 2
Understanding Culture Through a Lingua Franca

Anna Niżegorodcew

Abstract This chapter focuses on the role of English as a lingua franca in the development of intercultural understanding and communication. The following issues are discussed: first, problems involved in the definition of English as a lingua franca and understanding culture, secondly, the changing role of teaching English in Europe and its consequences for culture teaching, in the next parts, lingua franca use from sociocultural SLA theory perspectives, international research on foreign language teachers' views on teaching culture, and finally, examples of literary tasks from an international educational project aiming at the development of intercultural understanding through ELF.

Keywords lingua franca · Intercultural competence · Course module · English language teaching

2.1 Introduction

Teaching English for intercultural communication or English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has recently become one of the buzzwords of English language teaching methodology. English as the main European lingua franca has been dissociated, at least partly, from its national culture/s due to the contexts in which it is used by non-native speakers. Non-native speakers acquire and use ELF not only to communicate with native target language speakers, but also in order to communicate with speakers of different native languages. Running the risk of oversimplification,

A. Niżegorodcew (✉)
Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland
e-mail: annanizegorodcew@gmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_2,

it could be said that in the process of communication, non-native speakers who use ELF are representatives of particular national or regional cultures. The question arises whether diverse national cultures can be mutually understood by international students through a lingua franca.

In this paper the following issues pertaining to the above general question are discussed: first, problems involved in the definition of English as a lingua franca and understanding culture, secondly, the changing role of teaching English in Europe, as well as its consequences for culture teaching, in the next parts, lingua franca use from sociocultural SLA theory perspectives, international research on foreign language teachers' views on teaching culture, and finally, examples of literary tasks from international educational projects aiming at the development of intercultural understanding through ELF.

2.2 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and Understanding Culture

It is extremely difficult to decide if English as a lingua franca (ELF) refers only to the function of English used by non-native speakers, as well as by native speakers in communication with non-native speakers, or if it refers to a variety/varieties of English used in particular regions of the world by international speakers (Saraceni 2008, p 25). Both approaches seem to be valid.

Among the authors who have involved themselves in the defence of the latter definition are Seidlhofer and Jenkins. They claim that comprehensible non-native English should be accepted in its own right as a language for international communication, and native speakers are not in the position to assess it by comparing it with their norms (Seidlhofer and Jenkins 2008). The authors argue that the criterion of intelligibility is enough to warrant lingua franca English the status of language for international communication. However, even those radical advocates of the use of ELF as a separate variety of English admit that in teaching English native speaker norms should be followed (Jenkins 2007).

According to Swan,

> these [non-native speaker individual varieties of English] need to conform to native speaker norms sufficiently to permit effective communication, but they may differ considerably from native speaker English and from each other (depending on learners' mother tongues and other factors) (Swan 2009, p 81).

Additionally, as Canagarajah remarks, in using ELF,

> [t]he form of this English [ELF] is negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes. The speakers are able to monitor each other's language proficiency to determine mutually the appropriate grammar, phonology, lexical range, and pragmatic conventions that would ensure intelligibility. Therefore, it is difficult to describe this language a priori (Canagarajah 2007, p 925; cited in Saraceni 2008, p 26).

ELF as the function of English used by non-native speakers can be a language full of new associations, reflecting a multi-faceted reality, implied meanings and symbols. ELF may also help speakers to perceive their own culture in a wider perspective, by creating more general connotations of cultural concepts so far closely associated only with the native language.

Generally speaking, there are two views on the relationship between using ELF and culture. One view stresses the impoverishment of national culture (even destruction of culture) by the global language. ELF means a careless and limited language use for impoverished intercultural communication. We can use the metaphor of a *meeting point,* where people meet briefly in the hustle and bustle of an airport or a railway station. ELF is understood as a global language which destroys particular languages, just like global culture can mean destruction of local cultures. ELF use means a degradation of symbols, entering a *supermarket of culture,* where everything is cheap and for sale.

The other view emphasises the enrichment of culture by ELF by encompassing diverse cultures and making them available to one another. We can use the metaphor of an *agora***,** where people meet to talk at some length. Such communication is facilitated through ELF, which becomes an *interlanguage* of its speakers' cultures (Niżegorodcew 2010). In this paper ELF is viewed from such a functional perspective as an intercultural medium of communication and education.

2.3 Role of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in Europe and Intercultural Communication

History knows other languages that once became common languages and retained their status for a longer or shorter time. For instance, Latin is the best example of a European lingua franca used by educated Europeans from the Middle Ages up to the sixteenth–seventeenth century. Later, French became extremely popular among upper and middle classes in Europe. In the former Soviet Union, Russian was used as a lingua franca. Reasons why a particular language became a lingua franca were not purely linguistic, they were political and ideological. Past linguae francae propagated particular values, beliefs and life styles associated with political power, religion and ideology: Latin spread Christianity, French—rationalism and the ideas of Enlightenment, Russian—communism.

Obviously, there are also values, beliefs and life styles that are propagated by the English language associated with British or American national cultures. Supporters of teaching English would probably stress the spread of democratic values associated with western civilisation; its opponents might notice negative aspects, such as the spread of low value mass culture and ruthless market economy. Both groups might treat values, beliefs and life styles, in other words the culture associated with the English language, as inherently connected with it. Such a strong sense of identity of a given language with only one culture, also called

languaculture (Risager 2006), is usually characteristic of monolingual people. However, ELF is used by bilingual or multilingual speakers, for whom their knowledge of more than one language enables them to detach, at least partly, a linguistic system from values, beliefs and life styles.

Let me briefly outline the past 60 years of teaching English in Europe. English as one of the main foreign languages has become more and more popular since the Second World War due to sociopolitical and economical reasons. As a foreign language taught in European schools in the 1950s and 1960s, English was usually linked with the British native speaker middle class culture, as exemplified by the English for foreign students coursebooks written at that time.

The sociopolitical changes at the end of the 60s and in the 70s, involving the process of unification of Western Europe, as well as a great mobility of people and creation of multicultural societies had their impact on English language and culture teaching. However, in the first decades after those changes, in the 70s and 80s, the shift in English language teaching referred mainly to the shift of focus from teaching language, that is, developing learners' knowledge and skills in the target language, to the development of communicative skills. The new teaching approach, Communicative Language Teaching, made teaching target language culture somehow irrelevant. Students were supposed to communicate using their linguistic and communicative resources rather than to learn about aspects of British, American or any other culture (cf. Niżegorodcew 1995).

The following decades (the 90s and the first decade of the twenty first century) brought back a renewed interest in teaching culture as the necessary content of language teaching (cf. Kramsch 1993). Simultaneously and paradoxically, English as the most popular foreign language in Europe, has been changing its status of a foreign language to become more and more the European lingua franca, the language for international communication. Consequently, the traditional link between English as a foreign language and British (or American) culture in the sense of national culture has also been changed. What can be observed in the present role of English as a lingua franca, at least in Europe, is a gradual dissociation of English as a language for international communication from its traditional national culture (British or American). ELF speakers become aware that using a lingua franca does not necessarily mean identifying with the culture of British or American native speakers. The English language has been partly relocated from the role of the language associated with the target language culture/s to the role of the language for international communication (Saraceni 2008, p 26).

There are two underlying motives in dissociating the English language from target culture, firstly, the actual mobility of large numbers of multilingual people in Europe who need to communicate, and, secondly, the impact minorities and immigrants have on the European societies. The second motive, particularly in the "old" Europe, refers to the concept of the monolithic native speaker, which has been shaken (Cook 2002; Block 2003). Consequently, English language teaching theorists have serious doubts if the monolingual and monocultural native speaker should be a model for second/foreign language learners. Instead they propose that

proficient non-native and minority English language speakers should provide more appropriate models of those who promote their own cultures while using English (e.g. Canagarajah 2007).

Another recent trend is the renewed focus on multilingualism and multiculturalism in Europe. Recently published European Commission documents promote learning two second/foreign languages rather than only one lingua franca (COM 2008). In view of the present popularity of learning English in Europe, side by side with a strong status of national languages, as has been argued by House (2003), ELF as the main European language for international communication is not a threat to multilingual Europe, where national languages are used in a different role—as languages for national identification.

Yet, apart from national identification through national (native/first) languages, there is a growing awareness of European identification through commonly used additional languages, ELF being the most popular one. Singleton and Aronin claim that "English has […] permeated the sense of identity of large number of non-native speakers to the extent that it is now 'owned' by them." (Singleton and Aronin 2007, p 13) The authors further claim that this new identity of non-native users refers to their behaviour towards the English language, decisions they take to use it or not, and in what circumstances. The authors stress the role English plays nowadays in non-native discourses. Breidbach (2003) perceives the paradox of European linguistic diversity versus the need for ELF as the language for intercultural communication. He concludes by saying that

> English may function as a direct mediator between participants in a discourse, who would otherwise have to rely on translation. Furthermore, English already is the very linguistic means to give speakers, especially of lesser-used languages, their voice within a European public discourse (Breidbach 2003, p 89).

ELF helps its speakers to take the role of intercultural mediators as they familiarize speakers of other languages with their own cultures. In other words, following Byram's model (1997), they use their knowledge of own and target cultures, their skills to discover and interpret cultural messages through ELF, as well as attitudes of openness and attentiveness towards other cultures.

The process of borrowing English words by non-native speakers is another aspect of the English language appropriation process. In the present globalised world, borrowing English words by other languages is facilitated due to the powerful influences exerted on other cultures by the globalised market economy, the Internet, as well as the media and mass culture. Due to these influences, English words are omnipresent in other nations' daily lives, which is frequently resented in some countries. In other countries, however, the process of English language appropriation is generally accepted and welcome. Reasons why some nations have more negative attitudes towards English than others is based on their past history or present political and cultural rivalry (e.g. France). Alternatively, other nations do not share those negative attitudes towards English because it does not have negative connotations, which are associated with other languages, e.g. in Central and Eastern Europe.

Summing up, ELF, at least in Europe, has been partly dissociated from target national cultures, and has been appropriated by a large number of non-native English speakers for international communication. Using ELF in various native and non-native cultural contexts creates a new identity of its users as intercultural mediators.

2.4 Theoretical Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Background to ELF Use

While the psycholinguistic SLA theory treats language acquisition as the internalisation of a verbal code by an individual person, sociocultural theory goes beyond language as a code, and encompasses social communication patterns. According to sociocultural SLA theory, using a second language in a particular sociocultural context has impact on the process of second language acquisition in the sense of acquiring behavioural patterns of a given language community. From a lingua franca perspective second language acquisition is viewed as a functional and regulatory process in attaining a new identity of a member of a 'community of practice' (cf. Wenger 1998). Thus, 'behavioural patterns of a language community' refer to the lingua franca community of practice rather than to the target language native speakers' community.

According to Wenger,

> a community of practice is formed by three essential dimensions: (a) mutual engagement in activity with other members of the community, (b) an endeavor that is considered to be of relevance to all members of the community, and (c) a repertoire of language varieties, styles, and ways of making meaning that is shared by all members of the community (Young 2009, p 146).

On the basis of Situated Learning Theory, Young claims that what is learned by a newcomer to a community of practice is first of all 'local practices' and 'communicative styles' characteristic of the community. The newcomer is treated as a 'legitimated' participant, first on the 'periphery' of the community, then slowly "moving though a series of increasingly expert participant statuses as the learner's knowledge and skills develop" (Young 2009, p 150).

English used for international communication identifies its speakers as *second language users* and/or *bilingual or multi-/plurilingual speakers* (cf. Cenoz and Jessner 2000; Cook 2002; Block 2003; Gabryś-Barker 2005). ELF users can be treated as legitimated participants of the community of practice consisting of bilingual/multilingual people who frequently use English. Although their linguistic proficiency may be sometimes limited, and their cultural background is varied, ELF identification can be obtained since ELF users have common goals (e.g. participation in international projects or conferences), take advantage of different levels of communication (verbal as well as non-verbal) and try to make sense of ELF messages using their multilingual and multicultural knowledge resources.

Thus, some common ground can be found for speakers of different native languages, who can learn and use English at home and/or abroad in order to communicate with other speakers.

It is also possible to treat ELF use from the perspective of Complex Systems Theory (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008). According to the authors, "when we consider two people engaged in talk, their 'conversation' emerges from the dynamics of *how* [my emphasis] they talk to each other, while what they say reflects and constructs who they are as social beings" (ibid, p. 163).

Larsen-Freeman and Cameron claim that from the Complex Systems Perspective, discourse is a self-organising and co-adaptive process.

> [Language] learning is not the taking in of linguistic forms by learners, but the constant adaptation of their linguistic resources in the service of meaning-making in response to the affordances that emerge in the communicative situation, which is, in turn, affected by learners' adaptability (ibid, p. 135).

The Complex Systems perspective seems to account for the fact that co-operation and intercultural understanding is frequently reached although conversations are fragmentary, and in the case of non-native participants, erroneous and incomplete. It happens in ELF use, where participation patterns emerge unexpectedly as speakers take into account various levels and dimensions of communication. According to Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, relatively stable patterns that emerge in speech can be called 'speech genres' (ibid, p. 189). They are stable and they reflect traditional patterns, but they are also variable and changing through use. In the concluding remarks the authors claim that "it is the variability of the system that shows that it has the potential for further change and development" (ibid, p. 253).

Summing up, sociocultural SLA theory focuses on second language learners' and users' identity and on language acquisition understood as becoming a member of a given language community. Complex Systems theory puts stress on the variability of communication patterns in language use. Both of the outlined theoretical approaches can be treated as promising background to studying ELF use.

2.5 Foreign Language Teachers' Views on Teaching Culture

Distancing ourselves while teaching English from identifying the English language only with British (or American) culture, we have to ask the question whose culture should we teach in the English language classroom? If we decide that we should teach *ELF speakers'* or *ELF users'* culture/s, we should include in our syllabuses aspects of different national cultures, as well as aspects of common European culture.

But such a philosophy is rare in foreign language classrooms. The results of two European research projects (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich et al. 2003; Sercu et al. 2005) show attitudes of European language teachers towards teaching culture. In the former project, attitudes surveys were conducted in ten European countries (Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Greece, Holland, Iceland, Malta, Poland, Rumania,

and Slovenia); in the latter project, the research both on attitudes and classroom practices was carried out in six European countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Spain and Sweden) and in Mexico.

What can be observed in the results of the open-ended and close-ended questions in both projects is a fairly high level of uniformity of the answers. The teachers are generally positively disposed towards teaching culture, although they do not usually have enough time to do it in class. If they teach culture, they mostly take advantage of the existing target language teaching materials. Teaching culture means for them nearly exclusively teaching target language culture in the sense of the national target culture, e.g. English teachers try to introduce in class only aspects of British or American culture. Foreign language teachers are not concerned with multicultural education, neither are they interested in the role of main European languages, including English, as languages for intercultural communication.

As far as the contents of cultural education is concerned, foreign language teachers mention the following aspects (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich 2005, p 349): traditions and customs, history and civilisation, popular culture, legends and myths, stereotypes, geography, religion, beliefs (different ways of thinking and reacting), democracy and human rights, everyday life styles (in particular of young people), sociology and politics, art, music, film, literature, festivals, cuisine and culinary habits, manners and politeness, degree of formality in social relations and educational system.

However, the question arises again, whose culture will be described in the above aspects. In other words, what cultural contexts will be taken into consideration? Native and/or non-native? If native and target societies are monocultural, it is relatively easy to describe and compare their religion, life styles or stereotypes. If, however, the societies are multicultural and/or in flux, we either stay on the safe ground of majority customs, traditions and beliefs, generally speaking, of the culture in the sense of established traditions and high culture of the nation state, e.g. we teach English legends, we talk about great kings and leaders, we present works of art and literary achievements. Or, we can include minority customs, traditions and beliefs, showing culture as a multi-faceted kaleidoscope, e.g. we can talk in English about immigrants in the United Kingdom, their customs, beliefs and life styles. It is always difficult to make choices because choices inevitably show the teachers' preferences, also political ones.

If we do the latter, in such a multi-faceted view of culture, we can also include ELF users' culture. That is, we can teach aspects of various cultures through English in order to find some common ground for speakers of other native languages who frequently use ELF at home and/or abroad for intercultural communication. For instance, in Kerr and Rosińska's (2009) *Matura Masters: Pre-intermediate student's book* (Warsaw: Macmillan), there is a section on multicultural England, in which the authors ask Polish learners "What does it mean to be English?", and additionally and interestingly, "What does it mean to be Polish?" in the context of reading passages on multicultural British towns (ibid, p. 119).

The conclusions that can be drawn from the above research projects are as follows: L2 teachers are under the influence of mainstream educational policy, which is generally monocultural and associates teaching additional languages with

their national culture. It remains to be seen if English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers can become aware of the importance of a common intercultural ground, which can be provided by teaching English as a lingua franca combined with teaching ELF users' cultures.

2.6 Developing Intercultural Understanding Through ELF in International Educational Projects

The following examples of workshops come from two international educational projects. They focus on the development of intercultural understanding mediated through ELF. Aspects of national cultures have been selected to be presented to students from other national cultures through the medium of English as a lingua franca.

One of the projects is ERASMUS Lifelong Learning Intensive Programme "Modernisation of Europe by Innovating Teacher Training" (MEITT), implemented from 4th to 17th July 2010 at the Vilnius University, Lithuania, as a pilot course of the European Master for European Teacher Training (EMETT) Project[1]

The other Polish-Ukrainian project was initiated by the section of Applied Linguistics and EFL Teaching of the Department of English Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków in cooperation with the Department of English Philology at the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian University in Ivano-Frankivsk. The goal of the project was enhancing intercultural communication between Ukrainian and Polish students. Among other intercultural activities, Ukrainian and Polish participants of the project have prepared intercultural teaching materials. Particular units consist of authentic reading passages, followed by intercultural tasks.

It has been assumed that English will be playing a significant role in both projects, first, as the common language for the participants—the language for communication (ELF), and secondly, as the language of ELF users' identification. It is expected that the use of ELF will make the selected aspects of national cultures more universal. The analysis and comparison of different cultures are expected to lead to a raised awareness of cultural diversity and tolerance of other cultures. The intercultural workshops are believed to have a positive effect on students' reflectivity and on building their identity as culturally knowledgeable speakers of more than one language.

2.6.1 Activities Based on Poetry

In the MEITT Project teacher educators from eight European universities conducted lectures and workshops for a group of international undergraduate and graduate teacher trainees from those universities (Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania and Poland). I was responsible for the workshops

[1] EU Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme, 2007-2577/001-001.

entitled "English language teacher training via culture". After a short introduction on the role of ELF in encompassing different cultures through its use by multicultural non-native speakers and on the role of teachers as intercultural mediators, I presented Czesław Miłosz's poetry in English translations, both as examples of universal topics poetry deals with, and as an introduction to the life and work of the poet, who embodies both the national and intercultural ideas.[2]

The students were first provided with a short note on Miłosz's life and work,[3] later they read and discussed the following poems with the accompanying questions:

Emigration

(from *Second space,* 2002, in Miłosz 2002)
In my dreams come to me the years I spent in foreign lands.
And only then I know how much I suffered.
Our past life is covered up,
Or sealed up, as the bees do,
Filling up with wax damaged places.
Who could survive, remembering
All the humiliations to our pride,
And condescending looks at the poor man,
Who thinks that here, like at home, he is worth something?
If I were to create evidence for the young,
I would not even mention success,
Which, that is right, does happen, and is bitter.
(translated by Anna Niżegorodcew)

Questions

1. How old do you think was the author when he wrote the poem "Emigration"? After you have answered the question, check in Czesław Miłosz's biography how many years he spent in exile.
2. Do you think that the same feelings could be expressed by somebody who stayed all his life in his own country?
3. Why do you think the success that the author achieved (Nobel Prize for literature) he describes as 'bitter'?
4. Imagine writing an alternative CV, in which you list your failures rather than your achievements.

[2] Other factors being Miłosz's 100th anniversary (in 2011) and the venue of the MEITT Project (the Vilnius University from which Miłosz graduated).

[3] Czesław Miłosz was born in 1911 at Szetejnie, Lithuania (Russian Empire) and died in 2004 in Kraków, Poland. He was a poet, novelist, essayist, historian of literature and translator, in the years 1951–1989 he lived in exile, to 1960 in France, then in the United States. In Poland to 1980 he was encased in censorship. In 1980 he received the Nobel Prize in Literature. He was Professor of literature at the University of California at Berkeley and Harvard University. In 1993 he returned to Poland and lived in Kraków. He was buried in the Crypt of Merit "Na Skałce" in Kraków.

Gift

(from *The rising of the sun,* 1974, in Miłosz 2008)
A day so happy.
Fog lifted early, I worked in the garden.
Hummingbirds were stopping over honeysuckle flowers.
There was no thing on earth I wanted to possess.
I knew no one worth my envying him.
Whatever evil I had suffered, I forgot.
To think that once I was the same man did not embarrass me.
In my body I felt no pain.
When straightening up, I saw the blue sea and sails.
Berkeley, 1971 (translated by Czesław Miłosz)

Questions

1. Why was that particular day happy for the author?
2. Do you notice a characteristic pattern in the reasons he gives for being happy?
3. How would you describe this kind of happiness? Have you ever experienced it yourself?
4. Try to write a poem, describing your feelings and actions on your happy day. Start with the first line 'A day so happy.'

Child of Europe (fragments)

(from *Daylight*, 1953, in Miłosz *Selected poems* 2008)
[…]
Treasure your legacy of skills, child of Europe,
Inheritor of Gothic cathedrals, of baroque churches,
Of synagogues filled with the wailing of a wronged people.
Successor of Descartes, Spinoza, inheritor of the word 'honour,
Posthumous child of Leonidas,
Treasure the skills acquired in the hour of terror.
[…]
Let your words speak not through their meanings,
But through them against whom they are used.
[…]
Love no country: countries soon disappear.
Love no city: cities are soon rubble.
[…]
Do not love people: people soon perish.
Or they are wronged and call for your help.
[…]
Proud of domination over people long vanished,
Change the past into your own, better likeness.
New York, 1946 (translated by Jan Darowski)

Questions

1. What skills did the child of Europe acquire 'in the hour of terror'?
2. Is the poem written over 60 years ago, after the Second World War and at the beginning of the communist rule in the author's country, still relevant for the contemporary children of Europe? If so, in what sense?

3. Do the contemporary children of Europe still consider themselves inheritors of the moral code of the Ancient Greece, Judaism and Christianity? What are the moral values of these traditions that you would like to preserve in the contemporary multicultural Europe?

All three poems were interesting for the students who were sufficiently proficient in English (there was a group of participants whose advancement in English was not adequate for the Intensive Programme). They volunteered to answer all the questions. In particular, they liked Question four accompanying "Emigration" ("Imagine writing an alternative CV, in which you list your failures rather than your achievements"). It was given to the students as personal home assignment.

The poem "Emigration" stimulated the international students from EU countries, who are able to move freely from country to country, to reflect on the predicament of those who are forced to leave their countries and live abroad. The students also reflected on the price writers in totalitarian states have to pay for their political choices.

"Gift" was the most appealing poem for the students. Probably, because it did not require an extensive historical knowledge and focused on a momentary human experience of happiness. The feeling described in the poem was compared to the state of nirvana, which was understandable for all students.

On the other hand, the ideas expressed in "Child of Europe" seemed difficult to grasp for a number of the participants. They did not notice the bitter irony of the poem. Rather they focused on the symbolical sense of the characters mentioned by the poet. Interestingly, the Cypriots most easily recognized Leonidas and the French—Descartes. A more thorough discussion might have brought forth more insightful comments on the moral code of the contemporary children of Europe.

A rather obvious conclusion that can be drawn from the above activities based on literary works indicates that while introducing a given culture, we must take into account our audience's level of intellectual and linguistic advancement. Intercultural activities based on national literary works in English translation require at least an intermediate (B2) level of English language proficiency.

Intercultural communication can be compared to translating or interpreting. Both communicators and interpreters are intercultural mediators. Interpreters help others to communicate in an unknown language, while "communicators act in their own role" (Schäffner 2003, p 91). ELF communicators can have problems with understanding cultural nuances and connotations, similar to the problems faced by professional interpreters and translators. It seems that code switching to the native language and providing native terms may be a good solution in the case of the vocabulary referring to unique aspects of a particular culture. The remaining problems can be solved by additional comments.

2.7 Teacher Training Implications and Conclusion

English language as a lingua franca (ELF) is in the process of dissociation from its national culture/s and is encompassing different cultures, through its use by multicultural non-native speakers. In this function English mediates between different cultures and English language teachers should be aware of their roles as intercultural mediators. In order to play those roles, teachers should be, first of all, aware what English as a lingua franca means, both as a variety of English and as its function.

Firstly, in terms of the ELF form, teachers can allow for certain deviations from the native norms, in particular in the use of vocabulary, pragmalinguistic patterns and phonology. Except for very advanced levels, teachers should not expect their students to reach native speaker proficiency. Secondly, English teachers should be primarily aware of ELF understood as the function of English frequently used in non-native communication by speakers of other native languages. English teachers should be able to talk with their students not only about national target language culture/s but also about other cultures, including their own.

Sociocultural SLA theory, as well the Complex Systems theory provide promising background to studying ELF use, and as such should be introduced into English language teachers training curricula. In the courses devoted to English Language Teaching materials evaluation, special attention should be given to intercultural communication through ELF in the teaching materials. That is why teacher training curricula should include modules sensitising trainees to the fundamental question of English language users' cultural identity. One of the most important questions to be asked is the students' identity as simultaneously speakers of one or two national languages and, additionally, of English as a lingua franca.

It is hoped that ELF as the most popular medium of international communication in Europe will make selected aspects of different European cultures more universally known to English language students. Simultaneously, analysis and comparison of different cultures in English as a lingua franca are expected to lead to a raised awareness of cultural similarities and differences, and tolerance of other cultures. By analysing national cultures in international and intercultural settings, such as in international educational projects, English for international communication will not only provide students with cultural knowledge of different cultures but it will also result in more positive attitudes towards them.

References

Aleksandrowicz-Pędich L (2005) Postawy nauczycieli języków obcych w Europie wobec rozwijania rozwijania kompetencji międzykulturowej. In: Dąbrowska M (ed) Język polski i języki obce–kontakty, kultura, dydaktyka. Tertium, Kraków, pp 347–354

Aleksandrowicz-Pędich L, Draghicescu J, Issaiass D, Sabec N (2003) The views of teachers of English and French on intercultural communicative competence in language teaching. In: Lazar I (ed) Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in language teacher education. Council of Europe Publishing, Graz, pp 7–37

Block D (2003) The social turn in second language acquisition. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh
Breidbach S (2003) European communicative integration: the function of foreign language teaching for the development of a European public sphere. In: Byram M, Grundy P (eds) Context and culture in language teaching and learning. Multilingual, Matters, Clevedon, pp 81–91
Byram M (1997) Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Canagarajah S (2007) Lingua franca English, multilingual communities, and language acquisition. The Modern Lang J 91:923–939
Cenoz J, Jessner U (eds) (2000) English in Europe: the acquisition of a third language. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
COM [Commission of the European Communities] (2008) 566: Final. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions [online]. Brussels, 18 Sept 2008. Access: 6 May 2010 http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/cpm/2008_0566_en.pdf
Cook V (ed) (2002) Portraits of the L2 user. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Gabryś-Barker D (2005) Aspects of multilingual storage, processing and retrieval. University of Silesia Press, Katowice
House J (2003) English as a lingua franca: a threat to multilingualism? J Sociolinguistics 7:556–578
Jenkins J (2007) English as a lingua franca: attitude and identity. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Kerr P, Rosińska M (2009) Matura masters: pre-intermediate student's book. Macmillan, Warszawa
Kramsch C (1993) Context and culture in language teaching. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Larsen-Freeman D, Cameron L (2008) Complex systems and applied linguistics. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Miłosz C (2002) Druga przestrzeń. Znak, Kraków
Miłosz C (2008) Selected poems. Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków
Niżegorodcew A (1995) The communicative approach in the Polish context: strengths and weaknesses. In: Przemecka I, Mazur Z (eds.) Studies in English and American literature and language. Studies in honour of the memory of J Strzetelski pp 271–278
Niżegorodcew A (2010) W stronę interkulturowego modelu nauczania języka drugiego/obcego. In: Nijakowska J (ed) Interdyscyplinarne studia nad świadomością i przetwarzaniem językowym, pp 133–155
Risager K (2006) Language and culture: global flows and local complexity. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Saraceni M (2008) English as a lingua franca: between form and function. English Today 24(2):20–26 94
Schäffner C (2003) Translation and intercultural communication: similarities and differences. Stud Commun Sci 3(2):79–107
Seidlhofer B, Jenkins J (2008). Reconciling multilingualism with English as a lingua franca: realistic policy or wishful thinking? Panel discussion, 15th World Congress of Applied Linguistics, Essen, Aug 2008
Sercu L, Bandura E, Castro P, Davcheva L, Laskaridou C, Lundgren U, Mendez Garcia M, Ryan P (eds) (2005) Foreign language teachers' intercultural competence: an international investigation. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Singleton D, Aronin L (2007) The role of English in a multilingual world. In: Arabski J, Gabryś-Barker D, Łyda A (eds) PASE papers 2007: studies in language and methodology of teaching. Para, Katowice, pp 11–21
Swan M (2009) Review of L Prodromou' s English as a lingua franca: a corpus-based analysis. ELT J 63(1):78–81
Wenger E (1998) Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Young R (2009) Discursive practice in language learning and teaching. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester

Chapter 3
Sensitizing Foreign Language Learners to Cultural Diversity Through Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

Liliana Piasecka

Abstract Language and culture are intricately interwoven thus teaching and learning a language inevitabely involves teaching and learning culture of its users. However, this always raises a question about which culture is involved, how the concept is understood and what it means for foreign language learners as well as for native speakers of the language involved. Culture is not monolithic, it comprises a variety of cultural practices that people engage in across a range of social configurations they participate in. The present chapter addresses current concepts of culture in the context of foreign/second language learning, discusses how they relate to foreign language teaching practices (as illustrated by modern coursebooks) and suggests how teaching received culture can be enriched by referring to individual cultures in the learners' heads. This is an inspiring topic since foreign language learners come to the language classroom with the experience of their own culture(s) and, through the exposure to a foreign language and its culture(s), hopefully they develop a new kind of sensitivity to linguistic and cultural activities that people perform.

Keywords Language and culture teaching · Intercultural competence · Coursebooks · Diversity

3.1 Introduction

This paper focuses on the current thinking concerning teaching language and culture. Language is the primary symbolic system allowing us to express and to understand our own and other cultures. Thus I discuss possibilities involved in

L. Piasecka (✉)
Opole University, Opole, Poland
e-mail: elpia@uni.opole.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_3,

developing intercultural communicative competence and teachers' competences indispensable to sensitize foreign language learners to the diversity of their own cultures and cultures intertwined with languages they learn. It is my strong conviction that sensitizing language learners to cultural diversity affects their linguistic repertoire for expressing and making sense of meanings they encounter in diverse communicative situations. Thus their language acquisition processes are supported and the use of a foreign language in multiple contexts is more appropriate and accurate. Although many second/foreign language learners have access to authentic cultural texts (in the broad sense of the term), in formal educational settings the mediation of the teacher in culture-focused activities is helpful. Such a teacher needs to have all the necessary confidence and competences to teach interculturally. Options that are available to teachers who are willing to take this challenge are also introduced.

Although the place of culture in foreign language teaching and learning contexts has been established (Atkinson 1999; Byrnes 2010), language educators, researchers and policy makers are invariably concerned with the role of culture in foreign culture curricula (Byram 2010; Byrnes 2010; Levy 2007). One of the reasons that keep the discussion about culture in the foreign language learning context going is the complexity of the very phenomenon and, consequently, our understanding of this "complex and elusive" (Lo Bianco 2003, p. 11) concept. The relationship between culture and language teaching is even more complex due to the fact that the purposes of learning foreign languages have evolved over the years from linguistic through communicative to intercultural and intercultural communicative competence. Developing linguistic competence focused on language as a code, while communicative competence resulted from interpreting language as a communication system. Understanding language as a social practice has lead to the emergence of intercultural communicative competence (Scarino 2010). Language and culture are inseparable *ergo* teaching/learning a language entails teaching/learning culture. However, culture is differently perceived in each competence and therefore revisiting cultural aspects in language learning and teaching is justified.

In addition, the twenty first century is the age of globalization with English as its *lingua franca* which means that people use English to communicate with native and non-native speakers of this language from diverse cultural backgrounds. In fact, the participants of such encounters (non-native speakers of English communicating in this language) have to cope with three different cultural contexts, namely their first language culture, their foreign language culture and the culture of their interlocutor. Since successful communication involves the recognition of the sociocultural context of the persons involved, these persons have to be sensitive to the sociocultural aspects of communication as they participate in intercultural events which the acts of communication undoubtedly are. Successful communication definitely requires communicative competence composed of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences combined with the language learner's general competences (*Common European Framework for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment*, 2001; henceforth CEFR). These general

abilities are strongly connected with cultural aspects of communication and are the basis for identifying what has become to be known as intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

In the following section of the paper different views on culture are presented as the changing meanings of the concept are necessary to comprehend the complex relations between language and culture in the context of learning foreign languages.

3.2 Culture and Second/Foreign Language Learning

Discussing the place of culture in the field of second language acquisition, Atkinson (1999) contrasts two views of culture that he finds dominant in the area, the so called standard "received, commonsense view of culture" (p. 625) and nonstandard approaches that have resulted from postmodernist philosophy. According to the received view, culture is geographically and nationally located, it is relatively stable and homogeneous, representing "an all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behavior" (Atkinson 1999, p. 626). Appadurai (in Atkinson 1999) observes that such a view of culture is inadequate as by focusing on shared rules and norms, it disregards the fact that in a given culture some people are "marginalized or dominated" and this results in an "unequal access to social goods and power" (Atkinson 1999, p. 626).

The criticism of this traditional, received view of culture has resulted in the development of new, alternative, nonstandard approaches which stress the heterogeneous and fluctuating aspects of culture. Atkinson (1999, p. 627) writes that "terms such as *identity, hybridity, essentialism, power, difference, agency, resistance* and *contestation* [italics in the original]" have been proposed to depart from the received view of culture. These two contrasting views of culture have lead Atkinson to formulate principles of culture that might be implemented in researching and teaching culture in second language contexts. The principles are based on the criticism of the traditional views of culture and on the postmodernist conceptions of culture. The first two principles refer to the notions of humans as individuals that differ from one another but still are shaped by social and historical environment of the individual. The next two principles pertain to social group membership which is not limited to one group but to many that entail multiple social loyalties, identities and roles. These may be in conflict within the same individual yet they are not stable but dynamic. In addition, "social group membership is consequential" (Atkinson 1999, p. 645) in the sense that despite shared values and norms, unequal distribution of power or resources is disregarded or underrated. The next principle advocates the use of ethnographic methods of studying cultural knowledge and behavior since they are more suitable for identifying the most characteristic features of complex sociocultural events. Finally, the last principle refers to the mutual relationship between learning and teaching language and culture, realizing the complexity and heterogeneity of the latter.

The relationship itself is complex and multidimensional. Atkinson hopes that such an approach to culture in second language learning may be regarded as a starting point for developing new practices of teaching culture.

Levy (2007) is also concerned about learning and teaching culture, especially with the use of new information and communication technologies. Reviewing recent publications on culture and learning, he concludes that they all underline how complex and multifaceted the concept is. In an attempt to capture the "fundamental nature of culture" (2007, p. 105), he departs from Kramsch's (1998, p. 10) definition of culture "as membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings", which he extends to encompass Skelton and Allen's (1999, p. 4) view that "any one individual's experience of culture will be affected by the multiple aspects of their identity—race, gender, sex, age, sexuality, class, caste position, religion, geography, and so forth—it is likely to alter in various circumstances". Thus he proposes to consider culture as

– elemental,
– relative,
– evident in group membership,
– contested,
– individual.

Culture is elemental because people are exposed to and embedded in their own culture since birth so deeply that they may occasionally fail to recognize cultural foundations of their belief and value systems, attitudes and emotions. Their cultural background is the frame of reference for contacts with other cultures and that is one of the reasons why reflection about this background is so important to make sense of other cultures.

Levy (2007, p. 107) also argues, following Moorjani and Field (1988), that culture is relative as "one culture can only be understood in terms of another". This approach inevitably opens the space for comparing cultures in contact which, in turn, may lead to generalizations that may result in oversimplifications and false stereotyping, among other things. To avoid these dangers, the learner's attention should be directed to perceiving culture as practised by individuals.

Culture is also evident in group membership, it is "about groupness. A culture is a group of people identified by the shared history, values, and patterns of behaviour" (Lindsay et al.1999, p. 26–27). As people grow up and expand their activities, they belong to many groups and communities, including speech communities, which regulate the group members' behaviour and use of language. Membership in a variety of groups makes the person a meeting point, a complex and multilayered network of group cultures that the person has to cope with.

This multiplicity of cultures within an individual reflects what made Levy (2007) perceive culture as contested at an individual level, in addition to possible culture clash at larger, national levels. Learning a second/foreign language entails the learner's contact with another culture which may evoke

doubts and uncertainty about both the first and the second language cultures, especially when the values, beliefs and attitudes are dissimilar. The cultures are in a dynamic relationship that makes culture "a terrain of struggle" (Giroux 1988, p. 97; in Levy 2007, p. 110).

Last but not least, culture is individual. Although individuals share common beliefs, values, history, and language, their understanding and interpretation of these differ. Members of the same groups have personal, subjective interpretations of cultural practice and identity. This variability in the individual understanding of culture is a real challenge to language learners and teachers. Particularly the latter have to be aware of their own personal preferences and biases when they make decisions how to introduce foreign language culture to learners who also represent subjective approaches to cultural phenomena.

Both Atkinson (1999) and Levy (2007) opt for a broad understanding of culture in the context of second/foreign language teaching. Traditional approaches to culture as stable, monolithic and institutionalized do not reflect the conditions of human life in the twenty first century—the age of globalization, World Wide Web and the increased mobility of people, which bring a wide range of cultures into contact that may end as conflict. The broad understanding of culture does encompass the traditional view but is not limited to it. It implies its elemental, dynamic, heterogeneous, multilayered and individualistic qualities that should be accounted for in second/foreign language learning and teaching contexts. This new conceptualization of culture also means that questions pertaining to what and how to teach culture from these perspectives need to be addressed.

Actually, the shift in understanding the role of culture in foreign language education has been reflected in such documents as the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (2006), the *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEFR 2001), and the report on "Foreign languages and higher education: New structures for a changed world" (2007); (Byrnes 2010). The common denominator of these documents is their appeal for integrating language and culture learning. As Byrnes (2010, p. 316) succinctly puts it,

> each document wrestles with how to relate language and content or cultural learning, how to determine educative ends that are to be in focus, and, therefore, how to clarify the assumptions about the existing and the desired role for language and multiple languages. Each document, too, assumes that language use must be seen as embedded in diverse social activities in the lives of people and peoples around the globe as they interact with each other in increasingly varied and often surprisingly intimate ways, even across formidable distances.

In the following section of the paper, the concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) that reflects a postmodernist understanding of culture, shared by many theorists and educators, is discussed along with guidelines and recommendations for teaching language and culture included in one of the documents referred to above, namely the CEFR (2001).

3.3 Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

The idea of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) is associated with the work of Byram and Zarate (1994) and Byram (1997) who developed the definition of the concept. To communicate interculturally, language learners need various kinds of knowledge, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness. According to Byram (1997), ICC consists of a number of *savoirs*, that is:

- *Savoir* defined as "knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction" (Byram 1997, p. 58).
- *Savoir-comprendre* which is "the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own" (*ibid.,* p. 61).
- *Savoir-apprendre/faire* is the "skill of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (*ibid.*).
- *Savoir s'engager* is described as 'critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries' (*ibid.,* p. 63).
- *Savoir-être* refers to 'curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own' (*ibid.,* p. 57).

Byram's view of ICC was adopted by the Council of Europe in CEFR (2001), in which language user/learner competences are specified. First, all the competences are divided into general and communicative language competences. General competences that refer to cultural aspects of language learning and use comprise the following components:

- Declarative knowledge (*savoir)* that includes knowledge of the world, socio-cultural knowledge related to everyday living, living conditions, interpersonal relationships, values, beliefs and attitudes, body language, social conventions and ritual behaviour. Intercultural awareness, resulting from the knowledge, awareness and understanding of similarities and differences between the learner's "world of origin" and "the world of target community" (CEFR 2001, p. 103) also belongs here.
- Skills and know-how (*savoir faire)* consist of
  - practical skills and know-how that refer to social, living, vocational and professional skills, and
  - intercultural skills and know-how that reflect the learner's ability to relate L1 and L2 cultures, as well as to show cultural sensitivity.

– Existential competence (*savoir-être)* covers the so called selfhood factors specified as attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality factors.
– Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre)* which is composed of

  - language and communication awareness,
  - general phonetic awareness and skills,
  - study skills,
  - heuristic skills that are necessary for coping with new experience, finding, understanding and conveying new information as well as using new technologies. (CEFR 2001, p. 101–109).

The general competences, so thoroughly detailed by the CEFR, are important with respect both to the L1 and the L2 (Ln) learning context. What transpires from the guidelines is the conviction that sensitivity to and the awareness of one's own (in the sense of L1) culture are the lenses through which other cultures are understood, interpreted and communicated with. Indeed, educating interculturally competent learners is a challenging and demanding task. The development of ICC in learners requires that teachers, also known as *cultural go-betweens* (Kramsch 2004; in Larzén-Östermark 2008, p. 528) should be prepared to teach the *savoirs*, to sensitize their learners who are supposed to become "intercultural speakers (Larzén-Östermark 2008, p. 528). A cultural go-between mediates between cultures which implies that teachers are expected to understand language and culture as dynamic systems in a rich, meaningful sociocultural context. It ensues that to teach ICC, the teachers themselves need to have acquired the necessary *savoirs*, they need to perceive themselves as intercultural speakers. The question is how teachers actually understand culture and how they teach it. Do they work towards developing ICC, as suggested by CEFR? Empirical research, reported in the following section of the paper, provides interesting insights into this issue.

3.4 Teachers' Conceptions of Culture and Teaching ICC: Some Research Findings

Research on teachers' conceptions of culture and teaching ICC is not very extensive but the studies that have been conducted are interesting and informative in this respect. Byram and Risager (1999) surveyed British and Danish language teachers about their understanding of culture teaching. Their findings show the teachers' frustration about teaching culture in a serious way mainly because external evaluation of their students concerns linguistic competence (in Larzén-Östermark 2008).

Sercu (2005, 2006) has shown a deep concern about how foreign language teachers perceive teaching culture and whether they feel competent to teach ICC. 78 Flemish teachers of English, 45 teachers of French and 27 teachers of German (150 in total), working in secondary education, participated in her 2005 study.

They answered an electronic questionnaire that was designed to describe the participants' professional self concepts as well as their practices concerning language and culture teaching. The findings show that the teachers view foreign language teaching primarily as teaching communicative competence. They do teach culture, however, by providing information about "daily life, routines, history, geography, political conditions and big C culture" (Sercu 2005, p. 92) which reflects their understanding of the concept. Not surprisingly, they feel most competent when teaching about these culture-bound topics. Although they reported positive attitudes to develop ICC, their teaching practice shows that they are deeply rooted in teaching communicative competence. They realize that there is a need to develop intercultural understanding in the global world but they seem not to realize that this is also their responsibility and they feel they are not competent to work in this direction. Sercu's (2006) study is even more revealing because of its international character. The aim of the study was, first, to identify the teachers' professional profiles defined as their perceptions of teaching ICC (in terms of the *savoirs* detailed above) instead of communicative competence and their practice of teaching language and culture. The second objective was to find out the extent to which the teachers' profiles match the qualifications necessary to be both a foreign language teacher and an ICC teacher. This was a large-scale study: 424 foreign language teachers from Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain and Sweden teaching such foreign languages as English, German, French and Spanish participated in it. The data were collected by means of a web-questionnaire. The results show that the respondents' declarative knowledge of culture is sufficient and close to what an ICC teacher should know. Their skills of teaching culture are mostly confined to transmitting foreign culture knowledge. The teachers, however, do not employ activities that support independent searching for cultural information, its presentation and critical evaluation. Only few teachers declared to use an experiential approach to teaching ICC, evident, for example, in organizing trips and intercultural exchange programs. Sercu (2006, p. 64) observes that although the respondents have the skills to teach what she calls "a foreign culture approach", these may not be enough to fully develop ICC. The majority of the teachers also showed a positive attitude to teaching ICC and a foreign language and they were willing to integrate these because they are convinced that integrating language and culture makes their learners more tolerant. They also claim that ICC should be developed across curriculum, not only in foreign language classes.

Sercu's (2006) study revealed that foreign language teachers from seven different countries, despite working in different conditions, share an average "language and culture teaching profile" that indicates teaching communicative competence and culture. Although the teachers are not yet ICC teachers, they are willing to teach interculturally which means that they should be given opportunities to gain necessary knowledge and skills.

The last study reported on here was carried out by Larzén-Östermark (2008) who is very much concerned "whether or nor language teaching today can be

described as intercultural in the sense that culture is taught with the aim of promoting intercultural understanding, tolerance and empathy" (p. 527). Thus she wanted to find out Finland-Swedish teachers' of English understanding of the concept of culture, as well as objectives and ways of teaching it. She interviewed 13 Finland-Swedish teachers of English that differed in terms of sex, teaching experience and time they spent abroad. The results show that the teachers, realizing the complexity of the term "culture", understand it primarily as factual knowledge about the history, geography, religion, politics, cultural products, traditions and habits, values, norms and beliefs. It is also about appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviour in certain situations. Thus the objectives they follow in teaching culture refer to transmitting knowledge about English-speaking countries but also to preparing learners for intercultural encounters and thus developing tolerance and empathy. Such interpretations render teaching culture as transmitting information about factual knowledge ("pedagogy of information", Larzén-Östermark 2008, p. 534) although there are teachers who understand that sharing views and reflecting on cultural issues is a desirable method to develop intercultural awareness ("pedagogy of preparation" and "pedagogy of encounter", *ibid.*). The participants of the study realize that they do not have enough competence to teach along intercultural lines and for this reason they need training. There are also other factors that account for a rather traditional approach to teaching culture, such as class time, teaching and financial resources, or the dominance of teaching methods that focus on language competence.

Generally, the studies briefly presented above, despite the limitations of research methodologies, imply that teachers from diverse countries and cultures follow the objectives of communicative language teaching but at the same time they approve of innovations such as developing ICC, which makes them "favourably disposed" (Sercu et al. 2005; in Larzén-Östermark 2008, p. 541). From the point of view of CEFR (2001), they feel competent to teach declarative cultural knowledge (the first *savoir* from the list of general competences), which is related to their narrow view of culture as factual knowledge. However, intercultural training should also include other *savoirs*. To implement them into classroom practice, the teachers need training. Their favourable disposition means that they are ready to take the "cultural turn" and to sensitize their learners to foreign culture(s) but they need training to gain understanding and competence to follow the objectives of ICC.

This need was recognized by the European Centre for Modern Languages—a body within the Council of Europe—which launched and supported projects on intercultural communication training in teacher education, coordinated by Lázár (http://www.ecml.at). The aim of the projects was to facilitate the incorporation of ICC training in language classes and pre- and in-service teacher training and they resulted in publishing two important books focusing on learning and teaching ICC. The outcomes of the project are briefly presented in the following section.

3.5 Materials for Training ICC Teachers

The materials produced by the project on intercultural competence are a perfect example of intercultural communication since the authors of the two books, that is *Mirrors and Windows* (Huber-Kriegler et al. 2003) and *Developing and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence—A Guide to Language Teachers and Teacher Educators* (Lázár et al. 2007), represent different countries, cultures and educational experience. *Mirrors and Windows* (2003) was written with the aim to develop reflective thinking about the person's own and other cultures and this way to notice and reflect and understand similarities and differences between these cultures. Looking at one's own culture opens the windows to look at other cultures. Learning objectives that the book supports are specified as follows:

- to reflect on the students' own culturally determined values, behaviour and ways of thinking;
- to raise awareness of intercultural differences in values, behaviour and ways of thinking;
- to raise awareness of culturally determined aspects of language use;
- to practise observation and interpretation skills as well as critical thinking;
- to develop and adopt multiple perspectives;
- to negotiate common ground;
- to develop empathy, open-mindedness and respect for otherness (Huber-Kriegler et al. 2003, p. 9).

Individual units of the book refer to the concept of time, eating and drinking habits, conversation topics and conventions, attitudes to gender and "gendered identities" (Huber-Kriegler et al. 2003, p. 49), love, bringing up children and education. Each unit follows a consistent pattern that reflects learning objectives. Thus the introduction section sets the scene for the users to reflect on their own culture which is the point of departure for discovering other cultures by means of various reading passages, ethnographic tasks and project work options. Each unit ends with language work based on activities centered around phrases, expressions, metaphors, proverbs and sayings that enhance the learner's linguistic resources for discussing and interpreting cultural issues. The book also includes teacher's/trainer's notes that contain additional information on the topics discussed as well as ideas for discussing issues and role playing, for example.

The other book that seems particularly useful in the process of implementing intercultural communication training is *Developing and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence—A Guide to Language Teachers and Teacher Educators* (Lázár et al. 2007). It is divided into two parts. Part One contains guidelines for the teaching of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and provides the theoretical background introducing the definitions of culture, cultural awareness and the concepts of intercultural and intercultural communicative competences. Then the authors discuss how to plan ICC workshops and courses and they give sample materials to work on ICC with literature, songs and films.

Part Two, on the other hand, is a collection of guidelines for the assessment of ICC, also theoretically grounded. The guidelines, theoretically rooted, concern the ways of assessing three components of ICC, namely knowledge (*savoir*), knowing how (*savoir faire*) and being (*savoir-être)*.

These two publications may be used by the teachers and trainers who aim at working within the ICC framework since each book is accompanied with a CD-Rom offering a rich variety of materials, for example descriptions of workshops carried out during the project or key research papers concerning ICC (Lázár 2007). In addition, both publications can be accessed via the Internet at http://www.ecml.at which makes them cheap and easily available.

3.6 Conclusions

The twenty first century—the age of globalization, the World Wide Web and the increased human mobility—has brought new challenges and demands to the foreign language teaching profession. First of all, a shift from teaching communicative competence to teaching interculturally has been observed. This "cultural turn" seems to be a natural consequence of the "global village" effect. Nowadays it is relatively easy to come into a personal contact with speakers of many languages from a variety of countries. Many people work abroad. Travelling has become cheaper and the access to the Internet is quite common. People communicate cross-culturally using English—an international language of our times. Moreover, due to such exchange programs as Erasmus, many young people decide to study abroad for a period of time. All these situations lead to intercultural encounters which are important and invaluable for the development of knowledge, social relations and understanding of the contemporary world. However, people in intercultural contact need to realize that very often they come from cultures that starkly differ from their own cultures. To achieve successful intercultural communication, people have to be sensitive both to similarities and differences between cultures in contact. The challenge is even greater when culture is broadly interpreted as dynamic, multilayered, multifaceted and complex, based on multiple group membership.

Although language and culture teaching are inseparable, it is a common practice that language is given priority in second/foreign language learning contexts. However, the challenges of the twenty first century move second/foreign language instruction towards a more cultural focus. Obviously, the language cannot be disregarded but it can also be acquired in culture-oriented contexts. Introducing and implementing ICC is an answer to the challenges. By engaging L2 learners in activities that contrast L1 sociocultural practices with those of L2—Ln sociocultural practices, learners' sensitivity to both differences and similarities among them is enhanced.

Hopefully, intercultural teaching will bring about important changes in foreign language teaching but, to be effective, it cannot be limited only to a foreign

language context. Cross-curricular activities are also recommended as they lead to greater tolerance and intercultural understanding which involves the appreciation and critical attitude to one's own and other cultures.

In its form, ICC is a relative newcomer to the field of second/foreign language learning so foreign language teachers may not feel competent and confident to teach it. Fortunately, they may use specially designed resources, easily accessible via the Internet, that prepare them for this demanding task. Moreover, foreign language learners come to the educational institutions with a complex cultural make-up of their own as well as with varying levels of intercultural awareness. They watch films from other cultures, listen to songs, communicate easily, using the Internet (actually, the Internet is an excellent resource for developing ICC). This intercultural awareness that they bring into the classroom may be a good starting point for moving towards intercultural foreign language teaching. Using some of (or all) the ideas included in *Mirrors and Windows* (2003), foreign language teachers may introduce their learners into the world of intercultural reflection, sensitivity, tolerance, empathy, open-mindedness and understanding. This may happen when both the learners and the teachers are "favourably disposed" towards intercultural communication.

New perspectives on the role of culture in foreign/second language learning and teaching open new research agendas. It might be interesting to compare the acquisition and use of grammar, lexis and pragmatics between learners working towards ICC and those whose focus is on communicative competence. Another issue worth researching is the impact of intercultural awareness on comprehending and interpreting various texts from diverse cultures. Lexical growth and depth of processing might be studied in terms of intercultural activities. Since language and culture are intricately intertwined, one may expect that they mutually affect each other so the growth of intercultural sensitivity will be shown in more a more careful use of language that reflects the speaker's concern both for effective communication and for another person's beliefs, attitudes, emotions and feelings.

References

ACTFL (2006) Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the twenty first century, 3rd edn. National Standards in Foreign Language Education, Yonkers, NY

Atkinson D (1999) TESOL and culture. TESOL Q 33(4):625–654

Byram M (1997) Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Byram M (2010) Linguistic and cultural education for bildung and citizenship. Mod Lang J 94(2):317–321

Byram M, Risager K (1999) Language teachers, politics and cultures. Multilingual Matters, Clevendon

Byram M, Zarate G (1994) Definitions,Objectives, and evaluation of cultural competence. Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Byrnes H (2010) Revisiting the role of culture in the foreign language curriculum. Mod Lang J 94(2):315–317

Common European Framework for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (2001) Council of Europe/Cambridge University Press, Strasbourg/Cambridge
European Centre for Modern Languages (http://www.ecml.at)
Giroux H (1988) Teachers as intellectuals: towards a critical pedagogy of learning. Bergin and Garvey, Granby, MA
Huber-Kriegler M, Lázár I, Strange J (2003) Mirrors and windows an intercultural communication textbook. Council of Europe, Strasbourg
Kramsch C (1998) Language and culture. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Kramsch C (2004) The language teacher as go-between. Utbildning Demokrati. Tidskrift för didaktik och utbildningspolitik 13(3):37–60
Larzén-Östermark E (2008) The intercultural dimension in EFL-teaching: a study of conceptions among Finland-Swedish comprehensive school teachers. Scand J Edu Res 52(5):527–547
Lázár I (2007) Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Babylonia 3:9–13
Lázár I, Huber-Kriegler M, Lussier D, Matei GS, Peck C (eds) (2007) Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence—a guide to language teachers and teacher educators. Council of Europe, Strasbourg/Graz
Levy M (2007) Culture, culture learning and new technologies: towards a pedagogical framework. Lang Learn Technol 11(2):104–127
Lindsay RB, Robins KN, Terrell RD (1999) Cultural literacy: a manual for school leaders. Corwin, Thousand Oaks
Lo Bianco J (2003) Culture: visible, invisible and multiple. In: Lo Bianco J, Crozet C (eds) Teaching Invisible Culture: Classroom Practice and Theory. Language Australia Ltd, Melbourne, pp 11–38
Modern Language Association Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (2007) Foreign languages and higher education: New structures for a changed world. Profession, pp 234–245
Moorjani A, Field TT (1988) Semiotic and sociolinguistic paths to understanding culture. In: AJ Singerman (ed) *Toward a New Integration of Language and Culture*. Reports of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, VT Northeast Conference, Middlebury pp. 25-45
Scarino A (2010) Assessing intercultural capability in learning languages: a renewed understanding of language, culture, learning, and the nature of assessment. Mod Lang J 94(2): 324–329
Sercu L (2005) Foreign language teachers and the implementation of intercultural education: a comparative investigation of the professional self-concepts and teaching practices of Belgian teachers of English, French and German. Eur J Teach Edu 28(1):87–105
Sercu L (2006) The foreign language and intercultural competence teacher: the acquisition of a new professional identity. Intercult Edu 17(1):55–72
Sercu L, Bandura E, Castro P, Davcheca L, Laskaridou C, Lundgren U et al (2005) Foreign language teachers and intercultural competence an international investigation. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Skelton T, Allen T (1999) Introduction. In: Skelton T, Allen T (eds) Culture and global change. Routlege, London, pp 1–10

Chapter 4
Do We Need to Teach Culture and How Much Culture Do We Need?

Agnieszka Otwinowska-Kasztelanic

Abstract The educational policy of the European Union stresses the need for special treatment of culture in the school systems. European citizens should be aware of their national identity, but also open and tolerant towards other cultures. However, teaching cultural content on English language courses involves decisions related to the choice of topics and perspectives. On the one hand, the issue poses a question of what to teach, whose culture is to be taught and how to avoid stereotyping. On the other hand, it may be debatable whether culture should be taught at all, considering the current uses of English as an international language and as a lingua franca. The present chapter addresses the above-mentioned issues postulating a distinction between teaching English on adult courses and at schools. While the teaching of English as an international language should limit the cultural content, at schools the emphasis on the socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural skills should lead pupils towards achieving a level of socio-cultural competence. Results of a survey are discussed, comparing and contrasting the beliefs of Polish teenagers from various backgrounds with the beliefs of in-service and pre-service teachers of English concerning the teaching of culture. At the end, implications are presented for teacher training and construction of ELT materials.

Keywords European Union · Language courses · Teaching culture · Teachers · Intercultural skills

A. Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (✉)
Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw,
Nowy Świat 4, 00-497, Warsaw Poland
e-mail: a.otwinowska@uw.edu.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_4,

4.1 Defining Culture

Over the last two decades, the words 'culture' and 'cultures' in connection with language teaching have reoccurred in European texts, syllabuses, educational projects and in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. As European citizens, we are supposed to be aware of our national identity and open and tolerant towards other cultures. The educational policy of the European Union stresses the need for special treatment of culture in the school systems, while the European Parliament proclaims 'the intercultural dimension of education' (Decision No 253/2000/EC of 24 January 2000). Educational projects promoted by the European Centre for Modern Languages, such as LEA, refer to societies characterised by linguistic and cultural diversity. Bernaus et al. (2007, p. 10) state that "[f]or today's individual it is important to interact with people of other languages and cultures. Indeed that is what language education is all about: making languages a means of communication in the sense of a mode of openness and access to otherness: linguistic otherness, cultural otherness and otherness of identity". Thus, culture and language seem to be strictly interwoven. As Young et al. (2009, p. 150) point out, language is a component of culture, it acts as a transmitter of culture and as the main tool for the internationalisation of the culture by the individual.

However, the very term 'culture' seems rather controversial. Culture, can be viewed from a variety of angles, depending on whether we take into account its oral, or written aspects, whether we look at highbrow, or popular culture, and whether we focus special events, or everyday life and practices. Komorowska (2006, p. 60–61) discusses at least five different definitions of culture, as seen from the functional, structuralist, phenomenological, poststructuralist, and social-constructionist perspectives. According to Kramsch (1996, p. 2), there are two different ways of understanding culture. The first one is derived from the study of the humanities. From this perspective culture is the way a social group represents itself and others trough material productions, such as art, literature, mechanisms of preservation and reproduction through history. The second way of understanding culture sees the phenomenon as derived from the contributions of social sciences and involves attitudes, beliefs, ways of thinking, behaving and remembering shared by members of a community. On the other hand, Shiarev and Levy (2004) try to merge the two perspectives. They define culture as a set of symbolic systems, including knowledge, norms, values, beliefs, language, art, customs, habits and skills learned by members of a given society. This definition of culture will be assumed for the purpose of the present chapter.

4.2 Problems in Teaching Language and Culture

4.2.1 The Choice of Topics and Stereotyping

Kramsch (1996, p. 1) discusses the reasons why culture started to be important on language courses. According to her, the main reason for the revival of the

"intellectually legitimate, humanistically oriented, cultural <content>" would be the dissatisfaction with teaching purely functional uses of language on language courses. At the same time she refers to the differences and controversies concerning the teaching of culture. She believes that the revival of the cultural content leads to politically loaded discussions on the importance of national languages and cultures, the issue of acculturation of immigrants and finally nationalisms and xenophobia. However, there are many more problems connected with the teaching of culture. They involve decisions whether to teach culture as content, or treat it as context for teaching the language, what topics to choose and how to avoid stereotyping.

Language programmes aiming at teaching the cultural content have often been criticised for the undue engagement with cultural difference (Byram and Feng 2004; Kramsch 1995). Thus, using culture as context for learning has been proposed, calling for broader curricular approaches to language and culture (Holliday 1999). However, curricula with culture as context for language teaching have been accused of overusing the socio-political and socio-economic role of the English teaching 'industry' (Kachru 1991).

Yet another aspect of criticism concerns the superficial conceptualisation of culture in language teaching programmes and materials. Komorowska (2006, p. 62) points to the fact that language teaching materials tend to avoid complexity: they present facts rather than their interpretations or meanings. They also avoid presenting nuances and developing intercultural skills. Following Kuada and Gullestrup (1998) and Komorowska (2006, p. 62) states that if treated in a superficial way, even relatively simple every day routines might prove misleading, as they are symptoms of some underlying norms, attitudes or beliefs. If language learners are not provided with explanations of the underlying meanings, they are likely to face communication problems. On the other hand, culture cannot be framed only as social practices such as cuisine, festivals and traditional dress. Such preoccupation with differences is said to lead to stereotyping the target group and to placing undue emphasis on exotic differences between societies (Byram 1997; Holliday 1999; Kramsch 1993).

4.2.2 The Changing Role of English and Motivation to Learn the Language

Yet another problem of teaching culture on English language courses is the emphasis on presenting the economically and politically dominant cultural and linguistic groups as the only right, correct, standard and norm, as pointed out by Atkinson (1999); Holliday (1999), or Byram and Feng (2004). For decades when teaching English as a foreign language, the multicultural nature of contemporary societies has been ignored. On the other hand, the spread of English has resulted in using it as an international language, or a global lingua franca (Graddol 2006; Jenkins 2006, 2007). This, in turn, gave rise to the emergence of new local

Englishes and questioning the role of native speakers of English as target language models for teaching (Cook 1997, 1999; Jenkins 2006). For instance, Cook (1997) discusses non-native speakers' 'failure' to achieve NS competence, stating that a second language learner and a monolingual native speaker are completely incomparable:

> By definition a second language user is not a monolingual and will never be, just as women and men are incapable of changing places. (…) L2 users have to be looked at in their own right as genuine L2 users, not as imitation native speakers. (…) The L2 user is (…) a type all of its own: bilingualism is not double monolingualism but a different state.
> Cook (1997)

Siegel (2003, p. 193) points out that non-native speakers may have greater proficiency than native speakers in numerous situations, while Cook (1999) suggests that skilled non-native speaker users of English are better models for teaching than monolingual native speakers. In the light of the above, presenting adult L2 learners with examples of British and American culture as 'correct' or 'standard' seems highly questionable.

According to Dörnyei (2006, p. 52), another issue whose change is due to the spread of English and its use as an international language is motivation to learn. He calls for the reinterpretation of the traditionally understood integrative motive (Gardner 1985), stating that due to the absence of a well-specified target language community, the notion of integrative motivation to learn English is no longer applicable. He stresses that the integrative aspect of motivation does not make sense without a clear context and identification with the L2 community.

Dörnyei (2006, p. 53–54) adds that what the contemporary learner may be striving for is integration with the global community, rather than assimilation with native speakers of English. Global English identity will thus be related to instrumental aspects of English language use, which he calls the *Ought-to L2 self*, as opposed to *Ideal L2 Self*, related to our hopes, aspirations needs—similar to Gardner's integrative motivation. Although, according to Dörnyei (2006, p. 53–54), motivation to learn English can be seen as the desire to reduce the perceived discrepancies between the learner's actual self and his/her *Ideal* or *Ought-to* selves, it seems that nowadays more people are concerned with their *Ought-to English selves*. They learn English because of the attributes one ought to possess, or because of their professional duties, obligations, and responsibilities, as English is indispensable in their professional lives.

4.2.3 Teaching Cultural Content at School: Intercultural Competence

Concerning contemporary learners' needs and motivation to learn English, many people question the sense of teaching culture on language courses in Europe. It seems unclear how much time should be devoted to the teaching of culture, and

more precisely: whose culture should be taught, what topics and perspectives should be chosen and how stereotyping can be avoided.

As a partial solution to this dilemma, Komorowska (2006, p. 63) enumerates the reasons why cultural issues have to be taught at schools. She stresses that since European learners are constantly faced with international conflicts, the raise of nationalism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, schools should promote the development of understanding and tolerance among children and teenagers throughout Europe. She points to the fact that language educators involved in the works of the Council of Europe and the European Union, not only recommend developing cultural identities in young people, but also developing their pluri-or intercultural competence. As stated in the *Common European Framework for Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001, p. 168), "plurilingual and pluricultural competence is defined as the language communication and cultural interaction skills of a social player, who, at various levels masters several languages and has experience of several cultures".

Following Byram (1997, p. 50–63) and Komorowska (2006, p. 68) enumerates the five elements imminent to developing intercultural competence. They are: attitudes, knowledge, skills, learning to learn abilities and critical awareness. Thus, intercultural competence involves the skills to observe other people's behaviour, but to suspend judgement, to reflect on one's own culture as compared to other cultures, compare behaviours and cooperate with representatives of other cultures in spite of differences. Bernaus et al. (2007), the proponents of the Council of Europe's LEA Project, suggest that "[i]ndeed that is what language education is all about: making languages a means of communication in the sense of a mode of openness and access to otherness: linguistic otherness, cultural otherness and otherness of identity".

4.3 Research on Teaching Culture in Polish Schools

4.3.1 The Aim

Apart from the recommendations, the cultural topics to be taught at school will strongly depend on the age group, needs and motivation of our learners. Their exploration will also be connected with how teachers and learners understand the teaching of culture and the development of intercultural competence. Thus, the aim of the present research was to compare Polish teachers' and learners' views on teaching culture, to examine Polish teenagers' cultural identity, as well as their needs and motivation to learn English. Finally, it was to examine whether Polish teachers of English are aware of their learners' needs and motivation to learn the language, and whether they are ready to work on developing the intercultural competence of their learners.

The research was meant to answer the following questions:

1a. What kind of cultural identity do Polish teenagers have?
1b. Are teachers aware of this identity?
2a. Do Polish teenagers have integrative or instrumental motivation to learn language and culture?
2b. What aims do they have when learning English?
2c. Are teachers aware of their aims and motivation?
3a. Are learners and teachers ready for working on intercultural competence?
3b. What kind of cultural issues do teenagers want to learn about?
3c. Do these match teachers' preferences?

4.3.2 The Participants

The research was conducted on 239 teenagers aged 12–15 from Polish schools. They included 151 learners from state schools in small towns in the north-central region of Poland (20 learners from Kobyłka, 19 from Kętrzyn, 16 from Mława, and 115 from Ostrołęka in the Mazowsze region), as well as 88 learners from the capital of Poland (46 learners from Warsaw and 42 from a private school in Podkowa Leśna, a prestigious location near Warsaw).

As for teachers, the research was carried out on 98 in-service and 135 pre-service teachers of English. The pre-service teachers included 60 undergraduate students of methodology courses from two Warsaw universities, as well as 75 teacher trainees from 4 teacher training colleges (Łomża, Ostrołęka, Ciechanów, Łowicz) in the Mazowsze region of Poland.

4.3.3 The Method, Instrumentation and Analysis

All the participants were asked to answer a one-page questionnaire in Polish, different for the teachers and the learners. The questionnaires included 25 Likert-scale items for learners and 26 Likert-scale items for teachers. The answers were graded from 1 "No, I strongly disagree" to 6 "Yes, I strongly agree". The questionnaire items dealt the informants' views concerning teaching and learning of the English language and of cultural issues. Numerous items for learners and teachers dealt with the same issue (e.g. "I like learning about Great Britain/the USA/Australia" and "I like teaching about Great Britain/the USA/Australia", respectively). Both teachers and learners were also asked about their background. The questionnaires for learners and pre-service teachers were administered during classes in winter 2009. The questionnaires for in-service teachers were distributed in schools and during teacher training workshops in spring 2010. The participants were not supposed to consult each other while completing the questionnaires.

The questionnaire for learners included 8 statements concerning their background, plurilingual awareness (not discussed here) and their cultural identities, 11 statements concerning their motivation and their learning aims (*Ideal and Ought-to L2 self*), and 7 statements concerning their views on learning culture. The questionnaires for teachers included 12 statements concerning their plurilingual awareness (not discussed here), 6 statements concerning their learners' learning aims and cultural identities, and 7 statements concerning their own views on teaching culture.

For the sake of the present study, 6 research hypotheses were posed:

H1 Teenagers do not have strong cultural identity
H2 Teachers and learners do not differ in their perceptions of cultural identity
H3 Teenagers have instrumental motivation to learn English
H4 Teachers are aware of their motivation
H5 Teenagers are ready to acquire intercultural competence
H6 Teachers are ready to develop intercultural competence in their learners

In order to analyse the results, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used. Mann–Whitney U tests were calculated to compare the groups of students and teachers and Spearman R was used to calculate the correlations, with the alpha decision level set at .05.

4.4 The Results and Discussion

4.4.1 Cultural Identity

As for the first research question concerning the learners' cultural identities, the results are strikingly positive. A vast majority of all the respondents agreed very strongly or strongly that they were "proud to live in Poland" ($M = 4.98$, $Md = 6$, $SD = 1.37$). These answers were strongly positively correlated with the answers to "Polish traditions and festivals are important to me" ($M = 5.11$, $Md = 6$, $SD = 1.34$, $R = .46$). The results, presented in Table 4.1 below, do not corroborate Hypothesis 1.

It seems that the teachers did not share these views ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 1.19$ and $M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.30$, respectively). 10% of the in-service teachers and 14% of the pre-service teachers questioned did not believe their learners were proud to live in Poland. Over 12% of the in-service and 8% of the pre-service teachers believed their learners did not show any respect for Polish traditions. There was a statistically significant difference between the teachers and the learners in this respect ($U = 13{,}208$, $p = 0.000$ and $U = 16{,}026$, $p = 0.000$), which calls for rejecting Hypothesis 2.

The results point to the fact that teachers may underestimate their learners' cultural identity. This entails that they may not choose topics aiming at the comparison of the native culture with other cultures often enough.

Table 4.1 Cultural identity as seen by Polish teenagers and teachers

Variable	Learners ($N = 239$)			Teachers ($N = 233$)			U
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
Learners proud to live in Poland	4.98	6	1.37	3.80	4	1.19	13,208***
Learners respect Polish traditions and festivals	5.11	6	1.34	4.24	4	1.30	16,026***

***$p < 0.001$

On the other hand, the learners' declarations, although very consistent throughout the sample, cannot be believed blindly. We are brought up in the society where one ought to be proud of their national identity. This may also have influenced the teenagers' responses.

4.4.2 Aims and Motivation to Learn English

As far as the teenagers' motivation is concerned, it seems that their '*ought-to English selves*' have strongly influenced their motivation to learn English. Although the vast majority of the respondents' parents have never lived in an English-speaking country (M = 1.61, Md = 1, SD = 1.49), the teenagers claimed that for their parents it was "important that they were learning English" (M = 5.2, Md = 6, SD = 1.3). The parents' insistence on learning English was positively correlated with the learners' belief that "English is an important language and one has to know it well" (M = 5.29, Md = 6, SD = 1.15, R = 0.37), as well as with the belief that "one can communicate in English all over the word" (M = 4.79, Md = 5, SD = 1.54, (R = 0.29).

While both the teenagers and the teachers believed that English could be used all over the world, there were still significant differences between them (U = 20,427, $p = 0.000$), with learners displaying a stronger belief in this respect. The teenagers also felt a relatively strong need of integrating with the ELF community. Their motivation matched the teachers' beliefs on the issue, as there were no significant differences between the groups here. The findings are summarized in Table 4.2.

It is interesting that surfing the net as the aim for learning was chosen by 19% of all the teenagers from Warsaw (respondents who agreed strongly or very strongly), and by 30% of teenagers from smaller towns. It may mean that teenagers from smaller towns have fewer opportunities of interacting in English other than through the Internet. The situation was different for the question concerning speaking English on holidays abroad. A surprisingly large numbers of teenagers from both groups agreed strongly or very strongly that they liked to speak English on holidays (55% for those from Warsaw and 48% for those from smaller towns). The results may be due to the fact that more teenagers from Warsaw spend their holidays abroad, or that the quality of language teaching

Table 4.2 Motivation to integrate with the *ELF* community as seen by teenagers and teachers

Variable	Learners ($N = 239$)			Teachers ($N = 233$)			U
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
One can communicate in English all over the word	4.79	5	1.54	4.35	4	1.26	20,427***
Learn English to surf the net and to read	3.30	4	1.64	3.48	3	1.36	26372.5
When abroad for holidays like to speak English	4.10	4	1.78	4.20	4	1.41	2,752

***$p < 0.001$

Table 4.3 Teenagers' aims for English language learning

Variable	Warsaw ($N = 88$)			Smaller towns ($N = 151$)			U
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
Leave Poland for good and move to another country	3.77	4	1.89	3.26	3	1.80	5,601*
Leave Poland for good and move to an English-speaking country	3.27	3	1.90	3.05	3	1.84	6,189
Study abroad	4.01	4	1.84	3.77	4	1.84	6,137
Work abroad	4.31	5	1.74	3.74	4	1.86	5,489*

*$p < 0.05$

in the capital is higher than in smaller towns. The preference for speaking English on holidays was strongly correlated with the belief that "English is an important language and one has to know it well" (M = 5.29, Md = 6, SD = 1.15, R = 0.42) and "I like to learn English" (M = 4.31, Md = 5, SD = 1.48, R = 0.56).

The teenagers were also asked about their future aims. Their responses to "I would like to leave Poland for good and move to another country" were strongly correlated with the responses to the next three points of the questionnaire: "move to an English-speaking country" (R = 0.77), "study abroad" (R = 0.44) and "work abroad" (R = 0.67). Most teenagers seemed to be undecided whether they would like to leave Poland and they did not perceive moving to an English-speaking country as their ultimate aim. However, there was still a small but significant difference between the respondents from Warsaw (M = 3.77, SD = 1.89) and smaller towns (M = 3.26, SD = 1.80) with $U = 5{,}601$, $p = 0.043$. The respondents from Warsaw agreed more strongly they wanted to work abroad (M = 4.31, SD = 1.74) than those from smaller towns (M = 3,74, SD = 1.86) with $U = 5{,}489$, $p = 0.025$). Table 4.3 summarises their views.

All the results discussed above point to the fact that Polish teenagers have instrumental, rather than integrative motivation to learn English, which corroborates Hypothesis 3. The teenagers realize that English is important in the contemporary world, and is used for international communication, oral and written.

They also see its utilitarian value because most of them believe it is spoken all over the world and they would like to study or work abroad. However, they rarely want to leave Poland and move to an English-speaking country for good. Only 15% of all the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while 45% disagreed strongly or very strongly.

The teachers were additionally asked about their views on the role of English as a *lingua franca*. Most of them believed that "English is an international language" (M = 5.44, Md = 6, SD = 0.95), and agreed that their learners "will more often use English with non-native speakers than with Englishmen/Americans" (M = 4.12, Md = 4, SD = 1.36). All this points to the fact that teachers see the changing role of English as an international language, and they seem to realise what motivation and learning aims their learners have, as presented above. The results corroborate Hypothesis 4.

4.4.3 Learning and Teaching Culture

The teenagers had quite definite views on learning culture. Only 8% of students out of the 239 examined believed that "learning about Great Britain/the USA/Australia is useless and boring", while 58% disagreed strongly (M = 2, 4, median = 2, SD = 1.40). The teachers also tended to disagree with the statement that "in the times of globalization teaching culture is less important than teaching the English language" (M = 2.83, Md = 3, SD = 1.35). However, the learners' and teachers' preferences for the particular issues involved in learning and teaching culture differed considerably. They are gathered in Table 4.4 below.

Although it is not quite in accordance with the literature of the subject, the teenagers believed that "one needs to know much about the English-speaking countries in order to speak English well" (M = 3.9, Md = 4, SD = 1.4). Only 40 learners strongly disagreed with this statement. There were no significant differences here between their views and the views of the teachers in this respect (M = 3.78, Md = 4, SD = 1.43). It can be noticed that the teenagers were not particularly keen on learning about English-speaking countries (M = 3.28, Md = 3, SD = 1.69), while the teachers liked to teach about them (M = 4.67, Md = 5, SD = 1.32, $U = 14{,}799$, $p = 0.000$). Teenagers were also quite cosmopolitan in their views, as for them it did not matter if they were learning "facts about Britain, or for instance Peru, provided that they were interesting" (M = 4.17, Md = 4, SD = 1.68). The teachers also seemed open to this possibility, as there were no significant differences between the two groups in this respect. However, the teenagers strongly disliked learning names of monuments, buildings and landmarks in English-speaking countries (M = 2.51, Md = 2, SD = 1.44), while the teachers were more positive about the issue (M = 3.44, Md = 3, SD = 1.54, $U = 18{,}424$, $p = 0.000$). On the other hand, the learners paid as much attention to comparing Polish traditions to those in English-speaking countries (M = 4.11, Md = 4, SD = 1.60), as to those around the world

Table 4.4 Learning and teaching culture, as perceived by teenagers and teachers

Variable	Learners ($N = 239$)			Teachers ($N = 233$)			U
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
One needs to know much about English-speaking countries to speak English well	3.90	4	1.40	3.78	4	1.43	25982.5
Likes *learning/teaching* about English-speaking countries	3.28	3	1.69	4.67	5	1.32	14,799***
Likes *learning/teaching* interesting facts about English-speaking countries	3.75	4	1.63	4.55	5	1.28	20,180***
Wants to *learn/teach* interesting facts from all around the world	4.17	4	1.68	3.91	4	1.46	24635.5*
Likes *learning/teaching* names of landmarks in English-speaking countries	2.51	2	1.44	3.44	3	1.54	18,424***
Wants to compare/compares Polish traditions to English/American ones	4.11	4	1.60	4.87	5	1.11	20470.5***
Wants to compare/compares Polish traditions to those from various countries	4.12	4	1.57	4.20	4	1.37	27,603

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

(M = 4.12, Md = 4, SD = 1.57). The teachers preferred to teach about the traditions in the English-speaking countries, though (M = 4.87, Md = 5, SD = 1.11).

The results corroborate Hypothesis 5, however, they call for rejecting Hypothesis 6. It seems that teachers still prefer organising lessons around topics involving culture of English-speaking countries only, rather than opening towards raising intercultural competence in their learners. It is worth noticing, however, that the teachers' choices may have been strongly influenced by the content of their course books. The course books available on the Polish market tend to focus much more on presenting English-speaking countries than on the aspects of using English as a global *lingua franca*.

4.5 Implications of the Study and Conclusions

The present chapter has briefly discussed various problems connected with teaching the English language and culture. These included the choice of topics, stereotyping, superficiality and preoccupation with cultural differences, as well as presenting target language culture as dominant. The paper has also touched upon teaching about culture in view of the changing role of English, as well as the changing aims and motivation of learners. It suggested that teaching English at

schools gives an opportunity to develop learners' socio-cultural and intercultural competence. As Byram and Zarate put it,

> [a] learner possessing socio-cultural competence will be able to interpret and bring different cultural systems into relation with one another, to interpret socially distinctive variations within a foreign cultural system, and to manage the dysfunctions and resistances peculiar to intercultural communication
>
> (Byram and Zarate 1998, p. 13)

Thus, teaching English for intercultural communication means adopting a wider intercultural perspective, depending on learners' needs and motivation. The research presented in the paper focused on the results of a survey concerning the teaching of culture to Polish teenagers. It compared and contrasted the beliefs of Polish teenagers from various educational backgrounds with the beliefs of in-service and pre-service teachers of English, in order to show whether learners and teachers are ready to start exploring a wider intercultural range of topics.

The survey clearly showed strong cultural identities of Polish teenagers and their need to compare their culture with a wide spectrum of cultures. However, it turned out that the teachers examined were not fully aware of the learners' identity and were not quite ready to accept the role of intercultural mediators. It has also turned out that the teenagers, with no regard to their background, had instrumental rather than integrative motivation to learn English. Although they thought of studying or working abroad, they did not think about leaving Poland for good and moving to an English-speaking country. They rather preferred to use English when surfing the Internet and when going on holidays. The learners also seemed ready for acquiring intercultural competence. They were more open towards learning interesting facts about the world, than towards studying the culture of English-speaking countries only. Unfortunately, it seems that the teachers were not quite aware of their aims and motivation. They tended to prefer teaching about Britain and the USA, rather than adopting a wider cultural perspective. This is probably due both to the way teachers are trained and due to the content of the course books they use.

Thus, the research points to two areas important for the change of teachers' attitudes. These are teacher training and the construction of ELT materials. The raising or socio-and intercultural competence should become an inherent ingredient of teacher training courses and workshops for in-service teachers. On the other hand, ELT materials and course books to be used in Polish upper-primary and secondary classes should include more intercultural topics than those focusing on the English-speaking countries. They should also provide learners with frequent opportunities for comparing their own culture with various other cultures, with the English language being only a tool for comparison. These two issues should help to change teachers' attitudes, as it seems that learners' attitudes do not have to be changed.

To conclude, the question whether to promote intercultural competence in Polish schools seems rhetorical. As educators, syllabus writers and teachers we are responsible for helping our learners identify with their own culture and compare it

with what might seem strange, foreign and different for them. The cultural component of their English language lessons should help raise learners' awareness of others and teach them tolerance and openness towards the otherness. The topics and perspectives adopted should help them build intercultural competence and their own cultural identity. This implies that teachers of English should not force their learners to admire British and American landmarks, but rather show them that English may become a tool for widening their horizons. According to Kramsch (1996, p. 8) "one may want in the future to define the language teacher (…) as the catalyst for an ever-widening critical cultural competence. (…) It is a process which makes language teachers into agents of social change."

References

Atkinson D (1999) TESOL and culture. TESOL Q 33(4):625–654

Bernaus M, Andrade AI, Kervran M, Murkowska A, Saez FT (2007) Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education. ECML, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg

Byram M (1997) Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Byram M, Feng AW (2004) Culture and language learning : teaching, research and scholarship. Lang Teaching 37:149–168

Byram M, Zarate G (1998) Definitions, objectives and assessment of sociocultural competence. In: Byram M, Zarate G, Neuner G (eds) Sociocultural competence in language learning and teaching. Strasbourg, Council of Europe

Cook V (1997) Monolingual bias in second language acquisition research. Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses, 34, 35–50, [online]. [cited 15 November 2008] Access:<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/vivian.c/Writings/Papers/MonolingualBias.htm>

Cook V (1999) Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. TESOL Q 33(2):185–209

Council of Europe (2001) The common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Dörnyei Z (2006) Individual differences in second language acquisition. AILA Rev 19:42–68

Gardner RC (1985) Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation. Edward Arnold, London

Graddol D (2006) English next. British Council, London

Holliday A (1999) Small cultures. Appl Linguist 20(2):237–264

Jenkins J (2006) Current perspectives on teaching world Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca. TESOL Q 41(1):157–181

Jenkins J (2007) English as a Lingua Franca: attitude and identity. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Kachru BB (1991) Liberation linguistics and the quirk concern. Engl Today 7(1):3–13

Komorowska H (2006) Intercultural competence in ELT syllabus and materials design. Scripta Neophilologica Posnaniensia 8:59–83

Kramsch C (1993) Context and culture in language teaching. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Kramsch C (1995) The cultural component of language teaching. Lang Culture Curriculum 8(2):83–92

Kramsch C (1996) The cultural component of language teaching. Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht, 1(2). [cited on 25 February 2010]. Access:<http://www.spz.tu-darmstadt.de/projekt_ejournal/jg_01_2/beitrag/kramsch2.htm>

Kuada J, Gullestrup H (1998) The cultural context of corporate governance, performance, pressures and accountability. In: Demiraq I (ed) Corporate governance accountability and pressures to perform an international study. JAI-Press, London

Shiraev E, Levy D (2004) Cross cultural psychology: critical thinking and contemporary applications. Pearson, Boston, MA

Siegel J (2003) Social context. In: Doughty C, Long M (eds) The handbook of second language acquisition. Balckwell, Oxford, pp 178–223

Young TJ, Sachdev I, Seedhouse P (2009) Teaching and learning culture on English language programmes: a critical review of the recent empirical literature. Innovation in language learning and teaching 3(2):149–170

Chapter 5
The Contribution of FL Learning Experiences to the Development of Multicultural Identity

Dagmara Gałajda

Abstract It is assumed that culture has taken an important place in foreign language instruction (Culhane, Electron J Foreign Lang Teaching 1:50–61, 2004). Since it is widely known that people learning a foreign language become new selves by developing a different identity, the question is to what extent target language culture influences learners' L1 ego. The primary aim of the study was to investigate the way in which learners create their new L1 ego under the influence of Anglo-Saxon culture. In addition, the study tried to examine by means of a questionnaire how students perceive the notion of language ego in both L1 and L2 and the way it is linked to TL culture. The subjects of the study were third-year students of the English Department at the University of Silesia, doing their major in English Cultures and Literatures which was crucial in terms of research results. The results show that having mastered a FL, students become new persons which may have a real impact on their L1 ego. Specifically, under the influence of TL culture different personality traits are subject to change which leads to creating new self-perception and acquiring different verbal/non-verbal skills.

Keywords Learner's ego · Multicultural identity · Anglo-Saxon culture · Self-perception

D. Gałajda (✉)
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: dagmara.galajda@wp.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_5, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2011

5.1 Literature Overview

It is not easy to define identity since it is a complex and multi-faceted concept negotiated and transformed by means of a language. Identities are not fixed but rather determined by the place, culture and society people are born in. Very often identity is perceived as the individual concept of the self influenced by everything and everybody around us. Thus, it should also be mentioned that while learning a FL, learners tend to recreate their cultural identity and develop a new FL identity. The question is whether learners are aware of the fact that their self-perception together with language ego may change.

As believed by many researchers (Devens 2005; Dewaele 2007; Fail et al. 2004), the studies concerning the development of cultural identity very often focus on the negative aspects of acculturation such as depression, stress, loss of identity together with difficulties that appear throughout the acculturation process. Sandhu and Asrabi (1994) developed a 36-item questionnaire in order to measure acculturative stress. Their subjects were 120 international students in the USA who enumerated such stress markers as alienation, homesickness, culture shock, etc. On the other hand, Fail et al. (2004) conducted a series of case studies involving 11 former international school students. The focus of the research was the sense of identity and sense of belonging. A similar study was conducted by Devens (2005) who also investigated Third Culture Kids and their cross-cultural experiences. Devens' project looked into TCK struggling with depression because of their negative experiences in a great number of different schools.

It has to be emphasized, however, that little has been done to investigate successful cross-cultural adaptation. The point is that developing multicultural identity and becoming multilingual may enrich the individual. Studies like the one carried out by Jessner (2006) or Kemp (2007) stress the fact that being multilingual "enhances general metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness" (Dewaele 2007, p. 448) and in that way, it is an advantage in language learning. Such orientation is also in keeping with the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000), an instrument designed to measure the personality dimensions of the multicultural individual.

5.2 The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire

The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000) is a 91-item questionnaire with five-point Likert scale which investigates five factors: cultural empathy, openmindedness, social initiative, emotional stability and flexibility. Originally the MPQ was used for expatriate employees and students. It focuses on the multicultural success of an individual. All five dimensions are described in detail below:

- Cultural Empathy—whether the individual can empathize with the feelings and behaviours of people from different cultures
- Openmindedness—being open and unprejudiced towards norms and values from other cultures
- Social Initiative—being initiative and active in social situations
- Emotional Stability—the ability to stay calm in stressful situations
- Flexibility—"the ability to learn from experiences" (Dewaele 2007, p. 451)

So far the MPQ has been used in various countries and cultures all over the world (Taiwan, Britain, Canada, Italy, China, New Zealand, etc.) and applied to different groups of participants. In all cases the MPQ addresses individual's behaviour in multicultural situations as well as measures his/her success in intercultural communication. In the following study, the MPQ was used to interpret learners' answers concerning FL identity.

5.3 Research Design

The primary aim of the study was to examine whether FL learning experiences contribute to the development of multicultural identity. Another point of interest was whether such experiences as learning a FL at the tertiary level may strengthen or weaken learners' L1 identity, or rather result in the development of so-called *interlanguage identity*. Finally, the way in which learners create their new L1 ego under the influence of Anglo-Saxon culture was investigated.

The following pilot study was conducted over a period of two weeks at the University of Silesia in Sosnowiec. The subjects of the study were third-year students of the English Department, doing their major in English Cultures and Literatures which was crucial in terms of research results.

With the aim of collecting the data, a data collection tool, a questionnaire was used (Sect. 5.7, Appendix). It contained open and closed questions concerning cultural identity and its aspects: FL identity, language ego and code switching. The reason for choosing this type of data collection tool was to gather the most objective data. The questionnaire was anonymous and carried out in English due to the learners' high level of language proficiency. It was distributed to the whole group of the students, altogether 13 learners. They were asked to fill in the questionnaire during the classes since the majority of questions required teacher's clarification.

5.4 Data Presentation and Analysis

5.4.1 Defining Cultural Identity

The opening question of the questionnaire concentrated on learners' definition of cultural identity. Among the most frequent answers were:

"Sense of belonging to a certain culture"
"Our lg and place in the society"
"The way culture influences us and also the way in which we perceive ourselves with reference to a particular culture"

The majority of students define cultural identity in a similar way as Norton and Toohey (2000) and Berry and Poortinga (2006) do:

(..) How people understand their relationship to the outside world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future (Norton and Toohey 2000, p. 5)
(…) Refers to a complex set of beliefs and attitudes that people have about themselves in relation to their culture group membership (Berry and Poortinga 2006, p. 357)

In all quotations cited above the relation between culture and identity is about the sense of belonging to a given culture. Additionally, the students claim that culture influences us somehow and in that way we feel a bond with it. They also stress the fact that if language and culture is linked, so is the personality and culture. Such a perception of the relation between culture and identity is similar to the one presented by many authors (e.g. Pavlenko 2006). In other words, the subjects are quite aware that a construct of cultural identity exists and that it influences human personality.

5.4.2 Sense of Belonging

The question introducing the intensity of sense of belonging to a given culture did not give a straight answer. Admittedly the majority of students (60%) show almost strong identification with the Polish culture, whereas in the case of FL culture, they are somewhere in between. Taking into consideration that the study was conducted in FL setting, such results are not surprising. The subjects learn a FL in an artificial environment of the University and they do not display a deep sense of belong to an English culture.

In answer to the question *Have you ever had any experiences that increased your sense of belonging to Polish/English culture?* the majority of all students (70% in both cases) answered in the affirmative. However, the examples provided by the students differed with reference to a particular culture.

Q: Have you ever had any experiences that increased your sense of belonging to:

a. Polish culture?

"Learning the history of Poland"
"When Poles reach some spectacular success"
"During national celebrations and holidays"
"When 'blind' people tell me 'stupid' things about Poland"

b. English culture?

"During my studies, when I'm learning about tradition, history and culture"

"Reading books in English"
"Forum communities using English"
"I'm more interested in the election in US than in Poland!"

While it is true to say that all of the students provided very concrete and illustrative examples, the focus of their answers varied depending on the culture the students referred to. In the case of the Polish culture, the learners concentrated more on historical events, celebrations and national heritage. Consequently, their examples included some national events as well as foreigners' negative attitude towards Poland/Polish. It is believed that present generation pays little attention to national issues like culture, tradition, politics, etc. The above comments show the opposite, though. The students have a strong sense of nationality and national identity. While discussing their sense of belonging to the English culture, the students mentioned such aspects as language, knowledge about the English speaking countries, politics and hobbies like reading. For these reasons, it can be assumed that the students identify with the English culture via the language they use for different purposes and the learning process they take part in during their studies.

5.4.3 FL Identity as an Aspect of Cultural Identity

It is believed that human behaviour is influenced by one's personality which predisposes a person to act in a given way. However, different experiences, including learning a FL language, may modify person's identity and as a result, it may cause a change in one's personality. The question is whether students think that FL identity really exists and to what extent it may change their self-perception and personality traits.

In answer to the question *Do you think that FL identity exists?* the majority of the students claimed that in fact it does. What is more, the majority of the reasons the students gave for such an answer could be categorized according to the MPQ dimensions:

- Openmindedness: "Learning a FL influences person's worldview, they become more open-minded about foreign cultures, understand them better and are more likely to assimilate parts of it and identify with it."
- Flexibility: "My FL identity changes depending on my interlocutors and their cultural awareness."
- Social Initiative: "L1 identity may be broadened by FL/FL learning, an individual may freely move within those two cultures."
- Cultural Empathy: "If a person learns a FL for a longer time and gets to know the FL culture and likes it, I think it works—the person is able to understand feelings of people from other cultures."
- Emotional Stability: "For me it is who we want to be in such a stressful situation as speaking FL."

As already mentioned, the results shown above can be interpreted with reference to the MPQ dimensions. The students seem to be aware of the fact that they create a new identity under the influence of a foreign language they learn. They also emphasize the social value of FL learning as a way of getting to know other people and cultures. It leads to the conclusion that the construct of FL identity is an aspect of cultural identity which is negotiated in the course of language learning. According to the subjects, being open-minded and flexible is what matters when creating a new identity. People who are more open and tolerant towards different cultures tend to be also more empathic. One of the subjects claims that learning a FL language for a longer time helps to understand other people's feelings and attitudes, the ability included in the MPQ. By and large, all of the students' answers show that the subjects are conscious of the existence of FL identity. Clearly, it is connected with the fact that the students have been learning English for a long time and now not only their language proficiency is very high but also self-perception seems to be very deep.

The next two questions focused on a new self-perception created while learning a FL and personality traits which are changed under the influence of TL culture. Interestingly as it may seem, 60% of the students claim that they feel like a different person while using English. The reasons for such an answer is as follows:

> "It's easier for me to be laidback and ironic when I use English; it's for the lg reasons like phrases, especially acquired from the media."
> "I'm not so confident when speaking English, however, cursing and arguing is easier in English, I feel some distance to those words, they're not so strong as in Polish."
> "I'm more open but still reserved. It's easier to talk about my feelings in English."

It is clearly visible that the students emphasize in their answers the relation between language and emotions. While it is true to say that people shape their indentity through experience, it must be also stressed that at the same time people create their new personality and learn to explore themselves, their feelings and attitudes. Maybe some of the subjects are not so confident while using English, probably due to their proficiency level, however, using a FL makes them feel more open and more likely to manipulate the language and in that way become new people. It is a fact that the identity of a language learner is viewed as multicultural and subject to change. That is the reason why the learners who attribute change in behaviour to change in language are more aware of the fact that being bilingual influences personality and self-perception in general.

5.5 Language Ego

5.5.1 Perception of Language Ego

The learners were asked to describe their perception of language ego. Generally, students' answers varied and could be divided into three groups. In the first one students are sure that FL learning does not influence their language ego at all:

"Learning English didn't change my ego at all"
"I don't believe that changing lg changes personality or identity"
"Lg we use doesn't influence our personality or ego. It's all about using a different code (the message stays the same)"

The students perceive language use as the exchange of information. They do not pay any attention to changes which may occur in their personalities or attitude towards TLC. Such results reflect learners' lack of self-awareness and very practical approach to language learning. On the other hand, the second group of answers was somewhere in between:

"Mine is the mix of Polish and English"
"Since I'm learning English for such a long time the boundary is blurred"

There is not any strong division between mother tongue and FL. The learners can feel somehow that both Polish and English influence their personality and indentity. However, they still need some guidance in order to see that a foreign language they learn has impact on the way they think and behave. In the last group of students' answers it is easily visible that the learners are very much aware of their language ego:

"Lg is closely connected to culture so our self expression is different in both lg"
"I think ego changes. I become a different person while speaking English"
"FL ego always carries elements of L1 ego, L1 ego is the basis for FL ego"

Owing to the fact that the majority of subjects linked changes in language ego to a different culture, it can be assumed that the learners sense the impact TLC has on their personality. Furthermore, the students know that both L1 and FL ego exist and that they may intermingle depending on the context. It must be difficult for the subjects of this study to assess the importance of TLC in their learning history since they've been acquiring the language in a formal setting. However, their connection with English culture is so strong and close that they are more aware of how their identity changes.

5.5.2 Language Choice

In the following question the students were asked to mark in which language they prefer to do each of the activities listed in the Table 5.1. The languages they could choose from included their mother tongue (Polish) and FL (English), however, they needed to mark the intensity (Polish/English only, mostly Polish/English, Polish and English equally).

Obviously, the most frequently marked answer for using Polish only is praying and speaking to one's family. Such results are not very surprising taking into consideration the fact that the students live with their families in Poland. Apart from that, such activities as praying are also too personal and complicated to do it in a foreign language usually because of lack of proficiency. The majority of students express sarcasm or sadness mostly in English while expressing romantic

Table 5.1 Language choice

	Polish only (%)	Mostly Polish (%)	Polish and English equally (%)	Mostly English (%)	English only (%)
Think to yourself (inner speech)		30	60	10	
Express romantic feelings	10	**50**	10	20	10
Curse		30	50	20	
Express sadness	20	10	30	40	
Pray	**80**		20		
Do mental arithmetic	40	30	20	10	
Tease sb playfully	10	10	30	**40**	10
Express sarcasm		40	20	**40**	
Tell jokes	10	**50**	40		
Listen to jokes	10		80	10	
Sing		10	30	40	**20**
Speak to your university friends		20	50	30	
Speak to your friends outside university	40	30	30		
Speak to your family	**80**	20			
Other:writing, communicating via internet			10	10	

feelings is rather ascribed to Polish. It cannot be forgotten that the subjects watch and read a lot in English, so their colloquial language is really advanced. That is why they tend to switch to English in a less formal situation when they feel relaxed and understood by others. Similarly, the number of colloquial expressions they use is astonishingly bigger in FL since they watch a lot of TV shows, series, etc. in original version. To sum up, mother tongue is usually perceived as more emotional, however, it is not the language favoured for all emotional expressions.

5.5.3 Code Switching

The aim of the following two questions was to investigate the contexts in which students switch languages as well as to explain the reasons for code switching. First, the students were supposed to answer the question concerning the frequency of code switching in two different contexts:

a. speaking with others who know both languages
b. speaking with monolinguals

The majority of the subjects (80%) claim that they fairly often switch languages when speaking with bilinguals while 20% of them do it almost always. The reasons for that are as follows:

"When talking with friends at the university, switching comes naturally, often just for fun"
"In jokes, while teasing"
"When I cannot find a proper word or equivalent"

On the other hand, 60% of the subjects almost never switch between two languages when they interact with monoliguals, 30% marked "not often", while only 10% of the answers was for "fairly often". The students provided the following justification:

"I very often switch between two lgs when I speak to my friends, when we are in a hurry and want to explain sth quickly"
"When talking about subjects connected with English lg or culture, like books or films"

Generally speaking, it is quite normal for the subjects to switch languages when they are interacting with other bilinguals. Usually it comes naturally or the students find it easier to use an English word instead of a Polish equivalent. What needs to be stressed is the fact that most of the day the subjects spend with their university friends who are also bilingual. They form a peer group in which people share the same interests and it is more convenient to use English rather than their mother tongue. When it comes to the interaction with monolinguals, the subjects usually do not change languages, unless they want to say something quickly and the Polish equivalent is "unavailable" as the students call it. Both English and Polish appear to be integrated in students' everyday speech, however, it seems more natural for them to use English while talking about cultural issues since they learn about it in a FL.

According to the subjects, the reasons for code switching can be divided into linguistic and non-linguistic ones. What emerges in students' answers is that code switching is fun for them. They enjoy switching to English because it is more natural and easier. Very often they prefer to use some of the English words instead of Polish ones because they like them more:

"It's funny or easier to speak English"
"They sound more clever, cool or whatever; I like them more or sth"
"I quote or use a phrase I like"

The subjects also believe that they express themselves better in English. Some of the words or phrases sound better to them or they just feel the language:

"Some words express my ideas better"
"Some expressions sound better in English, sometimes there's no Polish equivalent "
"Sometimes I forget Polish equivalent"

It is worth remembering that regardless of their place of residence, the subjects spend a lot of time speaking and communicating in English. It comes as no surprise then that their mental lexicon is subject to FL influence despite the fact

that they do not live in TLC. This leads to conclusion that both linguistic and non-linguistic reasons for code switching are justified.

5.6 Conclusions

The major point of interest was to investigate whether FL learning experiences contribute to the development of multicultural identity. The findings show that learners take on a new identity while using a FL, however, some of them are still not aware of it. The students know that by learning about a FL culture they recreate their own L1 identity and construct some kind of a FL identity. What it more, the construct of FL identity may be characterized by the dimensions of MPQ questionnaire. Openmindedness, flexibility, social initiative, cultural empathy and emotional stability are the components of a FL identity enumerated by the students. They do not name it directly, though. Nevertheless, the subjects emphasize what Pavlenko maintains: "Thinking, behaviour and perception of the self and the world do change with the change in language." (Pavlenko 2006, p. 13)

The study also revealed that while learning a FL learners acquire it in a context of a given language. That is the reason why the languages people use activate different behaviour, thinking and self-perception. This may result in the development of a new language ego which is usually a combination of a FL and learners' mother tongue. Being preliminary and exploratory, the study still needs some longitudinal continuation. Due to insufficient data, the outcome of the study is not very revealing. Because of that, the area of the influence of FL learning experiences on the development of multicultural identity calls for further research to be undertaken with the use of more data collection tools.

5.7 Appendix

Learner Questionnaire

1. How old were you when you started learning English? .....

2. How would you define your level of proficiency in English? .....

1 = very proficient, 5 = not at all proficient)

3. What was the context of your learning history?

.....
.....

4. Have you ever been to an English-speaking country? YES/NO (Please, mark your answer)

If **YES**, please give the name of the country/countries .....
and the period of time spent there .....

What was the reason for your stay there?

.....
.....

5. How would you define the term culture?

.....
.....

6. What was your first contact with the English culture?

.....
.....

7. How would you define cultural identity?

.....
.....

8. How strong is the intensity of your identification with: (Please, mark your answer)

- **L1 culture:**

  no identification o----------o----------o----------o----------o strong identification

- **English culture:**

  no identification o----------o----------o----------o----------o strong identification

9. Do you think that FL identity exists? YES/NO (Please, mark your answer)

If **YES,** what is your perception of your FL identity? In what way are some parts of L1 identity influenced by FL and FL learning?

….....
.....

10. Have you ever had any experiences that increased your sense of belonging to:

- **Polish culture** **YES/NO** (Please, mark your answer)

If **YES**, please give examples:

.....
.....

- **English culture** **YES/NO** (Please, mark your answer)

If **YES**, please give examples:

.....
.....

11. Do you feel like a different person when you use a foreign language (English)? YES/NO (Please, mark your answer)

If **YES**, please give examples:

.....
.....

12. How do you perceive the notion of language ego in both L1 and FL? How is it linked to TL culture?

.....
.....

13. Which personality traits are subject to change under the influence of TL culture?

Do you create new self-perception while learning FL?

.....
.....

14. Indicate (√) in which language you prefer to do each of the activities listed below:

	Polish only	mostly Polish	Polish and English equally	mostly English	English only
think to yourself (inner speech)					
express romantic feelings					
curse					
express sadness					
pray					
do mental arithmetic					
tease sb playfully					
express sarcasm					
tell jokes					
listen to jokes					
sing					
speak to your university friends					
speak to your friends outside university					
speak to your family					
Other:					

15. When speaking with other people, how often do you switch between your two languages? (Please, mark your answer)

- **speaking with others who know both of your languages:**

almost always fairly often not often almost never

- **interaction with monolinguals:**

almost always fairly often not often almost never

When does it happen? In what contexts?

….....

.....

Why do you switch languages?

…….

……

OTHER COMMENTS:

In your opinion, to what extent TL culture/FL/FL learning influences learner's L1 identity?

……

……

Thanks for your cooperation!

References

Berry J, Poortinga Y (2006) Cross-cultural psychology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Culhane S (2004) An intercultural interaction model: acculturation attitudes in second language acquisition. Electron J Foreign Lang Teaching 1(1):50–61
Devens JA (2005) Depression rates among third culture kids in an international school setting. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Capella University, USA
Dewaele J-M (2007) The effect of multilingualism, sociobiographical and situational factors on communicative anxiety and foreign language anxiety of mature language learners. The Int J Bilingualism 11(4):391–410
Fail H, Thomson J, Walker G (2004) Belonging, identity and third culture kids. J Res Int Edu 3(3):319–338
Jessner U (2006) Linguistic awareness in multilinguals. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, UK
Kemp C (2007) Strategic processing in grammar learning: do multilinguals use more strategies? Int J Multilingualism 4:241–261
Norton B, Toohey K (2000) Identity and language learning. Pearson Education Limited, Essex
Pavlenko A (2006) Bilingual minds: emotional experience, expressions and representation. Multilingual Matters, Clevendon
Sandhu DS, Asrabi BR (1994) Development of an acculturative stress scale for international students: preliminary findings. Psychol Rep 75:435–448
Van der Zee KI, Van Oudenhoven JP (2000) The multicultural personality questionnaire: a multicultural instrument for multicultural effectiveness. Eur J Int Communication 13(2):51–65

Chapter 6
The Attitudes of English Teachers Towards Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

Małgorzata Jedynak

Abstract Learning a foreign language is inseparably connected with some reflection on a foreign culture. There is no one consistent definition of a cultural component in foreign language education since the scope of the term culture is wide. Furthermore, there are various teaching traditions depending on a language, which is reflected in highlighting different aspects of culture that are being taught in an L2 classroom. In the present chapter a distinction is made between the role of culture in a communicative approach and intercultural approach in which an emphasis is put on similarities and differences between native and target language culture. The primary objective of the research was to examine the attitudes of 16 secondary school English teachers towards intercultural component (IC) in foreign language education. The respondents expressed their opinions on the aims of intercultural education, their intercultural competence, necessity of IC introduction in L2 classroom, motivation of their students to IC. The subjects also evaluated the IC teaching materials available for English teaching.

Keywords Intercultural component · Languge teaching · Competence · Motivation

6.1 Introduction

'Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants' (Bennett 2007, p. 53). The opening quotation shows how fascinating is conducting research on culture.

M. Jedynak (✉)
Wrocław University, Wrocław, Poland
e-mail: mjedynak@uni.wroc.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_6,

We learn foreign culture and at the same time we uncover our own culturally conditioned behaviour. Intercultural approach discussed in this chapter does not only involve perceiving the similarities and differences between the cultures but also recognizing the native culture or 'hidden culture'. Undoubtedly, learning a foreign language is inseparably connected with some reflection on learners' native and foreign culture. Byram (1998, p. 95) noticed that 'whatever happens with the European Union, social change cannot be ignored, increasing face-to-face or virtual contact with people of other European countries is something for which we must prepare young Europeans, and for which language teachers have certainly a special role to play.' The quotation points to the importance of teaching culture in an L2 classroom. Foreign language learners should be ready for intercultural contacts and it is the role of L2 teachers to make them prepared for developing attitudes, skills and knowledge contributing to intercultural communicative competence. In order to help learners in their intellectual growth foreign language teachers should be equipped with skills that go beyond the knowledge of the subject they teach. However, some L2 teachers ignore the fact that effective communication in a foreign language is related to *intercultural competence.* As a result they frequently exclude an intercultural component from teaching. It seems that in the Polish educational context many L2 teachers lack confidence both in their own and target language cultural competence, thus they focus in teaching primarily on a grammar component. The reason may be the fact that the Polish society is perceived as monolingual and homogeneous. Though there are some minorities in Poland, their presence is not so visible as it is in other countries. In a different context, such as this in Great Britain or in the States, the awareness of cultural diversity or bilingualism is fostered at all levels of education. There is a need to introduce interdisciplinary training for foreign language teachers, which has been already noticed by Michael Byram, a specialist in FL methodology and proponent of the Intercultural Approach. In the present chapter the author makes an attempt to define the role of intercultural component (IC) teaching, objectives and potential competencies to be developed in interculturally-oriented teacher training, and finally presents the results of the research carried out among secondary school English teachers on their attitudes to IC.

6.2 The Concept of 'little c' and 'big c' Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

In many dictionaries, encyclopaedias, sociology or anthropology books one may find information that the term *culture* and its range has been changed many times. As Sztompka (2002, p. 233) claims there are more than 200 definitions of culture functioning nowadays and in the past. The attempts to define the term have a long history, thus it seems impossible to present all the debates on the nature of culture.

There is no one consistent definition of a *cultural component* in foreign language education since the scope of the term *culture* is wide.

Defining the range of culture for the purpose of foreign language teaching has been a challenge for FL methodology, course books authors and L2 teachers. Alptekin (2002, p. 57) claims that that culture consists of more than just civilisation and that our socially acquired knowledge is organized in culture-specific ways which normally frame our perception of reality such that we largely define the world through the filter of our world view". Probably the most popular explanation of the notion of culture is this with a comparison of culture to an iceberg only the tip of which is visible (language, food, appearance, etc.) whereas a very large part of the iceberg is difficult to see or grasp (communication style, beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions, etc.). The items in the invisible body of the iceberg include a long list of notions from definitions of beauty or respect to patterns of group decision making, ideals governing child-raising, as well as values relating to leadership, prestige, health, love, or death (Lussier et al. 2007).

Apart from ethnography, sociology, social and cultural anthropology, a great contribution to development of the term culture is owed to a discipline called Culture Studies related to Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams' works from Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. The discipline thrived in the 60s and 70s of the last century. As a result of social, political and cultural changes in Great Britain related to multicultural society formation was democratization of the term culture. As Turner noticed (1996, p. 39) a new discipline was a challenge to culture tradition and British civilization. Culture Studies brought some interest in mass (everyday) culture as a research subject. Since that time soap operas and TV ads have been analysed by researchers just like the Shakespearean theatre. The fact that a status of pop-culture and subculture have been equated with elitist high culture had undoubtedly influenced a way in which a cultural component is tackled in foreign language teaching. After the 60s elitist 'big c' *Culture* related to culture of achievements (elements of history, literature, art and music) was enriched with 'little c' *culture* related to culture of behaviour. The latter included three categories: products (literature, artefacts, folk art), ideas (beliefs, values, institutions), and behaviour (habits such as eating, clothes etc.) (Tomalin and Stempleski 1998, p. 7).

From many definitions of culture the last one combining the above-mentioned aspects is of most use in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. It is disputable whether elitist Culture of achievements or culture of behaviour should be given priority in foreign language teaching. In a traditional approach it is believed that the latter should be introduced especially at initial stages of learning, especially if the learners are young people for whom culture is associated with subculture or pop culture. Later on the lessons may be complemented with the elements of high elitist Culture. However, it may happen that a borderline between these two types of culture is blurred. For example, there may be a problem with interpretation of Romeo and Juliet matrimonial agency.

There are various culture teaching traditions depending on a target language, which is reflected in highlighting different aspects of culture that are being taught in an L2 classroom. In the methodology of the French language teaching a distinction is made between civilisation and culture. The former refers to a group of characteristics describing the country in a specific historical moment while the latter focuses on the knowledge about intellectual, artistic, moral, and religious life of the society in which there are both the past and the presence (Mendychowski 1998, p. 44–45; Zając 1997, p. 196). The above-mentioned distinction is not made, however, in reference to teaching English as a foreign language.

The most quoted author on a concept of integrated language and culture teaching—Michael Byram—claims that teaching culture means making the learners acquainted with the new system of meanings and the symbols related to these meanings (Byram 1989, p. 44). Only then the foreign language learners understand properly various manifestations of foreign culture such as cultural artefacts, values or behaviour.

All the above-mentioned definitions suggest that in language education a teacher cannot focus only on the traditional list of facts about the civilisation but on information about beliefs, values, behaviour, social practices, and customs.

6.3 Cultural Component in Communicative Approach

6.3.1 Problems with Cultural Competence

The fact that learning a foreign language must be accompanied with some reflection on target language culture is reflected in an evolution of a term *communicative competence*. The term was introduced for the first time by Dell Hymes in 1967. Since that time there have been many attempts to define communicative competence. The importance of social-cultural context was emphasised by Canale and Swain in 1980 distinguishing sociolinguistic competence (Brown 1993, p. 228) which was later divided into sensitivity to dialect, register, naturality and cultural references (Bachman 1991, p. 97). The term sociocultural competence is also used in various documents issued by the Council of Europe. In all communicative competence models native speaker competence is emphasised. In the second half of the 90s in the last century intercultural component has been distinguished in communicative competence. It was noticed that authentic communication contexts and texts did not guarantee that a learner will use the target language corresponding to cultural norms (Kramsch 1996, p. 203). Imitation of native speakers did not guarantee effective intercultural communication (Byram 1997, p. 11). Despite the efforts of proponents of communicative approach sociolinguistic aspects were only made popular without being put widely in practice (Stern 1994, p. 252).

6.3.2 Acculturation Process and Teaching Culture in FL Classroom

In the search of models of foreign culture learning and teaching the FL experts were inspired by experience of immigrants undergoing acculturation process. In one of acculturation models a learner undergoes four stages. In the first one called 'tourist', a learner may experience culture shock and uses L1 learning strategies for L2 communication. In the second 'survivor' stage' a learner knows language and culture at a level that allows him/her to survive in life situations. In the next 'immigrant' stage a learner after a long stay in a culturally and linguistically different environment is able to pass a threshold of acculturation. In the last 'citizen' stage a learner's level resembles this of a native speaker of a target language. Linguistic or cultural nuances do not practically exist (Acton and Walker de Felix 1995, p. 21). In another acculturation model also four stages are distinguished: isolation, adaptation biculturalism, and assimilation (Casa de Esperanza organisation 2003). Each of them present Latinos with unique challenges and opportunities. In Brown's acculturation framework, in turn, another terminology is used: excitement and euphoria, culture shock, culture stress and full recovery (Brown 1993). All these models are important for foreign language teachers since they may see some analogy between naturalistic and formal instruction setting. The first point that needs to be made is that similarly to socialisation in the native language acculturation process takes places simultaneously with language skills development. Furthermore, it may be assumed that cognitive and emotional development may also accompany acculturation. Thus, it seems advisable for language teachers to support this process. Acton and Walker de Felix (1995, p. 29–30) are of the opinion that though the 'immigrant' and 'citizen' stages takes place mainly outside a classroom, L2 teachers should help their learners to pass acculturation threshold.

Damen (1987, p. 140) explains that 'culture learning is a natural process in which human beings internalize the knowledge needed to function in a societal group'. It may take place 'in the native context as enculturation or in a non-native or secondary context as acculturation'. All people build their own cultural beliefs and values which they instinctively believe to be right. When a person undergoes acculturation he or she needs to be pulled out of the first culture and approach old problems from a new perspective avoiding any ethnocentric evaluations.

Undoubtedly teaching L2 culture resembles acculturation process. It is likely that culture shock will be experienced by learners, some of whom will need to change previously held views. Therefore, L2 teachers should play a role of a sensitive therapist who assists learners in their new experience.

In intercultural approach described in detail below, learning L2 culture is not reduced to adaptation of a new culture but it is a two dimensional, comparative process of L1 and L2 cultures. Therefore, acculturation in intercultural approach refers to ability to function in a different culture but also preservation of learners' own identity.

6.4 The Intercultural Approach in Foreign Language Teaching

6.4.1 The Main Assumptions of Intercultural Approach

Corbett (2003, p. 31–32) claims that the intercultural approach (IA) may be perceived as an extension of the communicative approach (CA). There are some common features in the two approaches such as using the same types of techniques (group problem-solving, project work, simulation games). There are, however, some differences between them. The main aim of the CA is communication, while in the IA maintaining contact, expressing identity, building a bond with own and foreign culture. In the CA the information about L2 culture is provided to the learners but priority is given to four skills development. In the IA there is integration of culture teaching and L2 teaching. The CA is interested in target language culture but it is the IA that stresses the importance of reflection on comparison of L1 and L2 cultures leading to development of the learner's identity. As to the content of teaching, in the CA it was frequently trivial or unimportant since the main aim was to develop the four skills. In the IA teaching through integrated content from various disciplines is emphasized. Finally, the effect of the CA is communicative competence and in the IA it is intercultural communicative competence. While the former is based on linguistic competence of a native speaker the latter characterizes an educated intercultural mediator and not necessarily a native speaker.

It was in the late 90s of the last century when the interest in teaching culture was reflected in a widely used intercultural approach. Up to this time interculturally-oriented teaching was not dominant in foreign language methodology or official documents such as these issued by the Council of Europe or ministries of education. The basis of intercultural approach appeared for the first time in Louise Damen's work 'Culture learning: the fifth dimension in the language Classroom' (Damen 1987). The book, however, concerns English as a second language in a multicultural American school and not a foreign language. Damen drew attention of foreign language specialists to the interdisciplinary area which is intercultural communication in teaching culture and foreign language. She claims that apart from traditionally recognised four skills, the fifth skill, namely interculural communication, should also be a focal point in foreign language teaching and learning. Damen (1987, p. 54) coined a term *pragmatic ethnography* referring to the new approach to intercultural skills and intercultural awareness development. She also listed the competencies of a teacher capable of teaching the fifth skill. According to her such a teacher should be an experienced guide, a trained observer and a fellow intercultural communicator (Damen 1987, p. 57). In the interculturaly-oriented classroom foreign language learners become aware of cultural differences which they notice in 'big c' culture and 'little c' culture areas. As a result they may be tempted to start examining their own norms, values and attitudes. The importance of a cultural component was also noticed by Kramsch (1996)

who in her 'Context and Culture in Language Teaching' claims that imitation of L2 community does not guarantee that a learner will be accepted by native speakers of the target language. However, the knowledge of L2 cultural context allows a learner to behave as someone belonging to a group. Kramsch notices that our constructs are strongly influenced by our native culture, thus it is so difficult for us to accept a way of thinking characteristic of a foreign culture. The main aim of intercultural approach is, according to her, assisting learners in finding their place between native and foreign cultures (Kramsch 1996, p. 181). As Zawadzka (2004, p. 191) claims, understanding a foreign culture requires comparison and reflection on the two cultures. The cultural dialogue suggested by her is based on taking a different point of view in order to understand differences in the systems of values and make an attempt to assign new meanings to already possessed constructs. Similarly to Damen, Kramsch and Zawadzka claim that an ultimate effect is a change in our thinking—a new culture is not our native but also not foreign. A term 'third place' used by Damen and Kramsch describe most accurately a new perspective or identity that should be individually constructed by each learner (Kramsch 1996, p. 257).

6.4.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence

According to Byram's model intercultural communicative competence (ICC) includes four competencies, namely linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural (Byram 1997). Lussier et al. (2007) claims that there are three dimensions in assessing this type of competence. The first one is called *knowledge/savoirs* in terms of collective memory, diversity in the ways of living and the sociocultural context of the societies and cultures of the communities. This element of ICC refers to intercultural awareness involving the understanding of similarities and distinctive differences between the native and target language communities. The second dimension of assessing ICC is *know-how/savoir-faire*. It implies that at the primary level the learners are able to function linguistically in the target language. When they are more advanced they are able to interact in different contexts, integrate new experiences and use efficiently communicative competence. Lussier et al. (2007) claims that the learners should develop abilities in order to be able to interpret and negotiate interaction in terms of skills: social (types of conventions), living (routine actions required for daily life), vocational and professional (mental and physical specialised actions to carry out the duties of employment) and leisure (arts, crafts, sports, hobbies). The learners at this stage should also use various learning strategies to overcome stereotyped thinking and communicate with people from target language cultures. The third dimension of ICC is called *being/savoir-être*. Lussier et al. (2007) notices that it is characterised by the attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality linked to personal identity. At the beginning cultural competence is based on cultural awareness and the understanding of other cultures. Consequently, critical

competence appears which involves appropriation of self-identity and the ability to accept other cultures. Finally, the learners having a higher level of competence in terms of transcultural competence appreciate otherness and integrate other values than those of their own culture. At this stage, the main objective is to help the learners to accept the role of a cultural mediator in situations of tension, misunderstanding or conflicts (Lussier et al. 2007).

6.5 Research

The primary objective of the research was to investigate the attitudes of language teachers towards developing intercultural communicative competence. Seven teachers of English participated in the research, all of whom were graduates of the English philology department in Wrocław and Opole. Their experience ranged from three up to fourteen years. A survey in an electronic form was sent over to all the subjects. It included ranking the statements and defining their attitude to the statements on a four point Likert scale. Additionally the researcher prepared open ended questions to check the teachers' familiarity with the intercultural communicative approach. In order to obtain the information about the teachers' attitudes to L2 culture teaching the researcher decided to formulate sets of questions in the survey related to (1) their views on cultural component in FL teaching, and (2) their knowledge of culture.

The first section included eight statements related to general aims of teaching culture. The teachers had to arrange them in the order that reflects their views on culture teaching. Table 6.1 below displays the teachers' responses ordered on the basis of decreasing arithmetic means.

The data shows that the greatest number of respondents associate teaching culture with a cognitive aim, namely with informing the learners on the target language customs and habits. An affective aim which is in the sixth position has not been often recognized by the teachers. The general aims that are associated with a role of a intercultural mediator have not been ranked high on the list (points 4, 7 and 8). Encouraging the learners to understanding L1 culture is not a priority for the majority of the respondents.

As to the teachers' knowledge of culture, this time the respondents were requested to define their level of knowledge using a four point Likert scale [(1) I do not know it, (2) I know it quite well, (3) I know it very well, (4) I know it perfectly well]. Table 6.2 below includes their responses and arithmetic means for each of the statements.

From the analysis of the data one can say that the respondents evaluate highly their competence in the first three points. The information on the first three cultural topics is mainly available in FL course books, thus the teachers are well acquainted with them. The topics listed as 6 and 7 require from the teachers a comprehensive knowledge related to analysis of arguments and are frequently avoided in a FL classroom.

Table 6.1 Teachers' views on the aims of culture teaching

Rank	Major aim	Arithmetic mean
1.	Informing the learners on the target language customs and habits	5.02
2.	Informing the learners on geography, history, social and political conditions of L2 country	5.83
3.	Informing the learners on L2 literature, music, arts	4.81
4.	Developing abilities of intercultural contact	4.59
5.	Informing the learners on values and attitudes of L2 native speakers	3.52
6.	Developing the learners' tolerance and openness towards other nations and cultures	3.33
7.	Encouraging the learners to understanding L1 culture	3.20
8.	Encouraging the learners to reflection over cultural differences	2.57

Table 6.2 Teachers' knowledge of the culture-related issues

Ranking position	Cultural component	Arithmetic mean
1.	English/American customs and habits (Christmas, Easter, cuisine)	4.32
2.	History and geography of Great Britain and the USA	4.21
3.	Values and attitudes	4.18
4.	British and American music	3.05
5.	British and American educational system	3.04
6.	Economic and political relations between Poland and Great Britain/the USA	2.72
7.	Cultural relations between Poland and the USA/Great Britain	2.55
8.	British and American Literature, drama, arts	2.34

In the last stage the teachers answered the following open ended questions on their familiarity with the term intercultural communicative approach:

1. Have you ever heard about the intercultural communicative approach?
2. Do you agree that the primary aim of foreign language teaching is to enable learners in an increasingly multicultural world to communicate with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds?
3. Have you participated in any workshops on IC approach?
4. Do you possess a necessary competence for teaching various aspects of the target language culture? Where have you got it from?
5. Has your own attitude to the target language culture changed throughout the years? If it has, in what way?

The researcher's assumption was that the teachers should be familiar with modern educational trends and incorporate elements of the intercultural approach in their teaching. Responding to the first question almost all the subjects admitted that they heard about teaching culture but not about the intercultural approach. Only one teacher was acquainted with the term of IC approach. The second

question referred to the main aim of FL teaching. All the teachers agreed with the conviction expressed in the question. However, the majority of them (six teachers) admitted that they had not participated in any initial or in-service training on intercultural component implementation. The survey participants claimed that they possess a necessary competence for teaching various aspects of the target language culture since they have a constant contact with it through media and travelling to the target language countries. However, it seems that their knowledge is sufficient for traditional teaching of culture but not for teaching an intercultural component. The majority of the subjects declared that they introduce in a classroom a wide variety of topics related to culture such as Christmas and Easter customs, places of interest, everyday life, folk and pop culture (see Table 6.2). However, correlation between what they teach in a classroom and their knowledge of a given topic was not examined in this research. Furthermore, they admitted that their own attitude to the target language culture changed and nowadays they perceive it more positively. The last question also concerns development of critical cultural awareness. I assumed that a teacher who develops critical thinking about himself/herself and his/her own or other society and culture will be the one who is best equipped to teach a foreign language interculturally. Three subjects admitted that they transferred their knowledge about culture to practical ground by modifying their behaviour. For example, they paid more attention to their body language that is interpreted differently in a target country, modified their pitch of the voice, or changed their native habits introducing a lunch break.

6.6 Conclusions

Though a sample in the research is too small to make generalizations about the attitude of Polish teachers towards the intercultural component, it may be assumed that their responses reflect a gloomy reality of the language education. The first observation is that the teachers are not acquainted with the intercultural approach, and they still associate culture teaching with the transmission of knowledge and facts about customs, habits, everyday life of the target language society. However, what they do in a classroom is not related to developing intercultural competence. In order to implement the intercultural approach the teachers should themselves acquire the knowledge about it.

What the teachers obviously lack is interdisciplinary training that should go beyond the traditional curriculum of foreign language teacher training. The aims of this training should be raising cultural awareness, developing intercultural competence (knowledge, skills, attitudes), and learning to deal with cultural diversity in and outside the classroom. The teachers should be also acquainted with the basic theoretical framework of intercultural communicative competence and the terms such as culture, acculturation, intercultural communication and intercultural competence. Finally, they should learn how to design and try out activities with an intercultural focus to be used in a language course.

References

Acton WR, Walker de Felix J (1995) Acculturation mind. Culture bound. Bridging the cultural gap in language teaching (pp 20–32). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge New York

Alptekin C (2002) Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT. ELT J 5(1):57–63

Bachman LF (1991) Fundamental considerations in language testing. OUP, Oxford

Bennett MJ (ed.) (2007) Basic concepts of intercultural communication. Selected readings. Intercultural Press, Yarmouth, Maine, pp 53–60

Brown HD (1993) Principles of language learning and teaching. Prentice Hall Regents, Englewood Cliffs, NJ

Byram M (1989) Cultural studies in foreign language education. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Byram M (1997) Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Byram M (1998) Intercultural communicative competence: the challenge for language teacher training. In: Cherrington R, Davcheva L (eds) Teaching towards intercultural competence. British Council, Bulgaria, Sofia, pp 95–102

Casa de Esperanza organization (2003) Online document, Retreived on 06/08/2010 from http://www.casadeesperanza.org/pdfs/AcculturationContinuum

Corbett J (2003) An intercultural approach to English language teaching. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Damen L (1987) Culture learning: the fifth dimension in the language classroom. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, MA

Kramsch C (1996) Context and culture in language teaching. OUP, Oxford

Lussier et al. (2007) Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence. A guide for language teachers and teacher educators. Graz: European Centre for Modern Languages

Mendychowski M (1998) Niektóre aspekty wykorzystywania treści interkulturowych i cywilizacyjnych na lekcji języka obcego. W Wybrane problemy doskonalenia dydaktyki języków obcych. Prace Naukowe SNJO PW 33(27). Wrocław: Oficyna Wydawnicza PW

Stern HH (1994) Fundamental concepts in language teaching. OUP, Oxford

Sztompka P (2002) Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa. Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków

Tomalin BS, Stempleski S (1998) Cultural awareness. OUP, Oxford

Turner G (1996) British cultural studies. An introduction. Routledge, London and New York

Zając J (1997) Od nauczania cywilizacji do refleksji interkulturowej na lekcji języka obcego. Języki obce w szkole, 3/1997, 195–199

Zawadzka E (2004) Nauczyciele języków obcych w dobie przemian. Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", Kraków

Part II
Cultural Differences in Language Instruction

Chapter 7
Cultural Differences in Perceptions of Form-Focused Instruction: The Case of Advanced Polish and Italian Learners

Mirosław Pawlak

Abstract The last two decades have seen a revival of interest in teaching formal aspects of language, which, on the one hand, has been motivated by such theoretical positions as the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, Appl Linguist 11:17–46, 1990), the Output Hypothesis (Swain, Principles and practice in applied linguistics: studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 125–144, 1995), the modified version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, Handbook of research on second language acquisition. Academic Press, New York, pp 413–468, 1996) and Skill-Learning Theory (DeKeyser, Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 42–63, 1998), and, on the other, has been inspired by numerous research findings demonstrating that not only does formal instruction work, but it also contributes to the development of implicit knowledge and its effects are durable. As a consequence, the main issue tackled by researchers has been the verification of the effectiveness of different ways of introducing and practicing grammatical structures, identification of linguistic features that are the most suitable candidates for pedagogic intervention, as well as determination of its optimal timing, intensity and duration (cf. Ellis, TESOL Q 40:83–107, 2006; Nassaji and Fotos, Form-focused instruction and teacher education: studies in honor of Rod Ellis. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 7–15, 2007). Even though the results of such studies have provided useful insights into various aspects of form-focused instruction, it should be kept in mind that the value of specific pedagogic solutions is by no means universal since it depends on the perceptions of teachers and learners which are to a large extent culturally determined (e.g. Schultz, Mod Lang J 85:244–258, 2001). In accordance with this assumption, the chapter reports the findings of a research project which set out to compare the views held by advanced Polish and

M. Pawlak (✉)
Adam Mickiewicz University, Kalisz, Poland
e-mail: pawlakmi@amu.edu.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_7,

Italian learners of English on different aspects of form-focused instruction. The subjects of the study were 212 participants, 106 from each of the two countries, who filled out questionnaires and participated in interviews. The analysis of the data revealed important differences between the two groups, which indicates that caution should be exercised about embracing recommendations that have not been empirically verified in a specific local context.

Keywords Form-focused instruction · Survey · Polish learners · Italian learners

7.1 Introduction

The place of formal instruction has always aroused considerable controversy in foreign language pedagogy, with theorists, researchers and methodologists often adopting somewhat extreme and orthodox positions that may be incompatible with everyday language teaching. Firstly, the long period of what Doughty (1998, p. 129) labels *grammar is everything pedagogy*, was followed by the onset of the so-called non-interventionist approaches which advocated the abandonment of grammar instruction and error correction in favor of replicating in the classroom the conditions of naturalistic discourse (e.g. Krashen 1982; Prabhu 1987). Such a stance, which drew upon the tenets of the Cognitive Anti-Method of the 1960s (e.g. Newmark 1966; Newmark and Reibel 1968), was justified not only on practical, but also on empirical and theoretical grounds. It was clear, for example that the knowledge gained in the classroom did not translate into the ability to employ it in spontaneous communication, a phenomenon referred to as the *inert knowledge problem* (Larsen-Freeman 2003), copious evidence became available that second language acquisition involves movement through intermediary stages of non-targetlike use that cannot be easily altered by pedagogic intervention (cf. Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991; Ellis 2008), and Krashen's (1982, 1985) Monitor Model embraced the non-interface position, according to which explicit knowledge cannot become implicit knowledge. However, radical proposals of this kind never caught on in most foreign language contexts and the last two decades have seen a revival of interest in teaching formal aspects of language in settings where meaning-focused instruction used to be the norm. This change of heart can be attributed, on the one hand, to the emergence of such theoretical positions as the Output Hypothesis (Swain 1985, 1995), the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt 1990), the updated version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1996) and Skill-Learning Theory (DeKeyser 1998), and, on the other, to research findings demonstrating that sheer focus on message conveyance does not guarantee the mastery of all aspects of communicative competence and that not only does formal instruction work, but it also contributes to the development of implicit knowledge and its effects are durable (see Ellis 2002; Pawlak 2006; Ellis 2008). As a consequence, the main issue tackled by researchers has been the verification of the effectiveness of

different ways of introducing and practicing grammar structures, identification of linguistic features that are the most suitable candidates for intervention, or determination of its optimal timing, intensity and duration (cf. Ellis 2006; Nassaji and Fotos 2007; Spada and Lightbown 2008).

Although the results of such studies have provided useful insights into various facets of form-focused instruction (FFI), it should be kept in mind that the value of specific pedagogic solutions should by no means be taken for granted since it is also a function of the beliefs held by teachers and learners as well as the interfaces between such beliefs (Spada and Gass 1986; Horwitz 1987a; Borg 2003). These beliefs, in turn, may be to a greater or lesser extent affected by the cultural background of those involved in the process of language teaching and learning (cf. Schulz 2001), with the effect that the techniques and procedures which work wonders in one educational context may turn out to be dismally ineffective in another. In accordance with this assumption, the present chapter reports the findings of a study which sought to compare the perceptions of different aspects of form-focused instruction manifested by advanced Polish and Italian learners of English as a foreign language. In the first part, an attempt will be made to outline some of the current controversies concerning form-focused instruction which served as a point of departure for the present research project and to discuss the findings of previous studies of learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction. In the second, the research questions, subjects and procedures of data collection and analysis will be described, the results will be presented and discussed, and some suggestions and for future research will be offered.

7.2 Current Controversies in Form-Focused Instruction

Since a plethora of terms is used in the literature to refer to formal instruction and there is considerable confusion concerning the kind of pedagogical intervention they are meant to signify (explicit or implicit, planned or unplanned, integrated within communicative tasks or forming part of the presentation-practice-production sequence, etc.), it is only fitting to clarify at the very outset how this concept is understood in the present paper. Drawing upon Ellis, *form-focused instruction* refers here to "(…) any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form", with the effect that it "(…) includes both traditional approaches to teaching forms based on structural syllabi and more communicative approaches, where attention to form arises out of activities that are primarily meaning-focused" (2001: 1–2). Consequently, the term is capacious enough to cover the use of a range of explicit and implicit instructional techniques, whether they are applied in isolation or in the course of message conveyance, the presentation or discovery of rules, as well as the provision of different types of corrective feedback (cf. Spada 1997). Such a broad conceptualization can serve as a basis for distinguishing more specific types of form-focused instruction which Ellis (2001) divides into: (1) *focus on forms*, in

which learners' attention is directed at a preselected structure and their task is to understand and master it with the help of rules or different forms of intensive practice (e.g. gap filling, using the target form in context), (2) *planned focus on form*, where the linguistic features are also preselected, often in response to persistent learner problems, and they are tackled intensively but this transpires in the course of communicative tasks (e.g. input enhancement, where structures are graphically highlighted in texts, or the application of focused communication tasks requiring the use of a specific linguistic feature), and (3) *incidental focus on form*, in which the overriding goal is conveying meaningful messages and attention to form is extensive in the sense that a variety of features can be targeted, either preemptively (i.e. a potentially problematic form is attended to before an error takes place) or reactively (i.e. corrective feedback is provided). Alternatively, it is possible to move beyond such broad-brush divisions which represent macrooptions in form-focused instruction (Pawlak 2006) in that they are pertinent mainly to overall syllabus design, and propose a more fine-grained classification of instructional techniques and procedures that are applicable to any lesson. Such an approach is visible, for example, in the taxonomy of instructional options proposed by Ellis (1997) and later modified by Pawlak (2006) in which a distinction is drawn between *learner performance options* and *feedback options*, with the former being subdivided into *focused communication* and *focus on a linguistic feature* (aimed at the development of explicit and implicit language knowledge), and the latter comprising a continuum of corrective moves ranging from more *covert* (*implicit*) to more *overt* (*explicit*).

Even though there is a consensus among most theoreticians and researchers that formal instruction is facilitative or even necessary in many situations, controversies remain as regards the utility of specific pedagogic solutions, such as the ones listed above, with implications not only for the choice of techniques or combinations thereof used in a particular lesson, but also the planning of these lessons as well as the choice, scope and design of the entire syllabus. To be more precise, the main disagreements revolve around such crucial issues as: (1) *the criteria for selecting linguistic features* for intervention (e.g. learning difficulty, markedness or learner need) and the nature of such criteria (e.g. diverse conceptualizations of linguistic complexity and different opinions on which items are formally and functionally simple or complex), (2) *the choice of syllabus* (i.e. structural vs. task-based), (3) *the timing of grammar instruction* (i.e. introduction of FFI at early or advanced stages of acquisition), (4) *the extent to which intervention should be massed or distributed* (i.e. of short duration or spread over a longer period of time), (5) *the value of intensive and extensive FFI* (i.e. targeting a single form over an extended period of time, as is the case with planned focus on form, or a variety of items in one lesson, as exemplified by incidental focus on form), (6) *the utility of explicit knowledge* (i.e. the extent to which conscious rule knowledge can aid the development of communicative ability), (7) *the role of deduction and induction* in introducing linguistic features (i.e. rule provision vs. rule discovery), (8) *the effectiveness of production-oriented and comprehension-based FFI* (i.e. having learners use the targeted feature correctly vs. modeling it and enabling them to

process it for form-meaning mappings), (9) *the value of different forms of language practice* (e.g. contributions of tasks strung along the controlled-communicative continuum), (10) *the merits of isolated and integrated instruction* (i.e. intervention can precede or follow a communicative task or be embedded in this activity without detracting from its meaningful character), and (11) *the role of different types of corrective feedback* (e.g. explicit vs. implicit, input-based or output-based, intensive vs. extensive) (cf. Ellis 2006; Pawlak 2006; DeKeyser 2007; Leeman 2007; Nassaji and Fotos 2007; Spada and Lightbown 2008; Larsen-Freeman 2009; Lyster and Saito 2010). Obviously, it is possible to point to other hotly contested issues within each of these domains such as, for instance, the choice of spoken and written grammar as a model, the relationship between the meaning-based and structural component at specific points of time, the amount of time needed to teach different linguistic features, the form that deduction and induction might assume, the role of metalanguage, the contribution of learners' mother tongue, the effectiveness of diverse types of output-oriented and input-based practice, the value of different error correction moves, or the validity and reliability of various assessment measures in terms of explicit and implicit knowledge, etc. (cf. Larsen-Freeman 2003; Pawlak 2004, 2006; Ellis 2009; Larsen-Freeman 2009). Besides, there is growing realization that, similarly to other aspects of foreign language pedagogy, FFI does not occur in a vacuum, with the effect that choices made in all of these areas may be more or less beneficial depending on a wide array of individual and contextual variables, the latter also pertaining to the cultural background (Larsen-Freeman 2009; Pawlak 2009a). It is some of these controversial issues, both general and specific, that provided a point of departure for the construction of the questionnaire that was used in the study reported in this paper and will be described in some detail in one of the following sections.

7.3 Previous Research Into Learners' Beliefs About Form-Focused Instruction

According to Hosenfeld (1978), the beliefs learners hold about language and language learning provide a basis for their mini-theories about learning a particular second or foreign language which, in turn, shape the ways in which they approach the tasks they are confronted with. Even though scholars such as Dörnyei (2005) express doubts as to whether these beliefs constitute a proper individual difference variable due to the fact that they are not enduring and stable, they are treated as such by most second language acquisition specialists and their role has been addressed in a number of empirical studies (cf. Dörnyei 2005; Ellis 2008). This line of inquiry was pioneered by Horwitz (1987b) who adopted the so-called normative approach in which beliefs are viewed as preconceived notions or misconceptions. She designed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), a tool in which they are measured by means of Likert-scale statements

related to five areas, namely: difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations. Since then attempts have been made to establish a link between beliefs and metacognitive knowledge (Wenden 1999), to investigate the relationship between general epistemological beliefs and specific language learning beliefs (Mori 1999), as well as to conceptualize beliefs in terms of metaphors individuals employ to describe their learning (Kramsch 2003). Research has also provided evidence for the relationship between beliefs and strategy use, motivation, learner autonomy, anxiety and proficiency (Mori 1999; Yang 1999; Kalaja and Barcelos 2003), their situated and dynamic nature (Tanaka and Ellis 2003), their impact on learners' actual classroom behaviors (Grotjahn 1991), as well as their influence on teachers' classroom practices (e.g. Burgess and Etherington 2002; Borg 2003). Such findings show that "(…) the beliefs language learners hold considerably affect the way they go about mastering the L2" (Dörnyei 2005, p. 216), although their contribution to learning outcomes is not always straightforward because, as Ellis (2008, p. 703) argues, "(…) the fact that learners hold a particular belief is no guarantee that they will act on it" and, for this reason, "if beliefs do impact on learning it is likely that they do so indirectly by influencing the kinds of learning strategies learners employ".

Learners' beliefs can also be expected to play a crucial role in the case of form-focused instruction, since their perceptions of the utility of grammar teaching and error correction as well as the different ways in which they are conducted can determine to a considerable degree the effectiveness of techniques and procedures employed by teachers. Although, by Horwitz's (1999, p. 575) own admission, "(…) it seems premature to conclude that beliefs about language learning vary by cultural group (…)", it stands to reason as well that the cultural background that learners represent may be an important factor in shaping learners' perceptions of FFI, not least because of the differences in the ways foreign language instruction is approached in various educational systems or deeply ingrained assumptions about teaching and learning in general that are pervasive in particular countries. In the light of this assertion, it may come as a surprise that the thrust of the research conducted to date has been on indentifying teachers' beliefs about different aspects of FFI, often within the framework of the more general study of language teacher cognitions (e.g. McCargar 1993; Burgess and Etherington 2002; Borg 2003, 2006; Basturkmen et al. 2004; Pawlak 2006; Pawlak and Droździał-Szelest 2007; Borg and Burns 2008), and it is only in the last decade or so that the focus has started to be shifted to learners' views. Early insights into students' beliefs about FFI can be gleaned from studies which utilized the BALLI (e.g. Peacock 2001) since among the 34 Likert-scale items included in this instrument, there are some that are more or less directly connected with learning and teaching grammar, such as: "Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules" or "It is important to repeat and practice a lot", with most learners tending to agree with them. As regards research projects in which perceptions of FFI were the sole focus, one the first was the study undertaken by Schulz (1996) which set out to compare the beliefs about grammar teaching and error correction held by US postsecondary

foreign language learners and their teachers, and found that the former were more favorably disposed to such pedagogical intervention than the latter. Also of relevance are studies which have examined learners' preferences concerning error correction, such as those conducted by Griffiths and Chunhong (2008), which addressed corrective feedback in general and involved English majors from China, and Pawlak (2010), which focused more narrowly on correction of oral errors in fluency- and accuracy-oriented activities and used data provided by Polish senior high school students. Although there were some minor differences, both groups were convinced of the importance of frequent correction that is directly provided by the teacher. An important contribution to this line of inquiry has also been made by studies which have aimed to design and validate new research instruments intended to measure beliefs about FFI, with Loewen et al. (2009) proposing a general tool of this kind and Spada et al. (2009) constructing a questionnaire focusing on preferences for isolated and integrated form-focused instruction.

When it comes to studies explicitly examining the impact of culture on various aspects of form-focused instruction, they have thus far been few and far between and their outcomes have been quite inconclusive. Schulz (2001), for example, replicated her first study mentioned above with Columbian foreign language learners and teachers, and although she failed to find major cross-cultural differences, she reported that in comparison to her American subjects, they "(…) were more favorably inclined toward traditional language teaching, which indicates stronger beliefs regarding the efficacy of explicit grammar instruction and error correction" (2001, p. 254). In a more recent empirical investigation, Pazawer and Wang (2009) compared the views on form-focused instruction manifested by 16 learners of English as a second language from seven Asian countries (i.e. China, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, India and Sri Lanka) who attended a Canadian university. They collected relevant data by means of group interviews and discovered that although the participants did recognize the role of grammar instruction in language education, they varied with respect to their more specific preferences in spite of the fact that they represented similar cultural backgrounds. Interesting insights into the impact of cultural differences on beliefs about FFI also derive from the research project carried out by the present author to which we now turn.

7.4 Research Questions, Participants, Data Collection and Analysis

The study sought to investigate the perceptions of form-focused instruction, understood very broadly as different techniques of grammar instruction and error correction, manifested by advanced Polish and Italians learners of English as a foreign language. More specifically, taking as a point of reference some of the controversies in FFI discussed earlier in this paper, it aimed to explore the similarities and differences between the two groups in such areas as: (1) overall importance of FFI, also with regard to specific language skills, (2) syllabus design

(i.e. structural vs. task-based), (3) planning lessons devoted to form-focused instruction, (4) introduction of grammatical structures (deduction vs. induction, the use of the mother tongue and terminology), (5) ways of practicing points of grammar (controlled vs. communicative practice, input-based vs. output-oriented options), and (6) the provision of corrective feedback on grammar-related errors (i.e. focus, timing, source). There was a total of 212 participants, 106 Polish (85 females and 21 males) and 106 Italian (87 females and 19 males), all of whom were English philology students enrolled in a BA program and participating in teacher training. The average length of experience in learning English was similar in both groups and amounted to about ten years, the Polish students were somewhat more confident about their overall command of English than their Italian counterparts, as evidenced by the results of self-assessment on a six-point scale (3.96 vs. 3.59), and the respondents from both countries were equally convinced of the importance of grammar in learning English, with respective means of 4.05 and 4.10 on a five-point scale (1—lowest, 5—highest). As for the nature of instruction that the Polish and Italian students received, particularly in classes devoted to the teaching of English grammar, the author's experience with the Polish context and consultations with his Italian colleagues indicated that it was similar and represented a traditional approach stressing rules and controlled practice rather than spontaneous use of the structures taught.

Since, in the opinion of the present author, the instruments employed in previous studies of learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction are either overly general and repetitive, asking respondents the same questions in a multitude of ways (e.g. Loewen et al. 2009), or very specific, focusing on a selected facet of form-focused instruction (e.g. Spada et al. 2009), a decision was made to come up with a new survey specifically for the purpose of the present research project. On account of the fact that the discussion of the specifics of the design procedure is, due to space limitations, beyond the scope of this chapter, suffice it to say that the aim was to construct a tool that would tap learners' beliefs about different aspects of FFI, and the point of reference were the latest state-of-the-art publications in this area and also the data collection instruments used in the studies conducted by Schulz (2001), Loewen et al. (2009) and Spada et al. (2009). The outcome of this process was a questionnaire which was intended to provide factual (e.g. length of experience in learning English, self-assessment of overall mastery) and attitudinal information (perceptions of selected aspects of FFI), was worded in English, and contained Likert-scale and open-ended items. The former made up the core of the tool and required the respondents to indicate on a five-point scale (1—strongly disagree, 5—strongly agree) their agreement with 30 statements related to the facets of form-focused instruction listed above, with the caveat that items representing a specific category were distributed throughout the survey rather than grouped together. The latter were general in nature and, following Loewen et al. (2009), consisted of four questions which were meant to obtain information on why the respondents like or dislike studying grammar as well as their preferred and dispreferred instructional options. Prior to its application in the present study, the questionnaire was piloted with a

comparable group of respondents, which resulted in a number of modifications (e.g. wording) and enabled the researcher to establish its internal consistency by calculating Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.81$).

The survey was administered during regularly scheduled classes by the present author (Polish students) and his Italian collaborators (Italian students), the participants were given as much time as they wished to fill it out, and they were asked to answer open-ended questions in English. The collected data were subjected to quantitative analysis in the case of the Likert-scale items and qualitative analysis in the case of the open-ended questions. As to numerical analytic procedures, they involved calculating the frequency of particular types of responses for Polish and Italian subjects, collapsing them into three categories (i.e. strongly agree/agree, undecided, strongly disagree/disagree) and computing their percentages, making comparisons between the two groups with respect to the facets of FFI in question, as well as conducting chi square tests of independence with an eye to determining whether the observed differences were statistically significant. When it comes to qualitative analysis, it consisted in identifying common categories and recurring patterns, but it should be noted that such results will only be touched upon here very briefly and only the most pronounced tendencies will be signaled.

7.5 Research Findings

The percentages of responses to the Likert-scale statements in the agree (*A*), undecided (*U*) and disagree (*D*) category provided by the Polish and Italian participants are presented in Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 which include items related to specific aspects of form-focused instruction, with between-group differences of 10% or more with respect to agreement or disagreement being shaded and those reaching statistical significance being indicated by three asterisks (***). As can be seen from Table 7.1, which presents the subjects' perceptions of the overall significance of FFI, the students were on the whole convinced of the importance of grammar instruction and error correction, both in general and in mastering the skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing. This is evidenced by the fact that the percentages in the agreement category are in all cases considerably higher than in the disagreement category, with the greatest difference standing at 98% and the lowest amounting to 24%. As regards the differences between the two groups of respondents, although none of them was statistically significant, they turned out to be sizable and exceeded 10% in the case of statements 29 and 25 which were connected with the appeal of learning grammar and the assumption that studying and practicing grammatical structures will contribute to more rapid improvement in English, respectively. In both cases, it was the Polish students who were more favorably disposed to FFI, which may stem from the fact that, as revealed in conversations with the author's Italian collaborators, the results of the end-of-the-year assessment in BA programs in Poland hinge to a

Table 7.1 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about overall importance of form-focused instruction

Number	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
29.	I like studying English grammar.	**61%**	**24%**	**15%**	**42%**	**40%**	**18%**
25.	I believe my English will improve quickly if I study and practice grammar.	**66%**	**26%**	**8%**	**48%**	**44%**	**8%**
8.	Teachers should correct students when they make grammar errors in class.	90%	9%	1%	94%	1%	5%
11.	Knowing grammar rules helps communication in English.	87%	10%	3%	90%	7%	3%
17.	Knowledge about grammar rules helps in understanding other people's speech.	72%	23%	5%	75%	23%	2%
23.	Knowing a lot about grammar helps my reading.	90%	9%	1%	94%	5%	1%
1.	I usually keep grammar rules in mind when I write in English.	68%	23%	9%	69%	22%	9%
4.	When I make errors in speaking English, I like my teacher to correct them.	94%	4%	2%	91%	9%	0%
19.	When I make grammar errors in writing in English, I like my teacher to correct them.	97%	1%	2%	98%	2%	0%

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the *A* or *D* category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold

Table 7.2 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about syllabus type

No.	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
9.	I like to study only the structures which cause problems in communication.***	**17%**	**34%**	**49%**	**8%**	**33%**	**59%**
27.	I like the teacher to give me a list of structures that will be taught in a course.	56%	32%	12%	49%	38%	13%

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the *A* or *D* category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold. Statistically significant differences established by means of the chi square test are indicated by ***

much greater extent on the familiarity with the intricacies of the English grammar than they do in Italy.

Somewhat greater disparities were found in the case of the beliefs about the selection of the syllabus which are presented in Table 7.2. Here, the Polish learners turned out to be more in favor of adopting a task-based approach than their Italian counterparts, as indicated by their greater preference for studying only linguistic forms which cause problems in communication (statement 9), with the differences of 9% (*A*) and 10% (*D*) being statistically significant ($x^2 = 4.16$, $p < 0.05$). It should be noted, however, that they were also more convinced of the need to be supplied with a list of structures to be covered (item 27), which means

Table 7.3 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about the design of FFI lessons

Number	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
7.	I like to know exactly which grammar point I am studying.***	**81%**	**16%**	**3%**	**66%**	**25%**	**9%**
30.	I like learning grammar by seeing the explanation, and then doing practice activities.	**87%**	**9%**	**4%**	**72%**	**26%**	**2%**
13.	I prefer to learn grammar as I work on different skills and activities.	**67%**	**23%**	**10%**	**49%**	**43%**	**8%**
28.	I like learning grammar by using the new structure in communicative activities.	60%	33%	7%	57%	41%	3%

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the *A* or *D* category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold. Statistically significant differences established by means of the chi square test are indicated by ***

that they favored as well a structural syllabus and points to a contradiction in their belief systems or perhaps reflects their conviction that the two types of syllabuses should be combined. Still, it must be emphasized that despite the existence of some cross-cultural differences, the members of the two groups were strongly attached to the preselection, sequencing and gradual introduction of points of grammar since the vast of majority agreed with statement 27 meant to represent the structural syllabus (56% of Polish and 49% of Italian students) and disagreed with statement 9 (49% of Polish and 59% of Italian respondents) indicating the task-based one.

Moving on to the design of classes devoted to form-focused instruction, both the Polish and Italian learners were generally speaking slightly more in favor of isolated than integrated FFI, which is visible in the high percentages of agreement with statements 7 and 30 relating to the awareness of what is being taught and being provided with an explanation before using a structure, respectively. At the same time, however, they did recognize the need for a degree of integration since most of them agreed with statement 13 about learning grammar in the course of working on different skills and activities, and statement 28 about the use of targeted forms in communicative activities. Such results appear to imply that, in the opinion of the students, isolation and integration are not mutually exclusive and should both be used, either in a single lesson or throughout the course, to enhance the learning process, a stance that is akin to some extent to the beliefs about the contributions of the structural and task-based syllabus discussed above. As regards the comparison between the two groups, the Poles were more positively inclined towards integration than the Italians students, which is evidenced by the statistically significant difference in item 7 (81% and 66% of agreement, 3% and 9% of disagreement, respectively, $x^2 = 4.03$, $p < 0.05$) and the 15% more responses in the agreement category in item 30. The Polish participants also held more positive beliefs about the contribution of a simultaneous focus on form and meaning, as shown by their 18% greater, albeit statistically insignificant, agreement with

Table 7.4 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about introducing grammar structures

Number	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
2.	It is best to discover grammar rules together with other students.	37%	41%	22%	41%	39%	20%
5.	I like to discover grammar rules by myself.***	**44%**	**36%**	**20%**	**17%**	**43%**	**40%**
10.	I prefer to read or listen to texts containing new structures rather than be given rules.	**37%**	**33%**	**30%**	**39%**	**46%**	**15%**
12.	It is best when the teacher explains grammar rules.	77%	20%	3%	75%	20%	5%
14.	I find it helpful when the teacher uses my mother tongue to explain grammar points.	49%	17%	17%	41%	23%	23%
16.	I believe that the use of terminology is important in teaching grammar.***	**34%**	**43%**	**23%**	**65%**	**30%**	**5%**
20.	It helps me when teachers use demonstration in teaching grammar (e.g. underlining).	82%	17%	1%	81%	18%	1%

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the A or D category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold. Statistically significant differences established by means of the chi square test are indicated by ***

statement 28 stressing the importance of opportunities for the use of the targeted features in real-time communication.

Interesting insights also come from the analysis of the responses to items representative of different ways of introducing grammatical structures, the results of which are included in Table 7.4. On the whole, it is quite clear that both the Polish and Italian participants expressed a penchant for deduction rather than induction, as evidenced by the fact that they were more likely to concur with the assumption that it is most useful when the teacher explains grammar rules (77% of agreement for Polish and 75% for Italian participants in statement 12) than that positing that they like to discover grammar rules for themselves (44% of agreement for Polish and 17% for Italian students in statement 5). There was also a marked preference for the use of the mother tongue in teaching grammar (49% and 41% of agreement in item 14) and the employment of various forms of demonstration (82% and 81% of agreement in item 20). The greatest divergences in this area between the Poles and Italians were observed in the case of individual rule discovery in statement 5, with the former favoring it much more than the latter (27% more in agreement, 20% less for disagreement) and the differences being statistically significant ($x^2 = 18.27$, $p < 0.001$). By contrast, the Polish participants expressed significantly less preference for the use of terminology in grammar instruction than the Italian students, with the differences in terms of agreement and disagreement for item 16 equaling 31% and 18%, respectively ($x^2 = 20.16$, $p < 0.001$). They were also somewhat less convinced of the utility of learning new grammar structures through reading and listening to texts as opposed to being supplied with rules (statement 10).

Table 7.5 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about practicing grammar structures

Number	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
3.	Controlled practice (e.g. doing exercises) is the best way to learn grammar.	73%	21%	7%	82%	15%	3%
18.	I believe it is important to use grammar structures in communication.	76%	19%	5%	81%	16%	3%
15.	I prefer to first understand how a structure is used before I have to produce it.	**94%**	**5%**	**1%**	**80%**	**17%**	**3%**
21.	I like to be given texts in which the new structure is highlighted (e.g. it is in bold).***	**83%**	**14%**	**3%**	**47%**	**46%**	**7%**

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the A or D category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold. Statistically significant differences established by means of the chi square test are indicated by ***

Table 7.6 Beliefs held by Polish and Italian students about correcting grammar errors

Number	Statement	Polish Students ($N = 106$)			Italian Students ($N = 106$)		
		A	*U*	*D*	*A*	*U*	*D*
6.	I believe that the teacher should only correct errors which interrupt communication.	**19%**	**37%**	**44%**	**14%**	**31%**	**55%**
22.	I like the teacher to correct my grammar mistakes as soon as I make them.	69%	24%	7%	72%	23%	6%
24.	I like the teacher to correct my grammar mistakes after an activity is completed.	51%	29%	20%	52%	29%	19%
26.	I prefer to be corrected on grammar by other students rather than the teacher.	**8%**	**28%**	**64%**	**8%**	**17%**	**75%**

A agree, *D* disagree, *U* undecided
Rows with differences in the *A* or *D* category exceeding 10% have been emphasised in bold. Statistically significant differences established by means of the chi square test are indicated by ***

The part of the questionnaire tapping the respondents' beliefs about different techniques of practicing grammar structures mainly concerned the contrast between controlled exercises and focused communication tasks, as well as the distinction between output-based and input-oriented options. As illustrated in Table 7.5, the students from both cultural backgrounds saw a place in FFI for all of these options, as indicated by the levels of agreement exceeding 70% for statements 3, 18, 15, which can be interpreted as their preference for a differentiated and eclectic approach to grammar teaching. When it comes to the differences between the groups, the Polish participants expressed a stronger preference for comprehension-oriented techniques of understanding the form-meaning mappings (item 15) and input enhancement (item 21). In the latter case, the difference was substantial, amounting to 36% in the category of agreement and reaching a statistically significant value ($x^2 = 4.49$, $p < 0.05$). This finding can perhaps be accounted for in terms of the Polish subjects' greater experience with such

instruction as they had been requested in the preceding months to participate in studies which employed a range of input-based techniques. Such an interpretation is quite plausible in view of the fact that, as the present author found in his research into grammar learning strategies in a similar context, the actions learners take with the purpose of mastering and gaining greater control over grammar often reflect the predominant instructional procedures employed by their teachers (cf. Pawlak 2009b).

The last group of Likert-scale items dealt with the focus, timing and source of corrective feedback provided in reaction to grammar errors, with the responses for the two groups being presented in Table 7.6. In line with the findings of previous research into preferences for error correction, both the Polish and Italian students favored frequent treatment of erroneous forms, as visible in the high percentages of disagreement (44% and 55%) with statement 6, they opted for immediate corrective reactions but at the same time recognized to some degree the contribution of delayed correction, as indicated by their responses to statements 22 and 24 (about 70% of responses in the agreement category for the former and 50% for the latter), and they were overwhelmingly against peer correction (64% and 75%). The respondents' cultural background did not seem to affect these preferences to a great extent since differences could only be observed in the case of focusing on errors interfering with communication and the provision of corrective feedback by other students, with the Italian learners being somewhat more opposed to the two possibilities (differences of about 10% in items 6 and 26).

Although, as was explained above, detailed analysis of the participants' responses to the four open-ended questions is beyond the scope of the present chapter, a few comments on some general patterns observed in the qualitative data are in order at this juncture. In the first place, the justifications for liking or disliking the study of grammar were very similar in both groups and revolved around its contribution to greater mastery of the target language, and complexity and boredom, respectively. With regard to instructional techniques and procedures, the Polish students appeared to be more aware of the importance of grammar in communication whereas the Italians stressed its role in ensuring greater accuracy, as illustrated by such comments as "Grammar is essential for successful communication" (a Polish student) or "It is essential to know how to speak properly in a language" (an Italian student). This tendency also found its reflection in the fact that the Poles often stressed the benefits of communicative practice as a follow-up to performing more traditional activities, pointing out, for example, that: "Teaching grammar is often about doing exercises (paraphrasing, filling in the gaps) and we do not use it in real-life communication; we practice grammar structures that are not used". The data also abounded in unfavorable comments about induction contributed by learners from both cultural backgrounds, such as "I don't like to discover rules on my own because I feel I can be wrong and it certainly hampers my learning" (a Polish learner). All of this shows that in some cases the results of qualitative analysis mirrored those of quantitative analysis, but in others there were also some marked divergences.

7.6 Conclusions and Implications

As can be seen from the foregoing discussion, the picture that emerges from the analysis of the beliefs about form-focused instruction held by advanced Polish and Italian learners of English is quite complex, with the findings sometimes being contradictory or open to debate. Nevertheless, it is possible to offer a number of conclusions, both with regard to the subjects' overall perceptions of form-focused instruction and the differences between the two groups in this respect. For one thing, it is clear from the collected data that irrespective of their cultural background, the participants recognize the value of grammar instruction and error correction, they are in favor of adopting a structural syllabus but are also cognizant of the need to use the targeted forms in communication, they express a clear preference for deduction, preferably aided by the use of the first language, they see the value of engaging in a variety of grammar practice activities, and they place a premium on frequent provision of immediate corrective feedback on grammar errors by the teacher. What should be in particular emphasized is their belief that instructional approaches, techniques or procedures which theorists and researchers often consider as irreconcilable can and should be combined for the benefit of successful FFI. As regards cross-cultural differences, the Polish students manifest somewhat more favorable views on the utility of form-focused instruction, they are more sensitive to the need to move beyond controlled, frequently decontextualized exercises and apply the structures taught in communication, and they are more inclined towards isolated FFI while being at the same time slightly more likely to acknowledge the contribution of integration. In addition, in comparison to their Italian counterparts, they express a stronger preference for induction, input-oriented techniques and reactive focus on form, but downplay the importance of metalanguage.

While these results are insightful, they should be approached with circumspection, not least because of the sometimes contradictory responses and the possible impact of a number of intervening variables, such as a gamut of individual differences or the likelihood that the responses might have been to a considerable extent influenced by the participants' specific educational experiences or the distinctive culture of the institutions that they attended. For this reason, there is a need for further research in this area, both quantitative and qualitative in nature, that would take account of the diverse factors that may interact in intricate ways with the cultural background in shaping learners' beliefs about FFI, including the proficiency level, age, cognitive styles, learning goals, motivations and the distinctiveness of local contexts and situations. Given the findings of this and previous studies (Pawlak 2009b), it would also make sense to examine in more detail the relationship between learner beliefs about FFI and teacher classroom practices, as in many cases the former will be significantly affected by the latter. Some suggestions can also be offered with regard to methodological issues as it is clear that a questionnaire, even such that has been carefully designed, piloted and validated, is bound to suffer from inherent shortcomings and it is therefore recommended to use it alongside other

tools of data collection such as observations, interviews or diaries, thus ensuring triangulation. Last but not least, it seems warranted to assume that the line of inquiry represented by this paper is valuable and worth pursuing as it makes it to possible to determine, however roughly and tentatively, the likelihood that pedagogic proposals advanced on the basis of the findings of research conducted in one context will be applicable in another. This is undoubtedly a much needed undertaking in view of the fact that all too often we are prone to uncritically accept instructional techniques propagated on the merit of putative empirical support which nonetheless may be blatantly incompatible with deeply ingrained cultural norms and, as such, frequently prove to be ineffective or unfeasible.

References

Basturkmen H, Loewen S, Ellis R (2004) Teachers' stated beliefs about incidental focus on form and their classroom practices. Appl Linguist 25:243–272

Borg S (2003) Teacher cognition in grammar teaching: a literature review. Lang Aware 12:96–108

Borg S (2006) Teacher cognition and language education: research and practice. Continuum, London

Borg S, Burns A (2008) Integrating grammar in adult TESOL classrooms. TESOL Q 29:456–482

Burgess J, Etherington S (2002) Focus on grammatical form: explicit or implicit? System 30:433–458

DeKeyser RM (1998) Beyond focus on form: cognitive perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In: Doughty CJ, Williams J (eds) Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 42–63

DeKeyser RM (2007) The future of practice. In: DeKeyser RM (ed) Practice in a second language: perspectives from applied linguistics and cognitive psychology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 287–304

Dörnyei Z (2005) The psychology of the language learner: individual differences in second language acquisition. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ

Doughty CJ (1998) Acquiring competence in a second language: form and function. In: Byrnes H (ed) Learning foreign and second language: perspectives in research and scholarship. Modern Language Association of America, New York, pp 128–156

Ellis R (1997) SLA research and language teaching. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Ellis R (2001) Introduction: investigating form-focused instruction. In: Ellis R (ed) Form-focused instruction and second language learning. Blackwell, Oxford, pp 1–46

Ellis R (2002) Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? a review of the research. Stud Second Lang Acquis 24:223–236

Ellis R (2006) Current issues in the teaching of grammar: an SLA perspective. TESOL Q 40:83–107

Ellis R (2008) The study of second language acquisition, 2nd edn. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Ellis R (2009) Measuring implicit and explicit knowledge of a second language. In: Ellis R, Loewen S, Elder C, Erlam R, Philp J, Reinders H (eds) Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 31–64

Griffiths C, Chunhong Z (2008) Researching error correction in China: procedure, product and pitfalls. In: Pawlak M (ed) Investigating English language learning and teaching. Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań–Kalisz, pp 127–137

Grotjahn R (1991) The research programme: subjective theories. Stud Second Lang Acquis 13:187–214
Horwitz EK (1987a) Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In: Wenden AL (ed) Learner strategies in language learning. Prentice Hall, New York, pp 119–129
Horwitz EK (1987b) Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language methods course. Foreign Lang Ann 18:333–340
Horwitz E (1999) Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning: a review of BALLI studies. System 27:557–576
Hosenfeld C (1978) Students' mini-theories of second language learning. Assoc Bull 29:2
Kalaja P, Barcelos A (2003) Introduction. In: Kalaja P, Barcelos A (eds) Beliefs about SLA: new research approaches. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp 1–4
Kramsch C (2003) Metaphor and the subjective construction of beliefs. In: Kalaja P, Barcelos A (eds) Beliefs about SLA: new research approaches. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp 109–128
Krashen S (1982) Principles and practice in second language acquisition. Prentice Hall, New York
Krashen S (1985) The input hypothesis. Longman, London
Larsen-Freeman D (2003) Teaching language: from grammar to grammaring. Thomson and Heinle, Toronto
Larsen-Freeman D (2009) Teaching and testing grammar. In: Long MH, Doughty CJ (eds) The handbook of language teaching. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, pp 518–542
Larsen-Freeman D, Long MH (1991) An introduction to second language acquisition research. Longman, London
Leeman J (2007) Feedback in L2 learning: responding to errors during practice. In: DeKeyser RM (ed) Practice in a second language: perspectives from applied linguistics and cognitive psychology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 111–137
Loewen S, Shaofeng L, Fei F, Thompson A, Nakatsukasa K, Seongmee A, Xiaoqing C (2009) Second language learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction. Mod Lang J 93:91–104
Long MH (1996) The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In: Ritchie W, Bhatia T (eds) Handbook of research on second language acquisition. Academic Press, New York, pp 413–468
Lyster R, Saito K (2010) Oral feedback in classroom SLA: a meta-analysis. Stud Second Lang Acquis 32:265–302
McCargar D (1993) Teacher and student role expectations: cross-cultural differences and implications. Mod Lang J 77:192–207
Mori Y (1999) Epistemological beliefs and language learning beliefs: what do language learners believe about their learning? Lang Learn 49:377–415
Nassaji H, Fotos S (2007) Issues in form-focused instruction and teacher education. In: Fotos S, Nassaji SH (eds) Form-focused instruction and teacher education: studies in honor of rod ellis. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 7–15
Newmark L (1966) How not to interfere in language learning? Int J Am Linguist 32:77–83
Newmark L, Reibel D (1968) Necessity and sufficiency in language learning. Int Rev Appl Linguist Lang Teach 6:145–164
Pawlak M (2004) On the effectiveness of options in teaching grammar: translating theory and research into classroom practice. Studia Anglica Posnaniensia 40:269–287
Pawlak M (2006) The place of form-focused instruction in the foreign language classroom. Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań–Kalisz
Pawlak M (2009a) Factors determining success and failure in the learning of English grammar. In: Barker A, Callahan D, Ferreira A (eds) Success and failure. Uiversidade de Aveiro Departamento de linguas e Culturas, Aveiro, pp 327–338
Pawlak M (2009b) Instructional mode and the use of grammar learning strategies. In: Pawlak M (ed) New perspectives on individual differences in language learning and teaching. Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań–Kalisz, pp 267–290

Pawlak M (2010) Learners' perspectives on the role of error correction in the foreign language classroom: the importance of space, technique and timing. In: Ciuk A, Mołek-Kozakowska K (eds) Exploring space: spatial notions in cultural, literary and language studies. Volume 2. space in language studies. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, pp 316–325

Pawlak M, Droździał-Szelest K (2007) When I think about grammar. exploring English department students' beliefs about grammar, grammar learning and grammar teaching. In: Pawlak M (ed) Exploring focus on form in language teaching. Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań–Kalisz, pp 299–318

Pazawer A, Wang H (2009) Asian students' perceptions of grammar teaching in the ESL classroom. Int J Lang Soc Cult 27:27–35

Peacock M (2001) Pre-service ESL teachers' beliefs about second language learning: a longitudinal study. System 29:177–195

Prabhu NS (1987) Second language pedagogy. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Schmidt R (1990) The role of consciousness in second language learning. Appl Linguist 11:17–46

Schulz R (1996) Focus on form in the foreign language classroom: students' and teachers' views on error correction and the role of grammar. Foreign Lang Ann 17:195–202

Schulz R (2001) Cultural differences in student and teacher perceptions concerning the role of grammar instruction and corrective feedback: USA-Colombia. Mod Lang J 85:244–258

Spada N (1997) Form-focused instruction and second language acquisition: a review of classroom and laboratory research. Lang Teach Abstr 30:73–87

Spada N, Gass S (1986) The role of learner opinions regarding classroom instruction: a review of research. Pap Appl Linguist 1:11–23

Spada N, Lightbown PM (2008) Form-focused instruction: isolated or integrated? TESOL Q 42:181–208

Spada N, Barkaoui K, Peters C, So M, Valeo A (2009) Developing a questionnaire to investigate second language learners' preferences for two types of form-focused instruction. System 37:70–81

Swain M (1985) Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In: Gass SM, Madden C (eds) Input in second language acquisition. Newbury House, Rowley, MA, pp 235–253

Swain M (1995) Three functions of output in second language learning. In: Cook G, Seidlhofer GB (eds) Principles and practice in applied linguistics: studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 125–144

Tanaka K, Ellis R (2003) Study abroad, language proficiency, and learner beliefs about language learning. JALT J 25:63–85

Wenden A (1999) An introduction to metacognitive knowledge and beliefs in language learning: beyond the basics. System 27:435–441

Yang N (1999) The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. System 27:515–535

Chapter 8
Multilingual/Multicultural Perspective on the Identification of Dyslexia

Joanna Nijakowska

Abstract On the one hand, there is a growing literature touching on the identification and remediation of dyslexia in a monolingual population; on the other hand, very little research has been initiated with respect to individuals from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds. There is an increasing and widespread sensitivity and concern over the issues of literacy acquisition and assessment of reading disabilities among school children in multi-cultural and multilingual settings, in particular, those who learn English as a second or subsequent language. Inasmuch as the assessment under such conditions is indeed a great challenge, achieving it early enough may equal enhanced effects in terms of treatment and later reading success. Conversely, delaying diagnosis and intervention leads to under-identification and, in the long run, to disadvantage and cumulative educational failure, not to mention the fact that it proves cost-ineffective. In attempting diagnosis towards dyslexia in a multilingual and multi-cultural environment, first of all there is a need to differentiate between the phenomena that could be characterised as common, regular problems related to L2 acquisition and true warning signs of reading fiasco. In addition, it is vital to understand whether the above-mentioned signs prevail in L1 and L2 alike.

Keywords Dyslexia · Diagnosis · Multi-cultural settings · Educational failure

The present chapter is part of a larger study on the phenomenon of developmental dyslexia (Nijakowska 2010).

J. Nijakowska (✉)
University of Łódź, Łódź, Poland
e-mail: jnijak@wp.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_8,

8.1 Introduction

While there is common agreement that early diagnosis of learning disorders is pivotal to the further educational career of at-risk children, especially in light of research findings indicating that with age, reading difficulties become progressively intractable, it appears that too frequently this postulate cannot be easily put into practice. Various universally applicable but also country- and language-specific factors seem to contribute to such a state of affairs, including lack of agreement as to the underlying causes, definition and assessment criteria among researchers, unsatisfactory degree of awareness among some of the stakeholders or lack of resources in terms of appropriate standardized diagnostic measures, formal regulations, let alone money. This already complex situation is apparently aggravated in the bilingual or multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Assessment of dyslexia in speakers of varying languages proves intricate, one of the reasons being that the same phonological deficit can be capable of bringing about different manifestations of reading problems across languages, depending on their orthographic depth. Wagner et al. (2005) speculate that as much as a mild phonological impairment in Spanish-speaking children tends not to deter them from acquiring accurate word reading ability, though slightly hampering fluency, in Spanish due to its transparent orthography, it would do more harm if they were English L1 speakers. Hypothetically, if the same children had an English native-language family background and were to fulfil the reading requirement in English, the same phonological impairment would be very likely to invite considerable problems in accurate and fluent reading, possibly even further exacerbated by inappropriate instruction, neglecting explicit reference to the alphabetic principle. Such a view can be substantiated by the findings of research on reading acquisition in alphabetic languages (Ziegler and Goswami 2005, 2006) indicating that, first, reading difficulties in all alphabetic languages studied to date can be tracked down to phonological processing disorders, second, the way letter-to-sound mapping is executed in different languages influences the reading strategies adopted by readers in these languages.

The aim of the chapter is to raise sensitivity to and awareness of learning difficulties in second language literacy acquisition that might be experienced by pupils for whom English is not a native language (L1). With a view to presenting the multilingual/multicultural perspective on the process of identification of dyslexia, I concentrate on individuals from ethnic and language minority communities who learn to read at school in their second language which is different from the language they use at home.

8.2 Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia) or Limited Knowledge of the Second Language?

It needs stressing that great majority of children from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds find learning English as a second language (ESL) literacy a perfectly attainable goal (e.g. see Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008b,

2009a for the reports on pupils' scholastic attainments in England), however for a minority of pupils from this population it seems to remain a considerable challenge (see Department for Children, Schools and Families 2009b for the report on students with SEN—special educational needs in England). Reading difficulties in the early stages of school education experienced by a number of children learning English as an additional language (EAL) may be caused by linguistic and cultural factors which mainly influence reading comprehension and usually refer to sentence and text level, however, a relatively small number of children seem to experience exceptional and continuing reading problems at the word level (dyslexia). These word level reading difficulties often fail to be properly diagnosed and are attributed to reduced knowledge of the language in which children are trying to learn how to read (Cline and Shamsi 2000). Cline and Shamsi (2000) point to the fact that the major hazard for educators is lack of certainty as to the actual cause (specific learning difficulty or limited knowledge of the target language) of slowness or failure in literacy acquisition, which often results in delayed diagnosis and appropriate treatment for pupils whose reading problems do not stem from their language status but can be traced back to the underlying learning difficulties.

Apparently, most research on dyslexia concentrates on monolingual speakers and there is a growing literature touching on the identification and remediation of dyslexia in a monolingual population. At the same time most research on learning to read in second language (L2) refers to students who do not experience any specific learning difficulties. Very little research has been initiated with respect to individuals from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds who find it difficult to learn to read in L2 (Cline and Shamsi 2000; Deponio et al. 2000; Everatt et al. 2000a, b; Ganschow et al. 2000; Stambolitzis and Pumfrey 2000). There is an increasing and widespread sensitivity and concern over the issues of literacy acquisition and assessment of reading disabilities among school children in multicultural and multilingual settings, in particular, those who learn English as a second or subsequent language. Inasmuch as the assessment under such conditions is indeed a great challenge, achieving it early enough may equal enhanced effects in terms of treatment and later reading success. Conversely, delaying diagnosis and intervention leads to under-identification and, in the long run, to disadvantage and cumulative educational failure, not to mention the fact that it proves cost ineffective. As Geva (2000) rightly stresses, in attempting diagnosis towards dyslexia in a multilingual/multicultural environment, first of all there is a need to differentiate between the phenomena that could be characterised as common, regular problems related to L2 acquisition and true warning signs of reading fiasco. In addition, it is vital to understand whether the above-mentioned signs prevail in L1 and L2 alike.

Children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, raised in a bilingual environment [living in a target/L2 speaking country and using their native language (L1) at home], frequently possess considerably weak L2 language skills before the commencement of formal schooling. Many educators apparently share a view that these children necessarily need to acquire a decent spoken command of L2 in order to learn to read it. Such an attitude also extends to promoting a view that waiting

for the L2 oral proficiency to fully develop is required to ensure the reliable and valid identification of learning/reading problems (Geva 2000). In research on at-risk learners of English as a second language (ESL), Geva (2000) confirms that elementary classroom teachers are rather reluctant and hesitant in qualifying ESL children as potentially at-risk for reading failure due to the prevailing belief that reading disabilities cannot be identified until these children reach a certain threshold of L2 oral proficiency. However, according to Geva (2000) there is no need to wait because, notwithstanding the crucial effect of L2 oral proficiency on reading comprehension, it seems to play a minor role in explaining poor word-based reading skills (word and pseudo-word decoding abilities) in L2, which prevail despite adequate instruction. Hence the need for early assessment of word decoding skills in L2, even if children still lack adequate L2 facility. As a matter of fact, it may be the case that children decode words much more accurately in L2 than in L1, which would depend on how letters map onto sounds (orthographic depth) in a given language. On the one hand, substantial differences may not be spotted between the accuracy and rate of word decoding in L1 and L2 in spite of varying levels of proficiency. Under such circumstances, reading comprehension seems greater in L1 than in L2 due to the facilitating effect of children's command of L1. On the other hand, along with not fully developed L2 oral proficiency, also poor decoding skills are capable of inhibiting reading comprehension.

Another important issue is that poor word recognition abilities can be traced back to low-grade phonological processing, which holds true across languages. Skilful phoneme manipulation enhances the development of good decoding skill, which, in turn, translates into high-level reading from the first grades. By contrast, below-standard phoneme manipulation ability has a debilitating effect on word decoding skill, possibly leading to reading failure. Importantly, several cross-linguistic studies consistently report the linguistic interdependence of phonological processing skills (and related processes, such as naming speed and phonological memory), in other words, these skills in one language are capable of predicting word recognition ability within and across languages, irrespective of existing differences between alphabetic systems of phoneme-to-grapheme conversion. All in all, most important for diagnosing reading disabilities in the multilingual context is the fact that differences in phonological processing abilities are critically related to word recognition skills across languages, which means that phonological processing abilities in one language, no matter whether L1 or L2, can predict individual differences in word decoding in another language. Diagnosing reading difficulties in a cross-linguistic context proves plausible even in view of not yet fully developed L2 proficiency (Geva 2000).

In sum, Geva (2000) suggests, first of all, that heavy reliance on L2 oral proficiency in the identification of ESL learners who can be at-risk for reading disability is unreasonable, second, that two sets of complementary procedures (useful in L1) can be successfully applied in assessing towards dyslexia in bilingual or ESL individuals. The procedures involve phonological processing abilities and rapid basic reading skills assessment as well as looking for the gap between listening and reading skills. A small gap is expected in average-achieving children,

by contrast, the discrepancy between much greater scores on listening comprehension tasks and poor reading comprehension is a vital indicator of a child experiencing print processing difficulties rather than problems with processing and comprehending verbal information. To stress it again, postponing diagnostic activities in the case of ESL children who encounter substantial difficulties in developing word recognition faculty can have far-reaching damaging consequences for these children, as they are simultaneously deprived of the chance for intensive instruction in word recognition/attack skills.

Nowadays, population of multilingual and multicultural communities seems to be growing and such ethnographic reality poses new requirements on educators and clinicians in terms of dyslexia screening procedures and tools as well as individual education plans in order to cater for the needs of children from ethnic and language minorities, e.g. ESL learners. The estimates are that ESL children constitute almost 10% of the entire public school enrolment in 2000–2001 in the USA, with the numbers expected to grow to 40% by the year 2030. Vast majority of the non-English-speaking population (about 80%) is mainly Spanish, however in some urban districts around 100 languages have been documented to be used among students (Wagner et al. 2005), unlike in Canada, where the student population is much more diverse in terms of native languages of ESL children and more numerous (approximately 18% as of 2001) (Geva 2000; Lovett et al. 2008). According to the summary information on actual languages spoken in schools by students whose L1 is not English provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008a), in England pupils whose first language is known or believed to be known other than English constitute about 12.5% of all pupils of compulsory school age and above; for 0.3% of these pupils their first language is unclassified. Of the pupils whose first language is known or believed to be known other than English, specific language can be provided for about 79% of pupils and for these 79% some 240 languages were recorded.

8.3 Identification and Assessment of Dyslexia in ESL Setting

In fact, it seems that early screening procedures designed primarily with monolingual children in mind can benefit bilinguals, as demonstrated in the case of learners of ESL. Everatt et al. (2000a) maintain that, in particular, phonological measures seem to be useful in identifying students with literacy problems, regardless of language background. Everatt et al. (2000b) found that young English/Sylheti bilingual children demonstrating below-standard spelling and reading skills can be accurately distinguished from the control group by the scores they achieve on several tests, including the measures of phonological processing ability and rapid naming. Apart from these two, the ability to recite high frequency sequences and repeat novel sequences of unknown or non-linguistic information, as well as the ability to recognize previously seen shapes also proved vital. Everatt

et al. (2000b) stress that phonological measures indeed provide consistent results with reference to bilingual and monolingual learners alike.

Hutchinson et al. (2004) support the view that early identification and assessment towards dyslexia of children with English as additional language (EAL) translates into more desirable effects in terms of therapy and treatment. They, nevertheless, admit that in the cases of children with EAL such a diagnosis is much more difficult than in monolingual children due to frequently poor L2 proficiency, the lack of L1 assessment and poor teachers' awareness of the effect dyslexia has on bilingual language processing, which altogether often leads to under-identification. Hutchinson et al. (2004) report the phonological assessment battery (PhAB) of service in identifying individuals with poor phonological skills, responsible for reading accuracy difficulties in both EAL and monolingual children, with the EAL learners ready for PhAB in the second year at school and above, on condition that their language skills allow to understand test instructions. All in all, as indicated by Lovett et al. (2008), it seems that, principally, the components of the assessment of reading disorders in ESL children would be similar to those used in the diagnosis of reading deficits in L1.

Bearing in mind the ethnographic reality mentioned earlier, understandably, educators and policy makers are forced to respond to the educational needs of ESL learners, also with respect to the appropriate identification procedures. Given the facts cited so far about the necessity to distinguish between problems regularly occurring in the foreign language learning (FLL) context and signs of forthcoming reading failure as well as the facts about assessment procedures originally designed for monolingual speakers but applicable also in multilingual context, whether such children should undergo the identification process in their L1 or L2 seems to remain an open question. Generally, that would depend on the levels of proficiency in both native language and English. A distinction between the assessment of proficiency in a given language (L1 or L2) and assessment of other skills, abilities and knowledge through the medium of a given language (L1 or L2) should be carefully made here. Some practitioners suggest that children should be assessed in their stronger language, others advocate the idea that children should be encouraged to switch between their languages while completing assessment tasks. On the one hand, assessment of ESL learners in English may prove troublesome in that they may simply find the task instruction incomprehensible, despite the potential for performing the task itself. On the other hand, while assessment conducted in L1 may offer greater insight into the range of abilities and knowledge, it cannot possibly prognosticate reading acquisition in English to the same extent as the assessment in English can. It is also the case that some children rarely use their native language for academic purposes and may simply lack the necessary vocabulary connected with scholastic activities (Cline and Shamsi 2000; Wagner et al. 2005).

Wagner et al. (2005) rightly point to the fact that the identification of learning disabilities in ESL learners needs to comprise the evaluation of the course of literacy instruction, which is useful for the examination of both opportunity (access) to learn and the skills learned, especially when children are given such

instruction in their native language prior to training in English. Thus, if children demonstrate good phonological skills developed in their L1 and at the same time experience difficulty in mastering reading ability in English, it may possibly be attributed to the quality and amount of instruction in English rather than to the underlying phonological deficit. If a student who gets literacy training in his L1 does not successfully develop reading ability in L1, it can be suspected, with good reason, that the prevalent phonological deficit constitutes the underlying cause. However, such factors as the varying instructional and cultural background of speakers sharing the L1 but having different origins, as is the case with Spanish speakers who are Puerto Rican, Mexican or Spanish, can play a role as well.

All in all, Wagner et al. (2005) advocate developing a comparable assessments procedure, grounded on examining at-risk ESL learners with regard to both native and English language. Ideally, these comparable assessments should touch on the same domains and levels with similar precision. In practice, availability of such compatible, valid and high-standard procedures is extremely rare. Such an enterprise poses considerable demands for multiple reasons, for instance, designing comparable assessments across languages varying in terms of orthography (both the type of the alphabet and orthographic depth) or alphabetic and non-alphabetic languages is indeed a challenge. Nevertheless, Wagner et al. (2005) report successful work on compiling a comparable assessment procedure for Spanish, developed from an existing one in English and comprising the following domains: knowledge of letter names and sounds, phonological awareness, rapid naming, word reading accuracy and efficiency, and reading comprehension.

Faced with mounting problems concerning assessment procedures in EAL students, one might also turn to the model of assessment involving the dynamism of response to instruction (Szczerbiński 2007; Vellutino et al. 1998; Wagner et al. 2005). The model assumes that the identification of students at-risk for reading failure, who require additional remedial teaching, should be based on their reduced response to instruction. In the context of EAL students, limited reaction to ESL or EFL services is applicable.

Yet another perspective on the assessment of learning difficulty follows from the research on the native language-based foreign language learning (FLL) difficulties. Here we concentrate on individuals who find the study of L2/foreign language, mainly executed in the formal, classroom environment rather than in the naturalistic setting of the target language-speaking country and its culture, a considerably demanding task. Identifying the problems they encounter, which can most possibly be traced back, as mentioned above, to their poor native language skills, is helpful in designing effective remedial teaching methods with regard to foreign language study.

The finding that students encountering either subtle or overt difficulties in reading, spelling, listening and speaking in their native language are likely to experience similar difficulties in FLL is, naturally, of vital importance for the assessment of their potential performance in foreign language courses. Generally, a comprehensive evaluation procedure should best involve several components, such as a review of a developmental history of the student and a scrupulous survey

of his/her native as well as FLL accounts (Ganschow et al. 1998). Implications for the assessment of difficulties in FLL drawn from the studies conducted by Sparks et al. (Ganschow and Sparks 1995; Sparks et al. 1995, 1997c) explicitly indicate both native language (English) and foreign language aptitude measures as a must. Administration of the standardised measures of the native language skills (reading, phonological/orthographic processing, grammar, writing, vocabulary and oral language) and the foreign language aptitude test (MLAT) sheds light on FLL potential (Ganschow et al. 1998). Native language phonological/orthographic measures consist of tests of phonemic awareness, pseudoword reading and spelling, which is an additional indicator of future foreign language performance. It is known that the score on the long version of the MLAT turned out to be a key predictor of the foreign language performance, hence the proposition to use it as a screening tool for diagnosing students' aptness for FLL. Furthermore, since the subtests of the MLAT measure different aspects of language learning, they could serve as diagnostic tools for detecting the possible problem areas in FLL. Additionally, attention should be paid to whether the language background, together with the current native language difficulty, are adequately documented as well as whether there exists a corroborated record of a failure in or an excessive struggle with the foreign language courses. Finally, it needs stressing again that the data collected during the psycho-educational assessment pave the way for the development of alternative foreign language instruction, with adequate adjustments made with reference to the FLL methods and strategies (Sparks et al. 1989).

A different approach towards evaluating learning difficulties in L2, though sharing some elements with the one presented above, especially with regard to the assessment procedures involving L1, is the one proposed by Helland (2008). Helland gives an account of the principles that served as guidelines in designing a test battery—'English 2 Dyslexia Test', used for testing English as L2 in Norwegian learners with dyslexia of Grade 6 and 7. Such a L2 test would necessarily integrate the following: differences between L1 and L2, with reference to language typology and features of the orthographic system, customary signs of dyslexia in L1 and typical symptoms of the disorder in L2, also vital elements of a language test and crucial components of a dyslexia test. In fact, Helland (2008) proposes that the above assessment tenets could equally be applied to other languages learned as L2 besides English.

Interestingly, functional neuroimaging techniques can also be potentially utilized during the diagnosis of ESL/EAL learners in order to identify certain markers of reading disability (Pugh et al. 2005).

8.4 Conclusion

Admittedly, despite increasing recognition of dyslexia throughout the world, tests for identification of individuals with dyslexia exist in relatively few languages (Smythe and Everatt 2000). Not only in deep orthographies, such as English, but

also in highly transparent orthographies and logographic languages there are reports of individuals faced with problems in learning to read and spell. As maintained by Vellutino et al. (2004), impaired fluency and speed in word identification and text processing, which lead to reading comprehension difficulties, are claimed to be the key markers for dyslexia in such languages. Thus, quite naturally, diagnosing dyslexia in different languages cannot be reduced to the assessment of phonological awareness, but requires the examination of a broad scope of cognitive identifiers, for example, the speed of processing or visual recognition skills, depending on the orthographic features of a given language, possibly conducive to diverse occurrence and manifestations of dyslexia across scripts. It is suggested that for students with dyslexia learning English, the processes related to phonological awareness constitute the main obstacle.

In assessing towards dyslexia in bilingual and multilingual/multicultural settings it is crucial not to mistake true warning signs of reading difficulty for common, regular problems related to L2 acquisition. It seems unreasonable to heavily rely on L2 oral proficiency in the identification of ESL pupils who demonstrate early symptoms of reading disability and to postpone the assessment until L2 oral faculty is fully developed because it seems to play a minor role in explaining poor word-based reading skills in L2, which prevail despite adequate instruction.

The number of bilingual/multilingual children who experience severe and continuing reading problems at the word level (dyslexia) seems relatively small in comparison to the number of students who may be slow in literacy acquisition due to linguistic and/or cultural reasons. Unfortunately, these word level reading difficulties happen to be misdiagnosed and are often attributed to reduced knowledge of the language in which children are trying to learn how to read. A major task for educators is to further develop sensitivity to and awareness of learning difficulties in second language literacy acquisition that might be experienced by pupils for whom English it is not a native language (L1), individuals from ethnic and language minority communities learning to read in English at school. It seems a great challenge to gain certainty as to the actual cause (specific learning difficulty or limited knowledge of the target language) of slowness or failure in literacy acquisition. As a matter of fact, it appears that early screening procedures designed primarily with monolingual English children in mind can, at least to some extent, benefit bilingual and multilingual students.

Beyond doubt, timely diagnosis, both in monolingual and multilingual/multicultural settings, provides opportunities for immediate intervention, designed to prevent a child from encountering intensified, severe dyslexic difficulties. Early diagnosis, conditioning the efficient help, paired with an opportunity to compensate for their developmental delays, should be offered to children at risk for dyslexia. The necessity of preventive treatment drawing on early diagnosis has been highlighted by practitioners (Benton 1978; Bogdanowicz 2002; Elliot and Place 2000; Górniewicz 1998; Jędrzejowska and Jurek 2003; Johnson et al. 2001; Ott 1997). The earlier the pedagogical intervention, the more efficient it is in terms of time and effort. Moreover, it can possibly hold back high anxiety and low

self-esteem from developing (Everatt et al. 2000a). On the other hand, if the dyslexic difficulties are not adequately recognised and dealt with instantly, they are forceful enough to exert considerable influence on the course of the scholastic career of the child. The assessment towards dyslexia is a typically complex task in monolinguals, it gets even more complicated in bilingual and multilingual/multicultural environment, however, there is no doubt that it is worth every effort.

It is true that in most research on dyslexia bilingual and multilingual/multicultural individuals rarely constitute a focus, unlike monolingual speakers. In addition, studies on reading acquisition in L2 mainly refer to students who are not dyslexic. Since little research combining the areas of reading acquisition in L2 and specific learning difficulties has been documented so far, naturally, new research perspectives open and scientific initiative is invited so that our knowledge concerning bilingual and multilingual/multicultural dyslexic learners, both with reference to identification and provision, can be filled with exciting findings.

References

Benton A (1978) Dyslexia: An appraisal of current knowledge. In: Benton L, Pearl D (eds) Dyslexia: An appraisal of current knowledge. Oxford University Press, New York, pp 451–476

Bogdanowicz M (2002) Ryzyko dysleksji. Problem i diagnozowanie [Risk for Dyslexia. Definition and Diagnosis]. Wydawnictwo Harmonia, Gdańsk

Cline T, Shamsi T (2000) Language needs or special needs? The assessment of learning difficulties in literacy among children learning English as an additional language: A literature review [RR 184]. Retrieved on 30 August, 2010 from: http://publications.education.gov.uk PageFunction = productdetails&PageMode = publications&ProductId = RR184&

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008a) DCSF: Pupil characteristics and class sizes in England: January 2008 (Provisional). Retrieved on 30 August, 2010 from: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008b) Attainment by pupil characteristics, in England 2007/08. Retrieved on 30 August, 2010 from: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009a) Key stage 2 attainment by pupil characteristics, in England 2008/09. Retrieved on 30 August, 2010 from: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009b) Special educational needs in England, January 2009. Retrieved on 30 August, 2010 from: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk

Deponio P, Landon J, Reid G (2000) Dyslexia and bilingualism–implications for assessment, teaching and learning. In: Peer L, Reid G (eds) Multilingualism, literacy and dyslexia. A challenge for educators. David Fulton, London, pp 52–60

Elliot J, Place M (2000) Dzieci i młodzież w kłopocie. Poradnik nie tylko dla psychologów [Children and adolescents in trouble. A guide not only for psychologists]. Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne. Spółka Akcyjna, Warszawa

Everatt J, Adams E, Smyth I (2000a) Bilingual children's profiles on dyslexia screening measures. In: Peer L, Reid G (eds) Multilingualism, literacy and dyslexia. A challenge for educators. David Fulton, London, pp 36–44

Everatt J, Smythe I, Adams E, Ocampo D (2000b) Dyslexia screening measures and bilingualism. Dyslexia 6:42–56

Ganschow L, Sparks R (1995) Effects of direct instruction in Spanish phonology on the native-language skills and foreign-language aptitude of at-risk foreign-language learners. J Learn Disabilities 28(2):107–120

Ganschow L, Sparks R, Javorsky J (1998) Foreign language learning difficulties: A historical perspective. J Learn Disabilities 31(3):248–258

Ganschow L, Schneider E, Evers T (2000) Difficulties of English as a foreign language (EFL) for students with language-learning disabilities (dyslexia). In: Peer L, Reid G (eds) Multilingualism, literacy and dyslexia. A challenge for educators. David Fulton, London, pp 182–191

Geva E (2000) Issues in the assessment of reading disabilities in L2 children–beliefs and research evidence. Dyslexia 6:13–28

Górniewicz E (1998) Pedagogiczna diagnoza specyficznych trudności w czytaniu i pisaniu [Pedagogical assessment of specific difficulties in reading and spelling]. Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń

Helland T (2008) Second language assessment in dyslexia: Principles and practice. In: Kormos J, Kontra EH (eds) Language learners with special needs. An international perspective. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 68–85

Hutchinson JM, Whiteley HE, Smith CD, Connors L (2004) The early identification of dyslexia: Children with English as an additional language. Dyslexia 10:179–195

Jędrzejowska E, Jurek A (2003) Diagnoza i terapia dysleksji rozwojowej [Assessment and therapy of developmental dyslexia]. In: Gałkowski T, Jastrzębowska G (eds) Logopedia. Pytania i odpowiedzi, Wydanie drugie poprawione i rozszerzone [Logopaedics. Questions and answers], 2nd edn. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole, pp 536–608

Johnson M, Peer L, Lee R (2001) Pre-school children and dyslexia: Policy, identification and intervention. In: Fawcett AJ (ed) Dyslexia. Theory and good practice. Whurr, London, pp 231–255

Lovett MW, De Palma M, Frijters J, Steinbach K, Temple M, Benson N, Lacerenza L (2008) Interventions for reading difficulties. A comparison of response to intervention by ELL and EFL struggling readers. J Learn Disabilities 41(4):333–352

Nijakowska J (2010) Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom. Multilingual Matters, Bristol

Ott P (1997) How to detect and manage dyslexia a reference and resource manual. Heinemann Educational, Oxford

Pugh KR, Sandak R, Frost SJ, Moore D, Einar Mencl W (2005) Examining reading development and reading disability in English language learners: Potential contributions from neuroimaging. Learn Disabilities Res Pract 20(1):24–30

Smythe I, Everatt J (2000) Dyslexia diagnosis in different languages. In: Peer L, Reid G (eds) Multilingualism, literacy and dyslexia. A challenge for educators. David Fulton, London, pp 12–21

Sparks R, Ganschow L, Pohlman J (1989) Linguistic coding deficits in foreign language learners. Ann Dyslexia 39:179–195

Sparks R, Ganschow L, Patton J (1995) Prediction of performance in first-year foreign language courses: Connections between native and foreign language learning. J Educ Psychol 87(4): 638–655

Sparks R, Ganschow L, Patton J, Artzer M, Siebenhar D, Plageman M (1997) Prediction of foreign language proficiency. J Educ Psychol 89(3):549–561

Stambolitzis A, Pumfrey P (2000) Text genre, miscue analysis, bilingualism and dyslexia: Teaching strategies with junior school pupils. In: Peer L, Reid G (eds) Multilingualism, literacy and dyslexia. A challenge for educators. David Fulton, London, pp 70–79

Szczerbiński M (2007) Dysleksja rozwojowa: próba definicji [Developmental dyslexia: An attempt towards defining the disorder]. In: Kostka-Szymańska M, Krasowicz-Kupis G (eds) Dysleksja. Problem znany czy nieznany? [Dyslexia. Familiar or unfamiliar problem?]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii-Skłodowskiej, Lublin, pp 48–70

Vellutino FR, Scanlon DM, Tanzman MS (1998) The case for early intervention in diagnosing reading disability. J School Psychol 36(4):367–394

Vellutino FR, Fletcher JM, Snowling MJ, Scanlon DM (2004) Specific reading disability (dyslexia): What have we learned in the past four decades? J Child Psychol Psychiatry 45(1):2–40

Wagner R, Francis DJ, Morris RD (2005) Identifying English language learners with learning disabilities: Key challenges and possible approaches. Learn Disabilities Res Pract 20(1):6–15
Ziegler JC, Goswami U (2005) Reading acquisition, developmental dyslexia, and skilled reading across languages: A psycholinguistic grain size theory. Psychol Bull 131:3–29
Ziegler JC, Goswami U (2006) Becoming literate in different languages: Similar problems, Different solutions. Dev Sci 9(5):426–453

Chapter 9
Is Teaching Culture-Bound? A Cross-Cultural Study on the Beliefs of ELT Teachers

Cem Can, Hasan Bedir and Grażyna Kiliańska-Przybyło

Abstract ELT teacher education has traditionally been based on the development of a repertoire of teaching skills, acquired through methodology courses at ELT Departments, observing experienced teachers and practice-teaching in a controlled setting as in micro-teaching or peer-teaching. However, the programs focusing on such kind of teacher training seem to be overlooking the nature of teacher learning process which should be viewed as a form of socialization into the professional thinking. According to Richards (Beyond training. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998) the teaching process is a thinking process shaping decision making reflected into the teaching itself. By the same token, novice teachers and student teachers should be equipped with not only the knowledge about the subject matter, instruction, and context, but also the repertoire of 'mental scripts and behavioural routines' (Berliner Exploring teachers' thinking. Cassell, London, pp. 60–83, 1987, p. 72) moulding the teacher beliefs about language teaching, learner, and teacher. Borg (Teacher cognition and language education. Continuum Research and Practice, London, 2006, p. 275) draws our attention to the impact of contextual (and cultural) factors on the novice teachers' cognitions. Neglecting them results in partial and flawed characterization of teachers and teaching.

In this particular study, we aimed at comparing Polish and Turkish novice and student teacher beliefs on language teaching, learner, and teacher considering the variables such as culture, year of experience and educational system. Additionally,

C. Can (✉) · H. Bedir
Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey
e-mail: cemcan@cu.edu.tr

H. Bedir
e-mail: hbedir@cu.edu.tr

G. Kiliańska-Przybyło
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: grazyna.kilianska-przybylo@us.edu.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_9, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2011

we intended to examine images generated by novice teachers in different educational and cultural settings (a closer look would be given to similar studies) in order to determine the extent to which the beliefs reflect teachers' awareness of professional practice (or lack of it) or the impact of cultural variables.

Keywords English Language Teaching (ELT) · Teacher training · Cultural variables · Polish and Turkish teachers

9.1 Background to the Study

Current tendencies in ELT teacher education stress the role of cognitive processes and the impact of cultural as well as contextual variables that might shape them. Two metaphors, namely: "the theory/practice iceberg" metaphor (Malderez and Medgyes 1996, p. 115) and "the teacher-as-thinker" metaphor (Richards 1994) best illustrate the point. The former suggests that the practice of language teaching constitutes a visible tip of the iceberg, which largely depends on and is conditioned by the invisible, i.e. not fully realized culture-based factors, such as planning skills, knowledge of pupils, language, activities and processes as well as beliefs, attitudes and feelings. The latter refers to the concept of teacher expertise and the impact of reflective processes on teacher's behavioural routines and practices.

The traditional "process–product approach" to teacher education and language teaching, based on the development of a repertoire of teaching skills, observation of experienced teachers and practice-teaching in a controlled setting, is often criticized for overlooking interpretive worlds of the teachers (Freeman 1996, p. 734 in Jensen 2006). Recent studies (Borg 2006; Richards 1998) prove that the teaching process is a thinking process, involving a teacher in actively constructing an individual and workable theory of teaching, which is shaped by personal experiences, beliefs and perceptions held before entering the program. This theory, verified by the context in which it is implemented, exert strong impact on teachers' work and future teaching methods (Lortie 1975 in Farrell 2006; Richards 1994).

Thus, the research perspective should focus on the process of shaping/reshaping teacher's conceptualizations about teaching as well as developing teachers' awareness and self-knowledge. This can be achieved by making teachers realize their own beliefs and highlighting factors that might determine their teaching behaviour.

The chapter presents the results of one-year study, in which the initial cognitions of Polish and Turkish teacher trainees are discussed and contrasted with the cognitions that these two groups have at the end of the teacher training programmes. A closer look is given to the analysis of metaphors generated by Polish and Turkish trainees, the evolution of their beliefs and the examination of cultural factors that might possibly have impact on them.

9.1.1 Reasons for Implementing Metaphor Analysis in Teacher Education

Robertson (1998, p. 97 in Farrell 2006) claims that the main problem of teacher beliefs is that they are tacit and that 'working from tacit images imprisons the teacher in a single frame of reference, which may be inappropriate to their future teaching contexts'. Robertson (1998, p. 70 in Farrell 2006) suggests that teacher education programmes should provide intervention to 'free [teachers] from tacit images of teaching.'

Metaphor analysis, because of the expressibility, compactness, and vividness of metaphors, is widely recognized in the field of education and applied linguistics as a tool for examining teacher' and learners' thinking, studying the evolution of their beliefs and attitudes or serving as an example of awareness-raising tasks (Cortazzi and Jin 1999, p. 150).

Another application of metaphor analysis is in the teacher education. Here, metaphor analysis can be implemented used to help teachers (both pre- and in-service ones):

- 'to articulate representations of themselves and their experience' (Kramsch 2003, p. 125; Nikitina and Furuoka. 2008b),
- 'to promote awareness of their professional practice' (Cortazzi and Jin 1999, p. 155),
- 'to reflect on their own experience and develop professionally' (Cortazzi and Jin1999, p. 150),
- 'to construct and verbalize their professional identity' (Efron and Bolotin Joseph 2001, p. 77; Pajak 1983, p.123 in Farrell 2006, p. 238),
- 'to help in reflective exploration of teachers' selves-in practice' (Efron and Bolotin Joseph 2001, p. 77).

A considerable number of studies employed metaphor analysis as an incentive to help teachers to articulate and assess their assumptions, beliefs and views on teaching and classroom interaction (Bernat 2009; Clandinin and Connellly, quoted in Jensen 2006; Farrell 2006; Dooley 1998; Kramsch 2003; Nikitina and Furuoka 2008a; Oxford et al. 1998; Strugielska and Strzemeski 2010; Swales 1994; Thornbury 1991; Vieira Abrahoa 2006; Zapata and Lacorte 2007). Still further studies are required into the evolution of the beliefs over extended period of time and examination of some cultural and contextual variables on teacher personal theories.

9.1.2 The Impact of Cultural and Contextual Factors on Teacher Beliefs

Metaphors are closely linked with culture (Kövecses 2005; Su 2008). Different experiences and cultures will produce different understandings towards the external world which will be reflected linguistically via metaphor, and in turn, metaphors will shape our perceptions of the world (Su 2008, p. 246).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 22) add that the most fundamental values in a culture are 'coherent with the metaphoric structure of the most fundamental concepts in a culture', and if some "can vary from culture to culture", then the fundamental metaphors of teaching, learning and language are worth investigating, both within one culture (e.g. to study occupational culture and beliefs of teachers) and across cultures as a part of a study of culture learning (Cortazzi and Jin 1999, p. 151).

However, when examining teacher's beliefs and cognitions cross-culturally, one cannot neglect the culture of the teaching profession, which also exerts strong impact on the teacher's belief system as it determines the understanding of some crucial issues and imposes particular actions. The culture of the teaching profession is referred to by Woods (1996, p. 48) as a 'tribe' or subculture with shared behaviours, shared routines, shared language and shared understandings of the concepts referred to by that language. As a result, some teaching terminology, including terms such as 'proficiency', 'grammar', 'cloze' and 'input', and such phrases as 'information gap activity', 'communicative approach' is common to any teacher, irrespective of his/her culture, although, as with any culture, the precise understanding of what is referred to by such will vary and will be determined by particular contexts. Woods (1996, p. 49) presents the view that teachers also have common concepts of appropriate behaviour patterns related to particular social situations, for example the classroom, the teachers' meeting, the afterclass student consultation, the teacher's room atmosphere, the code of behaviour, and so on. However, the frequency of pattern implementation may vary, quite the same as the internal structure of these patterns may be susceptible to modifications.

9.1.3 Selected Studies of Cultural Impact on Teacher's Metaphors

This subchapter focuses on the presentation of some studies which indicate the cultural impact on teacher's cognitions. To begin with, the study by Cortazzi and Jin (1999, p. 149) will be discussed. The sample included participants from different countries: 128 UK primary school teachers, 140 postgraduate students undertaking primary education courses, 140 of British undergraduate students studying English linguistics; 113 Chinese, 104 Turkish, 93 Japanese, 90 Lebanese and 60 Iranian university students of English as a Foreign Language. Time period (late 1980s and 1994–1995).

Metaphor analysis was used as a tool for gathering data. First noticeable cultural difference is observable in the participants' attitude towards the very task. English students and teachers treated it as a task developing creativity. For overseas students, however this task was perceived as a challenge, which resulted in a lower number of generated metaphors.

The study proved that there is a predominance of FRIEND and PARENT metaphors for teachers among the Chinese, Japanese, Lebanese and Turkish groups, compared with the much lower frequencies of these metaphors in the British data (there are only 13 instances of 'parent' and none of the 'friend' among

236 British metaphors) (Cortazzi and Jin 1999, p. 175). The frequencies of some metaphors vary, which may result from the fact that cultural associations may have different emphases and different sources (ibid.). The metaphors may directly relate to students' and teachers' cultures of communication in the classroom.

Oxford et al. study (1998) is perceived as the most comprehensive and influential (the typology suggested serves as a model for other studies, see: Farrell 2006). The analysis of metaphor usage was generated from narrative case studies from various literature reviews. Oxford et al. (1998) typology covers four perspectives of teaching:

- Social Order, e.g. teacher as manufacturer, teacher as competitor,
- Cultural Transmission, e.g. teacher as conduit, teacher as repeater,
- Learner-Centered Growth, e.g. teacher as nurturer, teacher as lover, teacher as scaffolder, teacher as entertainer,
- Social Reform, e.g. teacher as acceptor, teacher as learning partner (Farrell 2006, p. 238).

Farrell's study (2006), based on the previous typology, was conducted in Singapore context. Pre-service teachers' metaphors were classified by Farrell (ibid.) in following typology way:

- Social Order—(teacher control) Classroom as battleground/teacher as general; Teacher as missionary/special calling,
- Cultural Transmission—(teacher control) Teacher as culture broker,
- Learner-Centered Growth—(shared teacher-and-student control) Mother/nurturer, facilitator, motivator; Teacher as mentor; Teacher as mother.

Farrell (2006) reports no social reform metaphors and ascribes this tendency to the specificity of the Singaporian context.

Finally, in Su's study (2008), data were obtained by the examination of students' diaries and narratives in Chinese context. Su (2008, p. 244–246) says that a *good teacher* is called *Big Shrimp* in China (it refers to elite knight-errant); *English is monster enemy* and *Learning English* is *practicing Kongfu*. Teachers do not refer to important words as 'key words'. Instead, they use the term 'Big Shrimp Words', which imply that these words were carefully chosen by the teacher (Big Shrimp) (Su 2008, p. 246). According to Su (ibid.) this is the attempt to promote the teacher and emphasize the glamour and professional level of all the teachers.

9.2 The Study: Background and Research Data

9.2.1 Aims of the Study

In this particular study, we aim at comparing Polish and Turkish novice and student teacher beliefs on language teaching, learner, and teacher considering the variables such as culture, years of experience and educational system.

The aims of the study are as follows:

- To compare the initial cognitions of Turkish and Polish student teachers (i.e. the beliefs held by the trainees on entering the teacher training programmes).
- To compare final cognitions of these two groups of student teachers (i.e. the beliefs trainees have after a one-year training programme).
- To examine images generated by novice teachers in different educational and cultural settings, namely Turkish and Polish ones.
- To examine Turkish and Polish evaluations issued at the end of the training courses.
- To determine the extent to which the beliefs reflect teachers' awareness of professional practice (or lack of it) or the impact of cultural variables.

9.2.2 The Participants: Turkish and Polish Teacher Trainees' Characteristics

In Turkey, 154 ELT students attending the final year of Faculty of Education (Çukurova University) took part in the research. The age of the students ranges between 21 and 23. There were 120 Females and 34 males.

In Poland, the study was conducted among 37 teacher trainees, aged 20–22, who have been attending teacher training programme (II-year students of English Philology Department, University of Silesia). There were 30 females and 7 males.

9.2.3 Teacher Training Standards in Poland and Turkey

Candidates from both groups are future teachers of English. Below are the characteristics of particular teaching contexts (Table 9.1).

Despite the differences, there are also some similarities across the programmes:

- Pedagogical training (the overall course—360 h, including the following courses: language pedagogy, methodology of ELT, SLA theory, psychology). In addition, they are taking such courses as Linguistics, Psycholinguistics and Research Methods,
- Practical training (180 h—observation and teaching under the supervision of others; the students are supposed to complete observation sheets, prepare lesson plans and write self-reports),
- ICT competence,
- Command of a foreign language (B2, B2+) (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Table 9.1 Turkish and Polish teacher training standards

Poland	Turkey
Specialization in two subjects (in this particular study: English and German)	Specialization in two subjects (in this particular study: English and Turkish)
After the overall course the students obtain BA degree. Graduates are qualified to teach at all levels of education. However, they need to enroll for MA programmes to achieve full teaching qualifications and MA degree.	The graduates are teacher candidates and they are to take an examination including basic skills, and pedagogical content. If they pass the examination the passing grade of which is depended upon how many are needed they are appointed to different levels in schools located in different parts of Turkey. A few of them prefer to work in private schools.

9.2.4 The Course of the Study and Research Tools

To achieve research objectives a questionnaire with 2 tasks was distributed twice, at the beginning and at the end of the academic year. The exact dates are displayed below. A pre-training questionnaire was distributed in the following way:

– Turkish context: October 2009 number of participants: 152
– Polish context: October 2009, number of participants: 31

The post-training questionnaire was administered as follows:

– Turkish context: April 2010, number of participants: 158
– Polish context: May 2010, number of participants: 30

The questionnaire's purpose was twofold, namely: a catalyst for reflection and a metaphor generator. In details, the first task, based on sentence completion, aimed at: needs analysis, eliciting background information about the students as well as their initial motivations and expectations. Some examples of the sentences to be completed are as follows: I'm a teacher because…; My main qualities as a teacher….

In contrast, the second task, based on verbal association, consisted of six sentence heads. Its aim was to elicit students' associations and images related to teaching/learning process as well as teacher and learner (ex. Teaching is like…; The teacher is like….; The learner is like……; Language learning is like….; The textbook is like….; the classroom is like…). The second task of the questionnaire is included in Sect. 9.5 (Appendix).

For the purposes of this chapter, only the data concerning the conceptualizations of teacher and teaching at the beginning and at the end of the year (the second task) would be presented and analyzed.

9.3 Cross Cultural Comparison: Data Analysis

9.3.1 Metaphors about Teachers

The analysis of the data allows to notice certain regularities. Both at the beginning and at the end of the study, the teacher is viewed by the Polish trainees as a guide (this is the most prevalent metaphor). This tendency is not reflected in the Turkish context, in which the metaphor of a captain, a leader dominates at the beginning of the study. Noticeable is the fact that the metaphor of a leader is quite frequent in both groups, especially at the beginning of the study, which may indicate that the trainees in both countries enter the teacher training programmes with a rather traditional view on the role of the foreign language teacher. They seem to experience the feelings of uncertainty and perceived low self-knowledge, which in turn generates the feelings and necessity of being guided.

After a year, the most prevalent metaphor in both groups is that of a guide, with the metaphor of a leader and a gardener taking the second position in the frequency ranking in Turkish and Polish groups, respectively.

Another thing worth commenting is that although conceptually speaking trainees associate language teachers with leaders, they differ in the predispositions and actions, formality, scope of control and the type of influence associated with the teacher. For example, for Turkish trainees leader is depicted as captain, orchestra director, i.e. a person with a set of responsibilities, knowledge and skills, whose role is to direct, organize and facilitate. In contrast, for Polish trainees, leader is characterized not only by subject knowledge and skills, but also by charismatic predispositions, almost divine features (god of knowledge metaphor) or sacred knowledge (magician metaphor). The teacher is perceived as omnipresent, supernatural, as a role model to be followed (these metaphors disappeared completely at the end of the study) (see Table 9.2).

Both groups show similarities in presenting a language teacher as a caring, loving person who bothers about his/her students (e.g. parent metaphor; shepherd metaphor and gardener metaphor). However, occasionally the metaphors describing teacher as somebody who is hostile appear (e.g. monster metaphor in Turkish group and warrior metaphor in Polish group). After a year, the metaphors are more consistent and portray the teacher as guide, gardener (this metaphor is new, in case of Polish students, gardener metaphor appeared after the training), parent and master (master metaphor, however is relatively infrequent).

Both groups treat a teacher as an object or a container (these metaphors are prevalent at the beginning of a research), and in a sense indicate teacher's relationship to knowledge. Yet, the trainees use the names of different objects to exemplify the meaning of this metaphor. For Turkish students, the teacher is compared to a treasure chest (the treasure chest brings the associations of a valuable and unique content), whereas for Polish students, the teacher is compared to a cookery book (something handy and informative, something for everyday use).

Table 9.2 Turkish and Polish teacher trainees' metaphors of teachers

Teacher is like … Turkish/Pre	Teacher is like … Turkish/Post	Teacher is like … Polish/Pre	Teacher is like … Polish/Post
Leader (40) (captain 23, Orchestra director 13, leader 6)	Guide (23)	Guide (18)	Guide (14)
Parent/caregiver (8)	Leader (18) (orchestra director 11, pilot/ commander/model 7)	Leader (14) (master, boss, god of wisdom-3, Jesus)	Gardener (5)
Guide (8)	Counsellor (5)	Parent/caregiver (7)	parent/ caregiver(4)
Gardener (6)	Parent/caregiver (3)	Shepherd (2)	Helper (4) (prompter, shop assistant)
An artist/craftsman (4)	Gardener (5)		Shepherd (1)
Helper (counselor, coordinator) (6)	Coach (2)		
Treasure chest			
Mirror			
Monster	A lighthouse	Warrior	Water
Candle	A robot	Cookery book	Actor
		Magician	Sailor

Striking is the fact that metaphors describing the teacher are internally incoherent or even mutually exclusive, as if depicting some fragmentary contexts or situations or referring to the specific teacher's actions. They also imply different roles, degrees of formality and various patterns of interaction. For example: a teacher is compared to a parent, a leader, a mirror and a monster by Turkish students. At the same time, Polish students refer to a teacher as a guide, a leader, but also a warrior or a magician.

There are also some occasional metaphors focusing on hard, mundane work of the teacher, e.g. the metaphors of a robot (Turkish students) and a sailor (Polish students). Interestingly, such metaphors appeared in the post questionnaire after some Ss' experience with teaching. One more remark is that in the pre-questionnaire Turkish students compared a teacher to an artist or craftsman. This metaphor disappeared, was not used in the post questionnaire by neither of the groups.

9.3.2 Metaphors about Teaching

As far as teaching is concerned, noticeable is the fact that before the training, both Turkish and Polish subjects provided a multitude of descriptions. Generated metaphors depicted various aspects of the teaching profession. Some of the

Table 9.3 Turkish and Polish teacher trainees' metaphors of teaching

Teaching is like … Turkish/Pre	Teaching is like … Turkish/Post	Teaching is like … Polish/Pre	Teaching is like … Polish/Post
Raising plants, Cultivating garden (10)	Growing a plant (6), Tending a garden	Journey (4)	Journey (10)
		Guiding (4)	Growing garden (7)
Guiding (9) (Showing the right way to an explorer, introducing the world)	Playing a game (6)	Filling empty vessels (4)	Parenting/ bringing up children (6)
	Guiding (5) (helping learners see beyond the horizon)	Sharing	knowledge (3)
Sharing knowledge (3)			
Directing a chorus (4)	Feeding someone (3)	Growing garden (3)	
Building a structure (4)	Art (3) (Origami art)	War	Mission
Journey (3)	Shaping a diamond/Carving a sculpture (3)	Sport (extreme)	Talking to the wall
Cooking (3)	Raising a child (3)	Talking to the picture	
Giving an incentive to SS to follow their dreams (2)	Illuminating a dark place (2)		
Illuminating the unknown	An endless journey (3)		
	Directing a film (2) (Directing a science fiction movie)		
	Touching the future (2)		

images related to the overall responsibilities of a teacher (e.g. a guiding metaphor), especially the caring aspect of the profession (raising plants, growing garden, bringing up children metaphors) or interactive, cooperative nature of the profession (e.g. directing a chorus, playing a game metaphors) (for details see Table 9.3).

Some others emphasized the continuity of the very process of teaching and its unpredictability, e.g. a journey metaphor. A group of metaphors related to specific actions of the teacher, e.g. transferring knowledge (e.g. feeding and sharing knowledge metaphors, filling empty students' minds). And finally, there were also metaphors expressing the trainees' attitude and their perception of the teaching profession (e.g. a magic, puzzle, war, extreme sport or mission metaphors) as well as the process of teaching in general (e.g. traveling metaphor, guiding metaphor).

A year of training brought the following results in the two groups: the subjects generated fewer images; some metaphors were intensified (e.g. a journey metaphor, a gardening metaphor, a parenting metaphor, a sharing knowledge metaphor). This might indicate that the subjects made a step forward in defining the scope of teaching and are now more precise in their understanding of what

constitutes FL teaching. Guiding metaphor was quite predominant in both groups.

Metaphors concerning teaching, however depicted some differences among these two groups. Turkish students frequently used the metaphors of gardening, playing a game (this particular metaphor appeared in the post questionnaire). In contrast, Polish students were more prone to associate teaching with journey, filling empty vessel and bringing up children. Surprising is the fact that Turkish students generated metaphors that did not appear in the Polish group, e.g.: building a structure, illuminating the unknown, conserving nature or directing a film.

The post-study feedback obtained from both groups also shows certain tendencies. The most frequent comments are similar in Turkish and Polish groups. The trainees appreciated the training they participated in as it partially helped them to experience teaching and recognize some false assumptions that they had (The comments like: 'teaching is more complex than it seems' and 'teaching demands preparation, talent and experience' were quite frequent). The trainees reported to have become more aware of various teaching methods and sensitive towards students' educational needs. However, when asked to enumerate things they discovered about teaching, the Turkish students pointed to a large spectrum of issues: predispositions of the teacher, complexity and relevance of the profession, pleasure one can derive from it, the need for thorough preparation, the role of experience, specific character of the profession, additional duties of teachers, various techniques and interactional patterns. In contrast, Polish students concentrated on more limited, sometimes very specific issues: complexity of the profession, inspiration it gives, the ambiguous character of the profession, timing or the predictable elements of the teaching process (Comments like: 'Teaching is quite explicit. Sometimes it is more organized than it seems'). They also commented upon L1 and L2 use and the practice of particular language subsystems rather than interactional patterns.

9.4 Conclusions

The answer to the question posed in the title 'Is teaching culture-bound?' is yes (or rather: yes, to some extent) and no (i.e. no, not only).

Teaching is constrained by culture and cultural/social contexts in which it is performed. Some metaphors are common across the contexts and tackle the same ideas (e.g. learners as plants, teacher as guide, language learning as journey). However the difference lies in the frequency of appearance. Another remark: despite the fact that conceptually speaking the metaphors offered by Turkish and Polish students are similar, the observable difference relates to the associations that these metaphors evoke and wording used to describe them (often pointing to various attributions, aspects, behaviours or acts). The examples below illustrate the point:

Teacher as a light	Turkish Ss—a lighthouse, a candle (it implies both: static and dynamic aspects) Polish Ss–a light which leads us to the land of knowledge (it implies dynamic aspect)
Teacher as a leader	Turkish Ss—leader, i.e. captain, model, commander, director Polish Ss—leader, i.e. master, boss, god of wisdom, Jesus
Learners as T's followers	Turkish—mirror Polish—disciples
Teaching as enlightening	Turkish—illuminating the dark Polish—carrying out light and showing the way (this metaphor is widely present in Polish literature)

However, teachers' practical knowledge as a personal construct is also dependent on other factors, such as: experience, knowledge and training gained, individual's sensitivity for reflection and motivation. Borg (2006, p. 275), in turn, draws our attention to the impact of contextual (and cultural) factors on the novice teachers' cognitions. We also need to realize that some of the metaphors (comparisons) are group specific or even individual specific. This refers to the amount and character of the generated metaphors. Thus, any change may be attributable to a number of factors, cultural being one of them. This is nicely summarized by Freeman (2001, p. 5) who points to the dynamic character of teacher practical knowledge and compares it to 'an emerging loose group of tools', 'which change when and as you use them'.

The course had some, yet limited impact on the trainees' perception of the teaching/learning process in both contexts:

- Reorganization and rearrangement of beliefs, e.g. varying frequency of some of them.
- Relabelling, e.g. in pre-questionnaire, Polish students described language learning as 'observing the meal'; whereas in the post-questionnaire they used 'preparing a meal metaphor' to refer to language learning, which might imply increased experience, involvement in the process of learning and maturation.
- Reversal, e.g. at the beginning of the study Turkish students compared teachers to artists or craftsmen. This metaphor was no longer held at the end of the study.

Impact of the theoretical training does not necessarily imply change, as Borg (2006, p. 65) states, but can also take the form of reinforcement in prior cognitions. This tendency was observed in the research, e.g. language learning as a journey, a metaphor generated in both of the groups, which was intensified in the course of the study. Another example refers to language classroom, which was compared to a garden by the Turkish students or home—by Polish students. These two images were even more frequent at the end of the research than before.

We do realize the deficiencies of the research of that type, e.g. the questions of how these metaphors are reflected in the teaching practice and behaviour (also the linguistic behaviour) of the teachers or whether these metaphors are stable or

situation- or person-specific are still unanswered. We are also aware of the fact that to examine cross-cultural differences more thoroughly, a closer look should be given to any factors that constitute the teaching context.

The awareness-raising role of the study we conducted is undeniable. The value behind similar tasks lies in their potential impact on teacher trainees' professional identity in a variety of senses. They might trigger reflection and provide food for thought. Additionally, as Tsang (2004, p. 195) points out, they raise awareness of situations that require various actions based on planned and spontaneous decisions. They also help to orchestrate both old and new aspects of personal practical knowledge and finally, they promote informed automatization (i.e. routines stemming from prior deliberate reflection and examination).

9.5 Appendix

Finish the following sentences using up to three metaphors:

Teaching is like…
The teacher is like….
The learner is like……
The classroom is like……..
The textbook is like …….
Language learning is like….

References

Berliner DC (1987) Ways of thinking about students and classrooms by more and less experienced teachers. In: Calderhead J (ed) Exploring teachers' thinking. Cassell, London, pp 60–83

Bernat E (2009) From language learners to language teachers: conceptual metaphors of role identity in transition. Asian EFL journal—online document: http://www.asian-efl-journal.com

Borg S (2006) Teacher cognition and language education. Continuum Research and Practice, London

Cortazzi M, Jin L (1999) Bridge to learning. Metaphors of teaching, learning and language. In: Cameron L, Low G (eds) Researching and applying metaphor. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 149–176

Dooley C (1998) Teaching as a two-way street: discontinuities among metaphors, images, and classroom realities. J Teach Educ 49:97–107

Efron S, Bolotin Joseph P (2001) Reflections in a mirror: metaphors of teachers and teaching. In: Bolotin Joseph P, Burnaford GE (eds) Images of schoolteachers in america. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, Mahwah NJ, pp 75–92

Farrell TSC (2006) The teacher is an octopus': uncovering preservice english language teachers' prior beliefs through metaphor analysis. RELC J 37:236–248

Freeman D (2001) Imported theories local understandings: Part 2. TESOL Matters 11(1):5

Jensen D (2006) Metaphors as a bridge to understanding educational and social contexts. Int J Qualitative Methods 5(1):36–54

Kövecses Z (2005) Metaphor in culture universality and variation. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Kramsch C (2003) Metaphor and the subjective construction of beliefs. In: Kalaja P, Barcelos AMF (eds) Beliefs about SLA: new research approaches. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, pp 109–128

Lakoff G, Johnson M (1980) Metaphors we live by. University of Chicago Press, Chicago

Malderez A, Medgyes P (1996) Taking stock. In: Medgyes P, Malderez A (eds) Changing perspectives in teacher education. Macmillan Education, Oxford, pp 111–120

Nikitina L, Furuoka F (2008a) A language teacher is like…: examining malaysian students' perceptions of language teachers through metaphor analysis. Electronic journal of foreign language teaching 2008, vol 5, no2, pp 192–205—online document: http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg

Nikitina L, Furuoka F (2008b) Measuring metaphors: a factor analysis of students' conceptions of language teachers metaphorik.de. Metahorik J 15:161–180

Oxford R, Tomlinson S, Barcelos A, Harrington C, Lavine RZ, Saleh A (1998) Clashing metaphors about classroom teachers: toward a systematic typology for the language teaching field. System 26(1):3–50

Richards JC (1994) Teacher thinking and foreign language teaching. In: The language teacher vol 32 No 3 p 8—online document: http://www.jalt-publications.org

Richards JC (1998) Beyond training. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Strugielska A, Strzemeski K (2010) Metafora pojęciowa w interpretacji teorii osobistych–analiza krytyczna. W H. Widła (red.). Neofilolog nr 34:123–132

Swales S (1994) From metaphor to metalanguage. English teaching forum online, 32(3): 8–11—online document: http://exchanges.state.gov

Su L (2008) Metaphors of English learning. Intercultural communication studies XVII: 1: 2008, 240–247—online document: http://www.uri.edu

Thornbury S (1991) Metaphors we work by: EFL and its metaphors. ELT J 45(3):193–200

Tsang WK (2004) Teacher's practical knowledge and interactive decisions. Lang Teach Res 163(8):163–198

Vieira Abrahoa MH (2006) The construction of theoretical and practical knowledge in initial teacher education. In: Profile issues in teachers' professional development—online document: www.scielo.org.co

Woods D (1996) Teacher cognition in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Zapata G, Lacorte M (2007) Pre-service and in-service instructors' metaphorical constructions of second language teachers. Foreign Lang Ann 40(3):521–534

Chapter 10
Australian Experience of Culturally Diverse University Classrooms

Beata Malczewska-Webb

Abstract In the last twenty years, Australia has become one of the favoured destinations for international students who come to study not only English as a Second Language but also all programs at all levels including primary, secondary and tertiary as well as industry training. The internationalisation of education has attracted researchers' attention particularly in the past ten years. One of the central issues affecting both students and teachers is the changing increasing diversity of the student population and issues associated with it. Recent research into diverse classrooms indicates the complexity of issues in secondary and ESL education or teacher training (Gearon et al. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 36–56, 2009; Lo Bianco, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms, Multilingual Matters, Bristol. pp. 113–132, 2009; Miller, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Classrooms. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp. 36–56 2009). However, there is a need for more research into culturally and linguistically diverse classes at a tertiary level, in order to understand their pedagogical implications for everybody students, lecturers and institutions. This chapter examines the experience of students in diverse classes at Bond University, Australia, as an example of an international tertiary institution in Australia. It also looks at a range of linguistic, educational, and cultural factors which have an impact on students' international educational experience. It is hoped that careful analysis of students' perceived difficulties will provide the basis for better understanding and communication between students and lecturers, and will facilitate the transition between cultures and educational systems.

Keywords ESL in Australia · Diversity · Tertiary level · Educational system

B. Malczewska-Webb (✉)
Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia
e-mail: bwebb@bond.edu.au

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_10,

10.1 Internationalisation of Education in Australia: Background

The internationalisation of education in Australia has attracted much attention from teachers, researchers and education administrators in recent years (Miller 2009; Lo Bianco 2009; Gearon et al. 2009; Webb and Smith 2009; Ryan and Carroll 2005; Louie 2005; Ryan 2005; Dunn and Carroll 2005). This is due to the rapid increase of international students who come to Australia to study at all levels of education including primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational. This chapter examines the diversity of students population and the areas of academic difficulty experienced by both, home (or domestic) and international students at Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia. First, the chapter introduces the issue of internationalisation of education in Australia, then it examines the diversity of students who participate in the project. Further, the chapter focuses on the students' perceived difficulties during their studies.

The face of Australian education has changed dramatically over the last 20 years. In 1985, there were just over 30 thousand international students studying in Australia. Between 2002 and 2008, that number rose from over 274 to over 543 thousand students (www.abs.com.au) and in November 2009, it reached 629 thousand full fee-paying students (Yuile 2010). Even these official numbers do not fully reflect the high diversity of Australian classrooms as they are limited only to the number of students who start their education with the student visa. However, there are many other sources of international students in Australian classrooms such as New Zealand students, who do not even require this visa, migrant families, overseas students on Australian scholarships and sponsorships or even students who enrol in courses while on other visas. With the population of Australia being only over 22 mln, international students make almost 3% of the whole population.

Another aspect of the internationalisation of education in Australia is its influence on the country's economy. Not only do international students pay full fees for their education, but they also pay for their living and other expenses. The overall income from the international education went up from 3.7 billion dollars in year 2000 to 17.2 billion dollars during 2008–2009. According to Yuile (2010), that income helped employ over 120 thousand people and it placed international education as Australia's fourth biggest export revenue, only after coal, iron ore and gold. International education has had a very significant impact on the development of the Australian economy (Yuile 2010).

10.2 Surplus and Deficit View of International Education: Policy Makers, Teachers and Students

The internationalisation of education is viewed by most as a positive trend, important in the shaping of today's world (Ryan and Carroll 2005; Ryan and Hellmund 2005). Teachers, students and policy makers alike recognise the fact that

international students enrich education for all those who are involved in it. In the rapidly changing world, culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms provide unique real-life opportunities for learning how to live and work with people from other countries and cultures. Very often, international students bring the sense of previous success and initiative into the new community (Ryan and Carroll 2005; Ryan and Hellmund 2005).

This surplus view of international education is reflected in policies in Australia and worldwide. International Association of Universities (IAU) stipulates that *all internationalization programmes be founded on the principle of partnership among equals and promote intercultural competence and a culture of peace among global citizens* (http://www.unesco.org/iau/p_statements/i_statement.html). In Australia, the following statement was issued by Australian Education International (AEI): *International students contribute to our economic, social and educational development, bringing new ideas and greater cross-cultural understanding to Australia* (http://aei.gov.au/). These are brief examples of policies where the international education is recognised as a very positive phenomenon.

The surplus view of international education is reflected in the views of all involved in the making of modern education. Simply, there is no better way of preparing students for the modern world outside the classroom than exposing them to the world's diversity during the process of learning.

However, some teachers and students hold the deficit view of international education. Some teachers find it difficult to work with diverse classrooms with many pedagogical complexities (Miller 2009; Ryan and Carroll 2005). Students in those classes do not all share the familiar background with teachers and they have unknown characteristics and needs. Some teachers may prefer to stick to a familiar model of 'an ideal student' (Ryan and Carroll 2005). The 'ideal student' comes from homogeneous cultural and educational background and the familiarity with this background facilitates communication and the understanding of students' needs. However, the statistical data indicate that homogeneity of classrooms is a thing of the past and it is crucial, the sooner the better, to face the new, changing reality. According to Ryan and Carroll (2005), international students play the role of 'canaries in the coalmine'; they function as an early warning sign. In other words, the problems some teachers experience with international students indicate weaker points in the teaching/learning process such as ineffective communication or teaching style.

Literature concerning the diversity of English as a Second Language classrooms and its consequences is very rich and dates back further than the studies of diversity in other contexts (Anderson 1993; Dogancay-Aktuna 2005; Harmer 2001; Kumaravadivelu 1991; Liu and Zhang 2007; Malczewska 1993; Rao 2002; Xiao 2006; Wang and Channarong 2009). The top ten countries of origin for international students who choose Australia as their destination are East-Asian. Therefore, the study of work relationships between Western-trained ESL teachers and East-Asian students is of particular relevance in Australia. These work relationships are sometimes referred to as 'clash in the classroom' and many originate

in the lack of understanding between teachers and learners (Rao 2002; Webb 2009; Webb and Smith 2009; Wang and Channarong 2009).

Some teachers form opinions based on their understanding of a western student and claim that East-Asian students often lack in independent critical thinking skills, are only capable of rote-learning, do not participate in the class discussion and are more likely to plagiarise. These students are often accused of not being able to form opinions and having nothing to say as a result. Teachers, consequently, sometimes believe their students lack creativity, knowledge or even intelligence (Ryan and Carroll 2005; Rao 2002; Harmer 2001; Dogancay-Aktuna 2005; Xiao 2006; Malczewska 1993; Webb 2009; Webb and Smith 2009). These opinions, which so often stem from the lack of understanding of students' cultural, educational and linguistic background, can have a detrimental effect on the teacher-student relationships and, in consequence, all aspects of teaching and learning.

International students also report various problems during their studies outside their home countries. They usually believe the difficulties they experience stem from the differences between their home country and the country where they study. Students whose English is not their first language often attribute their study difficulties to their low English proficiency. In fact, a variety of academic, linguistic, cultural and individual factors affects their success (Ryan and Carroll 2005; Webb 2009; Webb and Smith 2009). Ryan and Carroll (2005) propose that these factors form two categories, those shared by all tertiary students and those typical of international students. The first category includes factors related to issues such as transfer between secondary and higher education, the use of academic language and conventions, independent learning, class participation, local language peculiarities and discipline specific vocabulary. The second category involves factors associated with being an international student; being used to other educational systems, other social and cultural contexts and values, different teaching and learning styles, or types of assessment. Many international students also experience additional pressures related to their family's expectations of success, the lack of social support systems and the loss of visa in case of failure (Ryan and Carroll 2005; Webb 2009; Webb and Smith 2009).

Webb (2009) and Webb and Smith (2009) suggest another category be added to the two previously introduced. Thus, apart from the difficulties potentially shared by all tertiary students and the ones related to being an international student, another category should include possible difficulties which may be shared by students of a particular background, be it linguistic, academic, religious, geographical or cultural. To illustrate, though the difficulties experienced by East-Asian students are very often grouped due to the characteristic features of Confucian education shared by several countries, it is impossible to make overgeneralisation not recognising the differences in the background of, for example, Korean and Chinese students. Also, students with a Muslim background may share difficulties unfamiliar to students of other religious background. The difficulties here may be associated with specific features of a particular group of students.

Some (Louie 2005) present arguments claiming that studying the differences and factors contributing to those may have detrimental effect on students' learning

by reinforcing stereotypes and stressing the importance of stereotypes over individual differences. These valid points, however, should not stop the researchers from investigating the sources of students' problems but, rather, make them more aware of how sensitive these issues can be and how cautious we must be in drawing conclusions from such studies. Particularly important is exercising the caution with gathering information about specific groups and drawing conclusions as rapid social, political and educational changes in many countries may lead to some aspects of data being quickly outdated and irrelevant (Louie 2005).

To sum up, it is essential to examine students' difficulties and needs in order to improve the communication between teachers and learners. The three-category framework of difficulties aims to help determining the needs of domestic and international students and the similarities and differences between different student groups.

10.3 Examining Difficulties of Students at Bond University: Introduction to the Project

This chapter describes the results of a research project undertaken in 2010 at Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia. The university represents the educational diversity very well as, at the time of the study, approximately half of the students were born outside Australia in 85 countries. The aims of the project were to examine (1) the level of diversity of Bond university classrooms, and (2) difficulties which students experience with academic practices. Twenty nine students completed a survey in which they reported their perceived difficulties with the university studies.

10.3.1 The Study of Student Diversity

Students who participated in the study were enrolled in the following 4 subjects: Academic Writing, Academic Reading, Language Acquisition and Spanish. The survey participants came from 13 countries, 24 (82.8%) were international and 5 (17.2%) were Australian students.

The largest group of students from one country included 7 (24.1%) Chinese students, followed by 5 Australian (17.2%) and 4 Taiwanese (13.8%) students. Three students (10.3%) came from France and 2 (6.9%) from the United States of America. Other countries, represented by one student, included Malaysia, Nepal, Turkey, South Korea, Germany, Japan, Thailand and Syria. Twenty one students (72.4%) were undergraduate and 8 (27.6%) postgraduate. This reflected the balance of students at Bond University, as approximately two thirds of them are enrolled in undergraduate degrees. The majority of the surveyed students (18 students, 62.1%) were from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 8

students (27.6%) were from the Faculty of Business, IT and Sustainable Development, and 2 (6.9%) were from the Law Faculty.

Students' background also varied significantly when considering the length and the place of their previous studies. The majority of students were enrolled in their first or second semester of studies. Over 20% of students were between semester 3–4 and semester 5–6. One postgraduate student was in the seventh semester of study. Almost 34.5% of the students (10) studied outside their home countries for over 3 years (3), 5 for up to a year and others for 2 (1) and 3 (1) years. The place of their studies outside their home countries also showed a significant variety of choice and half of the students had studied in the 'NABA' countries (North America, Britain, and Australia), which are traditional destinations for studying English as a Second language as well as other content areas. However, this small number also indicated other, new destinations for international education. Apart from other European countries, Germany, France and Italy, the choices also included Israel, South Korea and China. Within such a small group of students, the earlier educational choices indicated two facts, one, that students today very often make choices to study outside their home countries and that the destinations go beyond the traditionally chosen English speaking countries.

The next factor indicating the diversity of students was their length of living in Australia and it often corresponded with the length of students' study, however, the variety of experience here was again very significant. Some students (5) only lived in Australia for up to 4 months, 10 between 5 and 12 months, 7 between 2 and 3 years and 1 student between 4 and 5 years. Students who lived in Australia over 6 years included home students and a Turkish student who had lived in Australia for over 10 years. This student, in further analysis, was classified as a 'home student' due to the fact that s/he completed all his/her schooling there as well.

The diversity of educational experience of the students who answered the survey was remarkable. It would be impossible to make assumptions about students' needs based on their background due to this significant variability. Students participating in the survey came from different countries on different continents; they studied for different degrees and their previous educational experience differed extensively. What many students had in common was the choice they had made to live and gain education outside their home countries. In the face of such high variability of experience, the only way to find out the needs of particular groups is to learn it from the students. Most likely, the results of a survey like this will be, to some extent, different every time. Nevertheless, it is necessary to search for patterns of needs in order to assist in the design of academic courses.

10.3.2 Difficulties Experienced by Bond Students

With such a high level of educational, cultural and linguistic diversity of classes, examining the academic difficulties reported by these students was a fascinating

task. This section examines the most problematic areas overall, followed by the examination of these areas across the four subject groups. Remarkably, all the 16 tasks for the selection have been reported by some students as difficult. Out of all the listed tasks, 15 (93.8%) have been reported by the minimum of 20% of the students as difficult. This diversity of students' difficulties in their academic performance mirrors the diversity of students' population. However, the data also show consistency as many students find the same tasks challenging. The task reported by most (55%) of the students as problematic was *writing critical research papers*. This low level of confidence in doing this task was also supported by another 4 (13.8%) students who answered the question as 'not sure'. Accordingly, an extremely diverse group of 20 international students either found this task difficult or were uncertain about it. Both American students strongly confirmed problems with this task, as did 6 Chinese and 4 Taiwanese students and one Malaysian, Nepalese, Thai and French student. As no Australian students found it difficult, writing *critical research papers* is classified as a difficulty typical of international students.

The second most problematic area, with almost half (48.3%) of the students referring to it, was the most unanticipated. Here, students reported the difficulty with *understanding lecturers' different accents*. Another 5 students were not sure how to answer this question which points to the lack of confidence in understanding *lecturers' different accents* by 19 out of 29 students. This possible difficulty was added to the questionnaire following the study of Indonesian students who indicated this as a difficulty (Webb and Smith 2009). This important point suggests that the internationalisation of education has many facets and one of them is the internationalisation of the teaching body. Evidently, teachers are not the only ones grappling with the consequences of the diverse linguistic backgrounds. Students also experience identical problems where their teachers come from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

It is not easy to classify this particular difficulty as it is not strictly associated to academic performance (or at least in the traditional sense), nor is it related to being an international student or a particular group of students. Reported by both international and domestic students, this difficulty shows that being able to comprehend different accents is a challenge to students of all backgrounds. Therefore, this difficulty is classified as belonging to the category which comprises the difficulties possibly experienced by all students.

The next four areas of academic performance were perceived by 41.4% of students as difficult and they included *understanding Australian English*, *referencing and sourcing materials*, *giving oral seminar presentations* and *expressing own opinions in class*. The first one, *understanding Australian English*, was (predictably) perceived as difficult only by international students including students whose English was their first language. This point supports the suggestion that, similarly to the previous difficulty associated with understanding different accents, exposing students to English varieties should be included in academic education programs. This result was also surprising as both American students agreed that understanding Australian English was a problem affecting their studies.

Both tasks form a category possibly addressed by exposing students to English varieties which can prepare all students for understanding different accents. Consequently, *understanding linguistic varieties* can be categorised as belonging to difficulties encountered by all students, both domestic and international. However, international students need to be exposed to the Australian variety of English.

Giving oral seminar presentations was specified as an area of difficulty for international students from Europe, East-Asia, the United States and Australia. Apart from 12 students who confirmed the difficulty with *giving oral seminar presentations*, 7 more students were not sure how to answer the question. This means that more than half of the students (19) perceived some difficulty or uncertainty about this aspect of academic performance. Both American students were included in that group, 2 French students, and students from East-Asia. *Giving oral seminar presentation* was one of the two tasks which attracted the most extreme responses, with 6 (20.7%) responses from the students from East-Asia, Europe and the United States. Students who were not sure how to answer this question were all from East-Asia; 3 from China, 2 from Taiwan, and one from Korea and Japan. This suggests that these students were less familiar with this particular aspect of learning and were not certain how to respond. This task also can be included in the category of difficulties possibly encountered by all tertiary students.

Expressing own opinions in class and *referencing and sourcing materials* were pointed out as difficult by 12 (41.4%) international students from different regions. *Expressing own opinion in class* was also marked as 'not sure' by 5 more students and 4 students were not certain about how to evaluate *referencing and sourcing materials. Referencing and sourcing materials* attracted also 6 'strongly agree' responses from American students, and one student from France, Nepal and Taiwan. Only 3 students, the smallest number in 'the unsure' category, did not know how to answer this question. This task attracted largely decisive responses. No Australian students perceived this as causing them problems in their studies. Australian students have a more confident attitude to these academic tasks which suggests previous exposure to them.

Written academic English and *following lectures* were recognised as problematic by 37.9% (11) of students. *Written Academic English* was perceived as difficult only by international students with English as a Second Language but another 6 students, 5 from East-Asia and 1 from Australia, were not certain about their response. *Following lectures* was signalled as problematic by 8 students from East-Asia, one French student and two American students. Three more East-Asian students expressed the lack of confidence in evaluating this form of learning. *Written academic English* is classified as D1 difficulty causing problems to all students, while following lectures will be categorised as the D2 difficulty, possibly causing problems for international students.

The next learning task, *vocabulary specific to the subject area* was pointed out by 34.5% (10) of students as causing difficulty in their studies. Two students strongly confirming this problem were American, the remaining 8 were both from Europe and East-Asia. This task attracted as many as 8 more 'uncertain' responses

from European (German, French), East-Asian (Chinese, Taiwanese, Thai, Korean) and Syrian students.

The next two aspects of learning, *the quantity of reading that is required* and *doing independent research* were pointed out as difficult by 9 students (31%). *The quantity of reading that is required* was strongly confirmed as a problem by 3 Nepalese, Chinese and American students; and 6 more students from China, Taiwan, United States, France and Germany and the US also confirmed this as problematic. Another 10 (the largest category of uncertain responses) were not sure how they perceived it. Altogether, *the quantity of reading that is required* has either caused problems or uncertainty for 19 students which makes it one of the most problematic aspects of learning among the questioned students. The second task, *doing independent research,* apart from 9 students who confirmed it as difficult, attracted also 7 'unsure' responses from international students from the US, European and East-Asian countries. As no Australian students signalled these aspects of academic performance as causing difficulty in studying, all three sources of difficulty examined above are classified as D2 category, those experienced mainly by international students.

The next two, w*orking in pairs and small groups* and *establishing working relationships with lecturers* were confirmed as difficult aspects of studying by over a quarter (27.6%; 8 students) of the students. All 8 students who found w*orking in pairs and small groups* hindering their studies came from East-Asian countries. This included two strong responses from a Japanese and Taiwanese student, and 6 more responses from Chinese (5) and Malaysian (1) students. Another 3 Taiwanese and 1 French student were not sure how to evaluate it. Overall, 11 out of 12 responses came from students from East-Asian countries, the majority from China and Taiwan. No Australian or American students pointed w*orking in pairs and small groups* as getting in the way of their university studies. In fact, an American student answering an open question observed that she was used to tutorials and small groups as she was exposed to this style of teaching at home 'some of the ways my classes were conducted got me prepared for tutorials and having a small class.' A French student made a similar observation that 'working in groups' in his/her home country made it easier for him/her to study in Australia.

The data support the results of the studies performed on the methodological differences between students from East-Asian countries and ESL teachers trained in Western countries (Harmer 2001; Rao 2002; Xiao 2006; Webb 2009; Malczewska 1993). *Working in pairs and small groups*, one of the basic practices of communicative language teaching, was often not easily accepted by East-Asian students. They were not used to student–student interactions or constructivist ways of learning and found it hard to see their advantages. This aspect of learning is categorised as D3 as all students came from non-English speaking backgrounds, particularly from East-Asia.

Establishing working relationships with lecturers was found difficult by students of all backgrounds. A Japanese and an American student found it extremely difficult as did a very diverse group of students from China (3), the US, France and Australia. Also, 8 more students, from Taiwan (3), China (2), Malaysia, Thailand

and Germany, were not sure whether *establishing working relationships with lecturers* was the cause of their academic difficulties. Altogether, more than half of the students expressed some concern over their communication with lecturers. As students from all regions find this a difficult aspect of their studies, it should be classified as D1 difficulty.

Spoken academic English and *university procedures and administration* have been reported difficult by 7 (24.1%) of students. The former is perceived as problematic only by students whose English is not their first language. Out of 13 responses only 1 came from a French student, others were all from East-Asian students, with the majority of Chinese (6) and Taiwanese (4) students. This result is also consistent with the way English is taught and education delivered in East-Asian countries. Despite the curriculum policy introducing communicative language teaching and spoken English, students have to take university entrance exams which mostly focus on written English and Grammar (Liddicoat 2004; Harmer 2001; Rao 2002; Xiao 2006; Webb 2009). Therefore, reasonably, teachers still focus on the teaching of the skills required for students' future careers. This leaves little time for developing spoken English and, as a result, East-Asian students with similar systems (China, Taiwan, Japan or Korea) often find speaking difficult when they come to study in an English speaking country. This aspect of learning is categorised as D2 as affecting mostly international students, but East-Asian students, who are mostly disadvantaged, need to have D3 'extension activities' addressing this need.

The final task, *the use of technology for learning*, was reported only by 4 (13.8%) East-Asian students. It was interesting to observe, however, that another 5 students, from China, Thailand, Japan, Germany, and the US were not sure whether technology impeded their studies. Despite the few responses confirming this, still a large number of students (9) expressed the lack of confidence about the use of technology for learning. *The use of technology for learning* is classified as D2 difficulty as no Australian students reported this as hindering their academic progress.

Apart from the listed aspects of learning, students' responses to open-ended questions revealed more perceived difficulties with academic performance. The issues raised were associated with the educational system and the organisation of learning (1), lecturers (2), subject area (3) and English proficiency (4). The differences between the previous experience and the current educational system were acknowledged as another source of students' academic difficulties. As the university has a three-semester per year system, some students find the program too intensive: 'term is short. From week 6 there is no relaxing time.' Another difference was in the difficulty of the program as another student reported: 'the difficulty of the courses I am taking. Schooling is a lot different here than at home. The amount of readings was difficult as well.' Another student wrote that 'the independent study can be difficult'. Some referred to aspects of university studies in general such as 'writing' or 'lectures'. Other students simply stated that the hardest aspect of studying was 'totally different educational system' and 'getting used to the way education is' (in Australia).

Both American students indicated another problem related to being enrolled in a one semester Study Abroad Program. According to them, the university does not offer general introductory subjects to cater for the needs of study abroad students. They suggest that the university should 'offer more general ed classes that are for study abroad students' and that these should be taken as a general ed not a major class'. This category is classified as D3 as it only applies to Study Abroad students.

Another D2 task described by students refers to issues associated with *lecturers*. Apart from already mentioned difficulties with 'lecturers' accents' or 'teachers' accents', another student expressed concerns about teachers' workload and observed: 'teacher should have more free time.' This category is classified as D1 as matters associated with lecturers affect all students. The last category identified by students relates to *the subject matter*, and it is associated with difficulties students report while studying a particular subject such as: 'business law'. This is classified as D3 difficulty as it will affect the students enrolled in a particular program, be it business, law or linguistics.

To sum up, an overwhelming majority of the listed aspects of academic performance have been stated as causing difficulty. Out of 434 student responses, 162 (34.9%) indicated problems with some aspects of academic performance and a remarkable 93.8% (15 out of 16) were referred to as such by more than 20% of the students. Considering the diversity mapped out previously, it is extraordinary to see the consistency of problem areas where over 40% of the students report the same difficulties such as *referencing and sourcing materials*, which follow a set of strict conventions not requiring high-level linguistic or academic skills. The performance on tasks such as *writing critical papers*, *giving oral presentations* and *expressing own opinions in class* is often associated with students' English proficiency. However, as the results show, these difficulties were also reported by students whose English was their first language.

The majority of the academic tasks evaluated by the students were indicated as D2 tasks which were perceived as difficult mainly to international students. These included the following: *writing critical research paper, understanding Australian English, giving oral seminar presentation, expressing own opinions in class, referencing and sourcing materials, following lectures, vocabulary specific to the subject area, the quantity of reading that is required, doing independent research, university procedures and administration* and *the use of technology for learning. Working in pairs and small groups* and *spoken academic English,* however, need to be extended to providing training for specific, at need, student groups.

The next two categories, D1 and D3, are much smaller. Category D1, including aspects of learning indicated by both international and domestic students as causing difficulty, comprises *understanding lecturers different accents, written academic English, establishing working relationships with lecturers*. The smallest, D3 category, consists of difficulties associated with a particular group of students and their particular needs. The data suggest that *spoken academic English* and w*orking in pairs and small groups* should have D3 extensions aiming to assist East-Asian students in particular. Difficulties associated with being a Study

Abroad student or a student of a particular subject matter also belong to this category.

Based on student responses, three categories of difficulties have been identified, with D2 as the most extensive one, while D1 and D3 comprise few academic tasks. D2 includes difficulties experienced by international students, both from English and non-English speaking backgrounds. D1 consists of the difficulties reported by both domestic and international students and D3 comprises the difficulties characteristic of particular groups of students with specific needs. The concept of 'an international student' which emerges from this study is that of a student who is more influenced by the previous educational experience more than their first language.

10.3.3 Responses on Extreme Difficulties: Comparison of Backgrounds

The results of the examination of difficulties identified by students suggest that the international students perceive significantly more aspects of academic performance as difficult than the home students do. This claim is further tested by examining students' extreme responses. The extreme responses are the ones where students 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree' to experiencing a particular difficulty. This information is collated next in order to examine the background of students who gave these responses.

The 'strongly agree' responses to the listed academic difficulties form a small and varied cluster of 36 (7.8%) out of 464 responses given by students. The top two tasks which attracted the extreme answers from 20.6% (6) of students were *referencing and sourcing materials*, and *giving oral seminar presentations*. Two students from the USA and Taiwan, and 1 student from France and Nepal 'strongly agreed' that *referencing and sourcing materials* was difficult. Students (one from each country) from Malaysia, France, China, Taiwan, Thailand and the US gave the same response to *giving oral seminar presentations.* The third task, e*xpressing own opinions in class* attracted 13.8% (4) of extreme responses from a Malaysian, French, Taiwanese and American student.

All students who gave responses strongly confirming that they experienced difficulties with academic performance were of international background. Out of 36 extreme positive responses signalling difficulties, 21 (58.3%) came from East-Asian students, 10 (27.8%) from American students and 5 (13.9%) from European students (French). The extreme responses were given by international students of both English and non-English backgrounds.

These proportions in perceived difficulties change radically when the extreme negative student responses are analysed, where students strongly disagreed to experiencing a particular difficulty. Similarly to studying the diversity of extreme positive responses, it was interesting to find out the origin of students who

expressed such high confidence in their academic skills. Students submitted 81 'strongly disagree' responses denying experiencing academic difficulties with the listed tasks. More students made statements in this category than the extreme positive category, which only consisted of 36 responses. All listed tasks attracted over 10% of extreme responses, which is a very different outcome to the extreme positive ones which were chosen by over 10% of the students. The top three areas which students saw as the least problematic were *spoken Academic English*, *vocabulary specific to my subject area* and *understanding Australian English*. Over 20% of the students also strongly disagreed with the statement that *doing independent research* and *written Academic English* impeded their academic performance. The significant majority (48 responses, 59.3%) of responses in this category came from Australian students. The second largest number of extreme negative responses came from one Turkish student who came to Australia as a small child and has completed Australian schooling. Although s/he classified herself/himself as 'an international student' due to the background, s/he has been classified further as a home student due to the length of residency and the completion of prior education in Australia. Overall, an overwhelming 70.4% (57) of the extreme negative responses came from the home students.

While examining the background of the authors of these responses, it was found that only a small number of them came from students with limited experience in international education. Accordingly, 8 responses came from 2 French students who were in their 2nd and 3rd semester at Bond and have had limited experience in studying elsewhere (although one student studied for 3 months in Italy). Another 4 responses came from 2 American students and 4 from 1 Japanese student. However, most international students in this group had vast experience in international education. The Japanese student lived and studied for several years in Israel, France and the United States of America. The German student had studied in China, the Syrian student in the USA and the French student in Italy. The two American students and one student from France, Nepal and Taiwan have only studied for two semesters at Bond University.

Consequently, this group of students who showed such strong confidence in their ability to perform academic tasks consisted largely of the home students, and the American students. However, the second largest group comprised international non-English speaking background students who have either lived in Australia for a long time or have had studied outside their home country. This is consistent with the studies indicating that the process of internationalisation of education (students studying outside their home countries) plays a significant role in students' perceived academic difficulties (Webb and Smith 2009). The table below presents the results of the comparison between the backgrounds of students who gave extreme positive ('I strongly agree I have had difficulties with..') or extreme negative responses ('I strongly disagree I have had difficulties with…').

The table below illustrates astonishing differences between students' perception about the difficulties with their studies. The analysis of extreme responses indicates that students from East-Asia perceive many more areas of academic performance as problematic than students from other regions do. This is followed

Comparison of student backgrounds and extreme responses

Regions	Strongly agree with experiencing difficulties	Strongly disagree with experiencing difficulties
Home	0%	70.4% (57)
The USA	27.8% (10)	4.9% (4)
East-Asia	58.35 (21)	8.6% (7)
Europe/France	13.9% (5)	13.6% (11)
Western Asia/Syria	0%	2.5% (2)
Total	*36 (100%)*	*81 (100%)*

by students from the US, who also expressed a significant lack of confidence in their academic abilities. The analysis of the perceived difficulties of East-Asian and American students contrast with those of the home students'. The home students expressed much more confidence about their learning abilities than their international colleagues from any region. The diversity of this small sample is very high but the background of the students shows that home students perceive themselves as experiencing fewer difficulties with academic performance than international students. Although the results of extreme responses suggest that, in estimating one's ability, being a domestic student is of academic advantage, being a native-speaker of English, does not always help.

10.4 Conclusive Remarks and What Next?

To sum up, the three main points addressed in this paper have been the diversity of classes at an Australian university and students' perceived difficulties with academic tasks. Despite the small sample, the students' population is very diverse including home students, and students from different countries from several continents. The educational, cultural and linguistic background of these students is often so varied it is simply not possible to make assumptions or draw conclusions about their abilities or needs based on their background. Acknowledging and studying student diversity is the introductory step to determining the areas of students' needs.

The second step in addressing student needs is learning as much as possible about the difficulties students experience during their studies. A three dimensional framework has been designed as an instrument for further analysis of the aspects of academic performance which students perceive as difficult. This framework includes the following three classes of difficulties: D1; difficulties possibly experienced by all tertiary students, D2; those typical of international students and D3; difficulties associated with a particular group of students. This framework will be used for examining the needs of students as well as determining the differences between the domestic and international students and between particular student groups.

Several important conclusions can be drawn from the study. Home students perceive significantly less tasks as difficult than international students do. Clearly, the home background of the Australian education system and using English as their first language give them a good basis for success. However, home students also report many tasks problematic such as *writing critical research papers or referencing and sourcing materials*. English as a second language is clearly not always the main disadvantage in being an international student, as many students often believe. In fact, it appears that American students reported difficulties traditionally associated with the linguistic difficulty, such as *following lectures*. Although international non-English speaking background students may have a disadvantage in, for example, *speaking academic English*, these difficulties can be perceived as problematic also by the domestic students and students from other countries, where English is spoken as the first language.

The highly problematic difficulty with *understanding lecturers' different accent* deserves careful consideration. The changing character of the teaching faculty, similarly to the changing reality of the classrooms, is simply another facet of the same phenomenon; internationalisation of education. Consequently, it is here to stay and, as with any difficulty, this one should be addressed as part of the academic training for all students. The issue of understanding different student accents is dealt with in TESOL training when teachers are trained to understand their students better. Perhaps, students during their academic preparation should learn and be exposed to linguistic varieties as this may help them with understanding both their international peers and faculty, and, as a result, improve communication crucial for their educational success.

The existing framework, when applied to a larger group of students, will need to address several issues which have transpired in this small study. The study shows more similarities in perceived academic difficulties between American and East-Asian students then between American and Australian students. This suggests that the difficulties are more related to different systems of education rather than to English being students' first or second language. Other results suggest that students from European educational systems are more familiar with and therefore better prepared for education at an Australian university. More studies are needed to assert that but perhaps the educational system in some European countries, France or Germany (the only European students in this study came from these countries) is closer to what is required of university students in Australia. The verification of these hypotheses will aim to inform the design and structure of the courses preparing or assisting students in studying abroad. Another issue which needs addressing is the structuring of academic subjects at a university. Currently, students are divided according to their language proficiency but perhaps there is a need to group them based on different criteria such as previous educational experience or the familiarity with a particular educational system.

To conclude, only by extending research into student needs and building it into teaching and curriculum design can teachers better understand the nature of classroom diversity. Conversely, improved understanding of the students will prepare teachers better for the challenges and joys which student diversity brings

into teaching. The studies of reported difficulties and factors influencing them are necessary for improving communication and better understanding of one another. The arguments against such studies should only sensitise educators to the complexity of issues rather than stop them from further investigation. Understanding linguistically and culturally diverse student groups is a necessary step towards systematic improvement of the communication between students and teachers, and consequently, to a more successful learning and teaching experience. Wang and Channarong (2009) advocate more dialogue between teachers and students in ESL classrooms,(…) *in order to develop a healthier and happier environment of learning English* (p 29). Exactly the same principle must be applied to all diverse classrooms and therefore, we must extend that communication, to (almost) quote Wang and Channarong (2009), *in order to develop a healthier and happier environment of learning* (…).

References

Anderson J (1993) Is the communicative approach practical for teaching English in China? Pros and cons. vol. 21, No. 4 pp 471-480. US-China Foreign Language. Perganiou Press Ltd, Great Britain

Dogancay-Aktuna S (2005) Intercultural communication in English language teacher education. ELT J 59(2):99–107

Dunn L, Carroll J (2005) Collaborating and co-learning: sharing the message on teaching international students within institutions. In: Carroll J, Ryan J (eds) Teaching international students. Routledge, London and New York, pp 136–147

Gearon M, Miller J, Kostogriz A (2009) The Challenges of diversity in language education. In: Miller J, Kostogriz A, Gearonin M (eds) Culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 36–56

Harmer J (2001) The practice of English language teaching, 4th edn. Pearson Longman, London

Kumaravadivelu B (1991) Language-learning tasks: teacher intention and learner interpretation. English Lang Teaching J 45(2):98–107

Liddicoat AJ (2004) Language policy and language teaching methodology. Int J English Stud 4(1):153–171

Liu M, Zhang L (2007) Student perception of native and non-native English teachers attitudes teaching skills assessment and performance. Asian EFL J 9(4):157–166

Lo Bianco J (2009) Dilemmas of efficiency identity and worldmindedness. In: Miller J, Kostogriz A, Gearonin M (eds) Culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 113–132

Louie K (2005) Gathering cultural knowledge useful or use with care? In: Carroll J, Ryan J (eds) Teaching international students. Routledge, London and New York, pp 17–26

Malczewska B (1993) Great expectatations: teaching English on the Rim. in conference proceedings of the Queensland association for teachers of English to speakers of other languages, Brisbane: QATESOL, 60–66

Miller J (2009) Teaching with an accent linguistically diverse pre-service teachers in Australian classrooms. In: Miller J, Kostogriz A, Gearonin M (eds) Culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 36–56

Rao Z (2002) 'Chinese students' perceptions of communicative and non communicative activities in EFL classroom. System 30:85–105

Ryan J (2005) Improving teaching and learning practices for international students: implications for curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. In: Carroll J, Ryan J (eds) Teaching international students. Routledge, London and New York, pp 92–101

Ryan J, Carroll J (2005) 'Canaries in the coal-mine' international students in Western universities'. In: Carroll J, Ryan J (eds) Teaching international students. Routledge, London and New York, pp 3–13

Ryan J, Hellmund S (2005) Maximising international students' 'cultural capital'. In: Carroll J, Ryan J (eds) Teaching international students. Routledge, London and New York, pp 13–17

Wang J, Channarong I (2009) The mismatch of beliefs about learning English between Chinese university students and teachers. Sino-US English Teaching. 6(9):21–31 Serial No.69

Webb B (2009) 'Looking for the intercultural 'third place' in language teacher training.' Paper presented to International EFL conference. Cebu, Philippines, August 2009

Webb B, & Smith D (2009) 'Indonesian students and their Australian experience.' Paper presented to TEFLIN conference. Malang, Indonesia, December 2009

Xiao L (2006) Bridging the gap between teaching styles and learning styles a cross cultural perspective. TESL-EJ 10(3):1–15 December

Yuile P (2010) 'Address to Australian Technology Network of Universities: Melbourne'. http://www.atn.edu.au/atnconference/2010/Yuile_Marketing_Australian_international_education.pdf

Chapter 11
Culture Through Literature in Foreign Language Teaching

Ann Gillian Elgar

Abstract Traditionally reading the literature of the target language would have formed an essential component of foreign language study, particularly at more advanced levels. One outcome expected from such literary studies would be a certain familiarity with aspects of the target language culture. After an initial consideration of the place of the culture of the target language variety in language teaching, this chapter poses the question as to what aspects of the target language culture can be learnt through the reading of fiction in the foreign language. It is illustrated through discussion of the role of the target language culture in English language teaching in Brunei, and of the ways in which literary study may contribute to an understanding of cultural aspects of the target variety. In particular, the chapter reports on the extent to which Bruneian university students' insight into British culture was enhanced by their reading of selected works of contemporary British short fiction.

Keywords Literature in language teaching · Literary studies · ELT in Brunei · University students

11.1 Initial Thoughts

For many years I have taught Twentieth century British and American Literature at the University of Brunei Darussalam and at other universities in Europe and the Middle East. I have also read widely in the literatures of other languages I have

A. G. Elgar (✉)
University of Brunei Darussalam, Gadong, Brunei
e-mail: annelgar@gmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_11,

studied, in particular the literatures of France and Germany. One reason often put forward in support of the inclusion of literature in a language learning programme is that through reading literature students can become familiar with the culture of the target language community. That indeed was part of my own motivation for reading French and German literature. Particularly in the case of apparently realistic fiction, it is easy for a reader to assume that they are being presented with a photographic snapshot of life in a particular milieu at a particular point in time. Certainly when reading novels such as Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks: Verfall Einer Familie* (Buddenbrooks: The Decline of a Family) I imagined that real people had indeed once lived a life very similar to that of the wealthy merchant family, the Buddenbrooks, in Nineteenth century Lübeck in northern Germany.

I was prompted to investigate the link between culture and literature by the following incident. As part of a course in postcolonial 'new' English literatures taught at the University of Brunei Darussalam I was reading stories by the renowned Indian author R. K. Narayan with my class of second year B.A. students. One story that caught the students' imagination was *An Astrologer's Day* (Narayan 2006). In this story a man who has run away from his home village after an argument in which he believes he killed a man has set himself up as an astrologer in a market square in a faraway town. He prospers at this trade and attracts many customers, thanks more to his shrewd understanding of human nature than to any particular astrological skills. After reading *An Astrologer's Day* one of my students commented that 'the story shows that Indians are superstitious and believe what astrologers tell them'. That comment set me thinking along the following lines: How true is it that Indians are superstitious? Is superstition something that is more a feature of Indian culture than of cultures elsewhere? And more generally: What can one learn about a country's culture through reading its works of fiction?

In this chapter I seek to address the question as to what insights into a community's culture language learners can gain from reading works of fiction emanating from that culture. I will first briefly touch upon the question of the role of the target language culture in language teaching. I will then present some background information about Brunei, focusing in particular on issues of education, language, and culture in Brunei. In the final section of the chapter I will consider how culture is reflected in literature, and what students can learn from their study of literature about the culture of the target language. To illustrate the discussion I will present an example from my research into students' reactions to the cultural dimensions of British short stories.

11.2 Language Teaching and Culture

For several decades the dominant paradigm in foreign and second language teaching has been the 'communicative approach', an approach which has tended to undervalue the cultural dimensions of language use. For example in English language teaching in the 1970s, as Pulverness remarks (1996, in Corbett 2003, pp. 1–2), 'English was seen as a means of communication which should not be

bound to culturally-specific conditions of use, but should be easily transferable to any cultural setting… (I)t was seen as… important to avoid material which might be regarded as "culture bound".'

More recently, however, renewed interest has been shown in the possibility of incorporating a cultural dimension within the communicative curriculum. According to Corbett (2003, p. 2) a language course concerned with culture will primarily focus on people rather than on language in isolation, and will help learners to acquire cultural skills. Though culture is indeed a vast concept, Corbett proposes that a cultural component might be integrated into language teaching as follows:

> From the various, interacting traditions of linguistics and anthropology, as well as literary, media and cultural studies, we can adapt techniques of observation and description, as well as the analysis and evaluation of texts and social practices, in order to equip learners with ways of making sense of target cultures.

Thus rather than attempting to teach the target culture in all its complexity, language teaching would prioritize the teaching of 'appropriate tools for intercultural exploration' (Corbett 2003, p. 19).

11.3 Language and Culture in Education in Brunei

Brunei Darussalam (Brunei) is a Malay Islamic Monarchy situated in the south-eastern region of Asia on the north coast of the island of Borneo. Although Brunei's total present day land area is just 5,675 km^2, Brunei was once an extensive empire that stretched across much of northern Borneo and neighbouring islands. Brunei's population is currently estimated to number some 390,000 inhabitants (Borneo Bulletin Brunei Yearbook 2010, p. E58).

By the late Nineteenth century Brunei's land area had shrunk in size to such an extent that its continued existence as an independent state was threatened. However an 1888 Protectorate Agreement between Britain and Brunei guaranteed Brunei's continued existence, and the establishment in 1906 of a British Residency in Brunei further strengthened ties between the two countries. In 1929 the economic outlook for Brunei was transformed by the discovery of oil. Then in 1984, after 96 years as a British Protectorate, Brunei gained its independence from Britain. Nevertheless Brunei has maintained close ties with Britain, while emphasizing the three tenets of Malay, Monarchy, and Islam. According to Martin (2008, p. 206) an important legacy of the British presence in Brunei has been the English language, which is used widely in many contexts of everyday life in Brunei.

Beginning in 1912, with the establishment of Brunei's first school, primary education taught through the medium of Malay became available in Brunei. Then in 1931 the first private English medium primary school was established. By 1941 there were 32 Malay, Chinese, and English medium primary schools in Brunei. (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 5).

By the middle of the Twentieth century there was an increasing demand for an English-educated workforce, particularly from within the oil industry and the civil

service (Martin 2008, p. 211). The first government English medium primary school was established in 1951, followed by the first English medium secondary school. However reservations were expressed from the outset as to the wisdom of introducing English medium schools in Brunei, with the British Resident in Brunei in 1951 voicing his concern as to the 'repercussions [English medium schools] would have in respect of the languages and cultures of the two main racial groups in Brunei, i.e. the indigenous races and the Chinese' (Annual Report for the State of Brunei for the Year 1951, in Martin 2008, p. 212).

In 1959 at the end of the British Residency period Malay was recognized as the official language of Brunei, although use of English was still permitted alongside Malay for all official purposes until further notice (Martin 2008, p. 212). Recommendations contained in education reports published in 1959 and 1972 to make Malay the main medium of instruction were not implemented, and during the 25-year period from 1959 to 1984 two separate streams of education continued to exist, one taught in Malay, the other in English, 'with much greater prestige being given to English medium education' (Martin and Kamsiah 2003, p. 89). The highest achieving students were offered English medium secondary education, whereas less academically inclined students were educated in Malay medium secondary schools, the first of which opened in 1966 (Martin 2008, p. 213).

Brunei achieved full independence from Britain in 1984, and in the following year the Bilingual Education Policy was implemented, which replaced the separate streams of education in Malay or in English medium with a single system of education. The stated aim of this new education policy was 'to ensure that learners attain a high level of proficiency in both Malay and English' (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 4), while maintaining 'the sovereignty of the Malay Language' (Government of Brunei 1985, in Martin 2008, p. 213). However, as Martin (2008, p. 214) has pointed out, in spite of the rhetoric to the contrary, the bilingual system 'clearly legitimised English as the dominant language' of education. Although all subjects up to and including at Primary 3 level were taught in Malay, with the exception of English language, from Primary 4 onwards the medium of instruction for all subjects apart from Malay, Religious Knowledge, Physical Education, and Art (and History from 1995 onwards) was English (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 7).

The most recent educational reform in Brunei, known as the National Education System for the Twenty-first century (SPN21), is currently being implemented in stages commencing in 2009. This reform is designed to provide students in Brunei with an education that will equip them to live in the 'multitasking, multifaceted, technology-driven, diverse and vibrant world' (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 13) of the Twenty-first century, a world in which the phenomena of globalisation and digitalisation entail new educational challenges. The SPN21 curriculum includes 'critical skills in mathematics, science, languages and ICT; entrepreneurial skills and lifelong learning; and study skills and values education' (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 13).

Although concern about low levels of language proficiency achieved by school students forms a key aspect of the stated rationale for the educational innovations

introduced by SPN21, with the need to strengthen performance in the Malay language and to tackle low English language proficiency being explicitly mentioned, in effect the reforms place greater importance on English than Malay. Whereas previously primary age children in Years 1–3 were educated exclusively in Malay, with the sole exception of their English lessons, under SPN21 all subjects from Years 1 to 11 are taught in English, with the sole exception of Malay Language, Islamic Religious Knowledge, and Physical Education, plus certain creative arts and technology modules up to Year 8.

The potential threat that forces of globalization more generally and the predominance of English in particular pose to Malay language and culture in Brunei is a topic which appears with some regularity in the local press. For example in an article entitled 'Globalisation threatens nation's cultural values' the opinion of a Bruneian university lecturer is quoted, according to which 'the free movement of information nowadays has caused Bruneians, particularly the younger generation, to be exposed to new cultures and different values that could weaken the nation's cultural values' (Brunei Times 2009a, 2nd April). In another article, 'Action plan needed to preserve Malay', a Bruneian Malay specialist voices his concern as follows: 'In the face of increasing globalisation, mastering English is a prerequisite (…) in our race to progress, we neglect our values (…) our cultural heritage.' (Brunei Times 2009b, 4th November).

Ambivalence towards English was a key finding of research conducted by O'Hara-Davies (2010) among Malay sixth form students in Brunei. While students who participated in her research recognized the need for English in the modern world, they regarded learning English more as a 'must' rather than a choice. English was an ambivalent force that could both bring people closer together and drive them apart:

> English was thought to unite in that it furthered the cause of intercultural, international and inter-religious harmony. It also facilitated global travel and communication. However, it was also felt that English had the power to create and or perpetuate elitism and alienate its users from their own culture and people. (O'Hara-Davies 2010, p. 111)

With regard to the National Education System for the Twenty-first century (SPN21), which underwent its first stage of implementation in 2009, objections have been raised in the press concerning its perceived discrimination in favour of English and against the Malay language and culture. In an article under the headline 'SPN21 lays less stress on Malay, say experts' (Brunei Times 2009c, 24th April), two Bruneian Malay language specialists voice the following opinions: 'We are too focused on riding through the globalisation that we're forgetting our heritage that is Malay language'; 'If we excessively put emphasis on the usage of English, it will change our culture'.

Perhaps partly in deference to such misgivings concerning the pervasive influence of English, the Brunei Ministry of Education has prioritized the inclusion of Bruneian subject matter in English language textbooks in Brunei. As Martin and Kamsiah have pointed out:

> The function of English in the dissemination of Western cultures is clearly a concern of the Brunei authorities…As part of educational corpus planning, rigorous steps are taken to ensure that there is no cultural 'intrusion' in textbooks used in Brunei classrooms, especially English language textbooks. (Martin and Kamsiah 2003, p. 96)

This assertion is borne out by the *Gateway to English* series of three textbooks for Lower Secondary classes, published between 2003 and 2005 by Macmillan in co-operation with the Curriculum Development Department of the Brunei Ministry of Education. In the introduction to *Gateway to English Book* 1, as in the other books in the series, reference is made to 'the [Education] Ministry's policy of providing textbooks which reflect the culture and aspirations of Brunei Darussalam' (Curriculum Development Department 2003, p. IV).

My survey of *Gateway to English Book* 1 revealed that the majority of its content is indeed Brunei-based, featuring Bruneian characters such as a schoolboy and his family, Bruneian settings such as a veterinary clinic and a library, and Bruneian topics such as transport, wildlife, history and legends. Non-Bruneian textbook content mostly involves historical settings, with topics ranging from ancient Egypt and Greek legends to the lives of Helen Keller and Mohandas Gandhi. Interestingly, where present-day contexts outside Brunei do appear, they are often depicted in a sketchy fashion, as for example the account of a visit to a fictitious museum in London or the story about a young boy's hardships in an unidentified African country. This is in sharp contrast to present-day Bruneian settings in the book, where recognizable places and real life Bruneians frequently appear.

Nevertheless intercultural understanding is one of the learning outcomes envisaged for the key learning area 'Languages' under SPN21, a learning area which should instill 'effective communication skills…to participate, interact and contribute actively in the global community and culture, based on an understanding of the sociocultural, economic and political contexts' (Curriculum Development Department 2009, p. 36). Thus developers of English language learning programmes in the context of SPN21 need to maintain a careful balance between the competing demands of local Bruneian language and culture, in particular of the majority Malay community, and the international contexts in which English is spoken. An intercultural approach might well be suited to achieving the required balance as 'its reflective stance can encourage learners to be critically aware of the roles that different languages play in their lives. The *inter*cultural element of this kind of second language education also requires teachers and learners to pay attention to and respect the home culture and the home language.' (Corbett 2003, p. 4).

11.4 Target Language Culture and Literature

There are many aspects of a culture that may appear in literary texts emanating from or set against the background of that culture. For example Lazar has identified the following as being among cultural aspects of literary texts:

> Objects or products that exist in one society, but not in another (…) Proverbs, idioms, formulaic expressions which embody cultural values (…) Social structures, roles and relationships (…) Customs, rituals, traditions, festivals (…) Beliefs, values, superstitions (…) Political, historic and economic background (…) Institutions (…) Taboos (…) Metaphorical, connotative meanings (…) Humour (…) Representativeness—to what slice of a culture or society does a text refer? (…) Genre—how far do different genres translate cross-culturally? (…) The status of the written language in different cultures and the resulting strategies for reading a text. (Lazar 1993, pp. 65–66)

The advantages and disadvantages of learning culture through literature have however been the subject of debate. Among those who see a role for literary texts in promoting cultural awareness, Corbett (2003, p. 173), for example, suggests that 'the practical educational utility of literary texts…is that they can vividly illustrate aspects of an entire society'. In a similar vein Hall (2005, p. 119) proposes that 'appreciation of others' viewpoints…is one of the things students are in education to learn, and…literature may be able to support or facilitate such learning'. On the other hand, though, Lazar cautions that:

> The relationship between a culture and its literature is not at all simple, since few novels or poems could claim to be a purely factual documentation of their society (…) There is a danger that students will fall into the fallacy of assuming that a novel (…) represents the totality of a society, when in fact it is a highly atypical account of one particular milieu during a specific historical period. (Lazar 1993, pp. 16–17)

In the Bruneian context reading literature may be an acceptable and appropriate way to enhance learners' intercultural awareness. Occasional literary texts are included in the English language textbooks written for Bruneian schools, such as an extract from H.G. Wells' novel *War of the Worlds* and one from Roald Dahl's autobiography *Boy* in *Gateway to English* 2 (Curriculum Development Department 2004). Moreover, there is a long tradition of literary study in Bruneian schools, in particular of English and American literature, and Bruneian students may elect to study literature as one of their optional subjects for the Brunei Cambridge General Certificate of Education examinations at 'O' level (taken at the end of Year 11, at the age of about 16) and 'A' level (taken at the end of Year 13, at the age of about 18). There is thus a certain familiarity among Bruneians with literary ways of writing in the English language, a familiarity that can be drawn upon when using such texts to promote intercultural understanding.

To help answer the question I posed at the beginning of this chapter, namely 'What can one learn about a society's culture through reading its works of fiction?', I invited Second Year students on a course in Twentieth century British and American literature at the University of Brunei Darussalam to comment on the cultural aspects of the texts they were reading. One such text was the short story *The Destructors* by British author Graham Greene (2000). *The Destructors* is set in the London of the mid-1950s. In the story a gang of teenage boys set about destroying an elderly man's home, a 200-year-old terraced house that, unlike its neighbours, has survived the bombing of London in the Second World War. While the elderly owner is away for a bank holiday weekend the gang first take the house apart from the inside and then cause the façade to collapse, so that at the end of the

story all that remains of the house is a pile of dusty rubble. After the students had read this story, they were asked to write down their responses to the question: 'What did you learn about British culture from your reading of *The Destructors*?'

Some of the students' responses regarding the insights they had gained into British culture from their reading of *The Destructors* are listed below. Students variously claimed to have learnt that:

- 'Old people in Britain live alone, their families do not take care of them'
- 'Young people do not respect the elderly'
- 'Parents of young people cannot control them'
- 'Young people join violent gangs'
- 'Gangs can be dangerous and violent'
- 'Being a gang leader is prestigious'

The key point to note here is that while each of these statements might be true of certain British people living in particular circumstances at particular points in time, students have no way of telling from reading this one story how true their observations are of British culture as a whole. There is thus a real risk that students might overgeneralize the circumstances of this particular story and come to the conclusion that British society is far more violent and uncaring than it in fact is.

To guard against the possibility that students might jump to conclusions on the basis of partial evidence, it is advisable to present them with more than one literary source of evidence for any theme. Thus the story *The Destructors*, which does indeed tell some recognizable truths about a particular segment of British society at a particular point in time, might be counterbalanced by the reading of other stories which portray intergenerational relationships in British society in a more positive light. Moreover, the intercultural element of cultural learning would suggest that such stories could be read alongside stories dealing with relationships across the generations in a Bruneian context. Since, however, there are only few published literary works written in English in Brunei, an alternative might be to ask students to write such stories themselves, either before or after encountering the British texts.

11.5 Conclusion

The Bruneian context is a challenging one for the teaching of target language culture. While English proficiency is highly sought after in Brunei, the dominance of English can be a source of resentment. Furthermore, while active participation in the global culture is a stated aim of language learning, in practice Bruneian cultural content is heavily emphasized, particularly in English language teaching. Thus an intercultural approach to language learning, in which both cultures are set side by side and neither is privileged, may be an appropriate approach towards resolving these conflicts. Moreover, literary works as indirect cultural texts might be more acceptable in the Bruneian context than other more direct ways of teaching the target language culture.

References

Borneo Bulletin Brunei Yearbook (2010) Brunei Press, Gadong.
Brunei Times (2009a) Globalisation threatens nation's cultural values 2nd Apr
Brunei Times (2009b) Action plan needed to preserve Malay 4th Nov
Brunei Times (2009c) SPN21 lays less stress on Malay, say experts 24th Apr
Corbett J (2003) An intercultural approach to English language teaching. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon
Curriculum Development Department (2003) Gateway to English: student's book 1. Macmillan, Oxford
Curriculum Development Department (2004) Gateway to English: student's book 2. Macmillan, Oxford
Curriculum Development Department (2009) The national education system for the twenty-first century: SPN21. Ministry of Education, Negara Brunei Darussalam
Greene G (2000) Complete short stories. Penguin, London
Hall G (2005) Literature in language education. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
Lazar G (1993) Literature and language teaching. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Martin P (2008) Educational discourses and literacy in Brunei Darussalam. Int J Bilingual Edu Bilingualism 11(2):206–220
Martin P, Kamsiah Abdullah (2003) English language teaching in Brunei Darussalam: continuity and change. In: Ho Wah Kam HW, Wong RYL (eds) English language teaching in East Asia today: changing policies and practices. Marshall Cavendish Eastern Universities Press, London, pp 87–101
Narayan RK (2006) Malgudi days. Penguin, London
O'Hara-Davies B (2010) The paradox of English. J Multilingual and Multicultural Develop 31(2):107–118

Part III
Culture-Related Concepts and Constructs

Chapter 12
Time as Cultural Construct: Some Preliminary Remarks on the Conceptualization of Time in L1 and L2

Danuta Gabryś-Barker

Abstract One of the major competences within any model of communicative competence has to do with the socio-cultural aspects of appropriate functioning in another language. A significant category within this socio-cultural component is the construct of *time*. This is evidenced at the level of perception of time in our daily functioning, for example being rigorous about keeping the time or being (let's call it) flexible in this respect (Sp. *mañana* or Port. *amanhã*). It may also be assumed that this attitude to time will be well-reflected in the way language functions, i.e. its linguistic expression in single words or phrases and idioms. Cognitive linguists have a lot to say about this phenomenon. As a consequence, it may be assumed that the conceptualization of time in L1 will find its way into L2 production, observed at the level of lexical transfer, for example in the incorrect use of prepositions, which is a common lexical error for Polish learners of English. This study looks at subjects who are native speakers of Polish (Group 1) and Portuguese (Group 2) and at the same time advanced users of English as L2, and the way they conceptualize time in both languages. The data collected comes from two association tasks administered to both groups of subjects, in which the first task elicits the subjects' thinking about time at the level of semantics: *What do you associate with time?* (both in Polish/Portuguese and in English). The other task elicits linguistic responses to the stimulus word *Time*, by asking the subjects to produce words and phrases expressing time (both in Polish/Portuguese and in English). The focus of this study is the extent to which perception of time is idiosyncratic in its nature or whether it is marked as a phenomenon grounded in one's native culture and hence characteristic of each group. Also, interest centres on the degree to which conceptualization of time is carried across languages (L1 and L2) in terms of its meaning (perception of time—task 1) and its linguistic

D. Gabryś-Barker (✉)
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: danutagabrys@hotmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_12,

realization (lexical transfer—task 2). The preliminary data from the study may shed light on the way the construct of time can be dealt with in formal language instruction as a significant aspect of the cross-cultural awareness of a bilingual.

Keywords Socio-cultural component · Attitudes to time · Polish and Portuguese learners of English · Conceptualisations · Linguistic realisations

12.1 Introduction

A lot of misunderstanding comes from different conceptualisations of some constructs. Extreme cases were presented by Sharifian (2004) in his study of Australian and Aboriginal students. He quotes an example of two English sentences and their interpretation by these two sample groups: *Your family is deadly* and *You look deadly*. Anglo-Australians interpret the examples as: "Your family is dangerous" and "You look scary", whereas the Australian Aboriginal conceptualization is "Your family is great" and "You look fantastic" (Sharifian 2004, p. 85). These different interpretations derive from a conceptual discrepancy born by different cultural schemas and categorisations.

"Languages spread across cultures, and cultures spread across languages" (Risager 2006, p. 11), and culture is communication and communication is culture. Numerous volumes have been published and extensive discussions carried out on the relations between language and culture. It was at the turn of the nineteenth century that Humboldt (1767–1835) defined language as the way in which language was a tool for expressing people's spirit. Later on, Sapir (1916, 1921) believed language to be a guide to social reality. Whorf (1897–1941) talked about linguistic determinism (language determines the way we think) and linguistic relativity (differences between languages reflect differences in worldviews). Berlin and Key (1969) partially refuted linguistic determinism, pointing to a certain degree of universalism across languages (Salzman 1998). Many names could be added to this discussion, among them Wierzbicka (in a crosscultural context), Kramsch (in a multilingual context), Byram (in the pedagogical and educational context), numerous cognitive linguists (among others, those working in the field of metaphor), as well as Agar with his concept of *languaculture* and Friedrich coining the term of *linguaculture*.

The purpose of this paper however is not to continue the discussion on theoretical grounds but to demonstrate how certain constructs, such as TIME, can be seen as culture-grounded, expressing certain patterns of human behaviour characteristic of certain communities of nationals, maybe to a certain extent reinforcing existing stereotypes, maybe showing a high degree of idiosyncracy, not only across a language(s) but also within nationality.

It is important to observe the uniqueness of perceptions of culturally-grounded phenomena and how they function in different languages: in one's native language *versus* a second/foreign language being acquired/learnt. The importance of

cross-linguistic understanding of culturally-grounded concepts is a prerequisite for the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC), understood as the ability to participate successfully in L2/FL discourse(s) and being inter-culturally competent. More precisely, intercultural communicative competence is perceived as:

1. the ability to establish relations
2. the ability to communicate with minimal loss of distortion
3. the ability to achieve or attain a level of compliance among those involved (in the discourse) (Fantini 1997, p. 3).

Offering a more detailed definition of IC (intercultural competence), Byram (1997) distinguishes between different *savoirs* (competences/knowledges/ "know how"):

1. "knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction (…)"
2. *Savoir-comprendre* (understanding): "the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and to relate it to documents or events from one's own (…)"
3. *Savoir-apprendre/faire*: (learn/do) "the skill of discovery and interaction. ability to acquire knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-life communication and interaction (…)"
4. *Savoir s'engager* (involvement): "critical cultural awareness/political education. An ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries (…)"
5. *Savoir-être* (being): curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own (…)" (Byram 1997, pp. 57–61).

In consequence of such an understanding of IC, Byram sees a language learner as an "intercultural speaker", who is not only effective in communicative exchanges but also exhibits

> the ability to decentre and take up the other's perspective on their own culture, anticipating, and when possible, resolving dysfunctions in communication and behaviour (ibid., p. 42).

12.2 Background Assumptions

12.2.1 Culture and its Complexity: Uniqueness Versus Global Character

Generally speaking, culture may be defined as:

> (…) a large set of meanings shared by a group of people. To be a member of a culture means to have the ability to make meaning with other people (…). Particular cultures

> consist of the particular meaning-making processes that a group of people employs and the particular sets of meanings produced by them, in other words, *a particular conceptual system* (Kövecses 2006, p. 336, italics mine).

In discussing the construct of culture, Salzman (1998, p. 46) talks of it being "all inclusive":

> When one talks about culture, however, the explicit mention of language is, strictly speaking, redundant because any particular language is a form (even though autonomous) of learned behaviour and therefore a part of the culture.

Salzman (ibid., p. 46) believes that:

> There is no question that the lexicon of any language mirrors whatever the nonverbal culture emphasizes; that is, those aspects of culture that are important for members of a society are correspondingly highlighted in the vocabulary.

In other words, it is assumed that lexicon constitutes the basis for the externalisations of our experiences in the world, and as such creates our conceptualisations about the world. The world is "here and now" (*Situated culture*), but there is also the world of innate universal human experience shared by all of us. (*Universal culture*) (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1 Culture(s) (after Johnson 2000, p. 52)

Universal culture	Situated culture
• Reality is independent of specific cultures	• Reality is relative to specific cultures
• Humans operate thorough one system of rationality, which can be perfected to perceive the truth	• Humans operate through many different systems of rationality, perceiving different truths
• Culture resides in abstract knowledge system found in people's heads	• Culture resides in human action, manifested in human processes and products
• Language is a vehicle	• Language is symbolic action

Hannerz (1992) sees culture as a complex, multi-dimensional construct embracing:

1. *ideas and modes of thought* as entities and processes of the mind—the entire array of concepts, propositions, values and the like which people within some social unit carry together, as well as their various ways of handling their ideas in characteristic modes of mental operation;
2. *forms of externalization*, the different ways in which meaning is made accessible to senses, made public; and
3. *social distribution*, the ways in which the collective cultural inventory of meanings and meaningful external forms—that is (1) and (2) together—is spread over a population and its social relationships (Hannerz 1992, p. 7, quoted in Risager 2006, p. 64).

Although the above perception of culture would imply its uniqueness in a given context, Hannerz (ibid., p. 218) also coins a term "the global ecumene" to emphasize the globalization of present day culture reaching beyond the frontiers,

and cultures becoming more characteristic of groups than societies (nationalities). The cultural boundaries become "fuzzy" and culture becomes a less homogeneous construct as delineated by a national culture. However, it may be assumed that certain values as represented by a given national culture may be more resistant to change and persistent as determined by life-histories of its members, conditions of life, context—both geographical and historical, reinforced by education and daily life practices. Also the centrality of some cultures in the case of better developed countries that are seen as desired (e.g. USA or UK) as compared with more peripheral ones (such as for example Portugal or Poland), may exert influence on perceptions and value change. This change will certainly operate on the idiosyncratic level of individuals and their cross-cultural contacts via travel and professional connections or for young people, through educational mobility.

12.2.2 Representational Systems: Conceptualisations and Metaphors

According to Lakoff (in Baumgartner and Payr 1995, p. 121):

> The conceptual system, the terms on which you understand the world, comes out of interaction with the world. That does not mean that there's a God's-eye view that describes the world in terms of objects, properties and relations. Objects, properties, and relations are human concepts. We impose them on the world through our interaction with whatever is real.

Conceptualisations and their representations constitute the most significant function of human cognition as they construct and express our experience:

a. by being:

> (…) in the centre of the information processing flow, with input from perceptual modules of different kinds, and is centrally involved in memory, speech, planning, decision-making, actions, inductive inferences and much more besides (Hampton and Moss 2003, p. 505).

b. by categorising our perceptions:

> (…) language serves as a primary classificatory system, segmenting and fragmenting our notions about the world while also grouping and combining word categories, ranging from wider classifications to narrower specifications based on semantic criteria that are clustered and form their meaning (…). We learn to generalize and specify about the things of the world as we encode concepts into the words of language, just as the words of language in turn lead us to concepts. (Fantini 1997, p. 7)

c. by unconscious meaning-making processes of mind/brain activity in which:

> (…) [w]e categorize the world, organize our knowledge into frames, make use of within-frame mappings (metonymy) and cross-frame mappings (metaphor), build image-schemas from bodily experience and apply these to what we experience, divide our experience into figures and grounds, set up mental spaces and further mappings between them in the on-line process of understanding (…). (Kövecses 2006, p. 327)

d. by categorising meanings as:

> (…) embodied and culture-dependent at the same time (…). The mind is not the mirror of reality, it reflects the world *as* we experience and perceive it (…). Reality does not come in a prestructured form; it does not come in well-defined categories. Categories are defined with respect to prototypes and have a "family resemblance". One of our most essential abilities to survive is the ability to categorize the objects around us. By *creating* conceptual categories we make sense of the world, when we encounter new objects and events we assign them to already-existing categories or create new ones to accommodate them (ibid., p. 328–329).

e. by creating meanings as both:

> (…) literal and figurative and not essentially and predominantly literal. Cultural models for abstract concepts can only be metaphor based (ibid: 331).

f. by relating to the more familiar:

> The human being speaking a language uses his or her own body and its relationship to the surrounding natural and cultural environment as a basis to conceptualize spatial relations. Many of our metaphors vary because our experiences as human beings vary and because the cognitive processes we put to use for the creation of abstract though may also vary (ibid., p. 334).

12.2.3 Culture-Specific Concepts: TIME

Language is used as a vehicle to transfer messages, to express conceptualisations of natural phenomena, abstract concepts, etc., in other words, it conceptualizes the whole wealth of human experience. As Sharifian (2004, p. 75) put it, "(…) conceptualisations act as the foundation for our emergent behaviour in our daily encounters". And what is more "even very basic human actions, thoughts, and emotions may be construed through conceptualisations that appear to be largely cultural-specific" (ibid, p. 75). So the way we conceptualize follows the schemas and categories, which

> derive from various sources of our experience including bodily, environmental, as well as cultural, to make sense and organise the new experience. Cultural experience, including what is usually termed as "worldview", largely provides a framework for human conceptualization and may even underlie the way we conceptualise our body and our environment. These conceptualisations act as the foundation for our emergent behaviour in our daily actions (…) even very basic human actions, thoughts, and emotions may be construed through conceptualisations that appear to be largely culture-specific (…) (Sharifian 2004, p. 75).

Different conceptualisations result in cultural differences, which means that:

> Individuals of one culture show a concentration of behaviour patterns which in another culture are not observed with the same frequency, meaning that the observed features exist, normally distributed, in both of the cultures under comparison, but with a different strength of emphasis. (Engelbert 2004, p. 204)

Such an attitude to cultural difference will develop intercultural awareness and at the same time it will inhibit stereotyping (Engelbert 2004, p. 204). In different learning contexts it will point to the challenges cultural differences pose as

occurring in "multiple realities" (Hutchison 2006, p. 308) where the following will be observed:

> The attitude to work is different, that there is different feeling for time and space, there are other role perceptions, other rules of communication, a different view of the importance of the group versus the individual, different ways of dealing with hierarchy, other forms, superstitions, taboos, as well as other value systems (Brislin and Yoshida 1994, quoted in Engelbert 2004, p. 204).

I believe that one of these primary categories is TIME–its perception as observed in the behavioural patterns of daily life, professional enterprise and cross-cultural contacts. For example, it will be observable in the context of business dealings, in education (in terms of attitudes to teaching and learning) and in multinational personal contacts.

It was Whorf (1956) who early on identified perceptions of time as "subjective becoming later", "the subjective experience" or "feeling of temporal duration", as the essential understandings of time, "covered or cloaked by linguistically induced patterns" (Whorf 1956, pp. 141–143, quoted in Lucy 1992, p. 42).

There are quite a few cognitive studies concerning the conceptualization of time across languages. One of them is quoted by Kövecses (2006), Boroditsky's (2001) study of metaphorical language expressing time and its relation to the way we think about time in two languages, English and Mandarin Chinese. Boroditsky (ibid.) describes English as mainly oriented horizontally (TIME IS HORIZONTAL, e.g. *before a day*, *after a month*, *a year behind*), whereas mandarin Chinese is mainly vertical (TIME IS VERTICAL, e.g. use of *up* and *down* prepositions). In a sequence of on-line processing of metaphoric expressions both horizontal and vertical, in a form of true/false statements, the quicker reaction times were recorded in the case of horizontal structures demonstrating the spatio-temporal thinking about time. However, the reaction times were shorter for English subjects. In the second part of the study on the long-term understanding of the metaphors, again it was shown that the English responded quicker to horizontal metaphors than vertical ones, whereas the response was the opposite in the case of Chinese subjects. It was concluded that

> habits in language encourage habits in thought (…) A language makes us attend to certain aspects of experience through grammatically encoding these aspects while ignoring others (…) despite old and recent argument to the contrary, language habits appear to shape the way we think. (Kövecses 2006, pp. 151–153)

12.3 TIME Conceptualizations (Empirical Data)

12.3.1 Study Description: Research Focus, Subjects and Data Collection Tools

The focus of this study is the extent to which the perception of TIME is idiosyncratic in nature (irrespective of L1 background) or whether it is marked as a

phenomenon grounded in one's native culture and hence characteristic of each study group. Also, research interest centres on the degree to which conceptualization of time is carried across languages (from L1 into L2) in terms of the perception of time in L1 (task 1) and its perception in L2 and its linguistic realization (lexical transfer—task 2). The preliminary data from the study may shed light on the way the construct of TIME can be dealt with in formal language instruction as a significant element in the cross-cultural awareness of a bilingual.

This study looks at subjects who are native speakers of Polish (Group 1) and Portuguese (Group 2) and at the same time advanced users of English as L2. The two groups of subjects, Polish and Portuguese students, are generally homogeneous in terms of their linguistic faculties and learning histories. They are also homogeneous in terms of commonly shared experiences, which, like in Sharifian's study, comprise:

> (…) experience in similar physical environments (i.e. school, home)
> (…) membership of the same age group level
> (…) access to "modern lifestyle"
> (…) access to school materials (type of language instruction—*addition mine*)
> (…) contact resulting in *conceptual seepage* (Sharifian 2004, p. 82)

However, it may be assumed that the subjects representing two nationalities, Polish and Portuguese, will be different culturally, coming from two different geographical, political and historical contexts which have traditionally had little interaction. On the other hand, there should be a visible degree of homogeneity in responses within each of the groups, which will be based on culturally-grounded conceptualizations, but there may also be some degree of heterogeneity observed across the groups.

The data collected comes from two association tasks administered to both groups of subjects. Since language exteriorizes perceptions, the procedure of using association tasks was employed to observe cultural conceptualizations of the abstract phenomenon of TIME. As Sharifian (2004, p. 77) puts it:

> (…) in a word association task, the stimulus words appear to be able to elicit responses that largely reflect associative links in a human conceptual system. These associative links are usually formed as a result of cognitive processes such as schematisation and categorisation. Thus, associative responses to a stimulus word should largely reflect elements and aspects of schemas and categories in an individual's conceptual system.

The first task in this study elicits the subjects' thinking about time at the level of semantics: *What do you associate with time*? (both in Polish/Portuguese and in English). The other task elicits linguistic responses to the stimulus word *Time*, by asking the subjects to produce words and phrases expressing time (both in Polish/Portuguese and in English, task 2). (see Table 12.2).

Table 12.2 Stages of the project

Stage	Task 1	Task 2
L1 association tasks: • in Polish (group 1) • in Portuguese (group 2)	Stimulus—Response (individual lexical items)	Expressions/ sayings
L2 association tasks: • in English (both groups)	Stimulus—Response (individual lexical items)	Expressions/ sayings

12.3.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

12.3.2.1 Conceptualizations in L1 (Polish and Portuguese)

TASK 1: Generally, within each nationality group the responses were not distributed in a totally homogeneous way, but certain tendencies (connotations) were observed (Table 12.3).

TASK 2: Expressions relating to time *Czas to pieniadz* and *Tempo é dinheiro* (*Time is money*) were the most frequently conjured up expression in both groups. Other data are presented in Table 12.4.

The responses in the form of expressions **reflect the single word associations** in the corpus of Task 1 data (see Table 12.3 for comparison). Again, it is mostly in the Portuguese group that **personally relevant** expressions/sentences are used (not set phrases), such as:

Já nâo há tempo. (Now there's no time), *Lembra-me do tempo* (Remind me of the time) or *Preciso de mais tempo* (I need more time). They also express important **activities in daily life/in life**, for example: *Anda almocar está na hora*. (It's time for lunch) or *Hoje a tarde vou fazer bolos*. (I will bake cakes in the afternoon). As in Task 1, it is the dominant category for the Portuguese group.

At the same time, in the Polish sample, the dominant category is expressed by numerous **proverbs and sayings** related in some way to time: *Zakochani nie licza dni* (People in love do not count days), *Nigdy nie wejdziesz do tej samej rzeki* (Panta rei) or *Przeminęło z wiatrem* (gone with the wind). Also similar examples were received in the Portuguese data, but they were insignificant in number (only 8 examples), of the kind: *Carpe diem* (Seize the day) or *Futuro ninguem o sabe* (No one knows the future).

12.3.2.2 Conceptualizations in L2 (English)

TASK 1: single word responses In the corpus of both groups there were no substantial differences in the first task. All the responses produced also overlap with the words received in the L1 task. So the categories can be described as:

Table 12.3 Single-word association responses: *here and now versus abstract and metaphoric*

Type of associations	Group 1 examples	Group 2 examples	Comments
Literal and concrete	zegar, budzik, minuta, sekunda, doba, dzień, noc, epoka, wiek, teraźniejszy, przyszły, przeszły.	relógio, horas, minutos, secundas, dia, presente, passado, futuro.	• The responses not distributed in a totally homogeneous way, but certain tendencies (connotations) were observed; • The dominant responses in both groups overlap in this category.
Daily experiences	lekcja, zajęcia, dzwonek, sesja, gramatyka, czas present perfect, punktualność.	aulas, tarefas, prazo, horário, férias, curto prazo, longo prazo, pontualidade.	• Overlap of daily experiences (studies).
Descriptive	uciekający, stracony, upływający, ulotny, mało.	complicado, difícil, limite, atraso, pouco, rápido, longo.	• Both sets of data negative; • In the Polish responses focusing on lack of time; • A challenge or inability to cope with time in the case of the Portuguese data.
Attitude to time	zmarszczki, starość, rodzice, dziadkowie, siwe włosy, zmarszczki, śmierć, przemijanie, marnowanie, koniec świata, zabijanie, wiekowy.	Passear, comer, viajar, dormir, respirar, encontro, esperar	• Positive (optimistic—relating to present time) versus negative (pessimistic—time passing) associations; • Passage of time (Pol.) *versus* using time now (Port.).
Metaphoric and abstract	kurz, pajęczyna, nieskończoność, kapsuła czasu, bezkres, rozwój, ewolucja, degradacja, dojrzewanie, dorastanie, czasoprzestrzeń.	None	
Another meaning (Port. TEMPO as WEATHER)	None	sol, chuva, tempestede, vento, frio (25%)	• Reflection of meteorological conditions of the time when the tests were carried out (bad weather, conditions quite unusual for that time of year in Portugal); • Personal relevance and concrete concerns expressed.

Table 12.4 Associations

Type of associations	Group 1	Group 2
Similarities (as in Task 1)	czas płynie/ucieka/przemija, latka lecą, nie trać czasu, mija czas, nie ma czasu, czyjś czas przeminął, życie jest ulotne. (50%)	falta de tempo, curto/longo prazo, tempo perdido (wasted/lost). (40%)
Personally relevant daily activites	Individual examples (5%)	Já nâo ha tempo. Lembra-me do tempo (Remind me of the time) Preciso de mais tempo (I need more time) Falamos depois (We will talk later) Estás atrasada! (You are late!) Perder um tempo numa relacão (To waste time in a relationship)Nâo tempo para isso (We have no time for this) Tens um minuto? (Do you have a minute?) Acorda, tens aula! (Wake up, you have lessons!) Anda almoçar está na hora. (It's time for lunch)Vai dormir, já é cansada. Hoje a tarde vou fazer bolos. Estás disponível este fim de semana? Estou ansiosa pelas férias (I'm dying for the holiday) (50%)
Proverbs and sayings	Przyszła kryska na Matyska Zakochani nie liczą dni Nigdy nie wejdziesz do tej samej rzeki Przeminęło z wiatrem Młodość nie wieczność Gdy ktoś się spieszy, diabeł się cieszy Co masz zrobić później zrób teraz Iść a duchem czasu Na ten czas Wojski. (literary reference) (45%)	Tempo é dinheiro Carpe diem Futuro ninguém o sabe (No one knows the future) Nâo o deixas para amanhã o que podes fazer hojè. Quanto mais o tempo passa, mais nos tormamos velhos (The more time passes, the older we get) O tempo é o maior tirano. O tempo é o melhor remedio. (10%)

- literal and concrete: *watch*, *clock*, *hours*, *minutes*, *seconds*, *day*, *night*, *year*, *century*, *etc*.
- descriptive terms:

  Polish: *passing*, *running*, *wasted*, *flow*, *little*.
  Portuguese: *fast*, *timeless*, *late*, *stress*, *work*, *rush*, *shift*.

- daily experiences:

  Polish: *work*, *school*, *timetable*, *exam*, *appointment*.
  Portuguese: *classes*, *school*, *bus*, *timetable*, *teacher*, *boss*, *cell phone*.

- the attitude to time:

  Polish: *grey hair*, *race*, *lack of time*, *grandparents*, *grey hair*, *wrinkles*, *old age*, *free time*, *leisure*, *holidays*, *summer*, *relax*.
  Portuguese: *important*, *precious*, *respect*, *responsibility*, *rush*, *running*, *fast*.

Table 12.5 A significant overlap with the words received in L1 task

Type	Group 1	Group 2
Literal and concrete	Watch, clock, hours, minutes, seconds, day, night, year, century, etc.	The same
Descriptive	Passing, running, wasted, flow, little.	Fast, timeless, late, stress, work, rush, shift.
Daily experience	Work, school, timetable, exam, appointment.	Classes, school, bus, timetable, teacher, boss, cell phone.
Attitude to time	Grey hair, race, lack of time, grandparents, grey hair, wrinkles, old age, free time, leisure, holidays, summer, relax.	Important, precious, respect, responsibility, rush, running, fast.
Metaphoric and abstract	None	None

Here the Polish data demonstrates a more positive outlook on time, as if English and all the activities connected with it offered a more positive outlook on life.

- no metaphoric or abstract associations in any of the samples
- fewer TEMPO as WEATHER associations in the Portuguese data: (8 examples): *rain*, *sun*, *moon*, *storm*, *sea* (Table 12.5).

TASK 2: Expressions as responses (L2) Task 2 brought quite interesting results as far as the variety of responses and their possible interpretations are concerned. As it was in the case of L1 for both groups, also in L2, *Time is money* was the most frequently called up association in English.

In the Polish data, over 50% of phrase responses represent expressions characteristic of English and as such were marked. Markedness is a linguistic characteristic that often results in erroneous constructions or under-produced structures in a FL learner's performance. As such it is often explicitly focused on in language instruction to be over-learnt and as a consequence internalized. Examples of such expressions are numerous, for instance: *in time*, *on time*, *it's* (*high*) *time*, *tell the time*, *time's up*, *for the time being*.These examples also appear in the Portuguese data, however they are much less numerous (8 examples): *once upon a time*, *time's up*, *out of time*, *time out*, *running out of time*, *time after time*, *be on time*. So it seems that the transfer of training understood as an influence of language instruction on language performance, is less significant in the case of Portuguese students.

On the other hand, as was the case with Task 1 expressions, the Portuguese corpus contains a significant number (40%) of person-related phrases, such as: *We have got time*, *don't worry*! *Don't do such things*, *relax a bit* or *Time is me and you taking a coffee*.

Table 12.6 Differences between Polish and Portuguese expressions recalled

Type of associations	Group 1	Group 2
Marked structures (transfer of training)	In time, on time, it's (high) time, by the time, have a good time, have a time of one's life, be short of time, run out of time, tell the time, time's up, for the time being. (50%)	Once upon a time, time's up, out of time, time out, running out of time, time after time, be on time. (10%)
Personal	Insignificant	We have got time, don't worry! Don't do such things, relax a bit. Can we do this later? Time to lunch/breakfast Finish before deadline. Time is me and you taking a coffee Wake up early! See the schedule When is the dinner time? Let's have lunch together Do you know what time it is? It's time to finish what you started. (40%)
Proverbs and sayings	Absence makes the heart grow fonder Make hay when the sun shines An early bird catches the worm.	No examples given

This time, and in contrast to the L1 task, no sayings or proverbs were represented in the L2 associations of the Portuguese group; the only three observed samples appeared in the Polish data (Table 12.6).

12.3.3 Discussion and Conclusions

Why do we study the ways we store language(s) and recall linguistic items (words, phrases, sayings) automatically (through associations, slips of the tongue, code switches, etc.) without careful speculation, thinking or reasoning? I propose it is because, as Fantini puts it:

> (…) much of what is gleaned from a linguistic perspective about languages informs our understanding of culture. Because language reflects and affects culture, and because both languages and cultures are human inventions, it is not surprising this should be so. (…) (Fantini 1997, p. 5)

What sort of additional commentary is appropriate on the basis of this study data? In my previous comparative study of Polish-Portuguese perceptions of themselves and of others taken both from the *etic* (perceptions of 'outsiders'–foreigners) and *emic* (perceptions of insiders–natives) (Gabryś-Barker 2008), I concluded that four different dimensions of similarities and differences between the Portuguese and the Polish can be observed:

1. **positive versus negative:** The Portuguese seem more positive in their reflections both about themselves and about others (Poland and Poles) than the Polish informants;

2. **past versus present:** Both the Portuguese and Polish emphasize the historical past expressing positive attitude towards it, however Poles contrast it with negative feelings about the present;
3. **national versus personal:** There is more focus on the personal dimension in the case of the Portuguese, whereas Poles relate more generally to Poland as a nation (more associations were offered in this category than in the others);
4. **values and their interpretation:** Similar types of values are expressed but Poles more often see them as abstract and professed but not sincerely believed in, as put into practice in their lives (e.g. *religion just to show off*, *patriotic in words*, *family but career first*). (ibid, p. 128)

To what an extent can similar patterns be observed in the specific case of the construct of TIME? Definitely, the first observation was confirmed (as it was in the case of national characteristics in the other study) on more **positivity** and leniency towards time is seen in the Portuguese responses—like in the phrase (and attitude) *amahã*. Polish **pessimism** (a negative emotion) is expressed in the subjects' focus on *gloom and doom* of the future: *passing away*, *dying*, *getting old*. The second observation (from the previous study) "national *versus* personal", can be rephrased here as: **general (abstract) *versus* relevant for an individual,** the former being more a Polish domain, and the latter expressing the Portuguese characteristic of one's life taking on a daily, family and work-oriented perspective.

I believe that although based on very limited data in terms of number of participant informants and just one construct which I see as culturally-grounded (TIME), the study demonstrates quite significant cultural differences between people who come from Poland, i.e. this part of the world where different geographical (climatic!), political and historical setbacks still hold *versus* more relaxed, perhaps happier, and more in tune with their own individual needs Portuguese people. This understanding is an important aspect of being able to function multi-culturally, perhaps even integrating (if necessary) with the other community without falling into conflict with one's own L1 ego. This competence (intercultural competence)

> offers the possibility of transcending the limitations of one's singular world view (…) Contact with other world view can result in the shift of perspective, along with the concomitant appreciation for the diversity and richness of human beings (Fantini 1997, p. 13).

In the context of FL learning, as contrasted with L2 acquisition in a natural context of language immersion, where the environment itself enhances the development of intercultural competence of a non-native speaker, a FL classroom needs the careful attention of a teacher in this respect. Numerous studies of teachers' beliefs about FL instruction demonstrate that teachers generally assign more importance to linguistic objectives over cultural ones. Castro et al. (2004) in their study also looked at teachers' perceptions of what culture teaching meant to them, and conclude.

> On the one hand, when teachers define the objectives of culture teaching, they gave priority to the knowledge dimension expressed in terms of "daily life and routines". In the second instance, they perceived culture teaching in terms of its attitudinal dimension

(to promote openness and tolerance towards other cultures and peoples) and in the third place in terms of its behavioural dimension, expressed in terms of "reflection on cultural differences (…) (ibid., p. 102).

Reflection on cultural differences, but also on cultural similarities, should derive not only from cultural products but primarily from an awareness of language (one's L1 and the target language) and how it externalizes our conceptualizations about culturally-grounded constructs.

References

Baumgartner P, Payr S (1995) Speaking minds. Interviews with twenty eminent cognitive scientists. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ

Berlin B, Key P (1969) Basic Color terms. Their universality and evolution. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press

Boroditsky L (2001) Does language shape thought? Mandarin and English speakers' conception of time. Cognitive Psych 43:1–22

Brislin R, Yoshida T (1994) Intercultural communication training. Sage Publications, Seven Oaks, CA

Byram M (1997) Teaching and assessing intercultural competence. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

Castro P, Sercu L, Mendez Garcia MC (2004) "Integrating language-and-culture teaching: an investigation of Spanish teachers' perceptions of the objectives of foreign language education". In intercultural education, 15(1):91–104, March 2004

Engelbert S (2004) Intercultural training in exchange situations for experts and management: a critical reflection. Intercultural Educ 15(2):195–208 June 2004

Fantini AE (1997) Language: its cultural and intercultural dimensions. In: Fantini AE (ed) 1997, New ways of teaching culture. Innovative classroom techniques. New ways in TESLO series II, Maryland, USA: TESOL, Inc., pp 3–15

Gabryś-Barker D (2008) White people in fur coats versus dark-haired and exotic. In: Barker A (ed) Giving and taking offence, Universidade de Aveiro, Departamento de linguas e Culturas, Aveiro, Portugal, pp 123–136

Hampton JA, Moss HE (2003) Concepts and meanings: introduction to the special issue on conceptual representation. In: Language and Cognitive Processes, 18 (5/6):505–512

Hannerz U (1992) Cultural complexity. Studies in the social organization of meaning. Columbia University Press, New York

Hutchison CH (2006) Cultural constructivism: the confluence of cognition, knowledge creation, multiculturalism, and teaching. Intercultural Educ 17(3):301–310 August 2006

Johnson FL (2000) Speaking culturally. Language diversity in the US. Sage Publications, London/New Delhi/Thousand Oaks

Kövecses Z (2006) Language, mind and culture. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Lucy JA (1992) Language diversity and thought. A reformulation of the linguistic relativity hypothesis. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Risager K (2006) Language and culture. Global flows and local complexity. Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon and Buffalo and Toronto

Salzman Z (1998) Language, society and culture. An introduction to linguistic anthropology. Westview Press, Oxford

Sharifian F (2004) Cultural conceptualisations in english words: a study of aboriginal children in perth. In: language and Education, 19(1):74–88, 2005

Whorf L (1956) Language, thought, and reality: selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf. In: Carroll JB (ed) Technology Press of MIT and John Wiley and Sons, Cambridge and New York

Chapter 13
Getting Rid of the Modesty Stigma

Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska

Abstract One of the most important values of Polish culture is modesty. This is reflected in many aspects of everyday behaviour. Polish modesty is visible in the ways people respond to compliments, in the Polish self-presentational style, and in the overall manner of managing the self. It is visible in the management of the face and the body in general. The extent to which modesty influences the behaviour of Poles is especially noticeable in intercultural communication. The chapter deals with two modesty-related issues:

- communication problems due to the operation of Polish modesty encountered by Poles in American culture settings, and
- changes in Polish culture after 1989, changes in the role of modesty in particular.

The data come from participant observation of spontaneous communicative behaviour in Anglo-American and Polish culture. The participants are members of Polish culture, engaged in intracultural and intercultural communication.

Keywords Modesty · Face · Compliment responses · Intercultural communication · Polish and Anglo-American culture

13.1 Introduction

One of the most important values of Polish culture is modesty. It is reflected in many aspects of everyday behaviour. Polish modesty is visible in the ways people respond to compliments, in the Polish self-presentational style, and in the overall

E. Bogdanowska-Jakubowska (✉)
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: ewajakub7@gmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_13,

manner of managing the self. It is visible in the management of the face and the body in general. The extent to which modesty influences Poles' behaviour is especially noticeable in intercultural communication. In some cases, modest behaviour becomes a stigma which is discrediting for a Pole who interacts with members of other cultures in which modesty does not play such an important role as in Polish culture.

The paper is to deal with two modesty-related issues:

- communication problems caused by the operation of Polish modesty, encountered by Poles in American culture settings,
- changes in Polish culture after 1989, changes in the role of modesty in particular.

The data come from:

- participant observation of spontaneous communicative behaviour in American and Polish culture settings. The participants are members of Polish culture, engaged in intracultural and intercultural communication.
- the questionnaire and the interview carried out among a group of 56 young Poles (aged 22–25), all of them students of English at the University of Silesia.

13.2 Stigma

The term *stigma*, which originates from Greek, refers to "bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier" (Goffman 1963/1986, p. 1). The signs were cut or burnt into the body, and the persons who had them, slaves, criminals, or traitors, were treated as blemished and ritually polluted, and were to be avoided. In Christian times, the term got two additional meanings, and referred to "bodily signs of holy grace" and "bodily signs of physical disorder" (ibid.).

Nowadays, a stigma is understood as a social attribute which is discrediting for an individual or group (Abercrombie et al. 2000). The modern concept of stigma, or *spoiled identity*, is where a person feels that there is some blemish in his/her identity that excludes him/her from social relations and society. Stigmatized people possess "an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated" (Goffman 1963/1986, p. 5), and because of that they are excluded from social participation. A stigma is "a special kind of relationship between attribute and stereotype" (ibid., p. 4) existing in a given society. Every society establishes the means of categorizing people and "a complement of attributes felt to be ordinary and natural for members of each of these categories" (ibid., p. 2). So when we meet a person, we can anticipate his/her category and attributes, and his/her social identity, from first appearances. If he/she possesses an attribute that makes him/her different from what is an established standard, he/she is often treated as a tainted person, with the attribute which makes

him/her different being a stigma. Goffman distinguishes three types of stigma (1963/1986, p. 4):

- blemishes of individual character, such as weak will or dishonesty, or blemishes inferred from a known record of, for example, mental disorder, imprisonment, addiction, alcoholism, or unemployment,
- the tribal stigma of race, nation or religion,
- various physical deformities.

In modern times, individuals can choose from a wide range of possibilities how to present themselves to others, in clothes, manners, behaviour, and attitudes. This allows freedom and self-expression. However, "it also creates anxiety as people worry about whether their 'face fits'" (Pattison 2000, p. 143). Being constantly on display, under the eyes of a critical audience, individuals try to perform their roles correctly. The word *correct* means "following approved or established standards of manners, action" (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE) 1987). Behaviour which is not correct, or which is at least strange or irrational, in the opinion of other participants may be stigmatizing to the individual.

In the context of intercultural communication, following approved and establish standards may involve two possibilities—two types of orientations employed by second language users (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska 2009, p. 98):

- *the native (L1) culture orientation*—the individual uses L1 cultural scripts and the self-presentational style typical for his/her own culture, and wants to be identified as a member of his/her own culture; the language he/she uses (L2) is deprived of the cultural background, and functions only as a system of communication.
- *the foreign (L2) culture orientation*—the individual identifies him/herself with L2 culture, and tries to use the cultural scripts and the self-presentational style typical for L2 culture; irrespective of his/her L2 communicative competence he/she does his/her best to be native-like.

In other words, individuals engaged in intercultural communication either behave according to their native cultural norms of behaviour and at the same time stigmatize themselves to a certain extent in the eyes of the others, or they try to adjust to their interlocutors' culture. Excessive modesty may constitute a stigma, when others do not consider it an important constituent of their hierarchy of values.

13.3 *Skromność* and *Modesty*: The Two Words for One Concept

It is obvious that modesty is not a value specific exclusively for Polish culture. It can be called universal, but its interpretation varies across cultures; as cultures do not differ in values but "in their intensity, salience and degree of importance

attached to them" (Lubecka 2000, p. 37; Wierzbicka 1991, p. 61). Geoffrey Leech (1983, p. 132) discussing his *Politeness Principle* formulates six maxims, the Modesty Maxim among them. The Maxim, which is only applicable in expressives and assertives, has two versions: a) Minimize praise to *self*, and b) Maximize dispraise to *self*. Like other politeness maxims, it is universal, but its realization depends on cultural factors.

To be able to fully understand what modesty and being modest mean for Poles, one should check the meaning of the Polish word *skromność* (modesty) in the dictionary. It has several related senses (*Słownik Języka Polskiego* (SJP) 1981):

1. Powściągliwość, nieśmiałość w stosunku do osób odmiennej płci wyrażające się w zachowaniu, stroju itp.; brak zalotności, kokieterii (self-restraint, shyness/timidity in the presence of the opposite sex, expressed in behaviour, dress, etc.),
2. Niewygórowane mniemanie o sobie, brak zarozumiałości (not considering oneself as someone special, lack of conceit),
3. Brak wystawności, zbytku; umiar, prostota (lack of lavishness and luxury; moderation, simplicity),
4. Niepokaźność, ograniczoność; niewielkie rozmiary (inconspicuousness, scantiness, small size).

In English, the word *modesty* has the following senses (The New Oxford Dictionary of English (NODE) 1998):

1. The quality or state of being unassuming or moderate in the estimation of one's abilities,
2. The quality of being relatively moderate, limited, or small in amount, rate, or level,
3. Behaviour, manner, or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency.

Comparing these two words we can see that they denote the same qualities typical for people, their behaviour and possessions. *Słownik Języka Polskiego* (1981) also provides several definitions of the adjective *skromny* (modest), modifying a person: "nie dbający o rozgłos, uznanie" (not looking for publicity, recognition), "nie mający wygórowanego mniemania o sobie" (not considering oneself as something special), "nie rzucający się w oczy" (inconspicuous; avoiding sticking out); "niezarozumiały" (inconceited). Different English dictionaries mention similar senses of the adjective *modest*, modifying a person: "unassuming or moderate in the estimation of one's abilities or achievements" (NODE), "having or expressing a lower opinion of one's own ability than is probably deserved; hiding one's own qualities" (LDCE), or "not boastful," "rather shy, not putting oneself forward." This short comparison of the two dictionary entries for Polish *skromność* and English *modesty* shows that their senses bear significant resemblance. This, however, does not tell us anything about the intensity of the value and importance attached to modesty in the two cultures in question. We can learn about it mainly from observation of social interactions in the particular cultures.

13.4 Polish Modesty

Modesty was, and still is, considered by some Poles one of the fundamental values that should be acquired by young people. The mention of one's own success or any positive comment about oneself should be avoided. What is more, any comment of this kind made by another person should be played down. Modesty is in conflict with *the need for inclusion and approval*, which is the major face need in Polish culture. This need is satisfied by means of different positive face-saving devices, such as expressions of gratitude, good wishes, congratulations and compliments on the person's appearance, possessions, good work and achievements. Modesty is marked by timidity and lack of assertiveness visible in responses to compliments and congratulations (which are often played down or even rejected) and "in the way self-presentations are made […] (inappropriateness of stressing one's virtues and successes)" (Lubecka 2000, pp. 54–55; Marcjanik 2002). "Prescribed" modesty makes people reject what constitutes a high value to them. They are made to play down their own positive attributes, acknowledged by others. Due to the axiological changes, however, modesty is no longer the top value in Polish culture.

Self-presentation consists in stressing one's positive attributes and down-playing one's negative attributes (Goffman 1959; Baumeister 1982; Leary 2005; Leary and Kowalski 1990; Schlenker and Pontari 2000; Schlenker 2003). Verbal positive self-presentation "constitutes the defining characteristics of the speech act of boasting" (Tabakowska 2002, p. 456; Galasiński 1992). Boasting involves the use of the following linguistic devices: explicit topicalization of self, frequent use of first person pronouns (especially the inclusive *we*), and foregrounding positively charged information (Galasiński 1992; Tabakowska 2002). The result of self-presentation—public self-image (face) and the social need to orient oneself to it in interaction are universal. However, the basic, universal desire inherent in human nature "for a 'good' face" acquires different interpretations in different cultures, because the constituents of "good'' are culturally determined (O'Driscoll 1996, p. 4; cf. Mao 1994; Matsumoto 1988). Moral rules, hierarchies of values and social organization are specific to particular cultures; and as a consequence the image of self created on their basis must also differ.

The Polish self-presentation style involves creating a "good" self-image by means of apparent down-playing one's own positive attributes. Boasting in general, and boasting about one's success or happiness in particular, has never been accepted in Polish culture (Jakubowska 1996, 1999; Grybosiowa 2002), because it does not agree with the Polish norms of self-presentation. These are, however, only appearances (resulting from false modesty) which are intended to enhance the self-image. The Polish self-presentation style may be explained by two general motives:

- strong pejorative evaluation of boasting, which is perceived as "one of strong cultural taboos" (Tabakowska 2002, p. 456; Galasiński 1992),
- a tendency to glorify modesty (Klos Sokol 1994).

The main motive for rejecting the compliment in the conversation presented in Example 1 is modesty, or rather false modesty, which does not allow Krzysztof, the compliment receiver, to agree with Maria, the compliment giver, that his presentation was a success.

Example 1

Maria: *Świetny referat. Gratuluję!* (A great presentation. Congratulations!)
Krzysztof: *A, daj spokój. Napisany na kolanie. Jeszcze w pociągu go kończyłem.*
(Drop it. It is scrawled hastily. I was finishing it in the train.)
Maria: *Naprawdę bardzo ciekawy. Nie tylko mnie się podobał. Profesor X bardzo dobrze się o nim wyraził.*
(It was really very interesting. Others liked it too. Professor X spoke highly of it.)

One of the most commonly used Polish self-presentational strategies is complaining (Doliński 2005). It is employed by individuals to show that they are in possession of some desirable attributes or to present some positive but stressful incidents which happened in their lives. Poles, for example, often complain about hotel rooms or food served at a restaurant, implying in this way that they are used to higher standards of living and eating. They complain about other people's behaviour, intelligence or moral standards to show in this way that they are better (i.e. behave in a proper way, are more intelligent and have higher moral standards). Complaining is also employed in Polish responses to how-are-you type questions. Poles tend to downgrade the positive self-report (Jakubowska 1999; cf. Grybosiowa 2002; Doliński 2005); they say: *Jakoś leci* (It's going somehow), *Po staremu* (As before), *Może być* (It could be worse), or *W porządku* ((It's) alright) (Ożóg 1990; Jakubowska 1999) (see also Example 2). In similar situations, members of the younger generation, in replying to how-are-you type questions, follow the American pattern (i.e. give answers which are "brief, elusive, and as positive as possible" (Ferrara 1980, p. 333)) and present themselves as successful irrespective of the real situation (see Example 3).

Example 2

Ewa: *Cześć!*. (Hi!)
Iwona: *Cześć!* (Hi!)
Ewa: *Co u ciebie?* (What's up?)
Iwona: *Ach, nic ciekawego. Jestem okropnie zagoniona. Wiesz, koniec semestru, pełno prac mam do sprawdzenia. Jeszcze wyjeżdżamy ma weekend w góry.*
(Oh, nothing special. I'm terribly busy. You know, it's the end of the semester and I have loads of papers to read. And to top it all, we are going to the mountains for the weekend.)
Ewa: *To świetnie!* (That's great!)
Iwona: *Daj spokój! Nie wiem w co ręce włożyć.* (Come on! I'm up to here in work.)

Example 3

Jarek: *Cześć! Co słychać?* (Hi! What's up?)
Marek: *Cześć! W porzo. A co u ciebie?* (Hi! OK. And you?)
Jarek: *Nie narzekam. Mam pozdawane wszystkie egzaminy. Znalazłem pracę.*
(I can't complain. I've passed all the exams. I've got a job.)

The need to talk about something positive that has happened, is happening or will happen to us is universal. To comply with the traditional Polish norms of self-presentation, people refer to their success or happiness by means of complaint. Instead of boasting openly about getting a better job, getting married or buying a new expensive car, they complain about the stressful situation in their new job, about many problems connected with their wedding organization or about their inability to choose the car's colour. Simply speaking, what Americans say explicitly about their true or alleged success or happiness, Poles imply, or allude to, "putting on" a suffering face. This suffering, pained face, however, is falling "out of fashion" as members of the young generation of Poles adopt the Western/American way of self-presentation.

In Poland, it is expected that the face should reflect what one really feels. If it does not, it is a sign that the person is insincere (Szarota 2006). Poles, who smile in as many different situations as members of other cultures, do not like to smile "without any particular reason," and perceive the "smiling mask" as something artificial and insincere. Smiling seems to be important mainly in private life (ibid.). The smile is not a norm in the Polish social life; the majority of Poles rarely smile in public. A sad face and a pained expression, together with a slumped posture, are the nonverbal effects accompanying complaining, which is one of the main Polish strategies for establishing harmony and maintaining good social relations (cf. Antas 2002). For Poles, a solemn face at work is a sign of competence and professionalism. Excessive self-exposure, showing happiness and self-satisfaction, and a broad self-presentational smile get still pejorative evaluation from the majority of Poles.

Another important element of self-presentation is eye-contact. It is judged in different ways in different cultures. In some cultures, Polish culture included, the traditional code of conduct treats lowering one's (especially women's) gaze as a way to guard one's modesty. Thus, although nowadays Poles consider eye-gaze avoidance in social interaction as indicating aloofness, stand-offishness and unwillingness to communicate with others, in some situations eye-gaze avoidance has a positive value and is connected to the virtue of modesty. Looking directly at another person is interpreted in Polish culture as an invitation to interaction. It is believed that it can attract unwelcome attention or provoke aggression. A direct look accompanied by a smile employed by a woman and aimed at a strange man is treated as sexually provocative. That is why Poles rarely smile at strangers and tend to avoid direct eye contact with them.

13.5 Polish Modesty in American Culture Settings

In American culture *success* and *status based on achievement* are highly valued. Professional success, success in private life, or success in social relations makes the person attractive to others. An individual is worth how much he/she can achieve. The respect he/she gains is the measure of his/her achievement and

success. Social status is achieved by hard work, skill and *competence*. Competence, or at least its appearance, has a very strong positive impact on the image of the individual in the eyes of others. The last of the most frequently mentioned social attributes is *pride* (high opinion of oneself) which together with self-respect comprises the aspect of a good self-image. But it is not enough to be successful, one also has to let others know about it. The promotion of one's own success and achievement is obviously in conflict with modesty, which in American culture is not highly valued.

The smile plays a very important role in social interaction in American culture. Americans treat the smile like a social mask which should be put on whenever a person comes into contact with others. Being cheerful is an indispensable element of the American self-presentational style. When a person shows a broad smile to others, he/she creates his/her positive self-image. A happy looking person is perceived in American culture as one to be trusted and respected, one that is competent and successful. A person who is smiling is perceived as somebody who controls the situation. The same function as that of the happy self-satisfied face is often performed by various positive self-presentational comments, accepting responses to compliments and congratulations, and positive responses to how-are-you type questions. In this way, Americans show to others the self-image of a self-satisfied, successful person, who should be appreciated and approved of.

In American culture direct eye contact together with smile form part of self-presentational behaviour. Eye-gaze avoidance is "judged as indicating unattractiveness, low confidence, untrustworthiness and even low intelligence" (Gilbert 2002, p. 32).

The Polish self-presentational style differs from the American one; this results from the differences in hierarchies of values and the character of social relations in Polish and American cultures. Klos Sokol (1994, p. 24), an American linguist who worked at the University of Warsaw, discusses the differences between Polish and American self-presentational styles:

> The Polish sociolinguist, Adam Jaworski, claims that modesty is a feature highly valued in Polish culture. At the same time, he stresses the difference between the Polish and American way of self-presentational. The American way ('Listen to what I have achieved') is 'looking for confirmation' from others. It consists in the hearer agreeing with the speaker, and then congratulating him [on what he has achieved]. This can seem to be arrogant in comparison to the Polish preference for modesty ('I didn't come out best'). Jaworski describes this style of behaviour as 'getting [a compliment/congratulation] out [of the other].' Finally, the hearer objects to the speaker's low self-evaluation and stresses his good points.

This, perhaps a little overdrawn, picture of the cross-cultural differences between Polish and American cultures in self-presentation can be confirmed by my observation of intercultural communication between Poles and Americans.

The observed Poles can be divided into two groups. One group consists of individuals that represent the native (L1) culture orientation. They used the Polish self-presentational style, and wanted to be identified as members of Polish culture. Communicating in English with Americans in American culture settings, they

neglected cultural scripts specific for American culture. Their responses to how-are-you type questions were not as positive as possible; they were often negative and contained an element of complaining. What is more, sometimes their responses sounded like answers to genuine questions (see Example 4). The speakers seemed not to be aware of the ritual character of the English how-are-you type question and the response to it. They reacted to compliments uttered by Americans in much the same way as Poles do in Polish. The native-culture-oriented individuals tended to use self-praise-avoiding responses; they downgraded praise for themselves, rejected the compliment, or disagreed with its force (Examples 5–7). This often met with surprised looks and expressions of disbelief. The same can be said about responses to congratulations; although the praise of the receiver was accepted, it was usually downgraded (Example 8). Their self-presentational comments also differed from what is common in American culture: they reluctantly admitted to their success, showing unwillingness to talk about it (Example 9). They followed the Polish smiling code, smiling only when they had a particular reason. A Pole representing the native-culture orientation could also be recognized by a solemn face, a tired look, and sometimes a slumped posture.

Example 4

Mark: *Hi! How are you?*

Anna (unhappy, tired face): *Well, I'm tired. I'm trying to finish my paper.*

Example 5

Belen: *You look awesome today!*

Anna: *Well, I don't know. It's an old dress.*

Example 6

Belen: *You have such beautiful hair.*

Anna: *Don't exaggerate! I'm thinking about having it cut.*

Example 7

Sharon: *I really liked your presentation.*

Anna: *I'm afraid it was a little boring.*

Example 8

Mark: *Great job! Zbig.*

Piotr: *No, no. We did it together with Belen. This is also her success.*

Example 9

Piotr (asked to say a few words about himself): *I work for a private company. In fact, I'm its owner.*

The other group consists of individuals that represent the foreign-culture orientation. They tried very much to identify themselves with American culture; they used the American self-presentational style and did their best to behave native-like. They followed the cultural scripts typical for American culture even when interacting with other Poles. What mattered for them were not interlocutors and their culture, but the cultural settings in which an interaction took place. They greeted everyone with broad smiles. For them everything was *perfect, great,* or *awesome*. Their responses to how-are-you type questions were always as positive as possible, e.g., *It couldn't be better, Great!* They accepted compliments and congratulations with *thank you*, often with some self-enhancing comments:

Example 10

Sharon: *Congratulations on getting the award!*

Zbig: *Thank you. I think I've deserved it.*

Poles representing the foreign-culture orientation tried, both by their verbal and nonverbal behaviour, to create the image of a happy, self-satisfied, and successful achiever. In some cases, this image was slightly overdrawn and theatrical.

13.6 The Position of Modesty in the Polish Hierarchy of Values after 1989

After 1989 great changes took place in Poland: the transition from communism to liberal democracy resulted in economic, as well as social transformations (Wnuk-Lipiński 2001). Their consequences have been cultural changes and the opening of Poland to modern Western culture American culture in particular (cf. Ozóg 2002, 2002a, 2004). Poles have borrowed main Western values and assimilated some elements of Western lifestyle. For example, success, especially financial success, has become one of the most important aims of life; individualism, independence, freedom of choice and greater mobility have become the main categories of the lifestyle of the Polish young generation.

Generally speaking, we can observe a gradual axiological shift in Polish culture. As Ożóg (2006, p. 104) maintains:

> The values that constitute the core of the national culture have receded into the background: *honour, patriotism, responsibility, common good, beauty, truth, dignity, service, modesty, mercy, fidelity, family, home, morality, justice, tradition and work.* […] [In the foreground,] a new axiological system [has appeared], a system of concepts and values characteristic of postmodernism. These are mainly pragmatic, hedonistic values, related to consumption.

There have occurred some changes, especially among the young generation, for whom modesty is no longer the top value; success has become what one can tell others about without being perceived as a boaster. On the one hand, members of the young generation of Poles are traditionally brought up people. They believe that:

- modesty is a positive value,
- it is good that people behave in a modest way,
- people should avoid boasting.

On the other hand, however, modesty does not agree with their hedonistic values and pragmatic approach to life. The results of the questionnaire and the interview show that there is a conflict between the values the young Poles have been taught and what they believe in.

As has been said above, in Polish culture, being modest is one of the requirements of the code of polite conduct. Modesty, like politeness, is often employed for pragmatic reasons. Like politeness, it is a social medium which stands between individuals that want to achieve their goals. It can be used as any other means of manipulation. Although modesty still belongs to the canon of good upbringing and as such is passed down to the young generation of Poles, it gets now a completely different reading. As a socially constituted medium, it has acquired a relative character which is situation-dependent. This is, at least, how young Poles perceive it. Asked about the social value of modesty, the respondents of the questionnaire defined it as:

- a definitely good value which must be obeyed irrespective of situation (6%),
- a value which is rather good, but whose evaluation depends on social situation (74%),
- a value which should be avoided (20%).

The most frequently mentioned situations in which people should avoid being modest are: a job interview, any interview in which an individual is to prove his/her worth, and business interactions.

In the situations mentioned above, modesty has been replaced by other recently borrowed values, which have become "fashionable" in Polish culture, such as *a drive for success, achievement,* and *assertiveness.* The Polish self-presentational style has changed; the self-image that young Poles create has nothing to do with modesty, timidity or shyness. This new turn towards unrestrained positive self-presentational is visible in responses to how-are-you type questions (Example 11), responses to compliments and congratulations (Examples 12, 13), and talking about one's achievements and success (Example 14). This is confirmed by the results of the questionnaire.

Example 11 Responses to how-are-you type questions

A: *Opowiedz, co u ciebie słychać.* (Tell me, what you are doing?)
B: *A wiesz, nic ciekawego. Wszystko w porządku. Dziękuję.* (You know, nothing special. All right. Thank you.)
B: *U mnie wszystko dobrze. A u ciebie?* (I'm all right. And you?)
B: *Wszystko po staremu.* (Everything is as ususal.)
B: *Chwilowo mam bardzo wiele rzeczy na głowie, ale pozytywnie patrzę w przyszłość.* (At the moment, I have many things on my mind, but I'm positively looking into the future.)
B: *Wszystko ok. A u ciebie, co tam?* (Everything is ok. And how are you?)

Responses to how-are-you type questions produced by young Polish informants are mostly positive (71%). There are also "neutral" responses (15%) and "mildly negative" ones (14%).

Example 12 Responses to compliments

A: *Słyszałam, że jesteś najlepszym studentem na roku.* (I've heard that you are the best student in the year.)
B: *Co? Co ty gadasz?* (What? What are you talking about?)
B: *Hmm… Chyba nie…* (Hmm…Rather not…)
B: *Nie sądzę. Staram się jak mogę, ale na pewno są lepsi ode mnie.* (I don't think so. I do my best, but I'm sure others are better than me.)
B: *Raczej jednym z wielu.* (I'm rather one of the many.)
B: *Rzeczywiście. Dziękuję.* (Indeed. Thank you.)

A: *Rośnie z ciebie wielki naukowiec.* (You'll be a great scholar.)
B: *Chyba kpisz!* (You must be joking.)
B: *Nie żartuj!* (Don't)
B: *Eee, chyba nie.* (I don't think so.)
B: *No, chciałabym, ale to raczej wątpliwe.* (Well, I would like to (be a great scholar), but this is rather doubtful.)
B: *Chciałbym, żeby to była prawda. Niemniej dziękuję za mily komplement.* (I would like it to be true. Thank you for the compliment, though.)
B: *Traktuję to jako dobrą zabawę.* (I treat it as a good fun.)
B: *Dzięki. Robię tylko co do mnie należy. Fajnie, że ktoś to w ogóle docenia.* (Thanks. It's my duty. It's great that someone can see that.)

Example 13 Responses to congratulations

A: *Gratuluję sukcesu!* (Congratulations on the success!)
B: *Dziękuję!* (Thank you!)
B: *Dzięki. Też się cieszę.* (Thanks. I'm glad too.)
B: *Dzięki, ciężko na niego pracowałem.* (Thanks. I've been working hard.)
B: *Dziękuję bardzo, ale to nie było nic wielkiego.* (Thank you very much, but it's nothing important.)
B: *Wielkie dzięki za wsparcie! Bez waszej pomocy nic by z tego nie było.* (Many thanks for the support! Without your help all our efforts would come to nothing.)

Among the responses to compliments and congratulations there are acceptances (57%), rejections (36%), mocking remarks (10%) and explaining remarks (7%). These results are similar to the results of the study of compliment responses by Arabski (2004). This study, like the present one, is based on the linguistic data produced by young Poles, which can explain the difference between the picture it provides and the stereotype of Polish responses to such comments.

There is also some discrepancy in the ways people talk about their own achievements and success. In the former times, positive self-presentation, like boasting, was negatively evaluated, and as such it was said to be avoided. Nowadays young Poles talking about their achievements freely enhance their public self-image and do not treat it as boasting:

Example 14 Talking about one's achievements and success

A: *Cześć! Co u ciebie?* (Hi! How are you?)

B: *Cześć! Wiesz, dostałem stypendium.* (Hi! You know, I've got a scholarship.)

Ja spodziewałem się, że będzie nieźle, bo nieskromnie powiem, mam poczucie, że to niezły film (a Wirtualna Polska interview with Borys Lankosz about his film *Rewers,* on receiving the Złote Lwy award in the Polish Film Festival in Gdynia, 2009, Borys Lankosz http://film.wp.pl)

(I expected that it wouldn't be bad, because, maybe it will sound immodest, I feel it is a good film.)

13.7 Conclusions

The above mentioned discrepancies concerning Polish modesty can be explained, first, by the character of Polish culture, which now can be defined as culture "in transition" (i.e. in the state of transition from collectivism to individualism) and as such is hard to categorize. Second, Poles are a cultural group that is highly diversified in terms of values they cherish, employed patterns of behaviour and self-construals.

The interdependent self-construal predominates among the older generation and the less educated, while the independent self-construal predominates among the younger generation, who started their adult life during the last twenty years, and the educated. This is in line with the opinion presented by Ewa Kosowska (2002, pp. 106–107):

> The basis of the differences that shape the modern axiological standards turns out to be the level of education and the generation factor. In spite of the strong influence of new elements [that create culture], the essence of Polish identity is based on a range of traditional attitudes which different groups of Poles refer to. […] One can meet persons who build their hierarchy of values on the traditional patterns of national culture and those who take the postmodern orientation.

It can be said that the Polish face, i.e. the self-image created by Poles, like Polish culture, is "in transition" and cannot be classified unambiguously. Based on the two self-construals, it is neither purely interdependent nor purely independent. The Polish hierarchy of cultural values contributing to its content, modesty among them, is undergoing some changes.

References

Abercrombie N, Hill S, Turner BS (2000) The penguin dictionary of sociology. Penguin Books, London

Antas J (2002) Polskie zasady grzeczności. In: Szpila G (ed) Język trzeciego tysiąclecia II. Tom 1: nowe oblicza komunikacji we współczesnej polszczyźnie. Tertium, Kraków, pp 347–363

Arabski J (2004) Compliment responses in a cross-cultural perspective. In: Arabski J (ed) Pragmatics and language learning. Universitas, Kraków, pp 11–19

Baumeister RF (1982) A self-presentational view of social phenomena. Psychol Bull 91(1):3–26

Bogdanowska-Jakubowska E (2009) Discourse, culture and SLA. In: Arabski J, Wojtaszek A (eds) Multidisciplinary perspectives on second language acquisition and foreign language learning. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice, pp 91–103

Borys Lankosz – wywiad – film. Online document: http://film.wp.pl
Doliński D (2005) O tym, co pozytywnego może wyniknąć z narzekania. In: Drogosz M (ed) Jak polacy przegrywają, jak polacy wygrywają. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk, pp 53–68
Ferrara A (1980) Appropriateness conditions for entire sequence of speech acts. J Pragmat 4: 321–340
Galasiński D (1992) Chwalenie się jako perswazyjny akt mowy. PAN (Instytut Języka Polskiego), Kraków
Gilbert P (2002) Body shame: a biopsychosocial conceptualization and overview with treatment implications. In: Gilbert P, Miles J (eds) Body shame. Conceptualisation, research and treatment. Brunner-Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, Hove and New York, pp 3–54
Goffman E (1959) The presentation of self in everyday life. Doubleday, New York
Goffman E (1963/1986) Stigma. Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. New York: A Tochstone Book, Simon & Schuster Inc
Grybosiowa A (2002) Obce kulturowo formuły nawiązywania kontaktu we współczesnej polszczyźnie–geneza, recepcja, wartościowanie. In: Szpila G (ed) Język trzeciego tysiąclecia II. Tom 1: nowe oblicza komunikacji we współczesnej polszczyźnie. Tertium, Kraków, pp 41–49
Jakubowska E (1996) 'I want to say something good about you'–a cross-linguistic study of some polite formulae and their acquisition in a foreign language. In: Arabski J (ed) Foreign language acquisition studies. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice, pp 126–141
Jakubowska E (1999) Cross-cultural dimensions of politeness in the case of polish and english. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice
Klos Sokol L (1994) Polsko-Amerykańskie qui pro quo. IPS Wydawnictwo, Warszawa
Kosowska E (2002) Kultura polska. Korzenie współczesności. In: Cudak R, Tambor J (eds) Kultura polska. Silva rerum. Wydawnictwo Śląsk, Katowice, pp 87–112
Leary M (2005) Wywieranie wrażenia na innych. O sztuce autoprezentacji (trans: Kacmajor A, Kacmajor M). Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk
Leary MR, Kowalski RM (1990) Impression management: a literature review and two-component model. Psychol Bull 107(1):34–47
Leech GN (1983) Principles of pragmatics. Longman, London
Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987) Longman, Harlow. (LDCE)
Lubecka A (2000) Requests, invitations, apologies and compliments in American English and polish. A cross-cultural communication perspective. Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków
Mao LR (1994) Beyond politeness theory: 'Face' revisited and renewed. J Pragmat 21:451–486
Marcjanik M (2002) Polska grzeczność językowa. Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej, Kielce
Matsumoto Y (1988) Reexamination of the universality of face: politeness phenomena in Japanese. J Pragmat 12:403–426
O'Driscoll J (1996) About face: a defence and elaboration of universal dualism. J Pragmat 25: 1–32
Ożóg K (1990) Zwroty Grzecznościowe Współczesnej Polszczyzmy Mówionej. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego CMXIII, No. 98
Ożóg K (2002a) Atrakcyjna amerykanizacja w kulturze polskiej i w języku polskim. In: Krauz M, Ożóg K (eds) Składnia, stylistyka, struktura tekstu. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów, pp 18–26
Ożóg K (2002b) Ostatnie zmiany w polszczyźnie na tle tendencji kulturowych zachodu. In: Szpila G (ed) Język trzeciego tysiąclecia II. Tom 1: nowe oblicza komunikacji we współczesnej polszczyźnie. Tertium, Kraków, pp 75–82
Ożóg K (2004) Język w Służbie Polityki Językowy kształt kampanii wyborczych. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów
Ożóg K (2006) Współczesna polszczyzna a postmodernizm. In: Ożóg K, Oronowicz-Kida E (eds) Przemiany języka na tle przemian współczesnej kultury. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów, pp 98–109

Pattison S (2000) Shame. Theory, therapy, theology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Schlenker BR (2003) Self-presentation. In: Leary MR, Prince Tangney J (eds) Handbook of self and identity. The Guilford Press, New York/London, pp 492–518
Schlenker BR, Pontari BA (2000) The strategic control of information: Impression management and self-presentation in daily life. In: Tesser A, Felson RB, Suls JM (eds) Psychological perspectives on self and identity. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, pp 199–232
Słownik Języka Polskiego (1981) PWN. (SJP), Warszawa
Szarota P (2006) Psychologia uśmiechu. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk
Tabakowska E (2002) The regime of thw other: 'us' and 'them' in translation. In: Duszak A (ed) Us and others. Social identities across languages, discourses and cultures. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadephia, pp 449–461
The New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998) Clarendon Press, Oxford
Wierzbicka A (1991) Cross-cultural pragmatics. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, New York
Wnuk-Lipiński E (2001) Zmiana systemowa. In: Wnuk-Lipiński E, Ziółkowski M (eds) Pierwsza dekada niepodległości. Próba socjologicznej syntezy. Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Warszawa, pp 37–66

Chapter 14
Language Distance Across Cultures as a Way of Expressing Politeness and Not Only

Ireneusz Kida

Abstract By language distance we mean the employment of certain linguistic forms in everyday situations in order for the speaker/writer to encode a specific distance with respect to his/her audience. Language distance is basically used in formal situations. In such situations the speaker/writer usually uses the so called 'formal language'. But what is formal language from the point of view of language distance? It boils down to the use of such vocabulary/expressions that are detached from their original meaning. What is meant are, for example, lexicalised forms that have lost their original meaning (their semantic force) and their expressivity together with it, and thus have become more abstract. And when words become more abstract, they are less expressive and less direct, and it is exactly these features of words that are necessary for obtaining some distance in formal situations in different languages; colloquial expressions, phrasal verbs and other items that sound too direct cannot be used in formal situations, as they are too 'down-to-earth'. The chapter concentrates also on the so called honorific pronouns that are used for gaining distance, especially if they require a verb in the third person, which is much less direct than a verb in the second person. Moreover, apart from the fact that language distance is used in formal situations, it is also employed for expressing the degree of probability and politeness.

Keywords Politeness · Formal language · Honorific pronouns · Social distance

I. Kida (✉)
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: ireneusz.kida@us.edu.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_14,

14.1 Introduction

A Universal way of expressing the degree of respect, deference and politeness in everyday situations is the employment of an adequate psychological, non-verbal, distance expressed by means of a linguistic distance. In order for a speaker to be polite, respectful, or deferent towards his interlocutor it is necessary that he use such linguistic forms that will not trespass the interlocutor's sphere of privacy. If inadequate linguistic forms are used, and thus the required distance is not maintained, the speaker may sound too direct and offend his interlocutor in a formal situation or in a situation in which the speaker and his interlocutor are not friends. It is possible to observe that language users from different countries and from different cultural backgrounds employ similar linguistic means for maintaining the distance in question.

We will start our discussion with third person honorific pronouns and their accompanying verb forms, and then we will move on to the discussion of psychological distance and its verbal materialisation. Afterwards we will concentrate upon second person honorific pronouns and their accompanying verb forms, upon some ways of increasing and decreasing language distance, upon the phenomenon of employing abstract vocabulary items in formal situations, and finally we will arrive at some general conclusions arising from our discussion.

14.2 Third Person Honorific Pronouns and Their Accompanying Verb Forms

One of the ways of expressing deference, politeness[1] and respect by means of language is the employment of language distance; we are however going to concentrate basically upon the linguistic aspect of the problem. In some languages, this distance can be noticed in the practice of using such verb forms that are not in the second person singular (in addressing one interlocutor) or second person plural (in addressing two or more interlocutors). These verb forms are often accompanied by corresponding personal pronouns. In order to express politeness, deference, respect or kindness, the Polish language employs verbs in the third person singular, when addressing one person, and in the third person plural, when addressing more than one person. The corresponding personal pronouns, or we could also call them 'honorific pronouns' in this context, are the ones that follow below:

Pani 'a lady'—when addressing a woman
Pan 'a lord'—when addressing a man

[1] According to Cutting (2005, p. 53) we should make a distinction between politeness and deference because "politeness is not the same as deference, which is a polite form of expressing distance from and respect for people of a higher status, and does not usually include an element of choice."

Panie 'ladies'—when addressing women
Panowie 'lords'—when addressing men
Państwo 'ladies and gentlemen'—when addressing both men and women

As Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 23), "honorifics provide obvious and important evidence for the relation between language structure, politeness and social forces in general." In the above example, the word *Pan* 'a lord' in polite contexts is not used in the sense of 'an overlord' or 'a ruler' as was the case in the past, but in the sense that by using the word *Pan* one wishes to say that one respects the interlocutor, is polite towards him/her, and approaches him/her with a certain distance and the like; this kind of distance between two participants of a conversation, as Scollon and Scollon (2003, p. 53) suggest, "should not be confused with the power difference between them". A similar situation took place in Spanish, in which the honorific pronouns have the form *usted* 'a lord/a lady' and *ustedes* 'lords/ladies' to address one and more than one person respectively. These honorific pronouns are no longer treated as a form of expressing superiority over somebody, or as a form of deep humbleness towards the interlocutor; although the word *usted* comes from two words, namely, *vuestra merced*, which translated into English mean 'your mercy'. However, the two words underwent the process of phonetic simplification in the history of Spanish and merged into one word, which in turn resulted in that they lost their original semantic force and no longer mean what they meant in the past. In Polish, on the other hand, the corresponding pronouns in question did not undergo phonetic attrition and are still semantically strong enough to be associated with their original meaning, when they did not function as present-day honorific pronouns yet. Nevertheless, the times have changed and, although the pronouns in question are still phonetically strong, they are not semantically strong in the original feudal sense. So in the context of expressing politeness, we can speak of the loss of semantic force of the Polish honorific pronouns in the sense of lexicalization because they are still used, but their use is restricted to expressing politeness, deference, respect and, generally, distance in formal situations. Nevertheless, these pronouns, especially the pronoun *Pan*, can still be semantically strong, in the original sense of the word, in certain contexts. For example, the pronoun *Pan* is used to address God, as in: *Panie Boże* 'Oh, my Lord' *Pan Bóg* 'God, the Lord'. And in this context we cannot speak of the lexicalization of the word *Pan*. The lexicalised honorific pronouns in Polish are accompanied by the corresponding verbs in the third person. This situation can be illustrated by the following example:

Może *mi* ***Pan*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Może *mi* ***Pani*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogą *mi* ***Panowie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogą *mi* ***Panie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogą *mi* ***Państwo*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
'**Can you** tell me where the railway station is?

In the above examples we can notice the idea of language distance, which is expressed by means of the third person verbs and their corresponding honorific pronouns.

14.3 Psychological Distance versus Linguistic Distance

The above mentioned language distance is preceded by a psychological, non-verbal distance, that is, by a subconscious notion of the need of maintaining some distance with respect to the interlocutor. Therefore, the use of the verb in the third person and a corresponding honorific pronoun is, so to speak, a verbal materialization of the non-verbal psychological distance. The employment of distance, psychological distance in the first place and verbal distance in the second place, allows one to express politeness, respect, deference and kindness in formal situations. In other words, in order to be polite and so on towards our interlocutor in a formal situation, it is necessary to maintain some distance in order not to trespass his/her sphere of privacy. Of course, distance can also mean a hostile attitude but this kind of distance is not of our concern here, as we will concentrate only upon polite distance. Scollon and Scollon (2003, p. 54) distinguish three types of politeness systems, namely, deference politeness system, "in which participants are considered to be equals or near equals but treat each other at a distance", solidarity politeness system, in which "the participants see themselves as being in equal social position …" and "… both use politeness strategies of involvement", and finally, hierarchical politeness system, in which "the participants recognize and respect the social differences that place one in a superordinate position and the other in a subordinate position."

14.4 Second Person Honorific Pronouns and Their Accompanying Verb Forms

In Polish, the forms of the second person, of both the verb and its corresponding pronoun, unlike in the English language, are too direct to be able to be used in formal situations, which require maintaining some distance between the speaker and his/her interlocutor. As an exception to this, it is possible to use verbs in the second person plural for expressing respect towards a concrete individual. This form of expressing respect can still be found in some dialects of Polish, as for example in the East Cresovian dialect spoken in the region of the South Roztocze. In this region there are individuals whom we personally address by means of the pronoun *wy* 'you', a second person personal pronoun in the plural number, with its corresponding verbs in the second person plural. At the same time this form of address is the only form of addressing these people. In this situation the honorific pronouns *Pan* or *Pani* would be too formal and not adequate. Moreover, the second person personal pronoun singular *ty* 'you' would be too direct and thus also inadequate in the situation in question, as it would break the distance necessary to show respect and politeness. We would also like to mention that in the above-mentioned region of Poland there are people who still use the personal pronoun *wy* when they address their mother, or father, and it is at the same time the only way in

which they address their parents. Such a form of expressing respect and politeness exists for example in standard French or standard Russian, and it is employed in formal situations.

14.5 Some Ways of Increasing Language Distance

Coming back to the discussion of the third person forms of verbs, both singular and plural, in order to increase the distance, and at the same time the degree of politeness and so on, it is possible to use verbs in the conditional mood, as shown below:

Mógłby *mi* ***Pan*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogłaby *mi* ***Pani*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogliby *mi* ***Panowie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogłyby *mi* ***Panie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Mogliby *mi* ***Państwo*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
'**Could you** tell me where the railway station is?

The conditional mood is a kind of a past tense, which allows the speaker to build up a yet larger distance towards his/her interlocutor. According to Chodowska-Pilch (2004, p. 57) the conditional form "seems to distance the moment of the utterance, creating an inference of interpersonal distance (politeness, respect, deference, consideration, etc,)." One can ask why it is so. Well, past tense is used to talk about past events and past events are more distant in time than events that are happening in the present. At the same time past events, unlike present events, are not so direct. Therefore, past forms of verbs allow one to decrease the degree of directness which is not welcome in formal situations. In other words, past forms of verbs are less direct than present forms of verbs and owing to this fact we can create a larger distance with respect to our interlocutor and thereby be even more polite and kind. This way of increasing language distance is typical of Spanish, English and many other Indo–European languages. As Holtgraves (2010, p. 1400) observes, greater politeness is generally reported to be a function of increasing distance between interlocutors as "higher levels of politeness have been found to be associated with greater impersonal distance (i.e., interactants are more polite with people with whom they are less familiar) but also with greater liking (people are more polite with those whom they like)". Moreover, as regards the English language, the simple past forms of modal verbs, apart from being able to increase the degree of politeness and so on, they are also used in order to increase the degree of improbability. As far as the former is concerned, that is, the increase of politeness, the form *could you buy something for me?* is more polite than *can you buy something for me?*, because *could* is a simple past form of the verb *can*. The same can be said about the verb *will*, which has the form *would* in the simple past. On the other hand, as regards the latter, that is, the increase of the degree of improbability, when we say *it might snow tomorrow* we mean that this utterance is

less probable than the utterance *it may snow tomorrow*, because the form *might* is the simple past form of the verb *may*, which is evident due to the presence of the feature *-t-* that was, and still is, used to convert the simple present forms of verbs into simple past forms of verbs in Germanic; in the case of the verbs *could* and *would* the simple past feature has the form *-d-*, which is the most productive way of converting the simple present forms of English verbs into the simple past tense.

14.6 Some Ways of Decreasing Language Distance

If it is possible to increase language distance, it is also possible to reduce it. It happens very often that the Polish honorific pronouns *Pan/Pani,* being third person pronouns, can also be accompanied by verbs that are in the second person, as illustrated below:

Możesz *mi* ***Pan*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Możesz *mi* ***Pani*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Możecie *mi* ***Panowie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Możecie *mi* ***Panie*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
Możecie *mi* ***Państwo*** *powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?*
'**Can** (2nd person) **you** (3rd person) tell me where the railway station is?

Such forms of politeness appear in situations when the one uttering them wants to be closer to his/her interlocutor, by using a verb in the second person, but at the same time maintain a certain distance by means of an adequate third person honorific pronoun. This observation, however, refers only to the situation in which the interlocutor in the plural, that is, when the speaker addresses more than one person. This form of address still can be regarded as formal. However, as far as an interlocutor in the singular is concerned, that is, the situation when the speaker addresses one person, the above forms of address can, and do, sound very 'uneducated' and 'simplistic' and they are rather used by uneducated people. As Cutting (2005, p. 53) observes, "it is those of the lower status, the less dominant role and so on who use more indirectness and more negative politeness features, such as hedges and mitigation, than those with higher status and so on do." It must be remembered that it is by all means necessary to avoid this type of address in formal situations, as otherwise it can produce an effect that is totally opposite to the intended one and our interlocutor can get the feeling that one is offending him/her.

Sometimes we can find ourselves in a situation when our interlocutor addresses us by means of a third person verb without a corresponding honorific pronoun. For example:

Może *mi Ø powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?* (Pan/Pani)
Mogą *mi.Ø powiedzieć, gdzie jest stacja kolejowa?* (Panowie/Panie/Państwo)
Can (you) tell me where the railway station is?

We think that it is a way of reducing the distance, and at the same time the degree of formality, between the speaker and his/her interlocutor in a formal

situation in which they find themselves. This type of pronounless forms is very rare in Polish, but we have noticed that it is quite common in the region of Zagłębie Dąbrowskie. However, what is rare in Polish is a norm in Spanish for example. Here, the third person verb forms do not need to, although they can, appear in the company of the corresponding honorific pronouns. For example:

Puede decirme dónde está la estación de trenes? (Pan/Pani)
Pueden decirme dónde está la estación de trenes? (Panowie/Panie/Państwo)
Can (you) tell me where the railway station is?

As can be seen in the above example, there is no honorific pronoun *usted* that would accompany the verb in the third person singular, or *ustedes* that would accompany the verb in the third person plural. While in Polish the forms with a pronoun are the preferred ones, in Spanish the forms without a pronoun are not uncommon and one can even get the sensation that they are the only ones that are used in formal situations. The polite forms without a corresponding honorific pronoun sometimes appear in Polish as imperative forms for the third person, both in the singular and plural. For example:

Napisze tutaj (Pan/Pani)
Napiszą tutaj (Panowie/Panie/Państwo)
'Write here, please'

However, the preferred imperative form for the third person, both singular and plural, is the optative form introduced by the element *niech…* 'let…', as illustrated by the example below:

Niech Pan/Pani napisze tutaj
Niech Panowie/Panie/Państwo napiszą tutaj
'Write here, please'

The element *niech* is used in Polish as a way of encouraging the interlocutor to doing something. Moreover, it can also be used in expressing wishes, desires, etc.

14.7 Employment of Abstract Vocabulary Items in Formal Situations

Language distance can be measured not only by the presence or absence of honorific forms, but also by the kind of vocabulary items used in formal situations, for example in formal letters or speeches. This kind of formal situations is characterized by the employment of 'abstract' vocabulary items in English, for example, that are usually of Latin or French origin. In a formal letter, for example, it is more proper to use the verb *investigate* than the phrasal verb *look into*, the verb *consider* instead of *look at*, the verb *request* instead of *ask for*, etc. It is so because vocabulary items like phrasal verbs are too direct, too down-to-earth and too simple to be used in formal situations, and in formal situations it is necessary to keep at a certain distance from our interlocutor, and to emphasize the importance

of the situation. In order to create this distance, it is necessary to employ abstract, foreign and uncommon vocabulary items. Such items allow one to create the sense of distance because they are not so direct, not so common and not as known as the items that are considered indigenous and that are commonly used in informal everyday situations. In other words, the less direct certain vocabulary items are, the less likely they will be to offend anyone. However, as Eggins (2004, p. 102) observes, apart from the fact that there are differences between formal and informal situations in terms of the kind of vocabulary that we choose, "another major difference between the two concerns the choice of clause structure." The practice of choosing abstract, foreign, uncommon and so on vocabulary items and the clause structure for formal situations can be noticed in various Indo-European languages. It seems to be a universal mechanism that has implications for languages from other language families. Generally speaking, the idea lying behind this phenomenon is the non-verbal necessity to build up and maintain a certain distance necessary in formal situations. This non-verbal distance is then clothed with the adequate vocabulary items.

14.8 Conclusions

The employment of an adequate psychological, non-verbal, distance expressed by means of a linguistic, verbal, distance is one of the universal ways of expressing the degree of respect, deference and politeness in everyday situations. The lack of such distance can be identified with directness, and (too) direct forms, in turn, cannot be used in formal situations.[2] Direct forms are generally reserved for informal and friendly situations, in which the interlocutors do not have to care for the creation of any distance. As Cutting (2005, p. 53) observes, "the degree of formality between speakers is one of the most obvious social variables that affect how politeness is expressed. Speakers who know each other well do not need to use formulas encoding politeness strategies, and when they do use them, it can imply quite the opposite of politeness". Psychological distance can be expressed verbally in different ways and it can be increased or reduced depending on the interpersonal relations between the interlocutors, on their degree of education, as well as on the degree of formality in which the interlocutors find themselves. And finally, in the discussion of language distance, and indirectness which is associated with it, one should not forget about the cultural context, because "the relationship between indirectness and social variables is not so simple: the whole issue of politeness and language is exceedingly culture-bound" (Cutting 2005, p. 53).

[2] An example of a total lack of distance, and at the same time lack of respect towards the interlocutor can be the use of swearwords, both in formal and informal situations. Swearwords can be defined in this context as words that bring close to the interlocutor the issues to which he/she has a distance or which belong to the sphere of taboo.

References

Brown AP, Levinson SC (1987) Politeness: some universals in language usage. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Chodowska-Pilch M (2004) A grammaticalised marker of politeness in Spanish. In: Reiter RM, Placencia ME (eds) Current trends in the pragmatics of Spanish. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp 57–75

Cutting J (2005) Pragmatics and discourse. Routledge, London and New York

Eggins S (2004) An introduction to systemic functional linguistics. Continuum, New York

Holtgraves Th (2010) Social psychology and language: words, utterances, and conversations. In: Fiske S, Gilbert DT, Lindzey G (eds) A handbook of Social Psychology, vol II, 5th edn. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New Jersey, pp 1386–1422

Scollon R, Scollon SW (2003) Intercultural communication. Blacwell Publishing, Oxford

Chapter 15
Ethnic and Disciplinary Cultures and Understatement: Litotic Constructions in Polish and English Linguistics and Biology Research Articles

Andrzej Łyda and Krystyna Warchał

Abstract Linguistic interest in culture-dependent differences in the rhetorical organisation of written texts can now boast a fifty year research tradition, which produced a large number of analyses of L2 student writing, scholarly texts and other professional discourse, thus contributing directly to the theory and practice of teaching English for Academic and Occupational Purposes and indirectly to internationalisation of scholarship. Against this rich tradition, the interest in disciplinary differences in academic communication may appear more modest, but also in this area well-marked and consistent rhetorical differences have been observed, in some cases the variation being so systematic as to justify the use of the label 'disciplinary cultures'. This chapter combines the two perspectives and offers a cross-disciplinary cross-cultural perspective on understatement in English and Polish research articles representing two disciplines, linguistics and biology. The main focus of this chapter is on litotes and litotic structures, defined as the denial of the opposite, with the aim to study their frequency, type and function in one academic genre and in two languages and two disciplinary contexts. The analysis is based on two corpora of research articles, each comprising two hundred papers published in the years 2005–2007 in renowned Polish and international journals concerned with linguistics and biological sciences. A preliminary analysis of the data has already shown that litotic constructions are not rare in the corpora under analysis.

Keywords Academic discourse · Litotes · Disciplinary cultures · Corpus analysis

A. Łyda (✉) · K. Warchał
University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: andrzejlyda@gmail.com

K. Warchał
e-mail: ktotampuka@gmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_15,

15.1 Introduction

Since Kaplan's well-known essay (Kaplan 1966; also Kaplan 1987), the relation between culture and rhetorical conventions employed by its members has given rise to many analyses concerned with specific difficulties L2 users may have in communicating their ideas in language other than that of their habitual use on the one hand and with cross-cultural comparisons which aim at enhancing our understanding of the existing differences on the other. In particular, it has been observed that rhetorical patterns and discourse expectations of L1 tend to be transferred to the process of writing in L2, which may have developed different forms of discourse organisation and different rhetorical models and preferences (see, e.g., Connor and Kaplan 1987; Connor 1996). The emerging field of contrastive rhetoric has addressed the problems encountered by L2 writers resulting from the incompatibility of cultural scripts concerning, among others, the degree of author's responsibility for the effective communication (Hinds 1987), preferred argumentative patterns (Connor 1987), the specific aesthetic value attached to particular structures (e.g., parallelisms and coordination, Connor 1996), and the expected degree of (in)directness (Connor 1996). Many of these studies involve English as the main language of international communication and the one most frequently learned as a foreign or additional language—it is estimated that only one out of four users of English is its native speaker (Wood 2001).

A considerable amount of research into the cultural grounding of specific rhetorical choices is concerned with academic communication, now dominated by English, whose status as an academic lingua franca seems difficult to challenge. For example, Clyne (1987) in his English-German contrastive study observes that English writers favour linear development of argumentation and tend to define their key terms early in the text, while German scholars value digressions which expand the background knowledge and often develop definitions in the course of discussion. English-Finnish comparative research has yielded similar results—according to Mauranen (1993), Finnish authors are predisposed to develop their definitions and claims throughout the discussion and contextualise them in a broader context of what is already known rather than confine them to the specific goals of the text they produce. Čmejrková (1996) and Čmejrková and Daneš (1997), who comment on the differences between Czech and English academic styles, note that compared to English scholars, Czech authors use fewer advance organisers, are often more implicit in the treatment of definitions, and rarely state the main goals of their text in the introduction. Also Polish academic authors tend to be more restrained in outlining their goals, as shown by Duszak (1994) in her contrastive analysis of introductions to Polish and English linguistics research papers. Other cross-cultural comparative studies of academic written interaction involve, among others, English and Bulgarian (e.g., Vassileva 1997), English, French and Norwegian (e.g., Dahl 2004; Fløttum et al. 2006; Vold 2006), English and Swedish (e.g., Ädel 2006; Melander et al. 1997), and English and Spanish (e.g., Martín-Martín and Burgess 2004; Mur Dueñas 2008, 2009).

Linguistic interest in culture-dependent differences in the rhetorical organisation of written texts can now boast a fifty year research tradition, which produced a large number of analyses of L2 student writing, scholarly texts and other professional discourse, thus contributing directly to the theory and practice of teaching English for Academic and Occupational Purposes and indirectly to internationalisation of scholarship. Against this rich tradition, the interest in disciplinary differences in academic communication may appear more modest, but also in this area well-marked and consistent rhetorical differences have been observed, in some cases the variation being so systematic as to justify the use of the label "disciplinary cultures", a notion almost self-defining if it were not for the increasing vagueness of the concept of discipline.

The construction of classification schemes of human knowledge has a long history that can be traced back to Aristotle's *Distinctions* and his division of knowledge into "Politics", "Poetics" and "Metaphysics". Since this earliest division a number of attempts have been made at codification of knowledge into disciplines and, later with the gradual emergence of universities, into academic disciplines. The development of these classifications has almost invariably reflected fundamental assumptions concerning not only the very ontological status of the disciplines determined by their knowledge base, the nature of the subjects investigated and their methodologies but also the social organisation of which they are part and parcel, yet very often without realising that, as Storer and Parsons (1968) rightly warn, the organisational division should not be regarded as a reflection of an inherently correct way of categorizing knowledge. Rather, as has been claimed in recent work in the area of sociology of science (Shumway and Messer-Davidow 1991), the increasing rate of academic research combined with its widening scope clearly indicate that the disciplinary structure is dynamic and recent disciplinary transformations result from "intellectual and structural choices made within the academic community", partly as a response to social changes. This view has been most openly expressed by Hyland (2009), for whom the simultaneous existence of epistemological and social determinants of disciplines justifies a possible distinction between forms of knowledge and knowledge communities. However, without denying the fact that disciplinary boundaries are redefined and new disciplines emerge as a result of scientific migration, it is convenient to assume that at every stage of their development there can be identified characteristics typical of particular communities of knowledge, including their rhetorical practices, which reflect "the individual writer's projection of a shared professional context" (Hyland 2007, p. 90), even if the communities are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Research into disciplinary differences in terms of their academic practices and communication paradigms is of not a long tradition for a number of reasons, of which the major one is that for the last three decades the focus in the area of academic discourse has been placed predominantly on the general features of the register. This research paradigm was to a large extent a consequence of the dominant position of the notion of academic genre (Swales 1990), which while allowing generalisations, hampered the search for variation in academic

	hard / abstract	soft / concrete
pure / reflective	natural sciences; mathematics	humanities; social sciences
applied / active	engineering sciences	social professions

Fig. 15.1 Typology of disciplines based on two dimensions (after Lidholm-Romatschuk 1998, p. 28)

communication. Since then a body of research has been built providing ample evidence of variation between academic disciplines and their textual practices manifested in the ways in which disciplinary knowledge is advanced. The view that there can be identified a clear relationship between cognitive aspects of a particular discipline and its disciplinary culture goes back to Becher (1989) and the view has found support in numerous studies concerning disciplinary communicative practices in such areas as discipline-specific methods of argumentation (Bazerman 1988; Hyland 1999b, 2000, 2003; MacDonald 1994; Samraj 2002), move-structure in research articles, abstracts and PhD theses (Bunton 2005; Holmes 1997; Hyland 2004), the stance-taking patterns including a cross-disciplinary survey of hedges, self citation and evaluation (Bondi 2004; Groom 2005; Hyland 1997, 1998, 1999a, 2000, 2003; Hyland and Tse 2005; Parry 1998); interpersonal engagement (Hyland 2001, 2002; Kuo 1999) and rhetorical patterns in spoken academic disciplinary discourses (Biber 2006; Nesi 2001; Swales 2004). Understandably, most of the studies on the disciplinary modes of meaning-creation concerned the English language, systematic investigation into cross-disciplinary differences having being virtually non-existent until recently (but see, e.g., (Fløttum et al. 2006) for a cross-disciplinary comparative study of Norwegian, French and English and (Cavalla and Grossmann 2005) for a discussion of lexical differences in French research articles within various disciplines).

This chapter attempts to contribute to the on-going discussion on academic discourse by offering both a cross-cultural (ethnic) and cross-disciplinary (disciplinary) perspective on *understatement*, which, defined as a strategy of saying less than meant, is often perceived as one of the favourite rhetorical devices in English and at the same time an important feature of academic communication.

The cross-cultural dimension of the study follows from the fact the study concerns two languages and cultural contexts: Polish and Anglo-American, whereas its cross-disciplinary character derives from the fact that it offers a cross-disciplinary perspective on understatement in English research articles representing two disciplines, linguistics and biology. The degree of their distinctiveness, as is the case with many other so called disciplines, remains problematic as science becomes more and more interdisciplinary or even multidisciplinary, yet it is our contention that the traditional typology of disciplines based on the dimension of immediate practical applicability of the research findings and the dimension of method and the object of study can still be regarded as reflecting social perception of the disciplines. The two-dimensional typology is shown in Fig. 15.1.

The main focus of this chapter is on litotic constructions, that is on structures which deny the semantic opposite of what is meant. Our goal is twofold. First, we intend to study the frequency, types and functions these structures serve in one discipline defined genre of academic writing, linguistics research article, in two languages and cultural contexts—Polish and Anglo-American. In particular, we seek answers to the following questions: Do Polish and English authors of research articles use them with comparable frequency? Is there any difference in the structural types they prioritise? Is there any tendency for litotic structures to involve lexical items from specific semantic fields? And if there are such tendencies, do they tell us anything about the prevailing function these structures serve in discourse in these two cultural contexts? Second, we turn to possible disciplinary differences to ask the same questions about frequency, types and functions of litotic constructions in research articles of two disciplines: biosciences and language and communication studies.

15.2 Approaches to Understatement

Understatement—saying less than meant—is sometimes identified with litotes. Crowley and Hawhee (2004, p. 302), for example, speak of both as a figure which "diminishes some feature of the situation that is obvious to all." Others refer to understatement as the "contextually appropriate" effect of litotes (Peters 2006) or a strategy realised by means of this figure (Lanham 1991, p. 139). Litotes is here defined as "denial of the contrary" (Lanham 1991, p. 184), a figure which "substitutes what is meant by denying its semantic opposite" (Peters 2006; Ex. 1).

1. The failure of the project was *not totally unexpected*. (= it could be expected)[1]

Peters (2006) observes that, although typically realised through negation of the *not-unexpected* type, litotes does not have to follow this syntactic pattern, the negation of the opposite being implicit rather than overtly marked (Ex. 2).

2. The rate of response to the questionnaire was *hardly satisfactory*. (= it was unsatisfactory = not satisfactory)

As a device for understatement, litotes allows a certain degree of vagueness, providing an opportunity for the speakers to present themselves as tactful (Crowley and Hawhee 2004), and helps to avoid straightforward, unambiguous and committing statements by toning down their force (Peters 2006), but, as noted by Lanham (1991) and Müller (2006), it can also intensify the meaning if used to produce an ironic effect.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all examples in Sects. 15.1 and 15.2 are invented by the authors and meant only to illustrate the type of construction discussed.

For authors concerned with irony, understatement is inextricably connected with ironic effect. For example, Muecke (1969) observes that it is one of the earliest forms of irony; its occurrence is therefore a signal of ironic intention. Understatement comprises litotes—understood narrowly as a denial of the contrary (Ex. 3)—and meiosis, i.e., a substitution of a minimum value for a maximum in order to belittle or downgrade (Muecke 1969), sometimes merged with litotes (Wales 1989; Ex. 4).

3. In the course of the interview it became clear that he was *certainly not indifferent* to what his fellow students might think of him (of somebody who is obviously extremely sensitive to others' opinions)
4. The Conclusions section is *rather underdeveloped* (of a missing section of a term paper)

Muecke distinguishes between understatement proper—equivalent to ironic understatement (Wilson and Sperber 1992)—and understatement in form, which is often not ironical and which through frequent use has become conventionalised—part of language resources devoid of ironic intention (Ex. 5, 6).

5. I'm *not feeling the best* (Muecke 1969, p. 80)
6. It is *not impossible* that the numbers of members in the differentiating groups should vary in this way, and therefore it is *not impossible* that the dissimilarity of the selves should arise exclusively in this way.[2]

A different approach to understatement is proposed by Hübler (1983), who defines it as a principally non-aggressive verbal behaviour and therefore qualitatively different from irony or sarcasm (although, as the author himself admits, the boundary between them may on occasion be fuzzy, p. 22). Understatements constitute a violation of Gricean maxims of quality and quantity (Grice 1975) by saying less than meant in an attempt to make a potentially aggressive, harmful or disagreeable content more tolerable for the receiver:

> Their aim is to make sentences more acceptable and thus to increase their chance of ratification by the hearer…. Understatements and hedges are not stylistic strategies, but strategies pertaining to content, since they operate within and on the sentence proposition. Understatements affect the (phrastic) correspondence conditions, whereas hedges affect the (neustic) validity or fulfilment claim. (Hübler 1983, p. 23)

Seen in this light, the mechanism of understatement resides in reducing the hearer-related acceptability conditions (whether s/he perceives the statement as critical, offensive, imposing or unwelcome) by manipulating the content.

The brief discussion above shows that understatement can be seen as a stylistic device, sometimes realised by phraseological units marked by various degrees of stability, a form of verbal aggression or a face-saving strategy. It seems that its prevailing nature depends to a large extent on the type of interaction: the mode, the

[2] From *The Nature of Existence*, vol. 2, by John McTaggart (1988 [1927]): 172), retrieved 16 May 2010 from http://books.google.pl/books?id=1m45AAAAIAAJ.

immediate goals, the identity and social roles of the participants, the subject matter and the degree of its sensitivity, the setting and conventions that go with it, and, in general, expectations that participants have of this specific discourse type. The focus of the analysis on which this chapter reports is on understatement—or, more precisely, litotic structures—in a narrowly defined field of discourse: linguistics and biology research articles, in an attempt to obtain deeper insights into their function, frequency and preferred types in a cross-cultural perspective. Out of the whole spectrum of forms which—under various, broader or narrower interpretations—can be viewed as litotic, ranging from the most explicit constructions containing double negations (Ex. 1, 3, 6), through the meiosis-like structures depending on negation of the maximum value (Ex. 5) and implicit negation depending on negative adverbs (Ex. 2), to those possibly most interesting but at the same time most arguable, involving negation of a lexical item which itself can be interpreted as a negation of another item (Ex. 7), this chapter takes into consideration structures which contain two overt syntactic or morphological negative markers. This decision is partly determined by the method of analysis, which bases on electronically searchable corpora, and partly by the nature of the present study, which, comparative in nature, will be less fraught with error deriving from subjective, arbitrary decisions, not always easily transferred from one set of data to the other, if limited to cases which are perhaps not indisputable but at least relatively unproblematic.

7. We *do not deny* that this approach involves some difficulties for the analyst.

The next section gives details of the material studied and outlines the steps taken in the ordering and examination of the data. Further sections report on the obtained results.

15.3 Material and Procedure

The analysis is based on three corpora of research articles, each comprising 200 papers published in prestigious national (Polish) and international (English) journals. The Polish corpus (PLRA) comprises linguistics research articles published in the years 2001–2006 in the following journals: *Acta Baltico-Slavica, Biuletyn Polskiego Towarzystwa Językoznawczego, Etnolingwistyka, Język a Kultura, Onomastica, Poradnik Językowy, Slavia Meridionalis*, and *Studia z Filologii Polskiej i Słowiańskiej*, each contributing at most 40 articles of varied length. All the Polish journals were included in the 2003 list of Polish scientific journals issued by KBN (Polish Committee for Scientific Research). The total number of words in the corpus is approximately one million.[3] The first two authors of each article were checked for affiliation at Polish academic institutions to ensure

[3] All counts are based on *WordSmith 5.0* (Scott 2008).

that the language used was representative of academic Polish. Since few Polish journals make their issues available in the electronic form, most of the Polish material was scanned with HP Scanjet G3010, the scans manually controlled for accuracy.

The English linguistics corpus (ELRA) includes 200 electronically available research articles published in linguistics journals in the years 2005–2007, obtained from Science Direct, Elsevier's full-text scientific database. The total number of words in the English linguistics corpus is about 1.8 million.

The English biology corpus (EBRA) comprises 86 research articles published in journals subclassified as agricultural and biological sciences, 86 research articles published in journals subclassified as environmental sciences and 28 articles from biochemistry journals, all of them published in the years 2005–2007. The total number of words in this corpus approximates 1.2 million. In both English corpora, one journal contributed at most nine articles (not more than three published in the same year). An article was included in the corpus if at least one author was affiliated at an English-speaking research institution.

Before the analysis, all files were converted to txt format. The PLRA was then scanned with *WordSmith 5.0* (Scott 2008) for occurrences of the negative particle *nie* in the context of *nie** and *bez** (negative particle and preposition respectively, or negative prefixes), the context set at five words right and left of the hit word. The results of the search were filtered manually for litotic structures, producing a list of 53 entries.

The ELRA and EBRA were scanned with *WordSmith 5.0* (Scott 2008) for occurrences of the negative particle *not* in the context of *without, a*, ab*, anti*, counter*, dis*, il*, im*, in*, ir*, un**, and **less*, the context set at three words right of the hit word, and for occurrences of *impossible* in the context of *not to*, the context set at five words right. As with the PLRA, the results were filtered manually for litotic constructions, producing a list of 46 entries for the ELRA and 13 for the EBRA. In the first part of the analysis, the ELRA findings were confronted with those gathered from the PLRA. In the second part, they were compared with the EBRA results.

15.4 Results

On the whole, the PLRA search produced 53 litotic constructions, of which 34 (64%) followed the NIE-BEZ 'not-without' pattern, and 15 (28%) realised the NIE-NIE 'not-not' schema (Table 15.1), with the remaining four cases involving the more peripheral TRUDNO-NIE 'hardly possible-not' schema (Ex. 8).

8. Ryle twierdzi, *z czym trudno się nie zgodzić*, że zewnętrznie nie ma różnicy między gwizdaniem jako takim a gwizdaniem w ramach tresowania szczeniaka, istnieje natomiast różnica taktyczna. [bptj2001_2] 'Ryle claims, and *it is hardly possible to disagree at this point*, that externally there is no difference between

Table 15.1 The PLRA findings

NIE-BEZ category 'not-without'	NIE-NIE category 'not-not'	TRUDNO-NIE schema 'hardly possible-not'
***nie bez* N** 'not without N' (21)	***nie* V *nie*-ADJ** 'not V NEG-ADJ' (7)	***trudno nie* V** 'hardly possible not V' (4)
nie bez znaczenia 'not without significance' (7)	*nie było nieczyste* 'was not unclean' (1)	*trudno się nie zgodzić* 'it is hardly possibly not to agree' (2)
nie bez powodu 'not without a reason' (3)	*nie jest niemiłe* 'is not unpleasant' (1)	*trudno nie postawić pytania* 'it is hardly possible not to ask' (1)
nie bez wpływu 'not without influence' (3)	*nie jest zupełnie niemożliwe* 'is not totally impossible' (1)	*trudno nie zauważyć* 'it is hardly possible not to notice' (1)
nie bez racji 'not without a good reason' (2)	*nie jest to metoda niezawodna* 'it is not an infallible method' (1)	
nie bez nacisku 'not without coercion' (1)	*nie jest niezbędne* 'is not indispensable' (1)	
nie bez kozery 'not without a reason' (1)	*nie są nieomylni* 'are not infallible' (1)	
nie bez przeszkód 'not without obstacles' (1)	*nie miałaby nic nieregularnego* 'would not involve anything irregular'(1)	
nie bez przyczyny 'not without a reason' (1)	***nie* MÓC *nie* V** 'not CAN not V' (3)	
nie bez wyjątków 'not without exceptions' (1)	*nie mogą ich nie zauważyć* 'cannot fail to notice them' (1)	
nie bez zastrzeżeń 'not without reservations' (1)	*nie mogą nie ulec* 'it is impossible for them not to undergo (1)	
nie V bez N 'not V without N' (10)	*nie mogą nie budzić różnych zastrzeżeń* 'cannot fail to raise many objections'(1)	
nie pozostaje bez wpływu 'does not remain without influence' (5)	nie sposób nie V 'not possible not V' (2)	
nie jest bez znaczenia 'is not without significance' (2)	*nie sposób nie wspomnieć* 'it is impossible not to mention' (1)	
nie przebiega bez zakłóceń 'does not proceed without obstacles' (1)	*nie sposób nie odnotować* 'it is impossible not to notice' (1)	
nie obejdą się bez wiedzy 'cannot do without knowledge' (1)	nie BYĆ nie-N 'not BE NEG-N' (2)	
nie obyło się bez ofiar 'it was impossible to avoid casualties' (1)	*nie jest nietolerancją* 'it is not intolerance' (2)	
nie V bez-ADJ type 'not V NEG-ADJ' (2)	nie nie-V 'not NEG-V' (1)	

(continued)

Table 15.1 (continued)

NIE-BEZ category 'not-without'	NIE-NIE category 'not-not'	TRUDNO-NIE schema 'hardly possible-not'
nie jest bezwarunkowa 'is not unconditional' (1)	*nie uniemożliwia odpowiedzi* 'does not preclude an answer '(1)	
nie są bezpodstawne 'are not without a reason' (1)		
nie V bez-ADV 'not V NEG-ADV' (1)		
nie mogło odbywać się bezproblemowo 'could not proceed without problems' (1)		

whistling as such and whistling performed when training a puppy; there is though a tactical difference'

As for the NIE-BEZ category, by far the most frequent proved the *nie bez N* 'not without N' type, which, with 21 instances, accounted for almost 40% of the PLRA findings (Ex. 9, 10). The second most frequent type was the *nie V bez N* 'not V without N', attested 10 times (Ex. 11, 12). Another two cases realised the *nie V bez-ADJ* type 'not V NEG-ADJ' type (Ex. 13); the *nie V bez-ADV* 'not V NEG-ADV' type was represented by only one finding (Ex. 14).

9. *Nie bez znaczenia jest fakt*, że wartości pozytywne traktujemy jako normę, negatywne zaś jako odstępstwo od normy… [jk2005_7] '*Not without significance is the fact* that we treat positive values as a norm and negative values as a deviation from the norm'
10. *Nie bez racji możemy chyba przyjąć*, że ten rodzaj sugestii realizowany jest praktycznie przez wszystkie spoty… [bptj2002_3] '*It is not without a good reason that we can assume* that this type of suggestion is employed in virtually all the spots'
11. *Nie pozostało to bez wpływu* na kształt typowo strukturalistycznego opisu systemu gramatycznego, jak i analiz semantycznych. [sfps2005_3] '*It did not remain without influence* on the shape of the typically structuralist description of the system of grammar and semantic analyses'
12. Dlatego refleksje ogólne z obserwacji wielojęzyczności i nosicieli polskiego stereotypu etnicznego *nie obejdą się bez wiedzy* o problematyce i kulturze polskiej i żydowskiej. [el2002_2] 'This is why general observations on multilingualism and bearers of the Polish ethnic stereotype *cannot do without the knowledge* of the Polish and Jewish issue and culture'
13. Tak więc intuicje kryjące się za rozróżnieniem czynności zamierzonych i niezamierzonych… *nie są bezpodstawne*. [el2002_2] 'So intuitions underlying the differentiation between intended and unintended actions… *are not without a good reason'*
14. Oczywiście, tak szerokie wykorzystanie analizatora SAM… *nie mogło odbywać się bezproblemowo*. [bptj2001_9] 'Of course such a wide range of applications of the SAM analyser *could not proceed without problems*'

With regard to the NIE-NIE category, the greatest number of cases (seven) were found to realise the *nie V nie-ADJ* 'not V NEG-ADJ' type (Ex. 15, 16). Other types revealed in the search were *nie MÓC nie V* 'not CAN not V' with three instances (Ex. 17), phraseological unit *nie sposób nie V* 'not possible not V' with two cases (Ex. 18), *nie BYĆ nie-N* 'not BE NEG-N' with two occurrences of the same structure, and *nie nie-V* 'not NEG-V' attested once (Ex. 19).

15. Jak pokażę niżej, *stadium to nie jest niezbędne* i może zostać pominięte. [on2004_2] 'As I will show below, *this stage is not indispensable* and can be skipped'
16. Naturalnie, *nie jest to metoda niezawodna*, gdyż i tutaj istnieją przypadki homonimii, jak w poniższym przykładzie. [on2002_10] 'Naturally, *it is not an infallible method*, since there are also instances of homonymy here, as in the example below'
17. W takim kontekście zamykające tekst życzenia… *nie mogą nie ulec semantycznej reinterpretacji* i nie skojarzyć się również z lotami narciarskimi. [porj2003_8] 'In this context wishes that close the text *must [cannot not +V]undergo semantic reinterpretation* and become associated also with ski jumping'
18. Gdy mowa o reinterpretacjach znaczeniowych, *nie sposób nie wspomnieć o interesującym zjawisku* pośredniego oddziaływania nazwiska Małysz na struktury znaczeniowe innych wyrazów… [porj2003_8] 'When talking about semantic reinterpretations, *it is impossible not to mention the interesting phenomenon* of indirect influence of the surname Małysz on the semantic structures of other words'
19. *Nie uniemożliwia jednak odpowiedzi* na postawione we wstępie pytanie: jakie istnieje podobieństwo między rytuałem a stereotypem? [el2002_6] 'Still *it does not preclude an answer* to the question asked in the introduction: what is the similarity between a ritual and a stereotype?'

The PLRA findings show that litotic constructions realise two basic patterns, of which NIE-BEZ is twice as frequent as NIE-NIE. The most common structural types in the corpus under analysis were *nie bez N* (40%), *nie V bez N* (19%) and *nie V nie-ADJ* (13%). Lexical items most frequently involved with the second negation were nouns (attested 33 times and accounting for 62% of the data), followed far behind by verbs and adjectives (ten and nine instances respectively), with only one example involving an adverb.

The ELRA examination generated a list of 46 entries, which, considering the difference in size between the corpora, is half the number obtained for the PLRA. The most productive search involved the negative prefix *in*-(13 cases), followed by the prefix *un*-(8), the string *not without* (7), and the prefixes *im*-(6) and *dis*-(5). The negative prefix *a/ab*-occurred three times in litotic constructions, as did the negative suffix–*less*. *Il*-was attested once. The ELRA findings can be assigned to four major types (Table 15.2), of which the *not NEG-ADJ* groups 67% of the items (31 entries; Ex. 20, 21). The second most frequent type was the *not without N* (Ex. 22, 23),

Table 15.2 The ELRA findings

not NEG-ADJ (31)	not without N (7)	not NEG-V (4)	not NEG-ADV (4)
not (V) (as) (ART) NEG-ADJ (N) (29)	*not without their own ideas* (1)	*does not disrespect* (1)	*not infrequently* (3)
is not an uncommon finding (1)	*not without analogues* (1)	*do not go/has not gone unnoticed* (2)	*not insignificantly* (1)
is not an unreasonable assumption/alternative (2)	*not without (its) problems* (2)	*impossible for the reader not to infer* (1)	
is not an unusual one (1)	*not without issues of their own* (1)		
is not as unusual as (1)	*not without limitations* (2)		
is/was not abnormal (2)			
is not atypical (1)			
are/is/were not (dramatically) dissimilar (concepts) (3)			
not disconfirmed (1).			
is not illegal (1)			
(*is) not/may not be impossible* (4)			
does not seem so improbable (1)			
is not 100% incorrect (1)			
are not indeterminate (1)			
may not be/was not inevitable (2)			
not inexperienced (1)			
is not infinite (1)			
are not inflexible structures (1)			
are not invalid (1)			
(are) not exceptionless (2)			
is not limitless (1)			
ART not NEG-ADJ N (2)			
a not insignificant proportion (1)			
the not entirely unreasonable hypothesis (1)			

represented by 7 specimens (15% of the findings), followed by the *not NEG-V* (Ex. 24) and *not NEG-ADV* (Ex. 25) with 4 specimens each.

20. The specific case of Tasmania brings together the heightened French interest in exploration of the landscape, in exotic animals and people, and in colonial exploitation, and *prompts the not entirely unreasonable hypothesis* that Tasmania is perceived as France's "lost colony." [0164_met]

21. In this ambiguous region, *it is not impossible that* the phonetician's ear naturally separates the patterns into two different classes in a perceptually consistent way, though inconsistently in articulatory terms. [0075_jof]
22. however, *the notion of Britishness is not without its problems* in Scotland (or in England for that matter). [0126_lee]
23. The present study is, of course, *not without limitations*. [0038_eap]
24. The visitor consequently thinks the attendant *does not disrespect* her social position, and since this is in line with social norms for what service people should show they think of visitors, compensatory politeness arises. [0089_jop]
25. As Myers (1990) and others… have noted, even experienced, already-published professionals *are not infrequently stymied* in their efforts to publish their work and mystified by reviewer comments and editorial decisions. [0098_jsl]

The ELRA results show that in this set of data the most common type of litotic construction was the *not NEG-ADJ*, which was the third most frequent structure in the Polish part of the examined material. The *not without N* type, the most frequent structural schema attested in the examined set of Polish articles (*nie bez N*), was the second most popular type in the ELRA but far behind the most common structure. These proportions also show that lexical items most frequently involved in the second negation in the ELRA are adjectives (third frequency rank in the PLRA), with nouns coming second (most frequent in the PLRA), followed by verbs and adverbs.

A closer look at the results obtained for the PLRA and ELRA (Tables 15.1 and 15.2) shows that many of the Polish findings are in fact stabilised phraseological units. This concerns in particular items that realise the two most common structural types, i.e., *nie bez N* 'not without N' and *nie V bez N* 'not V without V', the former represented with such lexical chunks as *nie bez znaczenia, nie bez racji, nie bez powodu* and *nie bez kozery*—the last mentioned formation attested only once but involving a noun which in contemporary Polish occurs only in this expression—and the latter with *nie pozostaje bez wpływu* and *nie obyło się bez ofiar*. Also *nie sposób nie* and the peripheral *trudno nie*, attested twice and four times respectively, can be regarded as phrasemes, that is strings of linguistic elements which do not necessarily form phrases but because of the frequency with which they concur, are still recognised as chunks (Biber 2006; Hyland 2008). The ELRA results seem markedly different in this respect, apparently with just one recognisable fixed expression *not go unnoticed* (attested twice) and a more common string *not impossible* (four cases).

Indeed phraseology may be one of the factors underlying the higher frequency of litotic structures in the Polish corpus, which we initially found counterintuitive, bearing in mind the English propensity for understatement on the one hand, and Wierzbicka's (1985) remark that Poles do not have opinions but claims on the other. Another point to consider would be whether such stabilised phraseological units that involve litotic structures should still be considered as mechanisms for understatement—if we restrict understatement to those operations performed on

Table 15.3 The EBRA findings

(BE) not NEG-ADJ (10)	not NEG-V (2)
is not uncommon (3)	*does not necessarily invalidate (1)*
are not uncontested (2)	*have not remained undeformed (1)*
is not unreasonable (1)	
is not unexpected (1)	
is not impossible (1)	
is not inevitable (1)	
not non-existent (1)	
ART not NEG-ADJ N (1)	
a not implausible factor (1)	

the content which result in toning down the claim, as Hübler (1983) proposed. At least some of those found in the PLRA seem to function as foregrounding devices, bringing an element to the reader's notice, or emphatics, as in Ex. 26.

26. *Trudno bowiem nie zauważyć*, że dzięki swej tożsamości językowej, kulturowej i religijnej państwa i narody Europy środkowej przetrwały bez mała dwieście lat dominacji różnych mocarstw europejskich (Rosji, ZSRR, Austrii, Prus, Trzeciej Rzeszy)… [porj2005_15] '*It is hardly possible not to notice* that thanks to their linguistic, cultural and religious identity, states and nations of Central Europe survived almost two hundred years of domination by various European powers (Russia, Soviet Union, Austria, Prussia, Third Reich)'

As for the semantic features of elements involved in litotic structures in the Polish and English linguistics corpora, the material studied is too small to make any meaningful generalisation possible. In the PLRA there might be a certain disposition towards items which refer to SIGNIFICANCE, e.g., *znaczenie* (9 specimens), *wpływ* (8), or which otherwise suggest that something is significant, e.g., *nie mogą nie zauważyć*, *nie sposób nie wspomnieć*, *nie sposób nie odnotować*, *trudno nie zauważyć*, *trudno nie postawić pytania*, which together account for 40% of the data. In the ELRA, the SIGNIFICANCE cluster is also marked but to a lesser extent (9% of the data), as in *not insignificant*, *not insignificantly* and *not go unnoticed*. Another cluster noticeable in the ELRA (11% of the data) but unmarked in the PLRA is the POSSIBILITY cluster, represented by *not impossible* and *not improbable*.

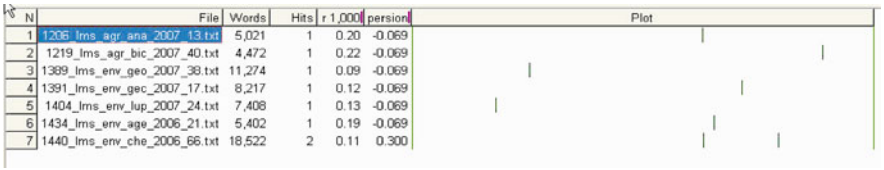
The EBRA examination generated a list of 13 entries, representing only two types of litotic structures, both involving prefixation (Table 15.3). The most common prefix was found to be *un*-(eight cases; Ex. 27–29), followed by *im*-(two cases; Ex. 30) and *in*-(also two cases; Ex. 31–32) and only one instance of *non*-in the whole corpus (Ex. 33). These litotic structures can be assigned to two groups, of which the superordinate category *not NEG-ADJ* (11 entries) realising two patterns *(BE) not NEG-ADJ* (10 entries) and *(ART) not NEG-ADJ N* (1 entry) represents roughly 85% of all litotic constructions attested in the corpus, with the remaining 15% grouped as a realisation of the *not NEG-V* (Ex. 34).

27. This is normally obtained at age 18, but in reality *it is not uncommon to find* pupils in their early 20s, perhaps if they have missed school due to pregnancy or had to repeat years.
28. *Competition is not uncommon among weed biological control insects* when more than one species is released.
29. Considering the close proximity of the springs at Colour Peak and Gypsum Hill to each other, *it is not unreasonable to suggest* similar hydrogeological pathways for these two systems as proposed.
30. Thus, much of the groundmass seems to be directly derived from melting of precursor rock constituents, and *it is not impossible that* some of the fine-grained minerals in the groundmass actually represent remnants of parent rock.
31. This process encourages participants to realise that *the current development trajectory is not inevitable*; it is possible to actively promote a sustainable future.
32. The fact that applying TNS principles in a particular context involves value judgements *does not necessarily invalidate it* as a framework for planning for sustainability.
33. The size range of interest (e.g., diameter of average mass = 130 nm for 85 nm, g = 1.7) is closer to the size independent 1,000 kg m^{-3} limiting case for the adsorption of water when compared to DMA effective density data, and thus the uncertainty due to unknown volatile fraction is likely to be smaller, but *not non-existent*.
34. The Granophyre dikes *have not remained undeformed*. Evidence of micro- and, rarely, macro-faulting has been observed by us.

In purely quantitative terms, the results obtained for ELRA and EBRA corpora show striking differences, with the number of litotic structure being 3.58 higher in ELRA than in EBRA. Even if we account for the fact that ELRA corpus containing over 1.8 mln words contrasted with almost 1.2 mln tokens in EBRA is 1.57 times larger, the frequency with which litotes occurs in ELRA should be regarded as significantly higher than in EBRA (2.25 times more often).

It should be also noted that only two of major syntactic categories proposed in the analysis of ELRA are represented in the EBRA corpus, i.e., the patterns *not NEG-ADJ* and *not NEG-V***.** What we find especially noteworthy is the absence of the pattern *not without*, which in a reference corpus of 2,400 academic articles from all disciplines occurred almost 1,000 times collocating with such nouns as *limitations, difficulty, problems, precedent, complication and controversy,* and *complication and interest.* Against the data obtained from this 60 mln word corpus, *not without* is underrepresented in ELRA and completely absent in the articles in biosciences.

In both corpora the most frequent structural schema was *not NEG-ADJ***,** where the NEG element was realised by as many as 6 different prefixes and one suffix in ELRA and only by 4 prefixes in EBRA.



N	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	1206_lms_agr_ana_2007_13.txt	5,021	1	0.20	-0.069	
2	1219_lms_agr_bic_2007_40.txt	4,472	1	0.22	-0.069	
3	1389_lms_env_geo_2007_38.txt	11,274	1	0.09	-0.069	
4	1391_lms_env_gec_2007_17.txt	8,217	1	0.12	-0.069	
5	1404_lms_env_lup_2007_24.txt	7,408	1	0.13	-0.069	
6	1434_lms_env_age_2006_21.txt	5,402	1	0.19	-0.069	
7	1440_lms_env_che_2006_66.txt	18,522	2	0.11	0.300	

Fig. 15.2 The dispersion of *not* UN-ADJ pattern in EBRA (*WordSmith 5.0*, Scott 2008)

To eliminate the danger of making generalisations concerning the corpora we also looked for instances of idiosyncratic overuse or predilection for litotes. In ELRA the litotic structures were distributed over 38 articles (19%), with the highest frequency of 3 hits in 2 articles, and 2 occurrences in four other articles. The remaining 32 articles contained only one instance of litotes each. By contrast, the 13 litotic structures in the EBRA could be found in 10 articles (6.5%) with one article making use of litotes three times, one twice and the remaining articles only once.

We found it also interesting to study the functional aspects of litotic structures within the sentences in which they occurred. Whenever it was possible to identify the canonical IMRD (Introduction—Methods—Results—Discussion) structure of RA, an attempt was made to specify roughly the position of litotic constructions. In the EBRA corpus the litotic construction occurred on average at 63% of the text ranging from 18% to 93%. In only one case was litotes attested in Conclusions, all the remaining instances being identified in the middle and the endwise section of the Discussion (the range between 58 and 91%). A typical dispersion is shown in Fig. 15.2 representing the *not UN + ADJ* pattern

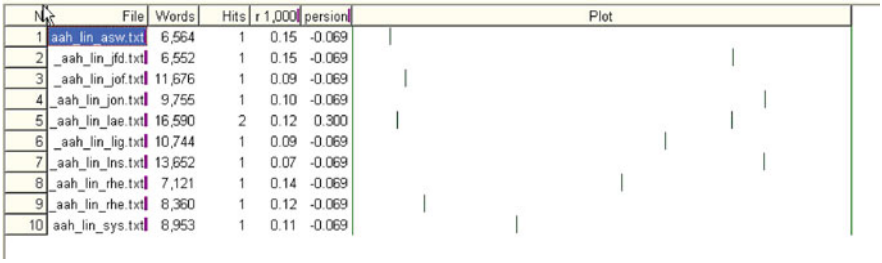
On the rhetorical organization level, research articles under study in the ELRA corpus demonstrated quite different characteristics. The litotic constructions in the corpus were dispersed over a wider range of positions from 1% to 87% of the text, with the mean value of 55%. In contrast to articles from the field of bioscience, the authors of language and communication articles tended to use litotic structures not only in the Discussion section but also already in the Introduction. No instance of litotes in the Concluding Remarks section was found. Figure 15.3 represents the dispersion of *not IN + ADJ* pattern.

We found it also interesting to study the functional aspects of litotic structures within the sentences in which they occurred. In the EBRA corpus 5 litotic constructions of *not* NEG-ADJ functioned as complements of definite NPs, already mentioned in the previous context (Ex. 35).

35. This diminishing effect of chlorate over time is *not unexpected*;

In four other cases they were placed within *it*-clauses with extraposed subjects, as in Ex. 36 and 37 below.

36. *it is not uncommon* for it to have exploited structural features, such as fractures…



N.	File	Words	Hits	r 1,000	persion	Plot
1	aah_lin_asw.txt	6,564	1	0.15	-0.069	
2	_aah_lin_jfd.txt	6,552	1	0.15	-0.069	
3	_aah_lin_jof.txt	11,676	1	0.09	-0.069	
4	_aah_lin_jon.txt	9,755	1	0.10	-0.069	
5	_aah_lin_lae.txt	16,590	2	0.12	0.300	
6	_aah_lin_lig.txt	10,744	1	0.09	-0.069	
7	_aah_lin_lns.txt	13,652	1	0.07	-0.069	
8	_aah_lin_rhe.txt	7,121	1	0.14	-0.069	
9	_aah_lin_rhe.txt	8,360	1	0.12	-0.069	
10	aah_lin_sys.txt	8,953	1	0.11	-0.069	

Fig. 15.3 The dispersion of *not* IN-ADJ pattern in ELRA (*WordSmith 5.0*, Scott 2008)

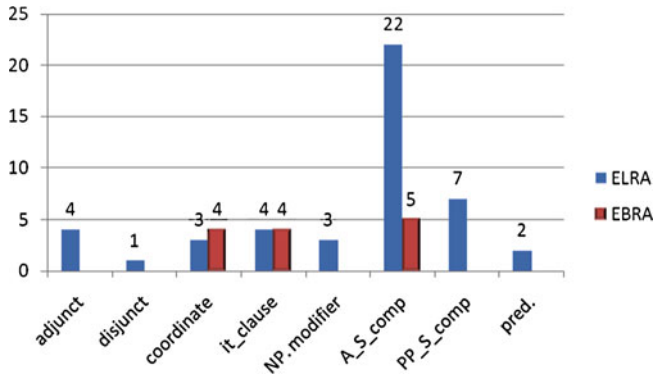


Fig. 15.4 The distribution of the functional categories of litotic structures in ELRA and EBRA

37. *it is not unreasonable* to suggest similar hydrogeological pathways for these two systems…

Finally, in three cases litotic *not* NEG-ADJ formed a part of a coordinate *but*-phrase and subordinate verbless *though*-clause introducing the idea of contrast, as in Ex. 38 and 39.

38. the uncertainty due to unknown volatile fraction is likely to be smaller, *but not non-existent*.
39. it is important to do so because these twin discourses remain embedded, *though not uncontested*

Litotic constructions in the ELRA corpus exhibit a greater functional variation with a significant difference in the distribution of the functional patterns when compared with the EBRA. Next to the aforementioned categories of adjectival complements of definite NPs, *it*-clauses with extraposed subjects and coordinate *but*-phrases, litotic constructions in the ELRA corpus were found to function as adjuncts (four cases; Ex 40), disjuncts (one case; Ex. 41), modifiers of the nominal element of subject-complement NPs (three instances; Ex. 42), and prepositional subject complements (seven cases; Ex. 43).

40. Interpersonal meanings *not infrequently* conflate with experiential meanings in "case marking" morphemes.
41. The first Gaelic-medium unit in the islands opened in 1986 (*not insignificantly*, a year after the first two units in urban mainland schools, in Glasgow and Inverness)
42. I have my suspicions that 'activity types' and 'communities of practice' are *not dissimilar concepts* and that they are in fact complementary when considering the thorny issue of 'context'.
43. The present study is, of course, *not without limitations*.

The distribution of the functional categories in both corpora is shown in Fig. 15.4.

15.5 Concluding Remarks

The aim of this chapter has been to study the frequency, structure and functions of selected litotic constructions in two cross-cultural perspectives: ethnic and disciplinary. The first important observation pertaining to all the three corpora under analysis is that the type of litotic structures we were interested in proved relatively rare. However, at the same time their limited occurrence in research articles makes them marked constructions of versatile functionality. In what follows we shall concentrate on their most prominent functions.

As it seems several aspects of the phenomenon of negated negation discussed here under the heading of litotes can be considered. First, it could be analysed solely as a manifestation of negation itself, which, as the abundant literature on negation claims, falls into two functional categories of metalinguistic and logical negation. If metalinguistic negation is defined as "intervening on a sentence portion by means of a distinctive stress" (Bouvier 2001, p. 15), then all instances of litotic structures in our three corpora belong to the other type of negation, which operates either locally on particular constituents or globally on sentences. What is specific about the litotic constructions is however the fact that in almost all cases they combine the two types of negation, yet the functions of the two negations seem to be different in the analysed examples. This conviction derives from the observation made by Givon (1979, p. 139) that "affirmatives are used to convey new information on the background of assuming the hearer's ignorance" and "negatives are used to correct misguided belief on the background of assuming the hearer's error." It seems that on the discoursal plane the litotic constructions as consisting of two negations perform both tasks simultaneously. However, instead of operating directly on already-introduced propositions, they refer to possible propositions that could be derived from the preceding part of text by denying their truth. Figure 15.5 based on ELRA text 0.038 illustrates the mechanism.

At the same time, the value of the negated negative becomes similar to the value of the corresponding affirmative, by means of which litotic constructions convey new information on the background of assuming the hearer's ignorance,

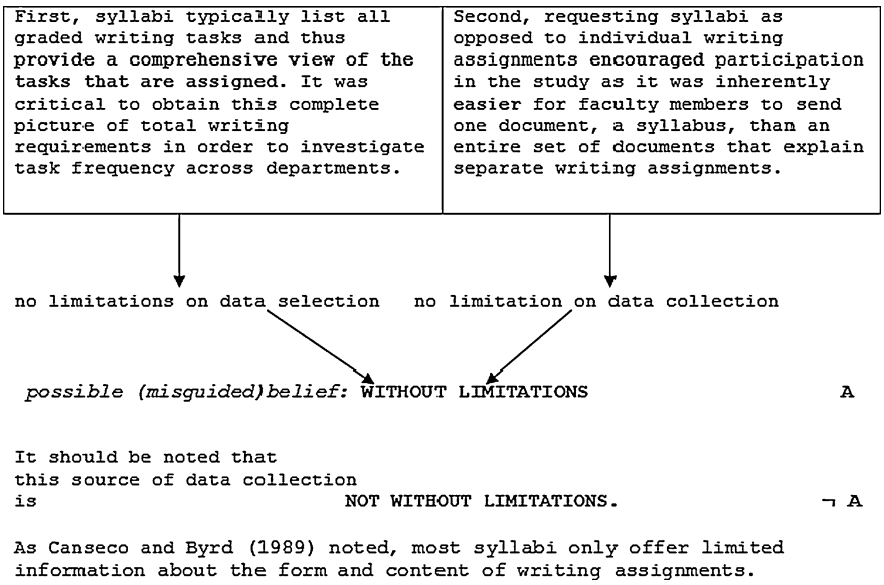


Fig. 15.5 The mechanism of litotic constructions operating on implicit propositions

yet they conceal the face-threatening impact of the affirmative behind the cognitively cumbersome (see Bullow-Moler 1999 for a discussion of cognitive problems in processing negation) and logically vague negated negative. If it is so, then in the academic discourse under analysis litotes performs both an ideational and interpersonal function by restricting the validity of a possible claim (other correction) and forestalling a possible objection (self-correction).

In this context it could be interesting to note that a similar mechanism can be found in the discourse-rhetorical relation of concession. Notably, one syntactic group of litotic constructions, namely coordinate *but*-phrases, is clearly concessive and shares certain characteristics including functional ones with concessive clauses, as in (44):

44. the uncertainty due to unknown volatile fraction is likely to be smaller, *but not non-existent* = Although it is likely to be smaller, it is not likely to be non-existent (preventing an unjustified conclusion).

As could be seen in our Result section, the explicitly marked concessive functions of litotic constructions would be relatively more common in biological research papers than in language and communication ones.

Secondly, the view that litotic constructions are employed in academic writing as a mitigatory device finds support in Horn's Division of Pragmatic Labour Rule (Horn 1989, p. 304), according to which "the use of a longer, marked expression in lieu of a shorter expression involving less effort on the part of the speaker tends to signal that the speaker was not in a position to employ the simpler version felicitously." Actually, as demonstrated by van der Wouden (1995, p. 4), the

A	unwise	……	wise
B	not wise		……..
C	……..	not unwise	
D	……..	not unwise	……..

Fig. 15.6 The *unwise—wise* scale and its possible interpretations (adapted from van der Wouden 1995, p. 4)

logical denotation of litotic *not unwise* in *It is not unwise to take precautions* corresponds to what is shown in Fig. 15.6 as Row C. In this way the speaker/writer can extend the zone of possible interpretations, which would be impossible to achieve with the unnegated opposite, i.e., *wise*.

Consequently, litotic constructions allow for a certain degree of vagueness, which, as our data suggest, is more characteristic of modes of communication in social sciences than in natural sciences.

Third, Givon's notion of shared backgroundness of negative assertions proves a useful tool for the justification of the high frequency of litotic structures in subject-complement position of intensive clauses in which the subject is realized either by definite NPs or demonstratives like *this*—a deictic marker of the preceding discourse. As shown in Fig. 15.4, this function of litotic structures is the most common one in both ELRA and EBRA, yet its share is relatively higher in ELRA, once again testifying to the view that natural sciences operate on facts and agreed-on terminology that is less likely to cause the reader to reach unwelcome or not fully valid conclusions.

A note should also be taken of relatively frequent *it*-clauses with extraposed subjects as in (45):

45. In this ambiguous region, *it is not impossible* that the phonetician's ear naturally separates the patterns into…

The variation in the use of *it*-clauses has been studied in four academic disciplines in Hewings and Hewings (2001) and their findings suggest that they are less frequent in hard sciences (astrophysics) than soft ones (history). However, our findings concerning only litotic *it*-clauses do not corroborate the results. As the position seems to have a non-neglible impact on the functioning of litotic expressions, it is interesting to note that when compared with other forms of realisation of litotes, the frequency of use of *it*-clauses would rather indicate that bioscience RAs give preference to litotes preceding a claim, whereas in language and communication RAs litotes follows such claims.

Studies of stance and engagement features in research articles by Dillon (1991) and Hyland (2007) show that rhetorical practices of disciplines are closely related to their purposes. As a consequence, according to Hyland, in natural sciences, where the frequency of the features is relatively low, the decisive factor shaping this disciplinary discourse is the need of novelty and significance of the contribution. By contrast, the discourse of soft sciences with its frequent markers of engagement "recasts knowledge as sympathetic understanding… through ethical rather than cognitive progression" (Hyland 2007, p. 99). Since our results show that litotic structures do perform interpersonal function, the results are not in disagreement with this view.

Generally, considering the disciplinary dimension of litotic structures, it may be argued that their use in two distinct disciplines shows variation in respect of their major syntactic patterns, their distribution in RA and frequency and suggests that their epistemologies and thus their disciplinary cultures are indeed dissimilar.

Considering the use of litotes in an ethnic, i.e., Polish—English perspective restricted to RAs in the field of language studies, it appears that Polish linguists tend to employ litotic constructions twice as often as their English colleagues. This, however, may be related to the fact that a considerable proportion of Polish litotic forms involves stabilised phraseological units, which in the English linguistics data occur only marginally. Secondly, what may be of interest for Polish authors writing in English is that while the most productive litotic pattern in Polish research articles is *not without N* (also the richest source of fixed expressions), in English the majority of forms conformed to the *not NEG-ADJ* type. This would also tend to support the view that in English RAs litotic constructions are frozen to a lesser extent than in Polish, where at least some of them are used as stylistic options, ready-made chunks available in the academic register acting as conventional guide-posting devices introducing a new argument.

15.6 Limitations

The present study is, of course, not without limitations. One of the limitations is that the present study focuses only on one specific group of litotic constructions. It may well be the case that the inclusion of semantically negative lexical items could produce a more comprehensive view of their role in academic discourse.

Secondly, it can be expected that increasing the size of the corpus could lead us to discovering other less common but syntactically and pragmatically interesting instances of litotic expressions. Further studies will undoubtedly cast a new light on the phenomenon.

References

Ädel A (2006) Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English. John Benjamins, Amsterdam

Bazerman Ch (1988) Shaping written knowledge: The genre and activity of the experimental article in science. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison

Becher T (1989) Academic tribes and territories. The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press, Milton Keynes

Biber D (2006) University language: A corpus-based study of spoken and written registers. John Benjamins, Amsterdam

Bondi M (2004) "If you think this sounds very complicated, you are correct": Awareness of cultural difference in specialized discourse. In: Gotti M, Candlin Ch (eds) Intercultural aspects of specialized discourse. Peter Lang, Bern, pp 53–78

Bouvier Y-F (2001) Use, levels and scopes of negation. Gener Gramm Geneva 2:15–37

Bülow-Moller AM (1999) Existential problems: On the processing of *irrealis* in simultaneous interpreting. Interpreting 4(2):145–168
Bynton D (2005) The structure of PhD conclusion chapters. J Engl Acad Purp 4(3):207–224
Cavalla C, Grossmann F (2005) Caractéristiques sémantiques de quelques 'Noms scientifiques' dans l'article de recherche en français. Akademisk Prosa 2:47–59 Romansk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen
Clyne M (1987) Cultural differences in the organization of academic texts. J Pragmat 11:211–247
Čmejrková S (1996) Academic writing in Czech and English. In: Ventola E, Mauranen A (eds) Academic writing: Intercultural and textual issues. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp 137–152
Čmejrková S, Daneš F (1997) Academic writing and cultural identity: The case of Czech academic writing. In: Duszak A (ed) Culture and styles of academic discourse. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp 41–61
Connor U (1987) Argumentative patterns in student essays: Cross-cultural differences. In: Connor U, Kaplan RB (eds) Writing across languages: Analysis of L_2 text. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, pp 57–71
Connor U (1996) Contrastive Rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second language writing. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Connor U, Kaplan RB (eds) (1987) Writing across languages: Analysis of L_2 text. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA
Crowley Sh, Hawhee D (2004) Ancient Rhetorics for contemporary students, 3rd edn. Pearson—Longman, New York
Dahl T (2004) Textual metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline? J Pragmat 36:1807–1825
Dillon G (1991) Contending Rhetorics: Writing in academic disciplines. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis
Duszak A (1994) Academic discourse and intellectual styles. J Pragmat 21:291–313
Fløttum K, Dahl T, Kinn T (2006) Academic voices across languages and disciplines. John Benjamins, Amstrdam
Givon T (1979) On understanding grammar. Academic Press, New York
Grice HP (1975) Logic and conversation. In: Cole P, Morgan JL (eds) Syntax and semantics Vol. 3, speech acts. Academic Press, New York, pp 41–58
Groom N (2005) Pattern and meaning across genres and disciplines: An exploratory study. J Engl Acad Purp 4(3):257–277
Hewings A, Hewings M (2001) Anticipatory *it* in academic writing: An indicator of disciplinary difference and developing disciplinary knowledge. In: Hewings M (ed) Academic writing in context: Implications and applications. Papers in honour of tony Dudley-Evans. University of Birmingham Press, Birmingham, pp 199–214
Hinds J (1987) Reader versus writer responsibility: A new typology. In: Connor U, Kaplan RB (eds) Writing across languages: Analysis of L_2 text. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, pp 141–152
Holmes R (1997) Genre analysis and the social sciences: An investigation of the structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. Engl Specif Purp 16:321–337
Horn LR (1989) A natural history of negation. University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London
Hübler A (1983) Understatement and hedge in English. John Benjamins, Amsterdam
Hyland K (1997) Scientific claims and community values: Articulating an academic culture. Lang Commun 16:19–32
Hyland K (1998) Hedging in scientific research articles. John Benjamins, Amsterdam
Hyland K (1999a) Academic attribution: Citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. Appl Linguist 20(3):341–367
Hyland K (1999b) Disciplinary discourses: Writer stance in research articles. In: Candlin ChN, Hyland K (eds) Writing: Texts, processes and practices. Longman, London, pp 99–121
Hyland K (2000) Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing. Pearson Education Ltd, Harlow, UK

Hyland K (2001) Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. Engl Specif Purp 20:207–226
Hyland K (2002) Directives: Power and engagement in academic writing. Appl Linguist 23(2):215–239
Hyland K (2003) Self-citation and self-reference: Credibility and promotion in academic publication. J Am Soc Inf Sci Tech 54(3):251–259
Hyland K (2004) Graduates's gratitude: The generic structure of dissertation acknowledgements. Engl Specif Purp 23(3):303–324
Hyland K (2007) Different strokes for different folks: Disciplinary variation in academic writing. In: Fløttum K (ed) Language and discipline perspectives on academic discourse. Cambridge Scholars Press, Newcastle, pp 89–108
Hyland K (2008) As can be seen: Lexical bundles and disciplinary variation. Engl Specif Purp 27:4–21
Hyland K (2009) Academic discourse. Continuum, London
Hyland K, Tse P (2005) Hooking the reader*:* A corpus study of evaluative *that* in abstracts. Engl Specif Purp 24(2):123–139
Kaplan RB (1966) Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. Lang Learn 16:1–20
Kaplan RB (1987) Cultural thought patterns revisited. In: Connor U, Kaplan RB (eds) Writing across languages: Analysis of L_2 text. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, pp 9–21
Kuo Ch-H (1999) The use of personal pronouns. Role relationships in scientific journal articles. Engl Specif Purp 18(2):121–138
Lanham RA (1991) A handlist of rhetorical terms. University of California Press, Berkeley
Lindholm-Romantschuk Y (1998) Scholarly book reviewing in the social sciences and humanities. The flow of ideas within and among disciplines. Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut
MacDonald SP (1994) Professional academic writing in the humanities and social sciences. Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale
Martín-Martín P, Burgess S (2004) The rhetorical management of academic criticism in research article abstracts. Text 24(2):171–195
Mauranen A (1993) Cultural Differences in Academic Rhetoric: A Textlinguistic Study. Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main
Melander B, Swales JM, Fredrickson KM (1997) Journal abstracts from three academic fields in the United States and Sweden: National or disciplinary proclivities? In: Duszak A (ed) Culture and styles of academic discourse. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp 251–272
Muecke DC (1969) The compass of irony. Methuen, London
Müller WG (2006) Style. In: Sloane Th-O (ed) Encyclopedia of rhetoric. Oxford University Press, Oxford, E-reference edition
Mur Dueñas P (2008) Analysing engagement markers cross-culturally: The case of English and spanish business management research articles. In: Burgess S, Martín-Martín P (eds) English as an additional language in research publication and communication. Peter Lang, Bern, pp 197–213
Mur Dueñas P (2009) Citation in business management research articles: A contrastive (English-Spanish) corpus-based analysis. In: Suomela-Salmi E, Dervin F (eds) Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Academic Discourse. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp 49–60
Nesi H (2001) A corpus-based analysis of academic lectures across disciplines. In: Cotterill J, Ife A (eds) Language across boundaries. BAAL in association with Continuum Press, London, pp 201–218
Parry Sh (1998) Disciplinary discourse in doctoral theses. High Educt 36:273–299
Peters H (2006) Litotēs. In: Sloane Th-O (ed) Encyclopedia of Rhetoric. Oxford University Press, Oxford E-reference edition
Samraj B (2002) Introductions in research articles: Variations across disciplines. Engl Specif Purp 21(1):1–17
Scott M (2008) WordSmith tools 5.0 for windows. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Shumway DR, Messer-Davidow E (1991) Disciplinarity: An introduction. Poet Today 12(2):201–225

Storer NW, Parsons T (1968) The disciplines as a differentiating force. In: Montgomery EB (ed) The foundation of access to knowledge. Division of Summer Sessions, Syracuse University, Syracuse

Swales JM (1990) Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Swales JM (2004) Research genres: Explorations and applications. Cambridge University Press, New York

Vassileva I (1997) Hedging in English and Bulgarian academic writing. In: Duszak A (ed) Culture and styles of academic discourse. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp 203–221

Vold ET (2006) Epistemic modality markers in research articles: A cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary study. Int J Appl Linguist 16(1):61–87

Wales K (1989) A dictionary of stylistics. Longman, London

Wierzbicka A (1985) Different cultures, different languages and different speech acts. J Pragmat 9:145–178

Wilson D, Sperber D (1992) On verbal irony. Lingua 87(1/2):53–76

Wood A (2001) International scientific English: The language of research scientists around the world. In: Flowerdew J, Peacock M (eds) Research perspectives on english for academic purposes. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 71–83

Wouden T van der (1995) Litotes and downward monotonicity—Online document. Retrieved April 18 2010 from http://www.tonvanderwouden.nl/index_files/papers/leipzig.pdf

Chapter 16
Ways of Expressing Birthday, Christmas and New Year's and Easter Wishes in L2 and L3: Cross-Cultural Transfer and Interlanguage Pragmatics

Teresa Maria Włosowicz

Abstract The purpose of the study was an analysis of learners' ways of expressing birthday, Christmas and New Year's as well as Easter wishes in L2 and L3. Particular attention was paid to cross-cultural transfer and both the subjects' achievement and reduction strategies. The study was carried out with 52 L2 and L3 learners whose native languages were: Polish, English, French, German, Portuguese and Russian. The subjects' L2s and L3s were English, French and German and, for comparison, extra information on target language wishes was elicited from native speakers working as teachers of those languages. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, asking the subjects how they would write birthday, Christmas and New Year's and Easter wishes in their L1, L2 and L3. Moreover, they were supposed to write wishes at three levels of formality: to a peer (brother, sister or friend—in all three languages), to a relative older than themselves (only in L1) and to someone with whom they were in official relations (for example, their foreign language teacher). As the results show, the subjects' achievement strategies were of three types. First, L1 transfer was observed, either, rarely, in the form of literal translation or, more frequently, as the transfer of cultural values (for example, emphasis on health). Second, some subjects tried to sound native-like, either by using target language formulae (e.g., 'Happy Birthday and many happy returns of the day') or by inventing their own, non-L1 formulae. Third, for fear of pragmatic failure, some subjects limited themselves to basic forms, such as 'Happy Birthday', especially in L3. Message reduction was also observed, particularly in L3, often in the form of message abandonment (leaving a gap in the questionnaire).

T. M. Włosowicz (✉)
Silesian School of Economics and Languages, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: melomane.plurilingue@gmail.com

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_16,

Keywords Speech acts · Cross-cultural transfer · Questionnaire · Expression of wishes · Comparative study

16.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study has been an investigation of learners' ways of expressing birthday, Christmas and New Year's as well as Easter wishes in L2 and L3. Attention was paid to both cross-cultural and cross-linguistic influence, yet it must be remembered that both kinds of influence are interconnected here, since the cultural values contained in wishes are expressed by means of specific linguistic formulae. At the same time, the subjects' communication strategies were analysed, including achievement strategies (also transfer-based ones) as well as reduction strategies.

By and large, wishes constitute a special category of speech acts. According to Searle (1977, in Fong 2000, p. 224), they are expressives, because they serve to express certain feelings towards the interlocutor and convey greetings. On the other hand, in Schmidt and Richards' (1980, p. 133) opinion, greetings constitute a small category of speech acts which is not generalisable as a major class but which deserves attention. One way or the other, wishes, greetings and similar utterances constitute language rituals which have to be performed according to certain rules. As de Salins (1996, p. 252) remarks, all kinds of wishes are neutralized (for example, 'Happy Birthday', 'Happy New Year', etc.), because the members of a linguistic community have only those terms at their disposal. At the same time, as Fong (2000) shows, wishes are not only conventional formulae, but they reflect such cultural values as good health, happiness, prosperity and wealth. Since greetings and wishes on the one hand and ways of responding to them on the other differ from one culture to another, studying them can help to understand other cultures (Folarin Schleicher 1997).

However, in foreign language courses wishes are often taught only superficially and are indeed limited to such bare formulae as 'Happy Birthday' or 'Merry Christmas', without any additional values that might be expressed by them, or less common variants, such as 'Season's greetings' instead of 'Merry Christmas' when speaking to a person of a different religion. It can thus be assumed that, as a result, learners have to use those most basic formulae, or should they want to say or write something more, they may resort to transfer or even literal translation from their native language.

This study was thus designed to investigate learners' strategies of expressing wishes in L2 and L3, assuming that in the latter case the subjects would have more difficulty due to a lower proficiency level as well as a greater number of transfer and interference sources. The research questions were as follows:

1. Are the ways of formulating wishes based on intercultural transfer?

2. If so, does the transfer take place only from L1 (both into L2 and L3) or also from L2 into L3?
3. Can it be bi-directional (both from L2 into L3 and from L3 into L2)?

In fact, the last question begs another, which will also be referred to in the present paper. As the Intercultural Style Hypothesis (Blum-Kulka 1991, in Cenoz 2003, p. 64, and Cenoz, personal communication on May 28, 2010) postulates, a foreign language can also influence the native language at the pragmatic level. It can thus be supposed that a foreign language may also influence the way of expressing wishes in the native language, leading to the emergence of an intercultural style.

16.2 Cultural Competence in a Foreign Language

16.2.1 Communicative Competence

It goes without saying that the ability to use a language is not limited to the knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical rules, but it also requires the ability to use language appropriately in particular situations. As Hymes (1972, p. 278, in Canale and Swain 1980, p. 4) remarks, 'there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless'. Therefore, Hymes (1972) and Campbell and Wales (1970, both in Canale and Swain 1980, p. 4) proposed the notion of communicative competence, intended to include both grammatical competence (understood as the implicit and explicit knowledge of grammatical rules) and contextual and sociolinguistic competence (comprising the rules of language use). Hymes (1972, in Canale and Swain 1980, p. 4) also makes an explicit distinction between communicative competence and communicative performance, where the latter refers to actual language use.

On the basis of different aspects of language use, Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983, in Safont-Jordà 2005, pp. 51–52) have proposed a division of communicative competence into grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence. Apart from grammatical competence, which in Hymes' terms (1972, p. 281, in Canale and Swain 1980, p. 16) refers to 'what is formally possible', and sociolinguistic competence, which refers to the norms of use and those of discourse, taking into account contextual and situational factors, there are two further subcomponents. Strategic competence is related to the use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in order to overcome problems in communication or to reinforce one's communicative intention. By contrast, discourse competence involves the ability to combine linguistic forms in oral and written text production and comprehension (Safont-Jordà 2005, p. 52).

It may be assumed that the expression of wishes in a foreign language requires all the four types of communicative competence. Even though wishes usually involve conventional formulae, such formulae must be used correctly, both from

the linguistic and the sociolinguistic points of view. While a grammatical or a lexical error might distort the speaker's communicative intention, using a wishing formula inappropriately in a given context might even offend the addressee, hence a foreign language learner should use strategies aiming to realise his or her communicative intention well. As for discourse competence, it is related here to grammatical competence and serves to produce properly structured and linguistically correct forms.

In fact, as Cenoz (1996, in Safont-Jordà 2005, p. 51) points out, communicative competence constitutes a dynamic concept which is related to the negotiation of meaning and involves the interplay of such variables as the relationship between the interlocutors, the speaker's intention in producing the message and the hearer's interpretation. A foreigner's failure to follow the sociopragmatic rules of the target language may result in cross-cultural pragmatic failure, which Thomas (1983, p. 99) divides into two types: pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure (term introduced by Leech 1983, pp. 10–11, in Thomas 1983, p. 99). Whereas 'pragmalinguistic failure is basically a *linguistic* problem, caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force, sociopragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour' (Thomas 1983, p. 99). Thus, pragmalinguistic failure occurs when the pragmalinguistic force of an utterance diverges from the target language norm or 'when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from L1 to L2' (Thomas 1983, p. 99). In contrast, sociopragmatic failure involves such infringements as breaking a taboo, asking for 'nonfree' goods (Lakoff 1974, p. 27, in Thomas 1983, p.105), including personal information, or misjudging a social distance.

It must yet be remembered that different kinds of errors are differently perceived and evaluated by interlocutors. As Thomas (1983, p. 96) remarks, even though grammatical errors may impede communication, they are at least noticeable, whereas pragmatic failure is rarely recognized by non-linguists. As a result, if a non-native speaker speaks fluently, a native interlocutor may attribute his or her pragmatic errors to impoliteness or ill-will (Thomas 1983, pp. 96–97).

Therefore, communicative competence should not be limited to communication in the sense of conveying information, which quite often happens in foreign language teaching (see Rychło 2008), but it should put considerable stress on the cultural aspects of target language use.

16.2.2 Cultural Competence as a Part of Multilingual Competence

In their attempt to define multilingual (or, as they call it, plurilingual) competence and pave the way to a multilingual curriculum, Coste et al. (1997) emphasize the importance of multicultural competence. They define multilingual and multicultural competence as a speaker's capacity to communicate linguistically and to interact culturally, given his or her differential mastery of several languages and

varied experience of several cultures and, at the same time, to manage that linguistic and cultural capital. However, they emphasize that such competence should not be treated as the juxtaposition of several distinct competencies, but as a speaker's complex and heterogeneous repertoire which includes a variety of singular, even partial competencies (Coste et al. 1997, p. 12). They also add (p. 12) that the multicultural profile may differ from the multilingual one and one may very well know the culture of a community whose language one does not master well, or the other way round.

Definitely, a multilingual's linguistic competence cannot be regarded as the sum of several monolingual competencies but rather, holistically, as an integrated though internally varied whole, shaped by the speaker's linguistic needs and experience (de Angelis and Selinker 2001; Grosjean 1992). Moreover, as Coste et al. (1997, p. 14) point out, it is enriched by a variety of cultural competencies.

Still, cultural competence goes beyond the knowledge of what Hammerly (1982, p. 513, in Stern 1992, p. 210) calls 'informational (or factual) culture', that is, what the average educated native speaker knows about his or her country, its geography, history, etc., and of 'achievement (or accomplishment) culture' (the traditional notion of 'artistic and literary accomplishments', Stern 1992, p. 211). According to Hammerly (1982), 'behavioural culture' constitutes the most important aspect of culture for second language learning. As Hammerly (1982, p. 515, in Stern 1992, p. 211) puts it, '[b]ehavioural culture—especially conversational formulas and kinesics—is the form of culture most important to successful communication'. However, apart from actual behaviour, it also involves attitudes and values (Hammerly 1982, in Stern 1992, p. 210).

Moreover, the acquisition of cultural competence is much more difficult than it might seem. According to Carroll (1987), the native culture seems natural and evident to the speakers of a particular language and even constitutes a sort of logic which directs their thinking. Thus, as Harden (2000, p. 120, in Bredella 2003, p. 31) points out, a learner will never fully 'understand' a foreign culture, so he or she had better accept his or her position as an outsider.

However, this does not mean that intercultural understanding is completely impossible. Definitely, it is difficult, because, as Bredella (2003, p. 37) puts it, '[t]here is a tendency in our thinking to subsume what is strange and foreign under our familiar categories', a tendency that Nussbaum (1998, p. 118, in Bredella 2003, p. 37) calls 'descriptive chauvinism'. On the contrary, Sell (2000, in Bredella 2003, p. 38) observes that empathy and imagination make it possible to perceive and understand other cultures' values, beliefs and categories. Actually, learning to understand another culture might be compared to learning a foreign language: one may not be able to master every single detail of it, but one may still learn to speak it fluently, even though it requires considerable effort. Bredella (2003, p. 39) summarizes the possibilities of intercultural understanding in the following way: 'Intercultural understanding means that we can reconstruct the context of the foreign, take the others' perspective and see things through their eyes. This implies that we are able to distance ourselves from our own categories, values and interests.'

According to Byram (2003, p. 62), intercultural communicative competence requires the following skills and qualities:

1. *Attitudes* (savoir être): curiosity and openness towards other cultures, as well as readiness to distance oneself from one's own culture.
2. *Knowledge* (savoirs): knowledge of the target culture's social groups, practices, etc. as well as of 'the general processes of societal and individual interaction.'
3. *Skills of interpreting and relating* such products of both cultures as documents, events, etc. (savoir comprendre).
4. *Skills of discovery and interaction* (savoir apprendre/faire): the ability to acquire cultural knowledge and use it in actual communication.
5. *Critical cultural awareness/political education* (savoir s'engager): 'an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries' (Byram 2003, p. 62).

A person who possesses these qualities can become an 'intercultural speaker', or an 'intercultural mediator' who understands the relationship between his or her native language and culture on the one hand and the foreign language and culture on the other (Byram 2003, p. 61).

However, not only the native language influences learners' pragmatic competence in a foreign language, but there is also evidence that such influence may be bi-directional, which indicates that, just as between languages, there can be interaction, or even interference, between different cultural competencies.

16.3 Interlanguage Pragmatics and Communication Strategies

16.3.1 Interlanguage Pragmatics

As has already been mentioned above, pragmatic failure can be due to the transfer of L1 speech act strategies or pragmatic force estimations into a foreign language. On the basis of research in contrastive pragmatics, Cenoz (2003, p. 62) distinguishes 'a universal and a language-specific component in the realisation of speech acts'. Whereas universal pragmatic knowledge is shared across languages, there are also different interactional styles and differences in the distribution, selection and realisation of speech acts in various languages (Cenoz 2003, p. 62).

Research in interlanguage pragmatics has concentrated on 'the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language' (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993, p. 3, in Cenoz 2003, pp. 62–63). While it has long regarded deviations from native speaker forms as instances of pragmatic failure, it must be remembered that pragmatic failure happens not only to beginners, but also to advanced students (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1990, in

Cenoz 2003). Pragmatic failure is usually explained by pragmatic negative transfer (Thomas 1983), or 'the influence of L1 pragmatic competence on IL pragmatic knowledge that differs from the L2 target' (Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993, p. 10, in Cenoz 2003, p. 63).

However, as L2 influence on L1 at the pragmatic level has also been observed, Blum-Kulka (1991, in Cenoz, 2003, p. 64) has proposed the 'Intercultural Style Hypothesis', or 'the development of an intercultural pattern that reflects bi-directional interaction between the languages'. It is supported, among others, by the results of a study by Cenoz (2003), which show that Spanish speakers fluent in English have developed an intercultural pattern: their requests in Spanish differ from those of monolingual Spanish speakers and, at the same time, their requests in both English and Spanish are similar. As Cenoz (2003, p. 76) points out, the existence of pragmatic transfer from L1 into L2 does not exclude the possibility of bi-directional interaction between the languages.

Similarly, in the case of third language learners, it may be hypothesised that pragmatic transfer occurs between all three languages, from L1 into L2 and L3, as well as from L2 into L3, and that advanced trilingual speakers may also develop an intercultural style, with similarities between L1, L2 and L3 in the realisation of speech acts.

16.3.2 Communication Strategies

In general, learners who lack the necessary means of expression in the target language have to use strategies which allow them to realise their communicative intentions. Faerch and Kasper (1983) distinguish between achievement strategies, which preserve the communicative intention and compensate for inadequate linguistic means, and reduction strategies, which involve giving up part or all of the communicative intention. Among achievement strategies, Faerch and Kasper (1983, pp. 45–52) enumerate compensatory strategies (paraphrase, transfer from another language, literal translation, borrowing, code switching, intralingual transfer and IL based strategies, including word coinage, generalisation and restructuring), cooperative strategies, retrieval strategies and non-linguistic strategies such as gestures, while reduction strategies comprise message reduction and message abandonment.

However, there is some evidence (Safont-Jordà 2005; Widła 2007) that third language learners possess a higher level of language awareness and use communication strategies more skilfully than L2 learners do. It could thus be supposed that also in the present study L3 learners would use communication strategies skilfully and that their language awareness would prevent them from making such errors as, for example, the transfer of culture-specific elements.

16.4 The Study

16.4.1 Subjects

The study was carried out with 46 trilingual and 6 bilingual subjects who had the following language combinations: Polish–English–German (12 subjects), Polish–French–English (8), Polish–English–French (1), Polish–French–German (1), Portuguese–English–German (7), Portuguese–French–English (3), French–German–Portuguese (1), German–French–English (2), French–German–English (2), French–English–German (1), French–Portuguese–Spanish (1), Portuguese–French–Spanish (1), French–English–Dutch (1), German–English–French (2), German–English–Spanish (1), English–French–Spanish (1), Russian–German–English (1), English–German (1), English–French (3), French–German (1) and German–English (1). However, some of the L3 learners avoided writing wishes in L3 and provided only bilingual data. Moreover, a few subjects volunteered who spoke languages unknown to the researcher (Spanish and Dutch) as L3. In their case, only part of the data (L1 and L2) could be analysed.

For comparison, native speakers of English, French, German and Portuguese were consulted and authentic material (postcards, e-cards, etc.,) was used.

16.4.2 Method

The subjects' task was to fill out a questionnaire (see Sect 16.6) in which they were expected to write wishes in L1, L2 and L3 at three levels of formality: 1. informal (to one's brother, sister or friend), 2. slightly more formal (to an older family member—only in L1) and 3. formal (for example, writing to one's foreign language teacher).

Since spoken wishes are generally short and often fulfil a phatic function rather than express one's real feelings towards the interlocutor (for example, while leaving school, an office, etc. just before Christmas, one can say 'Merry Christmas' to the people working there, which is, in fact, a season-specific farewell rather than true Christmas wishes), emphasis was put on written language and the subjects were instructed to express the wishes as they would do it in writing. They were explicitly encouraged not to limit themselves to bare formulae such as 'Happy Birthday', because they were expected to express certain cultural values (such as health, prosperity, happiness, etc.,) specific to the target culture or transferred from the native one.

16.4.3 Results

As could be expected, the study revealed, on the one hand, ways of formulating wishes in several languages from the point of view of both cultural values and discourse structure (as exemplified by the native speakers' responses) and, on the other, their expression in foreign languages. As for the former, it must be remarked that the structures of conventional formulae differ across languages. While in such languages as English, German and French wishes either begin with the subject followed by a verb and then the actual wishes ('I wish you…', 'I hope you have…', 'Ich wünsche dir…', 'Je te souhaite…', etc.,) or they are shortened to the wishes being expressed (e.g., 'Happy Birthday! Many happy returns', or: 'With love and best wishes for your birthday'), in Polish the structure either begins with the wishes as such (e.g. 'Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku życzy Maria', literally: 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year wishes Mary') or with the occasion (e.g., 'Z okazji Urodzin najserdeczniejsze życzenia zdrowia, szczęścia, pomyślności i spełnienia marzeń przesyła Maria', literally: 'On the occasion of your birthday the most cordial wishes of health, happiness, prosperity and the fulfilment of your dreams sends Mary'). Obviously, this can be explained by differences in word order between languages, as structures beginning with the wishes and ending with the subject were observed in German (L1) as well (e.g., 'Alles Liebe zum Geburtstag wünscht dir…').

On the other hand, as far as the values are concerned, the differences are quite subtle, as all the languages involved are European, so there were no 'exotic' wishes, as in the case of Chinese (Fong 2000). However, some values as well as their distribution over particular occasions appear to be culture-specific. For example, Polish speakers often wished the addressee the fulfilment of his or her dreams, which was also observed only in Portuguese, health on virtually all occasions and sometimes money as well as God's blessings, which seems to be quite specific to Polish culture. By contrast, wishes of health are generally reserved for the New Year in French and apparently also in English, whereas they are quite popular in Portuguese (on different occasions) and, as the data indicate, to some extent in German. Money was not alluded to in languages other than Polish, except for such general terms as 'prosperity' and 'success', which are often associated with financial prosperity.

Moreover, a lot of wishes bore idiosyncratic traits, which renders the analysis even more complicated. For example, a native speaker of French wrote: 'As-tu été sage cette année? Tu sais que le Père Noël a tout vu! Joyeux Noël et ne mange pas tout le chocolat', ('Have you been good this year? You know that Santa Claus could see everything! Merry Christmas and don't eat all the chocolate'.) Similarly, even though the original greetings cards expressed few values (mostly happiness, which can be regarded as an umbrella term depending on a particular person's idea of happiness), they often varied in style (for example: 'May your Christmas be filled with very special happiness', or: 'With warm wishes for happiness at Christmas and always'). It can thus be supposed that conventional formulae alone

are indeed not enough for a good postcard and that some creativity is welcome, as long as it does not break certain conventions.

In general, the L2 and L3 learners' responses can be divided into three categories:

1. *Transfer from L1* has indeed been observed and can be divided into literal translation (e.g., 'Alles Beste' (L3)—from 'wszystkiego najlepszego' ('all the best')) and emphasis on the values of one's native culture, such as health, long life or the fulfilment of wishes or dreams, e.g., 'Happy birthday! Fulfilment of all the wishes and all the best! (I could mention 'long life' optionally)'. It was also observed (very rarely, though) that the Polish symbol of longevity, 'a hundred years', was transferred into English and French, which might lead to pragmatic failure in the respective cultures. However, nobody translated the whole text of typical Polish wishes literally ('*the most cordial wishes of… sends…,' as in the example above illustrating the conventional structure), which proves that the subjects' pragmatic awareness was sufficiently high to identify such structures as culture-specific.
2. *The use of formulaic language* (bare formulae, such as 'Happy Birthday', 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year', 'Joyeux anniversaire', etc.,) was quite frequent and can be attributed to the desire either to sound native-like or to avoid pragmatic failure. In fact, some of the native informants limited themselves to such formulae and were surprised that the researcher wanted to elicit anything else from them. It can thus be supposed that in some cultures (especially Anglo-Saxon[1] and French) wishes are used to perform communicative rituals rather than to express particular feelings towards the addressee. However, the fact that other native speakers did write more (e.g., 'I wish you happiness and prosperity in the coming year') and that the 'ready-made' postcard wishes also varied indicates that ways of expressing wishes are largely idiosyncratic and cannot be reduced to a set of basic formulae.
3. *Individual creativity*: some of the subjects invented their own formulae which were neither based on the transfer of traditional L1 formulae, not used in the target language, for example: 'Happy Birthday! Let desirable be unavoidable' (L1—Polish, L2—English), or 'Many eggs and happy ham' for Easter (here, traditional Polish Easter dishes are referred to in English (L2), although the formula is not a translation of traditional Polish wishes). There were also borderline cases between creativity and transfer in which subjects translated their idiosyncratic L1 (mostly Polish) wishes into L2 and/or L3.

Predictably enough, visible differences were observed between L2 and L3. Even subjects who wrote quite elaborate wishes in L2 often limited their L3 responses to basic forms. Some even avoided providing any response in L3, which constitutes message abandonment. Yet, it might be supposed that such avoidance may have been motivated by their pragmatic awareness: not knowing how to write

[1] The native informants were both British and American.

wishes in L3, they may have chosen not to transfer anything, because they perceived wishes as non-transferable forms, like idioms (Kellerman 1987).

On the other hand, no visible transfer from L2 into L3 was observed, which proves the central role of the native culture (Carroll 1987), also in multicultural competence. However, there was one interesting case of transfer from L3 into L1: 'Wystrzałowego wskoku do Nowego Roku!' ('A fabulous jump into the New Year!'), which was based on the German (L3) expression 'Einen guten Rutsch ins Neue Jahr!' This example can be regarded as evidence of the subject's intercultural style. Other examples of an intercultural style are, on the one hand, some of the subjects' considerably reduced L1 wishes (e.g. 'Wesołych Świąt i szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!'), as Polish wishes are traditionally more elaborate, and, on the other, the simplification of discourse structure. In the latter case, the subject (sender) and the verb 'wish' or 'send' were omitted and the subjects only wrote the wishes as such, e.g., 'Wszystkiego najlepszego! Radości, zdrowia i spełnienia marzeń!' ('All the best! Joy, health and the fulfilment of your dreams!')

Finally, no communication strategies were observed in the sense of paraphrasing unknown L2 and L3 words in order to express the intended meanings. However, attempts to formulate wishes correctly in the target language can be regarded as a kind of communication strategies at the level of sociolinguistic and discourse competence.

16.5 Conclusions

On the basis of the analysed data, it can be concluded that, even though L1 cultural influence is strong, L3 learners often possess enough pragmatic awareness to avoid direct transfer from L1 into L2 or into L3. However, depending on their motivation, anxiety levels, etc., some subjects' creativity can diverge from both native and foreign language norms, whereas fear of pragmatic failure can lead others to message reduction or abandonment.

Still, as part of pragmatic competence, the proper realisation of wishes as speech acts should be explicitly taught to learners. As Safont-Jordà (2005) has shown, explicit instruction can help learners improve their pragmatic competence.

At the same time, some of the subjects' responses provided evidence in favour of the Intercultural Style Hypothesis. They revealed some influence of L2 or even L3 on L1 at the level of style and, in one case, even the transfer of a (slightly modified) conventional formula from L3 into L1.

However, the sample population was too small and the results were often too idiosyncratic for the results to be conclusive evidence of an intercultural style. Therefore, although the present study has provided some interesting insights into multicultural competence, further research is needed in this domain, with larger groups of subjects in all the language combinations investigated.

16.6 Appendix

The English version of the questionnaire (it was also prepared in identical German and French versions, depending on the subjects' language combination). Originally, it took three pages, because the spaces between the questions were large enough for the subjects to write relatively elaborate wishes in. Here, for technical reasons, the spaces have been reduced.

A cross-linguistic study of birthday, Christmas and New Year's, and Easter wishes.
Page 1.

1. Native language: _____
2. How would you write birthday wishes in your native language to:
   a) a friend (or your brother, sister or cousin)
   b) a member of your family who is older than you (one of your parents/grandparents; your uncle/aunt)
   c) someone with whom you are in official relations
3. How would you write Christmas and/or New Year's wishes to:
   a) a friend (or your brother, sister or cousin)
   b) a member of your family who is older than you (one of your parents/grandparents; your uncle/aunt)
   c) someone with whom you are in official relations
4. How would you write Easter wishes to:
   a) a friend (or your brother, sister or cousin)
   b) a member of your family who is older than you (one of your parents/grandparents; your uncle/aunt)
   c) someone with whom you are in official relations

N.B. If, in your language or culture, one of the above options is considered, for example, impolite or it is not customary, do not write any wishes in the corresponding space. However, please, indicate that it is not done and explain why.

Please, write something more than 'bare' greeting formulas. Instead, write the whole contents of, for example, a postcard.
Page 2.

1. L2: _____ Level (time of study): _____
2. How would you write birthday wishes in your L2 to:
   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations
3. How would you write Christmas and/or New Year's wishes in your L2 to:
   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations

4. How would you write Easter wishes in your L2 to:

   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations

N.B. If you think that, in the culture of your L2, one of the above options is considered, for example, impolite or it is not customary, do not write any wishes in the corresponding space. However, please, indicate that it is not done and explain why.

Please, write something more than 'bare' greeting formulas. Instead, write the whole contents of, for example, a postcard.

Page 3.

1. L3: _____ Level (time of study): _____
2. How would you write birthday wishes in your L3 to:

   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations

3. How would you write Christmas and/or New Year's wishes in your L3 to:

   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations

4. How would you write Easter wishes in your L3 to:

   a) a friend
   b) someone with whom you are in official relations

N.B. If you think that, in the culture of your L3, one of the above options is considered, for example, impolite or it is not customary, do not write any wishes in the corresponding space. However, please, indicate that it is not done and explain why.

Please, write something more than 'bare' greeting formulas. Instead, write the whole contents of, for example, a postcard.

References

Bardovi-Harlig K, Hartford BS (1990) Congruence in native and nonnative conversations: status balance in the academic advising session. Lang Learn 40:467–501

Blum-Kulka S (1991) Interlanguage pragmatics. The case of requests. In: Phillipson R, Kellerman E, Selinker L, Sharwood Smith M, Swain M (eds) Foreign/Second language pedagogy research. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 255–272

Bredella L (2003) For a flexible model of intercultural understanding. In: Alred G, Byram M, Fleming M (eds) Intercultural experience and education. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 31–49

Byram M (2003) On being 'Bicultural' and 'Intercultural'. In: Alred G, Byram M, Fleming M (eds) Intercultural experience and education. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 50–66

Campbell R, Wales R (1970) The study of language acquisition. In: Lyons J (ed) New horizons in linguistics. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth

Canale M (1983) From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In: Richards J, Smith RW (eds) Language and Communication. Longman, New York
Canale M, Swain M (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Appl Linguist 1:1–47
Carroll R (1987) Évidences invisibles: Américains et Français au quotidien. Éditions du Seuil, Paris
Cenoz J (1996) La competencia comunicativa: Su origen y componentes. In: Cenoz J, Valencia JF (eds) La Competencia pragmática. Elementos lingüísticos y psicosociales. Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco, Bilbao
Cenoz J (2003) The Intercultural style hypothesis: L1 and L2 interaction in requesting behaviour. In: Cook VJ (ed) Effects of the second language on the first. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, pp 62–80
Cenoz J (2010) Personal communication on May 28, 2010, at the 22nd International Conference on Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning, Szczyrk, Poland, May 28–29
Coste D, Moore D, Zarate G (1997) Compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle. Langues vivantes. Vers un Cadre Européen Commun de référence pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues vivantes: études préparatoires. Éditions du Conseil de l'Europe, Strasbourg
De Angelis G, Selinker L (2001) Interlanguage transfer and competing linguistic systems in the multilingual mind. In: Cenoz J, Hufeisen B, Jessner U (eds) Cross-Linguistic influence in third language acquisition psycholinguistic perspectives. Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon, pp 42–58
De Salins GD (1996) La communication et ses rituels. In: Boyer H (ed) Sociolinguistique: Territoire et objets. Delachaux et Niestlé, Lausanne/Paris, pp 215–288
Faerch C, Kasper G (1983) Plans and strategies in foreign language communication. In: Faerch C, Kasper G (eds) Strategies in interlanguage communication. Longman, London and New York, pp 20–60
Folarin Schleicher A (1997) Using greetings to teach cultural understanding. The Mod Lang J 81(3):334–343
Fong M (2000) 'Luck Talk' in celebrating the Chinese New Year. J Pragmat 32:219–237
Grosjean F (1992) Another view of Bilingualism. In: Harris RJ (ed) Cognitive processing in Bilinguals. North Holland Elsevier Science Publishers, Amsterdam, pp 51–62
Hammerly H (1982) Synthesis in second language teaching. Second Language Publications, Blaine, Washington
Harden T (2000) The limits of understanding. In: Harden T, Witte A (eds) The notion of intercultural understanding in the context of German as a foreign language. Lang, Oxford
Hymes D (1972) On communicative competence. In: Pride JB, Holmes J (eds) Sociolinguistics. Penguin, Harmondsworth, pp 269–293
Kasper G, Blum-Kulka S (1993) Interlanguage pragmatics: an introduction. In: Kasper G, Blum-Kulka S (eds) Interlanguage pragmatics. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 3–17
Kellerman E (1987) Aspects of transferability in second language acquisition. Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, Nijmegen
Lakoff R (1974) What can you do with words: politeness pragmatics and performatives. Berkeley Studies in Syntax and Semantics I:XVI-1–XVI-55
Leech GN (1983) Principles of pragmatics. Longman, London
Nussbaum MC (1998) Cultivating humanity: a classical defense of reform in liberal education. Harvard University Press, Cambridge
Rychło M (2008) The Educational approach to language teaching. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw
Safont-Jordà MP (2005) Third language learners pragmatic production and awareness. Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon/Buffalo/Toronto
Schmidt RW, Richards JC (1980) Speech acts and second language learning. Appl Linguist 1:129–157

Searle J (1977) A classification of illocutionary acts. In: Rogers A, Wall R, Murphy JP (eds) Proceedings of the Texas conference on performatives, presuppositions and implicatures. Center for Applied Linguistics, Arlington, pp 27–45

Sell RD (2000) Literature as communication. John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia

Stern HH (1992) Issues and options in language teaching. Edited by Harley B and Allen P. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Thomas J (1983) Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. Appl Linguist 4:91–112

Widła H (2007) L'acquisition du français–langue troisième. Problèmes méthodologiques et implications pratiques. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice

Part IV
Culture-Related Issues in Polish Educational Context

Chapter 17
Willingness to Communicate in L2 and Self-Perceived Levels of FL Skills in Polish Adolescents

Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel

Abstract The willingness to communicate (WTC) construct, originally referring to individuals' tendencies to engage in communication in the L1 when given the free choice (McCroskey and Richmond, Personality and interpersonal communication, Newbury Park, CA, pp. 129–156, 1987), can also be applied to a second language context (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels, Mod Lang J 82:545–562, 1998). It can then be defined as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels, Mod Lang J 82:545–562, 1998, p. 547). MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément and Noels, (Mod Lang J 82:545–562, 1998) proposed a pyramid-shaped L2 WTC model, showing the relationship between linguistic, communicative and sociopsychological precursors to L2 communication. Among them there are situational influences (e.g., desire to communicate with a specific person), and enduring influences (e.g., motivation, self-confidence). Empirical research carried out to date reveals that students' perception of themselves as learners in the classroom is related to their willingness to communicate. The aim of the study was to analyze the relationship between L2 WTC and students' self-perceived levels of FL skills in the context of a Polish secondary school. The results show that students with high self-perceived levels of FL skills significantly differ from low achievers on all WTC measurements.

Keywords WTC (willingness to communicate) · Pyramid-shaped model · Self-confidence · Motivation · Self-perception

E. Piechurska-Kuciel (✉)
Opole University, Opole, Poland
e-mail: epiech@uni.opole.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_17,

17.1 Introduction

Culture is a complex concept, quite difficult to grasp. It shapes language and communication, differentiating societies, and their members. In order to communicate between people of different languages and cultures, the knowledge of foreign languages is necessary. It has to be supported by a strong communicative objective, which is defined as *willingness to communicate*.

17.1.1 Culture and Communication

Culture can be seen as the "sum total of ways of living, including behavioral norms, linguistic expression, styles of communication, patterns of thinking, and beliefs and values of a group large enough to be self-sustaining transmitted over the course of generations" (Jandt 2004, p. 499). It is also defined as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another" (Hofstede 1980, p. 21–23). Also,Kramsch (1998, p. 10) describes culture as "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings". These definitions have several common assumptions; they agree that culture is learned, that it refers to groups of people, and that it includes a wide range of phenomena commonly shared by these people, such as meanings, values, norms or patterns of behavior. It can be understood that culture is embedded in everything people do in their society.

An aspect of human behaviour strongly shaped by culture is *language*. When used in verbal communication, it may not be viewed a universal means, because it is deeply rooted in a particular culture (Hargie and Dickson 2004). Consequently, in order to understand a culture it is necessary to take into consideration its language or languages. At the same time, understanding a language cannot exclude understanding a culture within which it is used (Kramsch 1995). In other words, "language and culture are not separate, but are acquired together, with each providing support for the development of the other" (Mitchell and Myles 2004, p. 235). Language plays a mediatory role in the social construction of culture, contributing to its formation and change (Kramsch 1998).

The basic role of language is to enable *communication*, which is "a symbolic process in which people create shared meanings" (Lustig and Koester 1996, p. 29). It follows that, similarly to language, communication is also culture bound.

The relationship between culture, language and communication can be explained by means of the culture dimensions proposed by Hofstede (1991). Among the five of them there is small versus large power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus feminity, uncertainty avoidance, and long- versus short-term orientation. *Power distance* is "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede 1991, p. 28). In a low power

distance culture people communicating do not stress their importance; instead, relationships based on equal rights are commonly recognised. In a high power distance culture communication provides for the detection of the unequal distribution of authority or privileges, e.g., the use of titles or polite addresses. The dimension of *collectivism/individualism* describes the extent to which individuals are integrated into groups. In individualist societies there are loose bonds between individuals; its members are expected to cater for their families on their own, while typical communication patterns reflect direct relationships. In collectivist cultures, society members are integrated into strong groups, like extended families or professional teams, which is also shown in their communication, valuing group membership or similar opinions. *Feminity versus masculinity* (achievement nurturance) is the dimension indicating the degree to which a culture values such qualities, like assertiveness, achievement, acquisition of wealth or caring for others, social support, and the quality of life. In feminist societies individuals pursue quality of life, such as helping others and sympathy for the unfortunate. There are less prescriptive role behaviors associated with each gender, while interlocutors value peaceful problem solving techniques, using a lower tone of voice in their conversations. In masculine societies achievement and ambition are appreciated, while the main object of communication is not to sustain bonds between society members, but to exchange information. The conversation volume is louder, and opinions are expressed in a harsher manner. *Uncertainty avoidance* deals with a society's tolerance for ambiguity. This dimension indicates to what extent individuals feel comfortable in unstructured, novel, or unknown situations, and how they cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by rigorous behavioural codes, laws and rules. Their communication focuses on ambiguity avoidance; interlocutors are more tense and often quarrel in order to ease tension and reduce anxiety. Uncertainty accepting cultures are more tolerant; they try to have fewer rules, while their communication focuses on nice topics, and interlocutors are more relaxed. The last dimension, *long versus short term orientation*, also called Confucian dynamism, has been created to identify dimensions of culture beyond Western cultures. In long-term orientation societies thrift and perseverance are valued; their communication focuses on exemplary standards, such as politeness, obedience, and honoring elders. In short-term orientation cultures—respect for tradition, and protecting one's 'face' are most appreciated, while fulfilling social obligations takes place regardless of cost.

These dimensions are a valuable tool for analyzing different societies, because in order to communicate across cultures, it is vital to comprehend cultural differences that may facilitate or debilitate communication. The cultural background of the interlocutors appears to have a serious influence on the quality and quantity of the communication act. Members of different societies when interacting need to understand cultural differences that are likely to obstruct their communication process.

This is also the case of Polish people attempting to learn and communicate in a different language, such as English. In order to understand the pitfalls of this

specific language acquisition process, it is necessary to analyze similarities and differences between the Polish and British/American cultures on the basis of Hofstede's typology.

The research shows that Poland is a society marked by a moderate level of power distance, slightly individualistic, rather masculine, with a strong tendency to avoid uncertainty (Cultural Dimensions, Poland 2010). There is a predisposition to use formal titles, as well as orders and bans. Apart from that, it is not appropriate to boast about one's assets, criticism and cursing are frequent characteristics of the communication process, while loud discussions help alleviate the feelings of anxiety (Zięba 2008). Aside from that, recent economical and political changes have induced the pursuit for more individualist society characteristics (Bokszański 2007), for example Polish students already score moderately high (score of 55) on the individualism dimension (Kolman et al. 2003).

On the other hand, the American and British societies, when compared to Poland, are characterized by a lower level of power distance, they are strongly individualistic and rather masculine (Cultural Dimensions, Great Britain 2010; Cultural Dimensions, United States 2010). They slightly differ from each other on the uncertainty avoidance scale, as the British society shows a lower level in comparison the American one, although both measurements are significantly reduced in comparison to Poland. The low level of power distance can be observed in the use of greetings, like *Hello* or greater informality in personal contacts (Zięba 2008). Masculinity in these cultures is characterized by a communicative focus on one's successes and professional career. Individualism is revealed in the use of 'I' or turn-taking without interrupting, while uncertainty is easily accepted when dealing with new people or ideas (Belshek 2006).

17.1.2 Willingness to Communicate in L2

The ultimate goal of foreign language learning is authentic communication between people of different languages and cultures. In order to overcome these differences, interlocutors need a powerful communicative target, which is defined as *willingness to communicate* (MacIntyre et al. 1998).

The origins of WTC studies can be found in L1 research focusing on one's predilections toward communication. It has been established that this construct is "a personality-based, traitlike predisposition which is relatively consistent across a variety of communication contexts and types of receivers" (McCroskey and Richmond, 1987, p. 129). It is also defined as a "predisposition toward approaching or avoiding the initiation of communication" (McCroskey 1992, p. 16), which means it is a stable tendency to initiate or terminate communication.

The way an individual communicates is deeply rooted in his or her culture, because "the amount of talking in which a person engages would be dependent, at least in part, on that person's cultural orientation" (Barraclough, Christophel and McCroskey 1988, p. 187). This is the reason why among the factors (antecedents)

shaping the individual's WTC, there is cultural divergence, seen as a lack of skills of effective communication within the L2 context, irrespective of successful L1 skills. When the individual regularly resides in the L2 society, this kind of behavior is classified as a personality trait; if the need to communicate in L2 is occasional (because he resides in L1 environment), then it operates at the situational level.

Henceforth, in second language acquisition studies the primary assumption is that changing the language of communication brings about a significant modification in the communication setting (MacIntyre et al. 1998). First of all, learning a new language is said to be "a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition" (Guiora 1983, p. 8). It is connected with the acquisition of new language systems and subsystems (lexical, grammatical and phonic), as well as of language content (vocabulary or grammar), and skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading). An inexpert student's reliance on their limited language abilities produces a significant threat to the learner's "self-perception of genuineness in presenting themselves to others" (Horwitz 1999, p. xii). Secondly, L2 learning is "a deeply social event that requires the incorporation of a wide range of elements of L2 culture" (Dörnyei 2003, p. 4). It "is essentially a socially oriented process… linked with the wider cultural and cognitive processes" (Foley and Thompson 2003, p. 62). It can be inferred that opening oneself to various aspects of another culture and language may destabilize the individual's already-possessed self-concept (Gardner 2001), which is a system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions about the self and environment, shaped by their L1 culture. This violation of the individual's communicative and cultural values caused by encountering a cultural gap between one's own culture and a new culture is a cause for negative emotions, like elevated anxiety levels (Kojima 2007).

Consequently, L2 WTC, although originating from L1 research, is seen as a situational variable, not a traitlike one, which means that it is limited to a specific type of situations—the ones connected with foreign language (FL) learning and use.

Willingness to communicate in L2 is defined as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (MacIntyre et al. 1998, p. 547). It is a state of readiness, influenced by state anxiety, a perception of L2 competence, and a desire to communicate with another person (MacIntyre 2004). Aside from that, WTC in L1 refers to speaking only, WTC in L2 is connected with both production modes—speaking and writing in L2, a variable that facilitates language learning itself, and an internal psychological event with socially meaningful consequences.

As far as L2 WTC origins are concerned, a pyramid model has been developed. This layered, heuristic model comprises WTC antecedents commonly explored in SLA studies arranged in a proximal–distal continuum in six layers (MacIntyre 2004), thus showing their immediate and more distant influence on the phenomenon in question. The enduring influences are represented in three bottom layers, and situational stimuli in three upper ones.

At the bottom of the pyramid, Layer VI, *the social and individual context* incorporating the most remote factors are placed, with variables such as intergroup climate and personality. They determine the individual's behaviour with their focus on the learner's stable personality characteristics relevant for communication, intertwining with his/her community qualities. At this level, effects of the relative socioeconomic power (ethnolinguistic vitality) of a society and personal communication networks are moderated by individual differences, which are certain personality traits which at the same time reflect the broader social climate.

Layer V, *the affective-cognitive context*, comprises more individually-based variables, like intergroup attitudes, social situation, and communicative competence. Hereby, the opposing forces of integrativeness and fear of assimilation interact with motivation to learn L2. Additionally, requirements and constraints connected with different social situations draw upon communicative competence, composed of five dimensions: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, strategic and actional competence, also called pragmalinguistic, which is the ability to reach one's communicative goal (MacIntyre et al. 1998).

Layer IV is connected with *motivational propensities*, including interpersonal motivation, intergroup motivation, and L2 self-confidence. Here basic communicative purposes interact with belonging to a particular group within the parameters of control and affiliation, constituting the social and affective facets of the motivation to communicate. At this level they interact with L2 self-confidence defined by judgments of proficiency and language anxiety experience.

Situated antecedents are located in Layer III, hosting the desire to communicate with a specific person, and state communicative self-confidence, most proximal determinants of WTC. They represent the cumulative influence of the layers discussed above. Affiliation and control motives foster a desire to communicate, together with high perceived competence and a lack of anxiety.

Layer II incorporates *behavioural intention*, i.e., willingness to communicate. This most proximal factor represents the final psychological step in preparation for L2 communication. Intention or willingness to act strongly predicts behaviour, so they are placed close to the top of the pyramid. It shows that in order to communicate the individual must have control over their actions, and behave in a purposeful manner in order to reach their goals.

Finally, Layer I is designed for *communication behaviour*, leading directly to L2 use. This is the culminating point of the interaction among complex variables at all the lower layers of the pyramid, cumulating in initiating L2 communication or refraining from it.

This heuristic model of L2 WTC shows the important role culture plays in the readiness to initiate communication in a foreign language when an opportunity arises. Although placed at the most distal layer of the pyramid, culture appears a powerful moderator of volition and L2 behaviour. It explains the individual's choice to speak or not to engage in L2 communication not only from the point of view of the social context, but also from the point of view of their personality traits

it shapes. It follows that members of certain social groups, apart from their individual characteristics, may have similar traits, like extraversion which is more frequently identified with Americans in comparison to the Japanese (Aida 1994).

Apart from that, *ethnolinguistic vitality* (also placed at the bottom of the pyramid model) must also be taken into consideration when speculating about the level of L2 WTC in a given social context. Languages with high ethnolinguistic vitality maintain greater prestige, hence they attract more speakers (MacInyre 2004). This is the case of the English language, a "global lingua franca" (Seidlhofer 2005, p. 339). Its status, when compared to Polish, appears quite high, so when taking into consideration Polish students learning English, it can be stipulated that they may be quite likely to engage in communication in English for the sake of joining a more prestigious society associated with the second language. Aside from that, a variety of other reasons may play a role, such as an access to the global communication network, enabling employment, pursue of interest or self-development.

A factor that plays a very important role in shaping L2 WTC is perceived L2 competence, hereby understood as the individual's self-evaluation of their FL ability. It interacts with communication apprehension (a situated antecedent), defined as language anxiety (Horwitz et al. 1986). It is maintained that the relationship between these two factors may vary as a function of experience with the foreign language (MacIntyre et al. 2002a). With more experienced students (immersion ones), L2 anxiety is a better predictor of WTC, while with less experienced ones—it is self-perceived competence (e.g., Baker and MacIntyre, 2000). This stipulation is corroborated by empirical research showing that greater willingness to communicate is associated with higher self-perceived competence in L1 (Barraclough et al. 1988), and also in L2 (e.g., Baker and MacIntyre 2000; Yashima 2002). Students who have a higher level of L2 WTC report using the language more frequently in the classroom (e.g., Hashimoto 2002).

So far, the concept of L2 WTC has been researched in many Western countries, like the United States, or Canada, as well as in Far East ones (China and Japan). To date, there are very few European studies, and virtually no research on Poles learning English, so the general aim of this study is to investigate L2 WTC in Polish secondary grammar school students learning English as a foreign language. It is speculated that in Poland the main opportunities for L2 communication are created in the context of instructed FL learning with scarce possibility of using it authentically in the out-of-school context. It follows that the most reliable predictor of L2 WTC is likely to be constituted by self-perceived levels of FL skills, instead of language anxiety levels. For this purpose the following working hypothesis has been adopted:

> H: Students with higher levels of self-perceived FL skills display greater L2 willingness to communicate in and out of the classroom in comparison to their peers with lower levels of self-perceived FL skills.

17.2 Method

Below there is a description of the study's participants, instruments, procedure, variables and analyses adopted for the purpose of explaining the obtained results.

17.2.1 Participants

There were 278 students from ten classes of three secondary grammar schools in Opole, south-western Poland (189 girls and 89 boys). Their average age was 16.48 (min. 15, max. 18). English was one of the two obligatory foreign languages studied at school, with three to six hours of language instruction a week, while the other one was either French or German, depending on the students' choice.

On the basis of the participants' self-assessment of the four skills, the sample was divided into quartiles: the lower one, called LSA, ($\leq$13 points) comprised 75 students with low self-assessment of their FL skills (55 girls and 20 boys), and the upper, HSA, ($\geq$18 pts) accommodated 71 students with high self-assessment of their FL skills (41 girls and 30 boys). The participants' level of English was varied, depending on their class they attended, and ranged from upper elementary to intermediate.

17.2.2 Instruments

The basic instrument adopted for the purpose of the research was a questionnaire. It included the *Willingness to communicate in the classroom* scale (Maclntyre, Baker, Clément and Conrod 2001), consisting of 27 items assessing the students' willingness to engage in communication tasks during class time in the four skill areas (hereby called WTCI). There were eight items measuring WTC in speaking, six for reading, eight for writing, and five for comprehension (listening). Sample items in the scale were: *How often are you willing to speak to your teacher about your homework assignment?* or *How often are you willing to read reviews for popular movies?* The participants indicated their answers within a range from 1 to 5, assessing how willing they would be to communicate in given contexts. 1 indicated *almost never willing*, 2—*sometimes willing*, 3—*willing half of the time*, 4—*usually willing*, and 5—*almost always willing*. The minimum number of points on the scale was 27, while the maximum: 135. The scale's reliability was measured in terms of Cronbach's alpha, ranging the level of 0.94.

The next scale used was *Willingness to communicate outside the classroom* (Maclntyre et al. 2001), which was applied to determine the students' willingness to engage in communication tasks outside the classroom in the four skill areas (hereby called WTCO). It included the same items as the previous scale, adopted

Table 17.1 Means, SD, and between-group comparisons on the measurements of WTCI, WTCO, and FL skills in students with low (LSA) and high self-perceived levels of FL skills (HSA)

	LSA ($N = 75$)		HSA ($N = 71$)		
	Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	$t(144)$
WTCI	65.57	18.10	87.06	21.99	-6.46^{***}
WTCO	63.77	21.74	89.01	24.07	-6.65^{***}
FL skills	11.27	1.95	19.46	1.73	-26.78^{***}

*** $p < 0.01$

to the out-of-school context. Again, they were evaluated by means of the same Likert scale with the same minimum and maximum numbers of points. Its reliability was 0.96.

The last measurement used in the study was a scale calculating *self-perceived levels of FL skills* (speaking, listening, writing and reading). It was an aggregated value of separate assessments of the FL skills with a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*unsatisfactory*) to 6 (*excellent*). The minimum number of points on the scale was 4, while the maximum: 24. The scale's reliability was Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$.

17.2.3 Procedure

The data collection procedure took place over the months of March and April 2010. In each class, the students were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The time designed for the activity was 15–45 min. The participants were asked to give sincere answers without taking excessive time to think. Each part of the questionnaire was preceded by a short statement introducing a new set of items in an unobtrusive manner.

The design of the study is differential, comparing groups that are differentiated on a pre-existing variable. The research was conducted by comparing means obtained on the WTC scales (WTCI and WTCO) in two groups (LSA and HSA), differentiated on the basis of their self-perceived FL skills.

There are two kinds of variables identified in the study. The dependent ones are the WTC measurements in and out of the classroom (WTCI and WTCO). The independent variable is constituted by self-perceived levels of the four skills. All the variables were operationally defined as questionnaire items.

The data were computed by means of the statistical programme STATISTICA, with the main operations being descriptive statistics (means and *SD*), and inferential statistics, i.e., two types of student t-tests. The first one—for independent samples—shows differences between the LSA and HSA groups on their WTC measurements (between-group comparisons). The other, correlated t-test, compares two related sets of scores in the same group; e.g., the WTCI and WTCO levels in the LSA group (within-group comparisons).

Table 17.2 Means, SD, and between-group comparisons of the measurements of WTCI and WTCO skill areas in students with low (LSA) and high self-perceived levels of FL skills (HSA)

		LSA ($N = 75$)		HSA ($N = 71$)		
		Mean	*SD*	Mean	*SD*	$t(144)$
WTCI	Speaking	19.69	5.10	24.18	6.19	-4.79^{***}
	Comprehension	12.79	4.41	17.69	4.65	-6.54^{***}
	Writing	17.49	6.22	23.11	8.30	-4.64^{***}
	Reading	15.60	6.08	22.07	6.06	-6.43^{***}
WTCO	Speaking	18.71	6.34	24.29	7.58	-4.84^{***}
	Comprehension	12.83	4.63	18.00	4.56	-6.80^{***}
	Writing	17.12	7.13	24.37	8.58	-5.56^{***}
	Reading	15.12	6.18	22.35	6.03	-7.15^{***}

*** $p < 0.01$

17.3 Results

In the first step the general measurements of WTCI and WTCO were analyzed. Results revealed similar statistically significant differences between the measurements in both groups. Apart from that, a similar finding was detected in relation to the assessment of the aggregated value of the FL skills assessment, which estimated the discrepancy between the two groups (LSA and HSA). The results are depicted in Table 17.1.

In the next step skill assessments of WTCI and WTCO were analyzed. It follows that all the group differences were statistically significant. It is worth noting that the skill assessed at the lowest level in both groups was comprehension, both in and out of the classroom. Moreover, hereby the group responses showed the greatest homogeneity (see the *SD* results). The skill assessed highest in both groups was speaking, while writing also appears equally preferred in the HSA group (see Table 17.2 for the summary of results).

Apart from that, it must be added that the within-group comparisons did not render any statistical differences between the global WTCI and WTCO measurements in both groups: in the LSA ($t = 0.50$, $p = 0.62$) or the HSA group ($t = 1.02, p = 0.31$). Also, a similar finding was obtained in reference to the WTC component skill areas.

17.4 Discussion

The main aim of this study is to shed more light on the role of self-perceived FL skills in estimating the magnitude of willingness to communicate in Polish secondary grammar school students learning English. In connection with this the main hypothesis adopted for the purpose of this research was as follows: *Students with higher levels of self-perceived FL skills display greater L2 willingness to*

communicate in and out of the classroom in comparison to their peers with lower levels of self-perceived FL skills. The basic results of the study allowed for its full corroboration.

L2 willingness to communicate is tightly connected with the student's perception of the level of their FL skills. The existence of this particular relationship has its roots in affective nature of both variables. WTC is a non-cognitive variable, extending beyond linguistic performance. What follows, mere communicative competence does not happen to be a sufficient trigger for initiating an L2 contact—it has to be supplemented by the student's readiness to use the foreign language in authentic communication (MacIntyre et al. 2003), which is highly boosted by affect. Consequently, the subjectively estimated risk taken in order to start a conversation in a foreign language must be controlled by the student's conviction that they will be able to cope with this task successfully.

Self-confidence, defined in L1 research as "calmness and assertiveness during social interaction" (Manning and Ray 1993, p. 18), in L2 studies is seen as "self-perceptions of communicative competence and concomitant low levels of anxiety in using the second language" (Noels et al. 1996, p. 255). It appears that one's perception of competence overrides actual competence in communication situations, especially when the initiation of communication, or willingness to communicate, comes into play (MacIntyre et al. 2002b), hence its key role in defining L2 WTC. As the WTC model proposes, L2 self-confidence is placed at the highest level of enduring influences (Layer IV). It interacts with state communicative self-confidence, located in Layer III, the lowest stratum of situated antecedents. The interconnection of trait and situation-specific self-confidence confirms the centrality of L2 self-confidence in the WTC model. Obviously, the role of anxiety cannot be overlooked—it has a tendency to bias self-perceived competence in such way that anxious students evaluate their speaking skill at a lower level in comparison to their less anxious peers who are likely to overestimate it.

Higher levels of self-perceived FL skills allow the learner to confront communicative situations with higher self-confidence, lowering their anxiety, and boosting their WTC. Such students feel secure enough to take risks and freely enter a discourse in a foreign language, because they feel positive about their linguistic and social abilities. On the other hand, students with low levels of self-perceived FL skills tend to withdraw from any potentially dangerous situations of social nature that may take place in the classroom. It follows that for those who believe that their FL abilities are not sufficient, the initiation of communication in a foreign language is highly unlikely. Threatened by negative social evaluation generated by their teacher and/or peers, they seem to be convinced that they are unable to engage in a successful communication act not because that they have nothing to say, but because their perception of competence does not allow them for an uninhibited exchange of ideas or feelings. In effect, a specific vicious cycle is created—students who believe that they can do not fear to improve their communicative abilities, and take chances to constantly improve them, while those who do not trust in their abilities deprive themselves of opportunities for language practice, and, in consequence, feel even worse.

The social context of the study sheds more light on cultural differences between Poland and English language speaking countries. Due to a lower level of power distance and strong individualism, the readiness to initiate communication in English-speaking countries is likely to be greater than in the Polish cultural context. This may explain the situation of Polish adolescents learning English in secondary grammar school, whose mean WTC scores are disappointingly low. Polish students represent the society characterized by lower ethnographic vitality. Their foreign language learning process focuses on the English language, distinguishing higher vitality cultures, thus more attractive for its learners. In this situation it may be quite surprising that the study participants' WTC turns out to be so low, both in the group with high self-perceived foreign language skills, as well as in the other one. Even the WTC score obtained by the group of students who assessed their FL skills highly appears to be at the level of Chinese students (Peng 2007; the same L2 WTC measurement scale), known for their reticence, and discrepant cultural norms governing communication.

Explanations for this apparently astonishing result do not only refer to general sociocultural norms. First of all, in the Polish context English remains a compulsory school subject with scarce opportunities for authentic use outside the classroom, so the student's willingness to initiate discourse in English may be strongly limited by this objective lack of real-life applications. In the above study by Peng, the participants were medical college students attending an intensive language program, which may be a factor facilitating their WTC. In the present research the participants were students of secondary grammar school, which generally excludes the effect of intensive language programs on promoting L2 WTC in EFL students. Apart from that, the varying ages of study participants may also play a confounding role in explaining the results. In the Chinese study the participants were older (mean age: 18.80) in comparison to the Polish cohort. The age difference appears to be further enhanced by normative changes: the Japanese sample consists of college students, young adults who start being independent, while the Polish students are adolescents who have only began their secondary grammar school education.

Another factor that comes into play when explaining these results is the issue of volitional control. It can be stipulated that in the context of obligatory formal education, such as the Polish secondary grammar school, students are not given a free choice of initiating discourse in English. They need to follow social rules governing their classroom behavior, relying on their FL teacher's instructions and requirements, which certainly limits their free choice of initiating discourse. Not surprisingly, their communication risks are even more threatening due to constant social evaluation from their teacher and peers they may not be ready to accept. This could be a reason why the WTC score in the group that assessed their FL skills at a lower level is so drastically small (less than 50% of the total score).

The same argument can be proposed for explaining the measurements of WTC in the classroom and out of the classroom in both groups (WTCI and WTCO). The within group comparisons did not show any statistically significant differences, which means that in both groups there were similar levels of willingness to

communicate both in the classroom, as out of it. It follows that the level of self-perceived FL skills is not related to the context of willingness to communicate due to very scarce opportunities for commencing authentic discourse in English outside school. It follows that the study participants when giving their assessment to the WTCO questionnaire must have mostly relied on their classroom experience.

It is also worth paying attention to the L2 WTC levels in four skill areas. In both groups the skill assessed highest is speaking. This finding comes as no surprise, because the value of speaking is directly connected with initiating the L2 contact, which most often happens via this medium. Hence, those who want to communicate are willing to do so speaking. Yet, the WTC skill area assessed lowest is comprehension (listening). It seems that the study participants are not so eager to volunteer L2 comprehension. The roots of this apparently astounding finding can be attributed to the nature of comprehension in communication, where listeners are not passive receptors of messages, but actively create the interaction through rendering immediate feedback (not necessarily verbal), through modifying their behavior, or through signaling their readiness to speak. Apparently, willingness to listen in L2 is dramatically lower in comparison the willingness to speak, because any comprehension deficit induces serious communication problems, that may be even further deteriorated by performance drawbacks. This is the reason why L2 willingness to comprehend is a seriously risky undertaking, exposing the student's inability to manage passive—objectively easier—abilities, and endangering their self-concept of a reasonable individual.

17.5 Implications and Recommendations for the EFL Classroom

Foreign language learning offers chances to communicate with other cultures via other languages. In the era of globalization, the need for authentic use of English has become an inevitable requirement. As Polish secondary grammar school students do not demonstrate a high level of willingness to communicate in English, it is necessary for teachers to help them readjust their linguistic and cultural systems acquired through L1 socialization processes to authentic L2 use. This can be done not only through broadening their linguistic competence, but also through giving students a cultural insight into L2 lifestyles.

The first step is to raise students' awareness of cultural differences between their own and the L2 societies. In the context of the present study, it is vital to explicitly acknowledge the cultural differences between Poland and the English-speaking countries. This can be done through a series of tasks involving analyzing video tapes with typical American series for teenagers, like *The O.C.* (*Życie na fali*) or *One Tree Hill* (*Pogoda na miłość*). The basic activities could focus on viewing selected passages from the series, and later discussing the verbal and nonverbal behaviours of the characters. The main themes could focus on the power distance

(ways of greeting other people or addressing them), individualism (talking about successes, expressing private opinions) and uncertainty avoidance (the use of phrases like: *I mean, kind of* or avoiding offensive language). Such interventions may help the teacher to sensitize students to the richness of the linguistic and cultural patterns of their own and foreign societies. At the same time, such tasks will also enable to develop the students' comprehension skills, and redirect their attention from purely verbal to nonverbal language.

Another path of classroom intervention may focus on boosting the students self-confidence. For this purpose students can keep diaries helping them to record everything new they learned during a lesson. At the same time, the diaries will also help them keep track of things they can study on their own, without the teacher's assistance. These private study logs will enable them to assess how much they have already improved with and without direct guidance.

The study has also some limitations that need to be addressed. The variable of language anxiety was excluded from the study on the grounds that in the context of formal instruction the most reliable predictor of L2 WTC is created by self-perceived levels of FL skills. Nevertheless, it may be of great interest to examine the degree to which language anxiety may have the power of modifying self-confidence, especially in Poles for whom making a good social impression may be of key importance. The participants of the study were a homogeneous sample, so its greater heterogeneity may offer interesting paths for further research, e.g., differentiating between educational or age levels.

Authentic communication between people of different languages and cultures should underlie foreign language learning. This is the reason why researching willingness to communicate from the perspective of different languages and cultures may offer interesting paths of inquiry. Understanding similarities and differences between cultures offers chances for bringing different people together, enabling equality in authentic communication worldwide.

References

Aida Y (1994) Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's construct of foreign language anxiety: the case of students of Japanese. Mod Lang J 78(2):155–168

Baker SC, MacIntyre PD (2000) The role of gender and immersion in communication and second language orientations. Lang Learn 50(2):311–341

Barraclough RA, Christophel DM, McCroskey JC (1988) Willingness to communicate: a cross-cultural investigation. Commun Res Rep 5(2):187–192

Belshek JA (2006) The influence of culture on the negotiation styles of British students. Annual review of education, communication and language sciences 3. Online document: http://research.ncl.ac.uk/ARECLS/vol3_documents/jalalali.pdf

Bokszański Z (2007) Indywidualizm a zmiana społeczna (Individualism and social change). Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa

Cultural Dimensions, Poland (2010) Geert Hofstede™ cultural dimensions. Online document: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_poland.shtml

Cultural Dimensions, United Kingdom (2010) Geert Hofstede™ cultural dimensions. Online document: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_united_kingdom.shtml

Cultural Dimensions, United States (2010) Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions. Online document: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_united_states.shtml
Dörnyei Z (2003) Attitudes, orientations and motivations in language learning: advances in theory, research, and applications. In: Dörnyei Z (ed) Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning. Blackwell, Oxford, pp 3–32
Foley J, Thompson L (2003) Language learning. Arnold, London
Gardner RC (2001) Language learning motivation: the student, the teacher, and the researcher. Tex Pap Foreign Lang Edu 6(2):1–18
Guiora AZ (1983) The dialectic of language acquisition. Lang Learn 33(5):3–12
Hargie O, Dickson D (2004) Skilled interpersonal communication: research, theory and practice, 4th edn. Routledge, London
Hashimoto Y (2002) Motivation and willingness to communicate as predictors of reported L2 use: the Japanese ESL context. Second Lang Stud 20(2):29–70
Hofstede G (1980) Culture's consequences: international differences in work-related values. Sage Publications, London
Hofstede G (1991) Cultures and organizations: software of the mind. McGraw-Hill, London
Horwitz EK (1999) Preface. In: Young DJ (ed) Affect in foreign language and second language learning. A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere. McGraw-Hill, Boston, pp xi–xiii
Horwitz EK, Horwitz M, Cope JA (1986) Foreign language classroom anxiety. Mod Lang J 70(2):125–132
Jandt FE (2004) Intercultural communication: an Introduction, 4th edn. Sage, London
Kojima E (2007) Factors Associated with Second Language Anxiety in Adolescents from Different Cultural Backgrounds. A PhD dissertation. University of Southern California, Online document: http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/assetserver/controller/item/etd-Kojima-20070724.pdf
Kolman L, Noorderhaven NG, Hofstede G, Dienes E (2003) Cross cultural differences in central Europe. J Manag Psychol 18(1):76–88
Kramsch C (1995) The cultural component of language teaching. Lang Cult Curriculum 8(12):83–92
Kramsch C (1998) Language and culture. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Lustig MW, Koester J (1996) Intercultural competence: interpersonal communication across cultures, 2nd edn. HarperCollins, New York
MacIntyre PD (2004) Volition and personality: bringing motivational tendencies to life. Paper presented at the 9th conference of the international association of language and social psychology, July 1, 2004, Penn State University. Online document: http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pmacintyre/research_pages/presentations.htm
MacIntyre PD, Dörnyei Z, Clément R, Noel KA (1998) Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: a situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. Mod Lang J 82(4):545–562
MacIntyre PD, Baker S, Clément R, Conrod S (2001) Willingness to communicate, social support and language learning orientations of immersion students. Stud Second Lang Acquis 23(1):369–388
MacIntyre PD, Baker SC, Clément R, Donovan LA (2002a) Sex and age effects on willingness to communicate, anxiety, perceived competence, and motivation among junior high school French immersion students. Lang Learn 52(3):537–564
MacIntyre PD, Clément R, Donovan LA (2002b) Willingness to communicate in the L2 among french immersion students. Paper presented at the second language research Forum, Toronto, October, 2002. Online document: http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pmacintyre/research_pages/other_files/slrf2002.pdf
MacIntyre PD, Baker SC, Clément R, Donovan LA (2003) Talking in order to learn: willingness to communicate and intensive language programs. Can Mod Lang Rev 59(4):587–605
Manning P, Ray G (1993) Shyness, self-confidence and social interaction. Soc Psychol Q 56(3):178–192

McCroskey JC (1992) Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale. Commun Q 40(1):16–25
McCroskey JC, Richmond VP (1987) Willingness to Communicate. In: McCroskey JC, Daly JA (eds) Personality and interpersonal communication. Sage, Newbury Park, CA, pp 129–156
Mitchell R, Myles F (2004) Second language learning theories, 2nd edn. Arnold, London
Noels KA, Pon G, Clément R (1996) Language, identity, and adjustment: the role of linguistic self-confidence in the acculturation process. J Lang Soc Psychol 15(3):246–264
Peng JE (2007) Integrative motivation among college students in an intensive English language program in China. Univ Syd Pap TESOL 2(1):33–59
Seidlhofer B (2005) English as a lingua franca. ELT J 59(4):339–341
Yashima T (2002) Willingness to communicate in a second language: the Japanese EFL Context. Mod Lang J 86(1):54–66
Zięba A (2008) Język a kultura. Komunikacja werbalna w wybranych polskich, brytyjskich i amerykańskich programach telewizyjnych (Language and culture. Verbal communication in selected Polish, British and American TV programmes). Investigationes Linguisticae, Volume XVI, 250–263. Online document: http://www.inveling.amu.edu.pl/pdf/Anna_Zieba_inve16.pdf

Chapter 18
The Ideal L2 Self and International Posture in the Polish Educational Context

Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Agnieszka Pietrzykowska

Abstract Dörnyei (The Psychology of the language learner: individual differences in second language acquisition. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, 2005) has readdressed the concept of language learning motivation applying the psychological notion of self to the creation of the new model that postulates that a learner's willingness to undertake efforts to master an L2 derives from the need to reduce the gap between one's actual and the ideal or desired self. It seems justifiable to say that learning a foreign language entails the development of an L2 self and is interwoven with the issue of social identity. The L2 Motivational Self System considers the possible and ideal self in relation to "international posture" which, unlike the Gardnerian concept of integrativeness, accounts for a tendency to associate with the international community rather than any particular L2 group or culture. There seems to be a connection between international posture and the ideal L2 self as well as motivation to learn a target language. The present chapter presents and discusses the results of the research project whose aim was to explain motivated language learning behaviour in relation to the learners' international posture. They imply that one's willingness to establish and sustain contacts with foreigners, to travel and participate in international activities as well as interest in international affairs may translate into increased motivation and higher levels of proficiency.

Keywords Motivation · Ideal L2 self · International posture · L2 proficiency

A. Mystkowska-Wiertelak (✉) · A. Pietrzykowska
Adam Mickiewicz University, Kalisz, Poland
e-mail: mystkows@amu.edu.pl

A. Pietrzykowska
e-mail: agnieszkapietrzykowska@wp.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_18,

18.1 Introduction

Learning a foreign language appears to be an exceedingly challenging task, not only because of placing heavy demands on the learner's memory and cognition, but also because of the fact that, unlike other academic subjects, it entails affecting the learner's personal dimension by reformulating an important part of one's identity. Out of numerous motivational factors influencing language development such as individual variation or the impact of the milieu, integrativeness has long been hypothesized to constitute a major motive driving learners to accomplish their goals. This conviction has grown from the assumption that learning a second/foreign language needs to resemble the learning of one's mother tongue, which is known to be drawn by the need to identify with the nearest surroundings: in the process of social identification children imitate the behaviour of adults who take care of them, including speech, and thus, encouraged by reinforcing reactions to their verbalizations, develop the ability to speak (Gardner and Lambert 1972, p. 12). Foreign language development has been, by parallel, assumed to result from the need to identify with the target language community. This stance has been most pronounced in the works of Gardner (1985, 2001, 2005) and his associates. Gardner and Lambert (1972, p. 132) defined integrative orientation as "reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group." However, this very conviction that language learning is driven by the willingness to identify or integrate with another ethnolinguisitc community has stirred up much controversy. Important evidence that has shaken the belief in the decisive force of the integrative motive came from Clément and Kruidenier (1983) who managed to prove empirically that integrative orientation of this kind was rare among language learners. Another important query as to the validity of the concept of integrative orientation as the major factor in motivated learning behaviour has been inspired by the ongoing debate concerning English becoming a global language, a modern *lingua franca.* Having recognized the global spread of English, the development of vernacular Englishes as well as growth of electronic discourse communities, it is no longer possible to claim that English can be associated with or is owned by a particular national group. Thus, the answer to the question which group learners of the English language wish to integrate or identify with proves to be exceedingly difficult. Moreover, as Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009, p. 3) observe, integrative motivation may not necessarily be involved in the contexts where English has assumed a status of a basic skill taught along with numeracy and literacy.

An attempt to account for the deficiencies of the traditional model of motivation has been a project launched by Dörnyei and his colleagues conducted for a period of 15 years involving 13,000 Hungarian learners of a number of foreign languages (for a detailed summary see Dörnyei et al. 2006). The multifaceted picture of integrative motivation that emerged from the data collected in the course of repeated surveys has led Dörnyei to the speculation that undeniably integrativeness acts as a vital motivating factor; however, the object of integration is not the

target-language community but this part of the learner's personality which houses the ideal or desired concept of being a proficient language user (Dörnyei 2005). The L2 Motivational Self System that originated as a result of the aforementioned research scheme considers the possible and ideal self in relation to "international posture" which, unlike the Gardnerian concept of integrativeness, accounts for a tendency to associate with the international community rather than any particular L2 group or culture. There seems to be a connection between international posture and the ideal L2 self as well as motivation to learn a target language. The present chapter presents and discusses the results of the research project whose aim was to explain motivated language learning behaviour in relation to the learners' international posture. They imply that one's willingness to establish and sustain contacts with foreigners, to travel and participate in international activities as well as interest in international affairs may translate into increased motivation and higher levels of proficiency.

18.2 Gardner's Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition

Research into motivation was inspired and advanced by a social psychologist Robert Gardner in Canada. Living in the country split between two main communities—Francophone and Anglophone—Gardner (1985, 2001, 2005) hoped that the motivation to learn the other community's language could bring the society together. Since he realized how important perceptions about the other language and its users are, Gardner made "language attitudes" the pivotal concept of his theory and claimed that success in language learning is largely dependent on the learner's disposition towards the linguistic cultural community of the target language, including pragmatic values or benefits that this community is believed to embody.

Further on, the positive attitude was theorized to fuel the wish to communicate with or even integrate or identify with members of the other language community. Such a stance was called integrative orientation, integrative motivation or integrativeness (Gardner 1985, 2001, 2005). In the words of Gardner (2001, p. 5), "[i]ntegrativeness reflects a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community. At one level, this implies an openness to, and respect for other cultural groups and ways of life. In the extreme, this might involve complete identification with the community (and possibly even withdrawal from one's original group), but more commonly it might well involve integration within both communities." In Gardner's Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition (Gardner 2001) integrative motivation is a composite construct including three main subcomponents: integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation and motivation, the last of which includes effort, desire and affect and functions as the 'motivational engine' that can be triggered by a specific learning goal, for example, an integrative

orientation (cf. Dörnyei 2009). In the Model motivation is also fed by *other support* and language achievement can be fuelled by language aptitude and other factors, however, integrativeness seems to play the crucial role in language development. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Dörnyei (2005, 2009, p. 23), the concept of integrativeness/integrative motivation seems enigmatic and has stirred much controversy. First of all, although it has been extensively researched and discussed, it appears to have no equivalent in other conventional theory concerning motivation or in educational psychology. Another weakness of the Model pinpointed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009) refers to the very meaning of the term *integrative*, since not infrequently is the target of integration difficult to identify: integration can be perceived as the goal in such learning contexts as ethnolinguistically split Canada, but not in foreign language learning settings where language instruction is part of a school curriculum and does not entail contacts with native speakers. Moreover, findings of numerous research projects (e.g., Dörnyei et al. 2006; Irie 2003; Lamb 2004; Ushioda 2006; Yashima 2000, etc.) have cast doubt on the value and relevance of the concept of integrativeness. Noels et al. (2000) have even identified four other orientations that are instrumental in sustaining motivation: travel, friendship, knowledge and instrumental orientation. Gardner's theoretical concept of integrativeness has been further undermined by the fact that the English language has assumed the status of an international language that does not "belong" to any national community. Hence growing difficulty with appointing a specific target language group with which to identify or integrate.

18.3 Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System

In view of increasing dissatisfaction and criticism of the Gardner's views of motivation, it became apparent that the notion requires rethinking and reformulation. Dörnyei (2000, 2001) first put forward a process-oriented approach according to which motivation ceased to be viewed as a stable characteristic but rather as a dynamic concept in constant fluctuation. A subsequent development ventured by Dörnyei (2005) was a new approach to understanding motivation, labelled as the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), which attempts to integrate a number of L2 theories (e.g., by Noels 2003; Norton 2001; Ushioda 2001) with recent developments in self research psychology. The creation of the L2MSS was the result of an extensive research project that Dörnyei and his colleagues conducted over a period of 15 years, involving 13,000 learners (Dörnyei et al. 2006). Teenage learners of five languages were repeatedly confronted with questionnaires aimed at tapping the changes concerning the learners' motivational and attitudinal systems. Apart from integrativeness, the questionnaire measured other motivational/attitudinal variables such as instrumentality (the pragmatic utility of learning the L2), direct contact with L2 speakers, cultural interest, vitality of L2 community (i.e. the perceived

importance and wealth of the target language community), milieu (i.e. the general perception of the importance of foreign languages in the learner's educational context and in friends' and parents' views), linguistic self-confidence (i.e. a confident, anxiety-free belief that the learner is capable of mastering an L2). Data accrued in the course of the surveys were submitted to structural equation modeling where each language and each year were treated separately. As a result, it turned out that the structure underlying the variables was importantly stable across time and languages.

Integrativeness appeared to play the most important role in L2 motivation being linked to all other attitudinal/motivational dimensions on the two criterion measures: *Language choice* and *Intended effort to study the L2*. The variables that preceded *Integrativeness* were *Attitudes toward L2 speakers/community* and *Instrumentality*, which indicates that motivation is highly dependent on two aspects, one being the pragmatic dimension, the other personal attitudes towards members of the target language community. In order to account for the observed regularity, Dörnyei (2005) searched for a theoretical framework that would explain the findings and decided that the possible self approach offered a plausible explanation of the data. Thus, he concluded that the concept of integrativeness, if approached from the self perspective, could be understood as the L2-specific aspect of one's ideal self: if our ideal self is concerned with L2 learning, we want to become a proficient L2 user, we would be described in the Gardnerian tradition (Gardner 1985) as having integrative disposition. Thus, the focal point of the new theory was equating of motivation, traditionally perceived as "integrativeness/integrative motivation" with the Ideal L2 self. The L2 Motivational Self System consists of the following three components:

1. Ideal L2 Self—the L2-specific facet of one's "ideal self"—the ideal self with respect to L2 represents the desired image of the self with a perfect command of the TL; realizing the constraints of the actual self, learners strive to reduce the discrepancy between the actual and ideal selves. Both integrative and instrumental motivation in the traditional understanding would belong to this component. The concept "houses the vision of oneself in the future" (MacIntyre et al. 2009, p. 48).
2. Ought-to L2 Self—the attributes one believes one ought to posses to meet expectations and avoid possible negative outcomes. The concept focuses on duties and obligations imposed by external authorities (MacIntyre et al. 2009, p. 48). It can also be understood as the need to accomplish a goal of learning a language which results from external obligation rather than personal conviction or vision. Here, the learner's effort is directed at preventing failure rather than achieving success (Lamb 2009, p. 229).
3. L2 Learning Experience—the motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience including the influence of the teacher, curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success.

18.4 International Posture

Taken the difficulty in naming a particular community with which to integrate in the case of the English language as well as dissatisfaction with Gardner's notion of integrativeness, Yashima (2000) employed the concept of *international posture* in her research on motivation.

The data she collected suggested that the traditional view that the individual's motivation to learn a language stems form the learner's disposition toward the target-language community and a wish to interact and identify with its members may not apply in the Japanese educational context. A similar tendency was observed in the study conducted by Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2008) who, while investigating the relationship between the learners strategy use and their proficiency level, established that English philology and secondary school students were rarely concerned with the life in America or Great Britain, neither did they express a wish or intention to visit any of the English-speaking countries. They may have been willing to interact with British or American people, nevertheless they did not wish to identify with them.

In the study aiming at establishing most prominent factors affecting motivated learning behaviour among Japanese EFL learners, Yashima (2000) managed to establish that a factor she labelled "intercultural friendship orientation" together with instrumental orientation were prerequisites for motivational intensity to learn English, which proved to result in higher proficiency. In yet another study Yashima et al. (2004) established that Japanese EFL learners were mainly driven by two motives: first being satisfying their immediate goals such as tests and exams, the other being connected to the international community. The latter motive referred to as *international posture* which can be briefly defined as "openness and favourable disposition towards other languages and cultures, interest in foreign affairs and non-ethnocentric outlook on life" (Yashima 2002, p. 57). Following the review of intercultural communication and social psychological research, Yashima et al. (2004) operationalized the concept to include the following components:

1. Intergroup approach tendency *e.g., I wouldn't mind sharing an apartment or a room with international students.*
2. Interest in international vocation and activities *e.g., I'd rather avoid the kind of work that sends me overseas frequently.*
3. Interest in foreign affairs *e.g., I often read and watch news about foreign countries* (Yashima 2009, p. 146).

It seems justifiable to say that the concept of international posture captures integrative and instrumental aspects of motivation and proves particularly useful in explaining how learners in contexts lacking meaningful direct contact with the speakers of the target language manage to relate to an L2 community.

Yashima et al. (2004) argue that increased motivation to study and communicate in English typically concerns learners who consciously control the way in

which they relate to the world and most likely visualize English using selves. According to Dörnyei and Csizér (2002, p. 454), possible selves "provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation" because one tries to bridge the gap between the actual self, as perceived by the learner him/herself, and the ideal self encompassing an image of a fluent and efficient L2 user. What Yashima (Yashima 2009, p. 147f) finds particularly intriguing is the question of identifying those types of possible selves that characterize learners with higher international posture making them study and/or communicate in English. Learners with a higher level of international posture might create possible selves interacting with other students, reading English language websites, or imagine their ideal selves working abroad, pursuing an international career etc. Embodying such visions and fulfilling dreams is not possible without attaining higher levels of proficiency in English and thus a vivid ideal L2 self seems to give impetus to undertaking effort in L2 practice. Yashima (2009, p. 148) observes that developing international posture might help to link the possible selves focused on achievement in any walk of life and the L2 self. International posture enables learners to generate possible selves that use English, which, in turn, facilitates communication and leads to extended practice.

18.5 Study

The study, whose part will be presented here, was launched in order to explore the concept of ideal L2 self as well as the idea of integrativeness in the Polish educational setting. The following research questions were posed:

1. Is the ideal L2 self related to the proficiency level?
2. Is there a relationship between the level of international posture and the level of proficiency?

The participants in the study were 104 English philology students, 77 female, 27 male, at the upper-intermediate and advanced level. There were 49 first-year students, 37 second-year students and 18 third-year students. The project took the form of a questionnaire based study. The research instrument was the questionnaire adapted from a project by Stephen Ryan (2009), who investigated the issues in the Japanese context, which, in turn, was based on the instruments used by Csizér and Dörnyei (2005a); Dörnyei and Clément (2001); Dörnyei and Csizér (2002); Dörnyei et al. (2006). The questionnaire included as many as 100 five-point Likert scale items referring to 18 motivational variables: ideal L2 self, L2 self-confidence, willingness to communicate, intended learning effort, travel orientation, English anxiety, attitudes to learning English, milieu, parental encouragement, cultural interest, attitudes towards L2 community, instrumentality, international contact, interest in foreign languages, international empathy, fear of assimilation, and ethnocentricism. However, only some of them were taken into account in the present article, as it reports only part of a wider research project. For

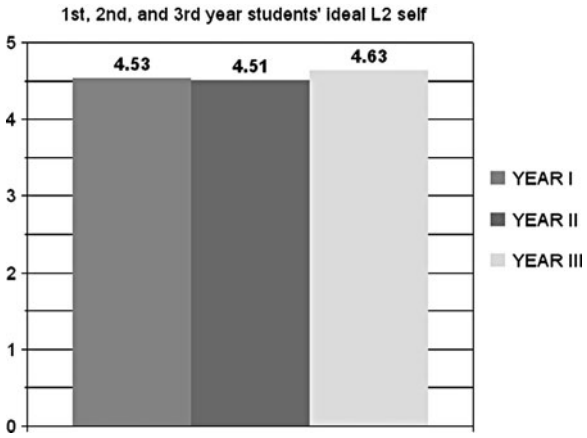


Fig. 18.1 The level of ideal L2 self

the purpose of the study, international contact, international empathy and travel orientation were hypothesized to represent one variable, namely international posture.

The results obtained on the basis of the survey were correlated with the participants' proficiency level established on the basis of the end-of-the-year examination consisting of a test, a written composition, and a short discussion with examiners.

The data gathered on the basis of the questionnaires show that all students evinced a very high degree of the ideal L2 self (Fig. 18.1), which is not surprising considering the fact that they all studied English Philology and most likely envisaged their professional future as dependent on their command of the language. The third-year students showed the highest level of the ideal L2 self, the second-year students the lowest. Still, the differences between the three groups were not statistically significant ($p = 0.9$, $p = 0.7$).

As far as the students' international posture is concerned (Fig. 18.2), the means were lower than in the case of the ideal L2. Still, the values do indicate quite a high level of international posture, which, again, is not a surprise given this particular group of participants. The first-year students evinced the highest degree of international posture, the third-year students the lowest one. The greatest difference (-0.25) appeared between the first-and second-year students (the difference is statistically significant, $p = 0.008$), the difference between year two and three was smaller (-0.08) and not statistically significant ($p = 0.9$).

As indicated by Pearson correlation coefficients (Table 18.1), the relationship between the ideal L2 self images and success in language learning was positive but very weak (2.5% of shared variance) for first-year students, negative and extremely weak (only 0.4% of shared variance) for second-year students, and negative and weak (3% of shared variance) in the case of the students in the third year of study.

As far as the correlation between the students' international posture and their learning results is concerned (Table 18.2), it turned out to be extremely weak and

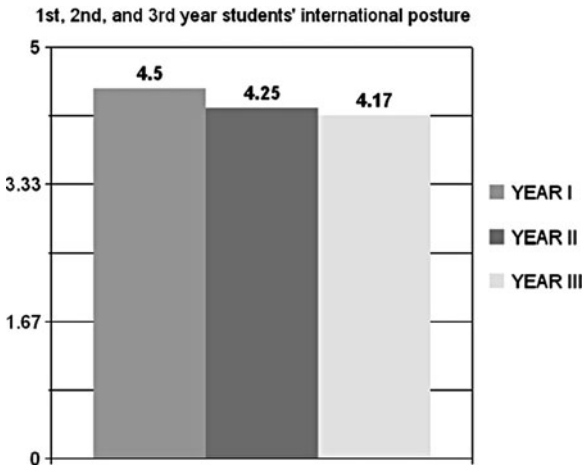


Fig. 18.2 The degree of international posture

Table 18.1 Correlation between the ideal L2 self success in L2 learning

Pearson product moment correlation	Year I		Year II		Year III	
Mean (ideal L2 self and exam)	4.53	61.74	4.51	72.24	4.63	65.03
Number of observations (n)	49		37		16	
Correlation coefficient (r)	0.16		−0.065		−0.17	
Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.025		0.004		0.03	
Significance (p)	0.14		0.35		0.25	

Table 18.2 Correlation between international posture and success in L2 learning

Pearson product moment correlation	Year I		Year II		Year III	
Mean (ideal L2 self and exam)	4.5	61.74	4.25	72.24	4.17	65.03
Number of observations (n)	49		37		16	
Correlation coefficient (r)	−0.05		0.19		−0.42	
Coefficient of determination (r^2)	0.002		0.04		0.18	
Significance (p)	0.38		0.13		**0.04**	

negative for year one (0.2% of shared variance), weak and negative in the case of year two (4% of shared variance), and moderate and negative for year three (18% of shared variance).

18.6 Summary and Conclusions

The research findings show that the levels of the ideal L2 self and international posture represented by the students were high, which is not surprising considering the fact that the participants in the research project were English Philology students. Nevertheless, some caution should be exercised in relation to such results,

as the students filling in the questionnaires may have wanted to paint themselves in a positive light and might have given higher scores for the statements to satisfy their teachers. The ideal L2 self was the strongest in third year students, but the difference between first-, second- and third-year students was negligible. As far as international posture is concerned, its degree was the highest for first-year students and the weakest for third-year students. It could be hypothesized then that there is a falling tendency among English Philology students with respect to the latter and with the passage of time instrumental goals take precedence over openness to an international community. Still, this assumption cannot be verified here as the three statistics in the study referred to three different groups and a longitudinal correlational study would have to be conducted.

Moreover, the results indicate that there was a very weak correlation (either positive or negative) between the ideal L2 self and success in language learning. Even though it must be borne in mind that correlation coefficients do not indicate causality, the conclusion may be that, perhaps, in the case of English Philology students the ideal L2 self does not mediate learning behaviours to a considerable degree and, as a result, does not translate into higher proficiency levels. According to Dörney (2005), the ideal self is more likely to motivate the learner provided that this future image is clear and precise enough, so that the student can visualize the distance he or she has to cover, the stages he or she has to go through to become closer to the desired ideal L2 self. In other words, the learner's immediate self should be linked to the ideal one. It may be speculated then that the participants in the study did not create such representations which would bridge the gap between their current state to the one they wanted to achieve and, hence, there is no correlation between their ideal L2 selves and the exam results, since the former was too distant a goal at the time. The students failed to discern a link between their current learning behaviours and their future careers, neither did they associate their immediate goals with their ideal L2 self images at the time.

As far as the relationship between international posture and success in L2 learning is concerned, it is either positive but very weak or moderate but negative. Therefore, it may seem that the students for whom English was a tool facilitating contacts with people from all over the world, not necessarily while staying abroad but, for instance, when using internet communicators, did not put too much effort into preparing for the exam. Doing well in formal examinations may not pose higher requirements than being able to use English spontaneously in encounters with foreigners. It may be speculated then that the students were simply satisfied with their communication skills since they already enabled them to interact with foreigners without serious problems, that is why the students paid little heed to accuracy, and it is worth emphasizing that accuracy is the basic criterion that is tested on the practical English exam. One of the exam components, a test, is partly based on vocabulary lists and the books the students are obliged to study on their own, which requires time and self-discipline. In written compositions, the examiners evaluate not only creativity and the ability to use good arguments, but also sophistication of vocabulary and, obviously, grammatical accuracy and variety. In addition, it may be concluded that international posture as such tends to be

associated with long- rather than short-term goals, which is why there was either little positive relationship between this construct and the exam results, or this relationship was negative, but considering the fact that many students already travelled wide and kept in touch with people living abroad, this may not be the case.

As can be seen, the outcomes of the part of the research project presented in the chapter are not particularly revealing. In all probability, it would be possible to draw less equivocal conclusions if the procedure had involved more than one research tool and if additional data collection instruments had been applied. Also, to obtain a clearer picture of the relationship between the two constructs, it seems highly reasonable to carry out a case study involving the participants for whom the correlation coefficients turned out to be the highest and the lowest. Finally, conducting a longitudinal correlational study would make it possible to explore the tendencies regarding the ideal L2 self and international posture. Moreover, it would be interesting to see if the tendencies manifested among English Philology students are also present among other learner groups and at different levels of proficiency. Undoubtedly, achieving a deeper understanding of the notions of the ideal L2 self and international posture and the role the two constructs play in second/foreign language learning will entail further exploration and discussion.

References

Clément R, Kruidenier BG (1983) Orientations in second language acquisition: the effects of ethnicity, milieu and target language on their emergence. Lang Learn 33:273–291

Csizér K, Dörnyei Z (2005) Language learners' motivational profiles and their motivated learning behaviour. Lang Learn 55(4):613–659

Dörnyei Z (2000) Motivation in action: towards a process-oriented conceptualisation of student motivation. Br J Educ Psychol 70:519–538

Dörnyei Z (2001) Teaching and researching motivation. Longman, Harlow

Dörnyei Z (2005) The Psychology of the language learner: individual differences in second language acquisition. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ

Dörnyei Z (2009) The L2 motivational self system. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda E (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 9–42

Dörnyei Z, Clément R (2001) Motivational characteristics of learning different target languages: results of a nationwide survey. In: Dörnyei Z, Schmidt R (eds) Motivation and second language acquisition. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, HI, pp 399–432

Dörnyei Z, Csizér K (2002) Some dynamics of language attitudes and motivation: results of a lingitudinal nationwide survey. Appl Linguist 23:421–462

Dörnyei Z, Csizér K, Németh N (2006) Motivation, language attitudes and globalization: a Hungarian perspective. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

Gardner RC (1985) Social Psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation. Edward Arnold, London

Gardner RC (2001) Integrative motivation and second language learning: practical issues. Kansai Univ J Foreign Lang Edu Res 2:71–91

Gardner RC (2005) Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. Canadian association of applied linguistics joint plenary talk, London, Ontario, May 30, 2005. Retrieved from http://publish.uwo.ca. Accessed 10 May 2010

Gardner RC, Lambert WE (1972) Attitudes and motivation in second language learning. Newbury House, Rowley, M.A

Irie K (2003) What do we know about the learning motivation of university students in Japan? Some patterns in survey studies. JALT J 25(1):86–101

Lamb M (2004) Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. System 32:3–19

Lamb M (2009) Situating the L2 self: two Indonesian school learners of English. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda ZE (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 229–247

MacIntyre PD, MacKinnon SP, Clément R (2009) The baby, the bathwater, and the future of language learning motivation research. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda E (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 43–63

Mystkowska-Wiertelak A (2008) The use of language strategies for learning grammar. In: Pawlak M (ed) Investigating English language learning and teaching. Wydawnictwo UAM, Poznań-Kalisz, pp 139–148

Noels KA (2003) Learning Spanish as a second language learners' orientations and perceptions of their teachers' communication style. In: Dörnyei Z (ed) Attitudes, orientations and motivations in language learning. Blackwell, Oxford, pp 97–136

Noels KA, Pelltier LG, Clément R, Vallerand RJ (2000) Why are you learning a second language? motivational orientations and self-determination theory. Lang Learn 50:57–85

Norton B (2001) Non-participation, imagined communities and the language classroom. In: Breen MB (ed) Learner contributions to language learning: new directions in research. Longman, Harlow, pp 159–171

Rynan S (2009) Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: the ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda E (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 120–143

Ushioda E (2001) Language learning at university: exploring the role of motivational thinking. In: Dörnyei Z, Schmidt R (eds) Motivation and second language acquisition. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, HI, pp 93–125

Ushioda E (2006) Language motivation in a reconfigured Europe: access, identity and autonomy. J Multilingual Multicultural Develop 27(2):148–161

Ushioda E, Dörnyei Z (2009) Motivation and language identities and the L2 self: a theoretical overview. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda E (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 1–8

Yashima T (2000) Orientations and motivation in foreign language learning: a study of Japanese college students. JACET Bull 31:121–133

Yashima T (2002) Willingness to communicate in a second language: the Japanese EFL context. Modern Lang J 86(1):54–66

Yashima T (2009) International posture and the ideal L2 self in the Japanese EFL context. In: Dörnyei Z, Ushioda E (eds) Motivation, language identity and the L2 self. Multilingual Matters, Bristol, pp 144–163

Yashima T, Zenuk-Nishide L, Shimizu K (2004) The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. Lang Learn 54:119–152

Chapter 19
Pragmatic Aspects of Culture in Foreign Language Learning

Justyna Zięb ka

Abstract The chapter discusses the role of culture in the process of foreign language learning from two perspectivess. Firstly, the place of culture in the school curriculum on a few levels of proficiency over the last 15 years is presented. It allows to determine how the perception of the target culture in the process of learning has changed and which aspects of culture have accompanied the learners of a foreign language. Secondly, it is examined what are the learners' needs and expectations towards the place of culture in foreign language learning and which aspects of culture seem the most significant and absorbing for them. Additionally, authentic materials as carriers of culture and their role in foreign language learning are analysed. Finally, the chapter concentrates on the possible future trends concerning the place of culture in the process of foreign language learning.

Keywords Culture in FLL · Curriculum · Authentic materials · Learners' expectations

19.1 Culture and its Role in the Process of Language Learning

The term 'culture' has been generally described as common beliefs, thoughts, customs, manners, values, traditions or shared patterns of human behaviour. At present defining culture is often connected with the notion of language because while learning a foreign language learners undergo the process of acculturation. Culture has become highly appreciated in the field of foreign language learning

J. Zięb ka (✉)
Silesian School of Economics and Lanugages, Katowice, Poland
e-mail: justyna.zet@op.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_19,

and acquisition, as "understanding a language involves not only knowledge of grammar, phonology and lexis but also certain features and characteristics of the culture" (Cakir 2006, p. 154). As Peterson and Bronwyn (2003) emphasize, language is not only a constituent of culture, but it also manifests culture. Tang (1999) identifies culture with language and argues that only thinking in a particular language means knowing that language. Because of inseparable connections between language and culture learners need to learn the target culture in order to deal with potential intercultural communication problems. Trivonovitch (1980) postulates that culture as a system incorporates not only biological or technical patterns of behaviour, but also verbal and non-verbal ones. According to Brown (1994, p. 170) "language (…) is the most visible and available expression of (…) culture". Rosaldo (1984), on the other hand, observes that purely theoretical knowledge about a certain culture hinders understanding it entirely. Those who are unable to rich a satisfying knowledge of the target culture are called 'outsiders', so they do not belong to it. Morain (in Valdes 1986, p. 70) agrees that "if two people read a signal in a different way, it is partial evidence that they belong to different cultures". Moreover, Morain (1986, p. 64) claims that "being able to read and speak another lnguage does not guarantee that understanding will take place". Therefore using a language is strongly connected with paying attention to both social and cultural factors, and communication is successfull only when so-called 'cultural affiliation' is visible. Cakir (2006, p. 155) states that "an analytic look at the native culture is as important as the learning of the target culture", as it is very helpful in achieving cross-cultural awareness, which involves paralinguistic aspects of behaviour. Lado (1963, p. 110) comes to the conclusion that foreign language causes "changing the learner's behaviour and injecting a new way of life and new values of life into his already settled behaviour pattern".

Cakir (2006, p. 157) notices a pragmatic side of cultural awareness by emphasizing that "learning to understand a foreign culture should help students (…) to use words and expressions more skillfully and authentically; (…) to act naturally with persons of the other culture, while recognizing and accepting their different reactions". Taking into consideration the above opinions it can be concluded that while learning a foreign language students should not only develop their knowledge in the scope of grammar and vocabulary, but also improve the communicative skills, acquire intercultural competence, become more open in understanding the reality, become aware of the existence of different social variables (age, sex, religion, social class) that influence communication and have mental desire to know more about the target culture. Whether textbooks can help learners to achieve the above-mentioned abilities will be investigated in the research section of the article. Since it has been recognized that language acquisition does not follow a universal sequence, but differs across cultures, more and more attention has been paid to matters connected with culture in the content of textbooks.

19.2 Aspects of Culture: The Importance of Pragmatic Facors in the Process of Language Learning

Creating an unambiguous classification of cultural elements is a very difficult task since it would have to include all aspects of social functioning. Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi (1990, pp. 3–4) recognize the following aspects of culture:

> Cinema, literature, music, and media (…) family, interpersonal relations, customs, material conditions (…) the system which conditions perceptions and thoughts (…) the background knowledge, social and paralinguistic skills, and language code which are necessary for successful communication.
>
> Adaskou, Britten, Fahsi (1990, pp. 3–4)

Lessard-Clouston (1997) enumerates three aspects of culture: general, specific and dynamic. On the other hand, Byram and Morgan (1994) distinguish seven aspects of culture:

a. everyday activities,
b. personal and social life,
c. the world around us,
d. the world of education, training and work,
e. the world of communication,
f. the international world,
g. the world of imagination and creativity.

Such aspects of culture as interpersonal relations (Adaskou, Britten and Fahsi 1990), personal and social life or successful communication (Byram and Morgan 1994) are of pragmatic nature. They refer to language used in a social context, including its effect on the interlocutors. Therefore pragmatic aspects of culture concern "knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realising particular illocutions, knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts, and finally knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages' linguistic resources" (Barron 2003, p. 10). Contextual use of language is connected with paying attention to such phenomena as: politeness strategies, social distance, genre, register, meaning and interpretation of communicative intentions. Apprehending and producing contextually appropriate language is perceived as a necessary factor of general communicative competence for the learners of a foreign language (Armasu 2007, 2008; Bachman 1990; Olshtein 1989).

However, Mrowa-Hopkins and Strambi (2005) notice that it is difficult to find any references to the socio-pragmatic aspects of language or culture in foreign language textbooks. Recognising the context allows avoiding pragmatic errors between the speakers and gives the ability to produce socially acceptable language. However, Armaşu (2007, 2008) notices that even the advanced students make pragmatic mistakes, and, moreover, "native speakers are often unaware of pragmatic rules until they are broken" (Armasu 2007, 2008, p. 110). Pragmatic error, as Armaşu (2007, 2008, p. 109) puts it, "may hinder good communication between

speakers (…), may make the speaker appear abrupt or brusque in social interactions (…), or may make the speaker appear rude or uncaring (…)."

19.3 The Research

The present section of the paper focuses on aspects of culture present in a foreign language education, and particularly on:

- elements of culture included in foreign language textbooks,
- the perception of target culture by the learners of English,
- learners' opinions on the usefulness of textbooks in the process of foreign language learning.

In order to describe the above issues research has been conducted on the group of 51 advanced learners of English who are the students of the first year of English philology. These persons were chosen for the examination because as the learners of foreign language they are able to characterize the pros and cons of textbooks in a solid way, and moreover, as people who give private lessons they also perceive textbooks from the teacher's perspective. Moreover, 24 English textbooks from elementary to advanced level published between 1990 and 2008 have been analysed in search of apects of culture present in the process of foreign language education. The list of the titles used in the research is put below the References section. The examined English textbooks were divided into two groups: those from the 90s and those from the first decade of the twenty first century. Additionally they were divided according to the level of proficiency into: elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. All the textbooks undergoing the analysis were/are used in Polish educational system at primary and secondary schools.

19.3.1 English Textbooks

Textbooks are books used by learners for the study of a particular subject. They are a basis of a course of study which constitutes a specific link between learners and teachers and their major function is to give learners instructions in a field of a particular scientific discipline. Thus, English textbooks are a basic source of information about the language. How much culture is there in English textbooks and which aspects of culture are taken into consideration is the question to be answered in the present section of the article.

When comparing *elementary* level books the proportions of cultural references are similar—older books focus on such aspects as: geographical details, famous people, cuisine, weather, art and they also contain adapted versions of articles. As far as new books are concerned, the focus is on sport, environment, fashion,

teenagers, British families, rights and laws, art, famous people, but they also contain pictures of popular places and culture quizes. Aspects of culture constitute 6% of older books' content and 6.35% of contemporary books' content.

5.3% of content is devoted to aspets of culture in *pre-intermediate* older textbooks compared to 7.5% devoted in modern textbooks. Books from the 90s include pictures of culture-typical elements (a policeman, football players), information about famous people and popular places, but they also offer reading sections and adapted stories. Newer books focus on similar aspects (popular places, celebrities, traditions, art) and additionally they contain separate culture files called 'culture corners' which are a good source of information about holidays, English language, popular songs and literature.

In case of older books on *intermediate* level 14.4% of content is devoted to culture and in case of new books only 8.5% touches the issues of culture. Older books focus mainly on adapted articles, headlines, roadsigns, notices, pragmatic aspects (explaining the complexity of English grammar and its influence on communication), literature, stereotypes, poems, songs, literature and newspapers. New books concentrate on communication, movies, famous people, companies, literature and they also have separate files devoted to culture which describe English speaking countries.

As far as *upper-intermediate* textbooks are taken into consideration it can be observed that older books focus on fragments of literature, articles about celebrities and famous places, pictures, poems and magazines which constitutes 18.4% of the content, whereas new books focus on celebrities and known places which constitutes 4.4% of the whole content.

Finally *advanced* level textbooks will be analysed. Both older and new ones concentrate on original sources of information (articles, short stories, songs). 9% of the content of older books and 7.4% of the content of new books is devoted to topics connected with culture.

To sum up, textbooks tend to incorporate elements of culture into sections connected with grammar and vocabulary. In case of textbooks from the 90s the higher the level of proficiency the more information about culture is provided. As far as newer books are taken into account, culture is often put into isolated sections, but it does not occupy as much content as in the case of older books. Nowadays culture is often described in separate books for more advanced learners, whereas in the past it was incorporated in the general textbooks. Neither old nor new textbooks guide the learners in the field of pragmatic aspects of culture. There was only one example of an article (from 1990) paying attention to communication issues ("When question is not a question") which explained the phenomenon of rhetorical questions. It may be concluded that neither in the past nor at present English textbooks prepare the learners to use language in a natural and easy way and thus avoid problems with communication.

19.3.2 Learners and the Aspects of Culture

Fifty one advanced learners of English were asked to fill in the questionnaire consisting of 14 questions connected with the role of students' books in the process of learning a foreign language and the place of culture in books' content. Replies to the first question allow to state what learners' understanding of culture is and *what aspects of culture they recognize*. Aspects of culture enumerated by the respondents were as follows: art (49%), history (29%), religion (25%), tradition (25%), social aspects (19%), customs and habits (15%), cuisine (14%), language (8%), holidays (6%), beliefs (4%), psychological aspects (4%), rules (2%) and national identity (2%).

In answering the second question learners were explaining *what is the reason for learning about a foreign language culture*. The most popular answer was to enrich the knowledge about a language (27%) and the remaining answers emphasized the ability to communicate (23%), satisfying learners' curiosity (12%), pragmatic reasons—knowing appropriate behaviour (12%), broadening intellectual horizons (10%), getting a new job (6%), getting new experience (4%), being more tollerant towards other cultures (4%) and being culturally aware (2%).

The third question concerned *defining cultural awareness*. According to the respondents cultural awareness can be defined as a conscious knowledge about culture (23%), knowledge about a language (6%), ability to communicate (6%), tollerance (4%), ability to behave properly (4%), being conscious about differences between cultures (2%), being conscious about differences between languages (2%), ability of linguistic thinking (2%), being familiar with other cultures (2%).

In the fourth question the learners were asked *when the study of foreign culture should begin*. Respondents suggested that the study of foreign culture should begin at the first contact with a foreign language (25%), in primary school (19%), as early as possible (17%), in secondary school (12%), in junior high school (6%), in kindergarten (6%), when learners become interested in culture (4%), in the childhood (2%) and before learning a foreign language (2%).

Whether students' books cover the issue of a foreign language culture in a sufficient way was question number five. Unfortunately most of the respondents answered 'no' (65%), some of them said that textbooks 'only partly cover the issue' (15%), 6% of learners answered 'yes' and the remaining 4% did not know the answer.

In question number six the surveyed group was asked to explain *what cultural patterns and behaviours students need to learn*. Most of them (33%) emphasized the importance of pragmatic aspects, such as ability to communicate and interact with other people, 31% answered that learners need to know how to behave while talking with people of other cultures, while others were not able to provide answers to the question.

In the seventh question learners were asked to answer *whether textbooks help them develop understanding the linguistic and behavioural patterns of a foreign language culture*. Again the answers were critical towards the textbooks, as 44%

of the polled answered 'no', 24% answered 'yes' and the remaining 30% stated that 'only to some extent'.

Answering the eighth question the respondents had to explain *whether students' books help learners act naturally with people of different cultures*. As much as 64% of answers were 'no', 28% were 'yes' and the remaining 8% was 'to some degree'.

Question number nine was as follows: *Do students' books help learners realize that such social variables as age, sex or social class affect the way people speak or behave*? Most of the answers were 'no' (72%), only 12% of interviewees answered 'yes' and the remaining 10% claimed that textbooks are helpful in this respect 'only to some extent'.

Whether learners are encouraged by their students' books to curiosity about any aspect of foreign culture was question number 10. As much as 65% of answers were 'no' and those who answered 'yes' (26%) enumerated the following aspects of culture: history (14%), holidays (4%), cuisine (2%), art (2%), everyday life (2%), and festivals (2%).

Question number eleven is connected with *motivation to learn about a foreign language culture*. 24% of the respondents do not feel motivated to learn about a target culture and those who are motivated (71%) emphasize the importance of such factors as: intrinsic motivation (25%), curiosity (16%), travels (8%), work (4%), interactions with foreign language speakers (4%), teachers (4%), friends (4%) and a target language literature (2%).

In the twelfth question respondents were asked to write *whether they use their knowledge about a foreign language culture in practice*. As much as 46% of learners admitted that they do not use their knowledge about a foreign language culture in practice and those who use it enumerated the following situations that require such knowledge: travelling (18%), interactions (18%), teaching other learners (8%) and watching television (2%).

Question number thirteen concerns *the best way to learn about a foreign language culture*. According to the respondents the best methods to learn about a foreign language culture are: travelling (67%), reading foreign language books (28%), interactions (20%), watching television (14%), the internet (10%), reading books about culture (2%), studies (2%), and language course (2%).

Providing the answers to the last question the polled wrote *what helps learners to learn about a foreign language culture most*. From the suggested answers they had to evaluate which source is very helpful (1), which may be helpful to some degree (2) and which is not helpful at all (3). The results are presented in Table 19.1.

In the above classification students' books come off badly as only 12% of respondents regard them as helpful and as much as 31% think that books are helpful only occassionally or that they are not helpful at all (31%). Instead, learners appreciate other sources, such as: journeys, the internet, television, literature or the teachers.

Table 19.1 Learners' evaluation of sources of knowledge about culture

	(1)%	(2)%	(3)%
Teachers	23	43	10
Students' books	12	31	31
Iourneys	84	8	2
Television	27	41	4
The internet	43	35	2
Foreign language books	27	47	6

19.4 Interpretation of the Data and Concluding Remarks

According to Peterson and Bronwyn (2003) culture should be entirely included as an essential constituent of foreign language learning. Learning about culture means focusing on a broader context of conventions that regulate the rules of communication in order to function as competent users of a foreign language. As it has been proven by the research, students' books, which shall be a reliable source of knowledge about a language, lack sufficient content in the scope of pragmatic aspects of culture and communication, so they do not fulfill the basic assumption. The learners seem to share a negative opinion about textbooks which is visible in the answers provided to the questions included in the questionnaire. According to the research

- learners' knowledge about culture is limited to information that can be found in textbooks,
- students' books do not contain enough material devoted to cultural issues,
- regardless the level of proficiency, textbooks focus on very similar aspects of culture and little space is devoted to pragmatic issues,
- students' books do not help in developing linguistic and behavioural patterns of a target culture,
- learning from textbooks is not enough to behave naturally towards people of a target culture,
- the best method to learn about a foreign language culture is a direct contact with that culture, so books should contain more authentic materials, as they seem to be the best carriers of cultural background in the environment of L1 culture,
- textbooks do not make it possible to acquire the knowledge in the scope of pragmatic aspects of culture,
- learning about culture helps learners enrich general knowledge, improve communication skills and develop intellectually,
- learners agree that the sooner people start learning about culture the better,
- using the knowledge about culture is necessary when having contact with a target culture (by means of interactions or travels), that is when pragmatic aspects are of essential meaning.

To sum up, theory cannot replace the practice as far as learning a foreign language is taken into consideration, so students' books should contain as much

authentic materials as possible. Revising the content of the textbooks is necessary in order to avoid unfavourable opinions about them, but also to enable learners to acquire sufficient knowledge about foreign languages in the scope of pragmatics.

References

Adaskou K, Britten D, Fahsi B (1990) Design decisions on the cultural content of a secondary English course for Morocco. ELT J 44(1):3–10
Armaşu VD (2007, 2008) Pragmatic awareness and spoken discourse skills. Lingua 6-7:107–126
Bachman LF (1990) Fundamental considerations in language testing. Oxford University Press, Oxford
Barron A (2003) Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics. JohnBenjamins Publishing Company, Philadelphia
Brown HD (1994) Principles of language learning and teaching. Prentice Hall Regents, New Jersey, USA
Byram M, Morgan C (1994) Teaching and learning language and culture. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters
Cakir I (2006) Developing cultural awareness in foreign language teaching. Turkish Online J Distance Edu 7(3):154–161
Lado R (1963) Linguistics across cultures. The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor
Lessard-Clouston M (1997) Towards an understanding of culture in foreign language education. Internet TESL J 3(5):1–12
Morain GG (1986) Kinesics and cultural understanding. In: Valdes JM (ed) Culture bound: bridging the cultural gap in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 64–76
Mrowa-Hopkins C, Strambi A (2005) How angry can you be in French and Italian? Integrating research and teaching for the development of pragmatic competence in L2 classrooms. Flinders Univ Lang Group Online Rev 2(2):48–62
Olshtein E (1989) Apologies across languages. In: Blum-Kulka S, House J, Kasper G (eds) Cross-cultural pragmatics: requests and apologies. Ablex, Norwood, NJ, pp 155–173
Peterson E, Bronwyn C (2003) Culture in second language teaching. Online document: http://www.cal.org
Rosaldo MZ (1984) Toward an anthropology of self and feeling. In: Schweder RA, LeVine RA (eds) Culture theory: essays on mind, self, and emotion. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp 137–157
Tang R (1999) The place of culture in the foreign language classroom: a reflection. Internet TESL J 5(8):1–2
Trivonovitch G (1980) Culture learning and culture teaching in K. croft readings of English as a second language. Withrop Publishers Inc, Cambridge, Mass

Research Material

Adventures pre-intermediate/Ben Wetz. Oxford: OUP, 2008
Blueprint One/Brian Abbs, Ingrid Freebairn England. Longman, 1990
Blueprint Two/Brian Abbs, Ingrid Freebairn England. Longman, 1990
Headway intermediate/John Soars, Liz Soars 12th ed..–Oxford. OUP, 1991
Headway pre-intermediate/John Soars, Liz Soars 12th ed.–Oxford. OUP, 1991
Headway upper-intermediate/John Soars, Liz Soars 12th ed..–Oxford. OUP, 1991
Language in use intermediate/Adrian Doff, Christopher Jones. Cambridge: CUP, 1996

Language to go intermediate/Araminta Crace. Longman, 2002
Language to go pre-intermediate/Gillie Cunningham. Longman, 2002
Language to go upper-intermediate/Antonia Clare, Longman 2002
Language to go elementary/Simon le Maistre. Longman, 2002
Meridian Plus 1/Jeremy Harmer England. Longman, 1990
Meridian Plus 2/Jeremy Harmer England. Longman, 1990
Meridian Plus 3/Jeremy Harmer; Steve Elsworth England. Longman, 1990
Opportunities intermediate/Michael Harris, David Mower, Anna Sikorzyńska. Longman, 2003
Opportunities pre-intermediate/Michael Harris, David Mower, Anna Sikorzyńska. Longman, 2002
Opportunities upper-intermediate/Michael Harris, David Mower, Anna Sikorzyńska. Longman, 2003
Powerhouse/David Evans Edinburgh Gate. Pearson Education International, 2004
Powerhouse/Peter Strutt Edinburgh Gate. Pearson Education International, 2004
Total English/J.J Wilson, Antonia Clare Edinburgh Gate. Pearson Education Ltd, 2007
The New Cambridge English Course/Desmond O'Sullivan; Michael Swan; Catherine Walter Cambridge. Polity Press 1993
The New Cambridge English Course/Michael Swan; Catherine Walter Cambridge. CUP, 1994
The New Cambridge English course/Michael Swan, Catherine Walter Fourth printing.– Cambridge. CUP 1993
Twist !/Rob Nolasco Oxford. Oxford University Press, 2001

Chapter 20
Strangers in Paradise: The Role of Target Language Culture in Foreign Language Teaching Materials

Marek Derenowski

Abstract Coursebooks used in the foreign language (FL) instruction are primarily designed to facilitate language learning, but they cannot do just that since language learning is inseparable from its cultural context. As Cunningsworth states, "A study of language solely as an abstract system would not equip learners to use it in the real world" (Cunningsworth, Choosing your coursebook. Heinemann, Oxford, p 86, 1995). For that reason, it is usually expected that FL teaching materials (TM) that the language teachers select should include elements of the target language culture. The extent and ways of incorporating cultural aspects in FL instruction vary in different TM, and therefore it is important for the FL teacher to know what to look for in a particular language textbook in order to decide if it is suitable for attaining the aforementioned goals. It seems that the language teachers are often unaware of the cultural 'richness' of the target language culture and the possible benefits it brings to the language students. The chapter investigates the role of culture in FL instruction in terms of the cultural content of the TM used in secondary education as well as the teachers' awareness of the cultural content of the coursebooks they select and later use with their learners.

Keywords Coursebooks · Teaching materials · Culture content · Secondary education

M. Derenowski (✉)
Adam Mickiewicz University, Kalisz, Poland
e-mail: dereno@icpnet.pl

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8_20,

20.1 Introduction

Coursebooks which are used nowadays in the foreign language (FL) classroom are mainly designed to facilitate foreign language learning, but they cannot simply do that since language learning is inseparable from its cultural context. As Cunningsworth (1995, p. 86) states, "A study of language solely as an abstract system would not equip learners to use it in the real world". Just for that reason, it is usually expected that FL teaching materials (TM) that the language teachers choose should include elements of the target language culture. The extent and ways of incorporating cultural aspects in FL instruction may vary in different teaching materials, and therefore it is important for the foreign language teacher to know what to focus on in a particular language textbook in order to decide if it may be suitable for attaining the aforementioned goals. As Nieto (2009, p. 3) writes: "language and culture have not always been linked, either conceptually or pragmatically. But this is changing, as numerous schools and colleges are beginning to reflect a growing awareness of their intersections, and of the promise they hold for rethinking teaching and learning".

However, it seems that the foreign language teachers are often unaware or simply decide to ignore the existing cultural richness and diversity of the target language culture and the possible benefits it may bring to their foreign language students. The current article investigates the role of the target language culture in the foreign language instruction in terms of the cultural content of the teaching materials used in foreign language education as well as the teachers' awareness of the cultural content of the coursebooks they select and later use with their learners.

20.2 Defining the Cultural Content in Foreign Language Learning

One of the most difficult problems confronting FL teachers is the choice of adequate instructional materials. What should students learn about a foreign language culture to be able to function in that culture? Different authors present various suggestions concerning the cultural content of foreign language teaching materials. In order to answer the above-mentioned question, it is essential to examine some ways in which culture may be reflected in textbooks. Moran (2001, pp. 15–18) offers four categories where culture is identified as:

- knowing about, relating to cultural information—facts about products, practices and perspectives of the target culture as well as students' own;
- knowing how, referring to cultural practices in the everyday life of the people of the target culture;
- knowing why, constituting an understanding of fundamental cultural perspectives—beliefs, values and attitudes;

- knowing oneself, concerning the individual learners' self-awareness. In other words, students need to understand themselves and their own culture as a means to comprehending the target language culture.

The treatment of the cultural content in FL materials should also include the analysis, comparison and contrast, which is more in keeping with the comparative method suggested by many scholars (Pulverness 1995). "One of the aims of the foreign language classroom is the development of the learners' awareness of intercultural issues and their ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations and contexts, given the increasingly international nature of contemporary life. In order for this to happen, learners need first to acquire knowledge about the target language community and then they need to reflect on their own culture in relation to other cultures" (McKay 2002, p. 83).

20.3 The Study

20.3.1 The Aim of the Study

As it has been said so far, teachers play a significant role in selecting and evaluating coursebooks and other teaching materials for the purpose of developing students' Intercultural Communicative Competence. The preliminary aim of the research was to evaluate the teaching materials used by language teachers in the language classroom through the intercultural perspective. It tired to find out if the language teachers were aware of the potential benefits of incorporating target language culture elements into their language teaching materials. Additionally the author conducted the study in order to investigate the extent to which teaching materials (TM) selected by the language teachers included a focus on each of the following areas:

- *The rationale behind FL teaching materials' design*, namely correspondence between the aims and goals of the TM (teaching materials) and the students' conceptual framework; correspondence between the aims of the TM and the students' needs and goals; topics suitability as determined by students' age, gender, environment and social setting; and explicit/implicit statement of the goal of cultural instruction.
- *Cultural content of the TM*, that is culturally sensitive versus tourism-oriented portrayal of the cultural character of the foreign society; integration of the cultural content into the FL course; and the nature of the TM character representation with regard to its age, social class, interests, mentality and family situation.
- *Presentation of content through cultural knowledge*, that is inclusion of the historical, geographical, political, ideological, religious and creative arts perspectives to explain the national identity of the target language community; portrayal of different ethnic origins and sub-cultural groups; presentation of socio-political problems, socially acceptable or taboo topics as well as cultural/racial/gender stereotypes; and reference to the learners' own culture.

- *Presentation of content through attitudinal perspective*, that is development of tolerance and empathy towards otherness as well as a feeling of the national identity; challenging the learners' existing stereotypes; arousing curiosity about otherness; and preparing students for an adequate behaviour in the target language.
- *Presentation of content through intercultural perspective*, that is encouraging learners to compare the foreign culture with their own; and offering mutual representations, images and stereotypes of the students' own and the foreign culture.
- *Presentation of content through culture-and-language perspective*, that is development of students' linguistic as well as paralinguistic awareness; teaching appropriate register; and authenticity of the material used in the texts, exercises, tapes, etc.

20.3.2 Participants

Thirty one teachers form Konin schools, took part in the study. There were twenty nine female teachers and only two male teachers. The study included eleven novice teachers, fourteen contract teachers, four appointed teachers, and two certified teachers. The majority of them had teaching experience ranging from 0 to 5 years (19 teachers). Six teachers taught for 6–10 years, two teachers had 10–15 teaching experience, and four teachers taught for more than 16 years. Twenty four teachers had more than 18 h per week and the remaining seven performed from 5 to 17 h per week. Eleven teachers were primary school teachers, nine worked in junior high school, and eleven were senior high school teachers.

20.3.3 Instrument

The data presented below was obtained with the use of a survey (Sect. 20.5, Appendix 1) distributed among thirty one English language teachers. The questionnaire was based on the survey presented by Kjartansson and Skopinskaja (2003), from the European Centre for Modern Languages and included twenty nine statements and was divided into six parts. Each part of the questionnaire focused on the selected aspect related to incorporating target language culture into language teaching materials (TM). Section A focused on the rationale behind incorporating target language culture into TM; namely aims, goals, and interests of the teaching materials. Cultural content was the content of section B, whereas section C focused on the content presentation (knowledge). Section D investigated the concept of attitudes, whereas section E was related to intercultural awareness, and section F examined the relationship between the culture and language. All the statements in the survey included a scale from 0 to 4, where "0" corresponded to "not at all", "1" to "not really", "2" to "to some extent", "3" to "to a large extent", and "4" to "completely". The obtained results were later put into a table (Sect. 20.6, Appendix 2).

20.3.4 Presentation and Discussion of the Results

As mentioned earlier, Section A of the questionnaire meant to find out, first, the correspondence of the aims, goals and topics variety of the utilized teaching materials (TM) to the conceptual framework as well as the needs and interests of the students; and second, the extent to which the goals of the cultural instruction are stated in the TM design. The figures in the statistical tables show that a majority of teachers rate their manuals' rationale as corresponding to their learners' conceptual framework.

The highest average score was achieved by primary school teachers (2.63) whereas the lowest average score was achieved by senior high school teachers (1.63). The average for all types of schools was above 50% and reached 2.19. One may wonder if the score could be higher, however, it has to be mentioned that the teachers may not be fully competent to evaluate the rationale behind their coursebooks and their experience and knowledge may not be sufficient enough to make proficient judgments. The lowest score for the senior high school may result from the fact that teachers in senior high school focus primarily on preparing students for the final exam, thus not devoting to much attention to conceptual framework of their students.

Likewise, the responses to the statement A2 reveal considerable correspondence of the goals of the TM to the learners' needs with the overall average 2.59. Again the highest average 2.72 was for the primary school teachers. The high average for this statement is not very surprising as the coursebooks that are present on the Polish educational market typically correspond with students' needs which are quite homogeneous. If they do not, teachers can always design their own materials that would nicely fulfill students' needs. As to the topics suitability for the interests of the students, as determined by their age, gender, environment and social setting, the figures show that TM are similar in this respect, most of them scoring well above "2" (to some extent). The age had the highest average (2.79), which again seems quite natural since the coursebooks are designed for specific age groups. When it comes to the statement A4, it seems that cultural goals are not that clearly stated with the average being only 1.96. Low average does not have to result from the actual lack of explicitly stated culture goals but it may be again the result of the teachers' lack of sufficient experience in evaluating coursebooks from intercultural perspective.

Section B of the questionnaire was concerned with the cultural content. Although materials are often seen as an important means of FLL, this is not their primary function, since language is used in real-life situations for real purposes. Teaching materials can hardly contribute to this process by including only tourism-oriented situations or isolated facts of the cultural content. The amount of such material seems to be still considerable among TM. With the reference to question 1B, concerned with the extent to which TM reflected the cultural character of foreign society, the overall average was 2.29. When it comes to teaching English the issue of the target language culture seems to be a little problematic since there are many countries where English is spoken. Teachers often decide to focus on British and American culture as they seem to be the most prominent.

However, nowadays students are exposed to a variety of target language cultures and it is to a large extent teachers' responsibility to make the students aware about the diversity of TL cultures. Discovering TL cultures may also be a great opportunity for developing learners' autonomy by letting them to find more and present it to the rest of the class. According to teachers culture is also well integrated with the course (B2) since the average for this question was 2.42. Similarly, teachers admitted that the characters in the TM were representative of the foreign society in all the aspects, including age, social class, interests, mentality, and family situation. Here the average for age was above "3" (to large extent), whereas other factors scored above "2".

Section C was designed to find out how well TM cross the so-called 'subject boundaries' by including knowledge, namely material on the historical, geographical, political, ideological, etc., perspectives in order to convey the national identity of the target language community. Except for question C5, concerned with the variety of cultures, all the other questions had the average below "2". According to the teachers taking part in the study teaching materials did not include issues related to national identity, religion, politics, art, subcultures, taboo topics, and students' own culture. Maybe the emphasis of most TM on communicative skills training results in students' lack of information about socially acceptable as opposed to taboo topics as well as cultural/racial/gender stereotypes.

Such neglect of social acceptability issues on the part of coursebook authors may lead to social misdemeanors of students in real-life situations and, even worse, to stereotyping and prejudice. Even if the coursebooks do not include such information it is the teachers' obligation to include them in the course curriculum. Of course some of the issues will be determined by such factors as age of the learners, their proficiency level or their knowledge of the world. However, learners need to broaden their horizons and language lessons seem to be a perfect opportunity to do so. At the same time teachers have to be aware of the fact that some of the topics e.g., religion or taboo topics need to be 'handled with care' and require careful preparation and cautious presentation in the language classroom. If done so, they can create a unique opportunity and context for the development of not only language skills but also students' motivation, autonomy and most importantly their world view. Additionally, low average for incorporating elements of the native language culture proves that international TM do not always succeed in making their texts and tasks locally appropriate. Such a situation may also be the result of teachers' insufficient knowledge of their own culture.

Understanding a foreign language culture always entails a change of some of one's attitudes. It seems that TM tend to incorporate tourism-oriented situations and lack problematic, or even negative social and cultural, aspects of the foreign language society. Therefore, the focus of Section D aimed to explore the role of the teaching materials in developing a better understanding and tolerance of 'others'. Often called by Cunningsworth (1995) "the hidden curriculum", this dimension has an important impact on the formation of the learners' internal value system. What can be seen from the statistical tables is that the teaching materials scored well on questions D1, D2, D5, and D6 which indicates the development of

tolerance toward otherness, empathy, preparation for adequate behavior when in contact with members of other cultures as well as curiosity awakening about otherness. By contrast, the low scores of teaching materials on questions D3 and D4 may suggest their relative inadequacy to develop the students' tolerance/empathy towards national identity as well as to challenge their existing stereotypes. The relative inadequacy towards national identity corresponds with the statement from previous section concerning lack of L1 culture in the teaching materials. If the learners are to become more open towards otherness and tolerant teachers must provide them with the opportunities co compare and contrast their L1 culture and the target language cultures.

Section E tackled the presence of intercultural awareness in the TM. The FLL process involves learners in comparison, since whenever one encounters a foreign language culture, one attempts to understand it in terms of his/her own cultural background. Rather than focusing learners' attention on a foreign language culture only, the learners should also be encouraged to consider mutual representations of their own and the foreign culture. Teaching materials incorporated in the course curriculum should offer students the opportunity to reflect on their own culture as seen from the outside. When it comes to encouraging the students to compare L1 culture and the target language culture the overall average was as high as 2.37. By contrast, mutual representations of the students' own and foreign culture seems to be inadequately reflected with the average 1.64.

In the section F, the analysis of the culture-and-language dimension, as reflected in the materials' structure, shows teaching materials' failure to develop students' awareness of paralinguistic means and relative inadequacy to teach students appropriate register, with question F1 overall average as low as 1.93, whereas question F2 had even lower average of 1.77. There also seems to be a relative inadequacy to teach students appropriate register (1.96), which is quite surprising because coursebooks, especially those for senior high school do include specific, well organized sections designed for practicing style and register (mainly for writing). Finally, it seems that according to teachers the materials used in the texts, exercises, tapes, etc., are considered to be quite authentic with the average 2.26. Of course one may wonder to what extent a Polish teacher with Polish students in the Polish classroom can be authentic. Nevertheless, nowadays the access to authentic materials seems to be limited only by the teachers' creativity and motivation. Incorporating authentic materials into the language classroom provides a unique opportunity for the development of students' intercultural competence as well as their autonomy and motivation.

20.4 Conclusions

The study tried to equip language teachers with a tool for evaluating FL coursebooks and review language teachers' attitudes concerning target language culture teaching with various foreign language teaching materials. Although the material

presented in most teaching materials serves the purpose of making students conscious of selected aspects of culture, either target culture or their own; the second—comparative stage—should be highlighted. Students should be made aware that different cultures provide different cultural frameworks. Through the process of comparison and contrast learners will gain access to more diverse ways of seeing the world, develop their worldview, as well as understand better their own culture. They will become culture learners, less ethnocentric, and more culturally relativist. Clearly, FL teachers will find it worth considering intercultural practices in their educational context. Such skills and knowledge seem indispensable in the modern world around us.

Additionally some positive and negative trends can be observed in relation to the cultural content in foreign language teaching materials. There seems to be an increase in attempts to include intercultural activities and create reality in coursebook texts by including serious social issues. Apart from the coursebooks, teachers can and should use a variety of authentic materials and involve students in presentations concerning the target language culture. What is more, one can also notice an attempt to personalize the FLL process by providing opportunities for exchanges of views. Contemporary coursebooks include a large range of accents and voices which provides good listening practice as well as a variety of genres and text types.

However there are also negative trends. For example, one may notice a subordination of the goal of culture teaching to other goals, especially communicative ones and an excessive focus on language form, and the neglect of intercultural communication. Teachers too often focus on the examination needs neglecting the target language culture knowledge. It is especially relevant in the Polish educational context. It is rather alarming because culture provides a perfect authentic context for practicing language skills. Other negative trends may be the absence of controversial social issues in texts and activities and tourism-oriented representation of the cultural character of the foreign society. The language classroom is a perfect place to look closer at some controversial topics that are not discussed elsewhere. Teachers should devote some time to prepare the lessons carefully in order to avoid simplifications and stereotypical opinions. During such lessons students will not only develop their language skills but also their worldview. Looking closer at the culture content in the foreign teaching materials one can also notice stereotypical representation of target cultures as well as the students' own culture. Stereotypes are to some extent unavoidable but teachers should try to present the positive stereotypes and avoid the negative examples of stereotypical images of the target language culture.

20.5 Appendix 1

Please read the following questions and tick (☑) your answer.

1) Gender: male ☐ female ☐

2) The degree of teacher career:

☐ novice teacher ☐ contract teacher ☐ appointed teacher ☐ certified teacher

3) Years of teaching experience:

☐ 0-5(years) ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 16 and more

4) Number of hours per week:

☐ 0-9 ☐ 10-18☐ more than 18

5) Type of school you teach in

☐ Primary ☐ Junior high ☐ Senior high

6) Name of the coursebook you use…….

Teaching Materials Evaluation Guide (coursebooks, workbooks/activity books, cassettes, CDs, videotapes, teacher manuals) cultural content. Rating scale:

☐ 4 Completely ☐ 3 To a large extent ☐ 2 To some extent ☐ 1 Not really ☐ 0 Not at all please tick

A. Rationale: aims, goals and interests of the teaching materials

1. To what extent are the aims and goals of the TM (teaching materials) geared to the conceptual framework of the students (as determined by their age, social class, cultural background)?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent do the aims and goals of the TM correspond to the needs and goals of the students?

4 3 2 1 0

3. To what extent do the TM cover a variety of topics suitable to the interests of the students, as determined by their

a) age 4 3 2 1 0

b) sex (female/male) 4 3 2 1 0

c) environment (rural/urban) 4 3 2 1 0

d) social setting 4 3 2 1 0

4. To what extent is the goal of the cultural instruction stated (for example, if it is primary to other goals, give a 3 or 4, if secondary, give a 1 or 0)?

4 3 2 1 0

B. Cultural content

1. To what extent do the TM reflect the cultural character of the foreign society?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent is the cultural content integrated in the course?

4 3 2 1 0

3. To what extent are the characters in the TM representative of the foreign society with regard to,

a) their age	4	3	2	1	0
b) their social class	4	3	2	1	0
c) their interests	4	3	2	1	0
d) their mentality	4	3	2	1	0
e) their family situation	4	3	2	1	0

C. Presentation of content: knowledge

1. To what extent is the historical perspective present to explain the national identity of the target language culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent is the geographical perspective present to explain certain features of the national character of the target language culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

3. To what extent are the political (also ideological, and religious) perspectives of the target language culture(s) taken into consideration?

4 3 2 1 0

4. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the creative arts of the target language culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

5. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of cultures (for example, British, American, African)?

4 3 2 1 0

6. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of subcultural groups (namely, professions)?

4 3 2 1 0

7. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the socially acceptable or taboo topics of the target language culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

8. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the cultural/racial/gender stereotypes?

4 3 2 1 0

9. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the students' own culture?

4 3 2 1 0

10. To what extent do the TM offer insight into socio-political problems of the target language culture(s) (unemployment, pollution, etc.)?

4 3 2 1 0

D. Presentation of content: attitudes

1. To what extent does the TM develop tolerance towards otherness?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent does the TM develop empathy towards otherness?

4 3 2 1 0

3. To what extent does the TM challenge the students' existing stereotypes?

4 3 2 1 0

4. To what extent do the TM develop a feeling of the national identity (and an awareness of being a member of an international community as well)?

4 3 2 1 0

5. To what extent do the TM encourage curiosity about the other culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

6. To what extent do the TM prepare students to behave adequately when in contact with the members of other culture(s)?

4 3 2 1 0

E. Presentation of content: intercultural awareness

1. To what extent do the TM encourage students to compare the foreign culture with their own (namely, to observe and analyze similarities and differences between their own and the foreign culture)?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent do the TM offer mutual representations, images and stereotypes of the students' own and the foreign culture?

4 3 2 1 0

F. Presentation of content: culture and language

1. To what extent does the cultural context of the TM develop students' awareness of different linguistic means to express their attitudes?

4 3 2 1 0

2. To what extent do the TM develop students' awareness of the paralinguistic means to express their attitudes?

4 3 2 1 0

3. To what extent do the TM teach the register appropriate to the students' needs (formal-informal, slang, regional idioms)?

4 3 2 1 0

4. To what extent is the material used in the texts, exercises, tapes, etc., authentic?

4 3 2 1 0

20.6 Appendix 2

Questions	Overall	Primary	Junior high	Senior high
A. Rationale: aims, goals and interests of the teaching materials				
1. To what extent are the aims and goals of the TM (teaching materials) geared to the conceptual framework of the students	2.19	2.63	2.33	1.63
2. To what extent do the aims and goals of the TM correspond to the needs and goals of the students?	2.59	2.72	2.44	2.63
3. To what extent do the TM cover a variety of topics suitable to the interests of the students, as determined by their				
a) age	2.79	2.81	2.66	2.90
b) sex (female/male)	2.25	2.18	2.22	2.36
c) environment (rural/urban)	2.12	2.18	2.00	2.18
d) social setting (middle class)	2.17	2.36	1.88	2.27
4. To what extent is the goal of the cultural instruction stated?	1.96	2.18	2.00	1.72
B. Cultural content				
1. To what extent do the TM reflect the cultural character of the foreign society?	2.29	2.27	2.33	2.27
2. To what extent is the cultural content integrated in the course?	2.42	2.27	2.55	2.45
3. To what extent are the characters in the TM representative of the foreign society with regard to,				
a) their age	3.06	3.09	3.11	3.00
b) their social class	2.34	2.18	2.22	2.63
c) their interests	2.36	2.63	2.44	2.00
d) their mentality	2.30	2.36	2.66	1.90
e) their family situation	2.24	2.36	2.11	2.27
C. Presentation of content: knowledge				
1. To what extent is the historical perspective present to explain the national identity of the target language culture(s)?	1.60	1.54	1.55	1.72
2. To what extent is the geographical perspective present to explain certain features of the national character of the target language culture(s)?	1.73	1.63	2.11	1.45
3. To what extent are the political (also ideological, and religious) perspectives of the target language culture(s) taken into consideration?	1.12	1.09	1.11	1.18
4. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the creative arts of the target language culture(s)?	1.78	1.36	2.55	1.45
5. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of cultures (for example, British, American, African)?	2.19	1.81	2.33	2.45
6. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of subcultural groups ?	1.63	1.18	2.00	1.72
7. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the socially acceptable or taboo topics of the target language culture(s)?	1.29	1.18	1.33	1.36
8. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the cultural/racial/gender stereotypes?	1.62	1.63	1.44	1.81
9. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the students' own culture?	1.76	1.90	1.66	1.72

10. To what extent do the TM offer insight into socio-political problems of the target language culture(s) (unemployment, pollution, etc.)?	1.72	1.18	1.44	2.54
D. Presentation of content: attitudes				
1. To what extent do the TM develop tolerance towards otherness?	2.16	2.27	2.11	2.09
2. To what extent do the TM develop empathy towards otherness?	2.06	2.00	2.11	2.09
3. To what extent do the TM challenge the students' existing stereotypes?	1.70	1.81	1.22	2.09
4. To what extent do the TM develop a feeling of the national identity (and an awareness of being a member of an international community as well)?	1.68	1.81	1.33	1.90
5. To what extent do the TM encourage curiosity about the other culture(s)?	2.30	2.45	2.00	2.45
6. To what extent do the TM prepare students to behave adequately when in contact with the members of other culture(s)?	2.15	2.09	2.55	1.81
E. Presentation of content: intercultural awareness				
1. To what extent do the TM encourage students to compare the foreign culture with their own?	2.37	2.63	2.22	2.27
2. To what extent do the TM offer mutual representations, images and stereotypes of the students' own and the foreign culture?	1.64	2.09	1.55	1.27
F. Presentation of content: culture and language				
1. To what extent does the cultural context of the TM develop students' awareness of different linguistic means to express their attitudes?	1.93	1.54	2.00	2.27
2. To what extent do the TM develop students' awareness of the paralinguistic means to express their attitudes?	1.77	1.72	1.66	1.90
3. To what extent do the TM teach the register appropriate to the students' needs (formal-informal, slang, regional idioms)?	1.96	2.00	1.88	2.00
4. To what extent is the material used in the texts, exercises, tapes, etc., authentic?	2.26	2.54	1.88	2.36

References

Cunningsworth A (1995) Choosing your coursebook. Heinemann, Oxford

Kjartansson R, Skopinskaja L (2003) Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in language teacher education. European Centre for Modern Languages Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg

McKay SL (2002) Teaching English as an international language:rethinking goals and approaches. Oxford University Press, Oxford

Moran PR (2001) Teaching culture: perspectives in practice. Heinle and Heinle, Boston, Mass

Nieto S (2009) Language, culture and teaching—critical perspectives. Routledge, New York

Pulverness A (1995) Cultural studies, British studies and EFL. Mod Engl Teach 4(2):7–11

Index

J. Arabski and A. Wojtaszek (eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, Second Language Learning and Teaching,
DOI: 10.1007/978-3-642-20201-8, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2011