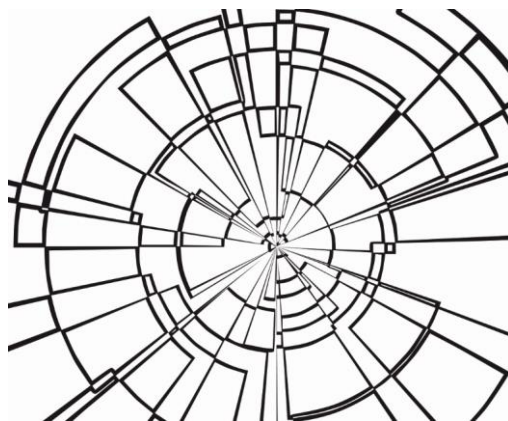


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Language World

A BUDAPESTI GAZDASÁGI EGYETEM
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SZAKMAI KIADVÁNYA

PERIODICAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
COMMUNICATION OF THE BUDAPEST BUSINESS SCHOOL



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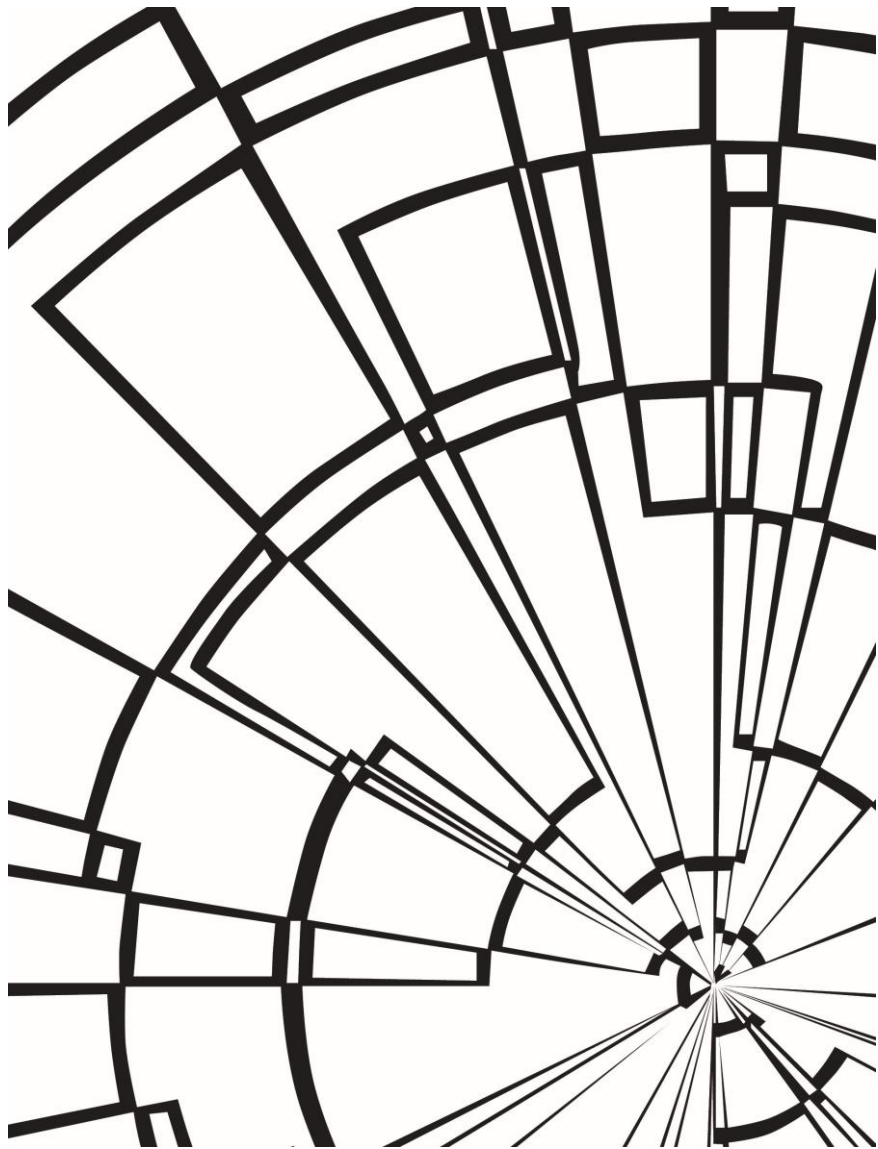
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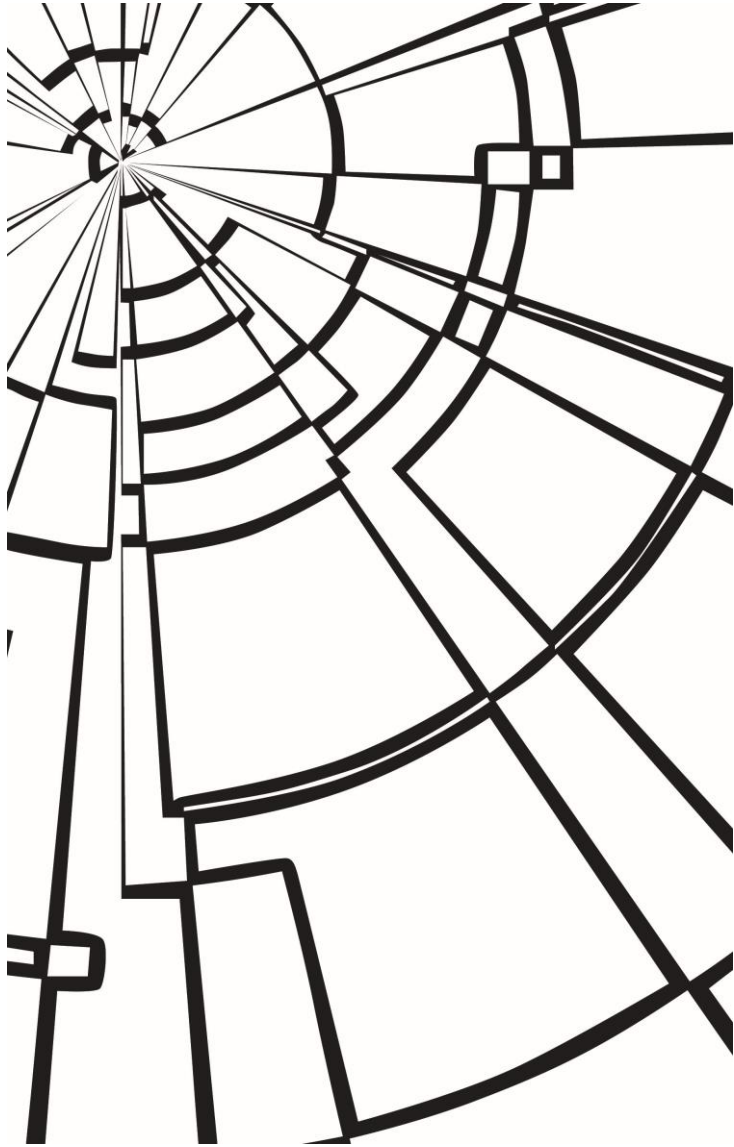
Foreword

Intercultural encounters may have been limited to narrow segments of business people and experts such as scientists or artists in the past but in the last few decades they have become an everyday reality for people in all walks of life. In an increasingly globalised world of intercultural dialogue we all face challenges such as communication barriers rooted in cultural stereotypes, prejudice, lack of knowledge and misunderstandings due to language deficiency. Enhancing multilingualism in Europe is a target established long ago, however, foreign language knowledge is not the only factor in efficient communication and cooperation. Even more important are intercultural awareness, sensitivity and intercultural competences that are clearly defined in EU documents as a key competence to deal with the social, political and economic changes resulting from European integration, globalisation and recent migrations. It is also a key competence for educational and labour mobility and effective integration in competitive job markets, which explains why most institutions in higher education – especially in the field of business studies – include intercultural studies in their curricula as well.

The present volume presents fourteen papers each focussing on a different aspect of interculturality, thus providing a valuable overview of the different approaches to developing and enhancing intercultural education and the ways the inter- or multicultural nature of education may contribute to the learners' personal and professional growth.

Ágnes Loch

Head of the Institute of Foreign Languages and Communication
Budapest Business School



Verbal and non-verbal intercultural communication barriers of international students in Hungary

TÜNDE BAJZÁT

University of Miskolc

In present day Hungary the number of study abroad programs and student mobility is growing at a rapid pace. Students from different cultural backgrounds and with different mother tongues have to face several cultural challenges and difficulties in the new host country and academic environment that might result in misunderstandings or conflicts and can lead to negative experiences. Therefore the present study analyzes the verbal and non-verbal intercultural communication barriers experienced by international students in Hungary.

Keywords: intercultural communication, student mobility, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, barriers of communication

Introduction

Globalization, advances in communication technology, educational and labour mobility, the internationalization of higher education require people to understand cultural differences and communicate across cultural borders. Intercultural communication occurs when “[...] a message produced in one culture must be processed in another culture” (Porter and Samovar, 1997: 8). This circumstance is quite problematic because, “[...] culture forges and shapes the individual communicator” (Porter and Samovar, 1997: 21). Due to the differences that interlocutors have to face with intercultural communication misunderstandings, problems or even conflicts can arise. If someone cannot function well in another culture, it can be a physically and mentally stressful, and disappointing experience. Therefore the aim of this paper is to find out the intercultural communication barriers of international students at a university in northern Hungary. The first part of the paper presents the theoretical background, method, setting and subjects of the research. The second part focuses on the results of the empirical study.

The theoretical background of the research

Intercultural communication involves speakers of different cultural backgrounds with different mother tongues, therefore they can communicate by using the mother tongue of speaker A, or the mother tongue of speaker B, or they can choose a third language. In the first case speaker A is at an advantage over speaker B both at linguistic and cultural levels; and speaker B is at a disadvantage. In the second case speaker B is at an advantage over speaker A. In the third case both speakers are faced with different linguistic and cultural differences and difficulties, because they “... bring their own sociocultural expectations of language to the encounter. Speakers’ expectations shape the interpretation of meaning in a variety of ways” (Bowe and Martin, 2007: 1). Due to these differences in language usage communication may result in misunderstandings or even conflicts. In order to find out the differences and the barriers of intercultural communication several research studies have been carried out. Barna’s research showed that there are six stumbling blocks in intercultural communication, and the greatest barrier is verbal communication. Vocabulary, syntax, idioms, slang and accents can cause difficulties and can create barriers to communication. A worse language problem is when someone clings to just one meaning of a word or phrase in the new language, regardless of the context or connotation (Barna, 1997).

Keles (2013) conducted his study among 10 European exchange students from the Erasmus program, who studied at the University of Mugla in Turkey. His research proved that not sharing a common language meant verbal barriers in the classroom and also in everyday life, because the participants experienced that most of the Turkish people did not speak English well and the exchange students did not speak Turkish. Eginli (2016) carried out her study at the University of Ege, Turkey, where 6 exchange students from Azerbaijan, Greece, Lithuania, Poland and Russia took part in the face to face in-depth interviews. Her findings indicated that students faced three barriers of communication. First of all, expressions in Turkish culture are more indirect and these indirect expressions lead to misunderstandings. Secondly, culture has an effect on our daily lives and international students had problems about accommodation and the university, which they could not solve. The third problem was English as a language factor, because most of the international students had to speak English in their daily lives and not having enough English speakers on or off the campus meant a challenge for them.

Mahmud, Amat, Rahman and Ishak (2010) conducted their study of group interviews among 30 international students at the National University of Malaysia. The medium of instruction is English and Bahasa Melayu at Malaysian universities. Their research proved that the greatest challenge for international students was speaking and understanding English and Bahasa Melayu, as well as the local dialect and slangs. Some of the participants had the experience that Malaysian people did not speak English, which made communication difficult or sometimes impossible. Suseela and Poovaikarasi (2011) carried out their questionnaire study among 250 international students at five major private universities in Malaysia. Their results showed that speaking English was one of the adjustment problems and students felt that language was the basis for all the difficulties they faced.

However, the above mentioned stumbling blocks can also appear in non-verbal communication, since it is closely related to verbal communication, but can often overshadow it. Both verbal and non-verbal communication are coding systems that people learn and pass on as part of the cultural experience (Porter and Samovar, 1997). Non-verbal communication comprises the following topics: physical appearance (attire), proxemics (space and distance), chronemics (time), kinesics (facial expressions, movement and gestures), haptics (touch), oculosics (eye contact and gaze) and vocalics (paralanguage) (Andersen, 2012).

The first concept of non-verbal communication is physical appearance, which is the most obvious nonverbal code and covers the stable physical features of human beings and the strategic use of artefacts associated with appearance. During initial encounters these elements play a crucial role. Blue jeans and business suits have become accepted attire worldwide, but clothing may signal one's culture, religion or an occupation (Andersen, 2012). The second element of non-verbal communication is proxemics, which was developed by Hall (1969). Proxemics describes how close one person gets to another person when talking to them. Hall differentiated four distance zones, such as intimate, personal, social and public distance. Intimate distance (0-50 cm) is for wrestling, comforting, embracing, protecting, touching or whispering. Personal distance (50-100 cm) is for interactions among family members or good friends. Social distance (1-4 m) is for communication of acquaintances, impersonal business and social discourse are conducted at this distance. Public distance (4 m or more) is used for public speaking, but it is not restricted to public figures it can be used by anyone on public occasions. People in different cultures have different proxemic patterns, for example Arab males sit closer to each other than American males, and with more direct, confrontational types of body orientations. Latin Americans interact more closely than Europeans, and Indonesians sit closer than Australians (Matsumoto, 2006). The third feature of non-verbal communication is chronemics, which is the study of meanings, usage and communication of time. Hall (1969) differentiated cultures as monochronic and polychronic. Monochronism means doing one thing at a time, people compartmentalize time, they schedule one thing at a time and become

disoriented if they have to deal with too many things at once. Time is viewed as a commodity that can be spent, saved, used wisely or wasted. On the other hand people in polychronic cultures do several things simultaneously. In intercultural communication, for example monochronic northern Europeans find the constant interruptions of polychronic southern Europeans unbearable, since nothing seems to ever get done. The fourth concept of non-verbal communication is kinesics, which include facial expressions, body movements and gestures. Facial expressions of emotion across cultures show that these expressions contain such nonverbal signs that identify the expresser's culture (Andersen, 2012). For example for Japanese people facial expressions reflect social balance, they do not show any significant emotion through public facial displays. A smile is part of the social etiquette, aimed at sustaining harmony, and it can indicate happiness, a friendly acknowledgment, mask negative emotions or used to avoid conflict (McDaniel, 1997). Gestures differ in meaning, extensiveness and intensity. Gestures can signal endearment or warmth in one culture, but may be an obscene or insulting sign in another culture (Andersen, 1997). The fifth element of non-verbal communication is haptics. It also shows considerable intercultural variation, for example in Germany both men and women shake hands at every social encounter, but in the USA women are less likely to shake hands. In Vietnam men do not shake hands with women or the elderly unless the woman or the elderly offers the hand first. In Thailand people do not touch in public, and touching someone on the head is considered to be a major social violation (Porter and Samovar, 1997). The sixth feature of non-verbal communication is oculosics, which is the study of the messages sent by the eyes. In the USA people maintain a good eye contact while communicating with someone, however in Asian countries eye contact is a sign of disrespect. Eyes can express feelings as well, the meaning of eye widening is culturally diverse, for example it indicates anger in China, a request for help or assistance in Latin-America, and a persuasive effect for African Americans (Porter and Samovar, 1997). The Arabs gaze much longer and more directly at their partners than Americans do (Matsumoto, 2006). The seventh concept of non-verbal communication is vocalics or paralanguage, which includes all the nonverbal elements of voice. Cultures with strong oral traditions speak with more passion, for example African Americans and Jews; Italians and Greeks talk more and talk louder than Asians do (Andersen, 2012). Japanese people use silence to express hierarchy, social balance and empathy. Silence is considered to be a virtue and it is also a sign of respectability and trustworthiness (McDaniel, 1997).

The European exchange students in Keles' study experienced that proximity is different in Turkish culture, because European people need bigger distances during communication than Turkish people. Furthermore, the European students mentioned that eye contact is more direct and deep in Turkish culture than in European cultures and some gestures have different meanings in the two cultures (Keles, 2013).

The aim, method, setting and subjects of the research

The aim of the empirical study was to find out the differences and barriers of verbal and non-verbal intercultural communication of international students in Hungary and at a university in northern Hungary. It was hoped that on the basis of the findings, suggestions could be made on what changes should be carried out in Hungarian tertiary education to better satisfy the needs' and adaptation of international students and to help Hungarian students' preparation to study abroad. The analysed data are partial results of an empirical study. To obtain the research data non-probability sampling was chosen. It is used when probability sampling is difficult to achieve. Its disadvantage is that it does not involve random selection. Non-probability sampling may not represent the population well, therefore the sample cannot be considered to be representative of the examined population (Majoros, 2004). Nevertheless, in the present research non-probability sampling was used because doing research among international students who are unknown to the researcher is a difficult task, as the researcher has no means to convince the participants to take

part in the research. However, this method seemed to be the most suitable one and the individuals could decide whether to participate in the study or not.

The method of data collection was by questionnaire. The questionnaire in English contained closed and open-ended questions, as well as Likert scales. Closed questions were used, because they direct the respondents' thoughts, but at the same time they allow the researcher to compare the participants' answers and it is easy to process them. It is easier and quicker to answer closed questions. The disadvantages are the loss of spontaneity and expressiveness (Oppenheim, 2005). The closed questions were concerned with the participants' personal data, the exchange program in the framework of which they studied at the University of Miskolc, the Faculty and the program they attended at Miskolc University, the duration of their stay and whether it was the first time they had come to Hungary. On the other hand open ended questions give freedom to the respondents, let their thoughts roam freely, and free-response questions are expressed spontaneously. They are easy to ask, but difficult to answer them and even more difficult to analyse (Oppenheim, 2005). The open-ended questions enquired about the international students' experiences of the differences and difficulties of verbal and non-verbal intercultural communication concerning Hungarian and English as the language of communication, the participants' previous expectations, beliefs and opinions of Hungary and Hungarian people, their anxiety of studying abroad and if there were additional barriers to successful intercultural communication. Furthermore, the Likert scales aimed to measure how problematic the elements of verbal and non-verbal communication were for the international students and to find out the difficulties of studying and speaking Hungarian. However, the present paper only analyses some of the closed and open-ended questions concerning the differences and difficulties of verbal and non-verbal intercultural communication.

As a survey method the self-completion questionnaire was used, where the participants filled in the questionnaire, which they received by e-mail and then they sent it back to the researcher. The respondents completed the questionnaire voluntarily and their anonymity was assured. The study was conducted in the winter of 2016 at the University of Miskolc in northern Hungary, where international students, who previously attended or are presently studying at the different Faculties of the University, filled in the questionnaire in English. The international students studied at the University of Miskolc between September 2008 and January 2016. The questionnaire was sent out to 418 e-mail addresses and 67 international students (16%) answered the questions. Table 1 contains further information on the foreign students in question. We can see that a little more than half of the respondents (58%) are male; and almost half of them are male foreigners (42%). The table shows that the participants are quite young, their average age is 27.18 years, a third of them (37%) are between 21 and 25 years of age, nearly half of them (46%) are between 26 and 30 years of age, a few of them (14%) are between 31 and 35 years of age, and only 2 respondents (3%) are above 35. The table illustrates that half of the participants (52%) studied in Hungary in the framework of the Erasmus program, more than a third of the respondents (39%) arrived in Hungary with the help of the Stipendium Hungaricum program, and a few students (9%) came with the Brazilian Science Without Borders program. We can see that almost half of the participants (49%) attended a Bachelor's program at the University of Miskolc, more than a third of them (39%) studied on the Master's Program and a few of the foreigners (12%) went on a PhD program. The table also shows that almost a third of the respondents (28%) attended the Faculty of Economics at Miskolc University, a fifth of them (21%) chose the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science, some of them studied at the Faculty of Earth Science and Engineering (18%) and the Faculty of Materials Science and Engineering (17%), fewer participants attended the Faculty of Law (8%) and the Faculty of Arts (4%), and there were only a few of them who decided to study at the Faculty of Health Care Studies (3%) and Bartók Béla Institute of Music (1%). We can also see that nearly half of the respondents (46%) stayed in Hungary for one semester, more than a third of them (36%) studied at the University of Miskolc for two semesters, some of them

(15%) attended Miskolc University for four semesters, and only a few participants (3%) stayed for three semesters.

	Number of students	Percentage
Gender	Female: 28	42%
	Male: 39	58%
Age	average age: 27.18 years	---
	21-25 years: 25	37%
	26-30 years: 31	46%
	31-35 years: 9	14%
	above 35: 2	3%
Name of the exchange program	Brazilian Science Without Borders: 6	9%
	Erasmus: 35	52%
	Stipendium Hungaricum: 26	39%
Studied on	BSc program: 33	49%
	MSc program: 26	39%
	PhD program: 8	12%
Studied at the faculty of	Economics	28%
	Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science	21%
	Earth Science and Engineering	18%
	Materials Science and Engineering	17%
	Law	8%
	Arts	4%
	Health Care Studies	3%
	Bartók Béla Institute of Music	1%
Duration of stay	1 semester: 31	46%
	2 semesters: 24	36%
	3 semesters: 2	3%
	4 semesters: 10	15%

Table 1. The subjects of the research (n=67)

As far as the country of origin is concerned the participating students arrived from 22 different countries, mainly from Europe. Most of the students filling in the questionnaire came from Turkey (8 students) and Spain (7 students). Some of the participants arrived from Brazil (6 students), Iraq (5 students), Algeria (4 students), Italy (4 students), Nigeria (4 students), Ecuador (3 students), Germany (3 students), Greece (3 students), India (3 students), Lithuania (3 students), Bulgaria (2 students), China (2 students), Poland (2 students) and Romania (2 students). There was one student from each of the following countries: Colombia, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Vietnam. For most of the participants (89%) it was the first time they had come to Hungary, and only some of them (11%) had previously visited Hungary.

The results of the research

The following section presents the results of the research. The first part describes the barriers to verbal communication. The second part presents the differences and barriers to non-verbal communication.

The barriers to verbal communication

While attending the University of Miskolc the language of instruction for the majority of the international students (96%) was English, and only a few of them (4%) pursued their studies both in English and Hungarian. Before arriving in Hungary only five of the participants (7%) studied Hungarian, but most of them (62 students, 93%) had not. However, more than half of the respondents (41 students, 61%) learnt Hungarian during their stay in Hungary, and less than half of them (26 students, 39%) decided not to do so.

When the respondents were asked if they had had any problems during their stay in Hungary because they did not speak Hungarian, more than half of the participants (40 students, 60%) answered 'yes' to the question. Almost half of the students (42%) who complained about problems caused by their lack of Hungarian knowledge were those students who decided not to learn Hungarian, and more than half of them (58%) despite studying Hungarian during their stay wrote about experiencing problems. Due to their lack of Hungarian knowledge the international students mentioned 11 areas where they experienced some barriers to verbal communication: shopping (10 responses), not being understood (7 responses), asking for directions (6 responses), public transportation and buying a ticket (6 responses), communicating at the students' hostel (6 responses), visiting a doctor or being in hospital (5 responses), ordering food (3 responses), making friends (2 responses), finding out some information (2 responses), dating girls (1 response) and communicating with the elderly (1 response). We can see that due to their lack of Hungarian knowledge the international students experienced most of the barriers to verbal communication concerning shopping, which is expressed by a Chinese female participant: *"Shopping in Lidl was a problem, because I can't read, so actually I don't know what I should buy. Sometimes I bought strange commodity that I even don't know what it is."* A male student from Ecuador had a similar experience: *"I bought a kind of paprika sauce instead of ketchup, and horseradish sauce instead of mayonnaise."* Besides shopping, not being understood was the second greatest problem for the international students, about which a male participant from Iraq wrote the following: *"When the first time I arrived at the railway station in Budapest they could not understand me, which delayed me for more than one hour."* Asking for directions and using the public transport were the next areas where the respondents experienced some problems, which is well illustrated by a male student from Spain: *"I had some problems when using the public transport, since I could not communicate properly where I wanted to go, or if I needed to ask something in the street."* Quite a few participants wrote about the difficulties of communicating at the students' hostel, here is an example from an Algerian female participant: *"I have some problems to be understood at the hostel where I live, because no one speaks English, so when I have some problems in my room I need to call a friend who speaks Hungarian to help me."* Visiting a doctor or being in hospital was another area where the foreign students faced some communication problems and realized that speaking Hungarian was essential, as it is stated by a male respondent from Algeria: *"Going to the doctor and explaining him your problem should be in Hungarian."* Moreover, verbal communication in Hungarian was a barrier when the international students wanted to socialize with the locals, the following example from a Nigerian male student illustrates this problem: *"It was difficult making friends and dating girls, because most of them spoke Hungarian."*

As far as communicating with Hungarian people in English is concerned the answers to the open-ended question showed that the majority of the respondents (47 students, 70%) had such problems while studying at the University of Miskolc. The participants mentioned 8 areas where they experienced some barriers of verbal communication in English: shopping (10 responses), not being able to communicate because a lot of people can't speak English (8 responses), not being able to communicate because young people or university students can't speak English (7 responses), public transportation and buying a ticket (6 responses), not being able to communicate because the elderly can't speak English (5 responses), not being able to communicate because the

administrators/teachers/receptionists at the University of Miskolc can't speak English (5 responses), not being able to communicate in smaller cities and villages (5 responses) and visiting a doctor or being in hospital (5 responses). As we can see communication problems arose because most Hungarians whom the international students met did not speak English, and most problems occurred during shopping, which is well illustrated by the experience of a male respondent from Nigeria: *"My first time in the supermarket was a nightmare; I sought assistance to get the things I needed because they were all in Hungarian. I ended up buying pork instead of beef which I wanted at the time and a lot of other things I needed and didn't know where to get them."* Several participants complained about not being able to communicate with Hungarian people in English, like the Spanish female student, who wrote that: *"Every day when I tried to talk to someone in Hungary, just a few people could speak English. I had to point at what I wanted every single day."* Other international students had communication problems either because the elderly or people in smaller towns did not speak English, for example: *"Older people do not speak English and in small cities even young people don't speak too much English."* said a male respondent from Ecuador. In addition some of the participants faced problems when they wanted to communicate with administrators or teachers at the University. It is well expressed by a Lithuanian female student: *"There were no problems in Budapest because of the language, almost everyone spoke English there. Sometimes it was difficult in Miskolc though. Even the administrators at the University didn't speak English fluently, and sometimes we had to use body language to communicate. One of the teachers didn't speak English well, so it was difficult to understand the subject."* If we compare the barriers to verbal communication in Hungarian and English, we can see that the international students experienced the problems in similar areas of everyday communication. However, more participants mentioned having communication barriers when they wanted to converse with Hungarian people in English than in Hungarian, and the foreign respondents faced some problems concerning their studies at the University of Miskolc, as well.

The differences and barriers to non-verbal communication

When the international students were asked whether they experienced any differences of non-verbal communication between their home countries and Hungary, a third of the respondents (23 students, 34%) answered 'yes' to the question. The following areas of differences were mentioned: social contact and greetings (9 responses), counting (5 responses), facial expressions (3 responses), gestures (3 responses), physical distance (2 responses) and touching (2 responses). The results show that the international students experienced the greatest differences in connection with social contacts and greetings, which is well expressed by a female participant from Lithuania: *"Greetings are very different, two kisses on the cheeks in Hungary and in our country we hug each other if we know the other person well, but if we don't we just say hello or hi."* The differences in counting was the next area where respondents from Brazil and China felt some differences, as it is indicated in the Chinese female student's answer: *"We count in a different way. Once I was in McDonalds, I wanted one ketchup, the seller put a thumb to confirm with me if it was one and I didn't catch it immediately, because we use our index finger to indicate one."* Only few of the respondents experienced differences in connection with other elements of non-verbal communication. Here is an example from a Bulgarian female participant: *"Shaking head – in Bulgaria we do it the opposite way."*

As far as non-verbal communication problems are concerned the answers to the open-ended question showed that only some of the respondents (16%) had such problems while studying at the University of Miskolc. The intercultural differences of social contacts and greetings were mentioned by the international students as the stumbling blocks of non-verbal communication, which is well illustrated by a female participant from China: *"We take bows more frequently than shake hands, so sometimes I don't know the correct way to behave, to bow to a man or shake hands or just wave hands."* Her experience is strengthened by a male respondent from Iraq, as he said: *"At first I was confused when I met girls, because I didn't know what I should do, kiss or shake hands."* If we compare the outcomes

of the research with the results of the studies discussed earlier, we can see that the present study also proved that verbal communication is the greatest barrier in intercultural communication. Furthermore, the lack of speaking the local language or a lingua franca to mediate between the different cultures can also hinder communication and further contacts between the international students and the local inhabitants. As far as non-verbal communication is concerned the participants experienced fewer differences and problems, and most of the barriers occurred when the respondents arrived from Asian, Arabic or Southern American countries, because the traditions, customs and behaviours of these cultures greatly differ from other European cultures and Hungarian culture.

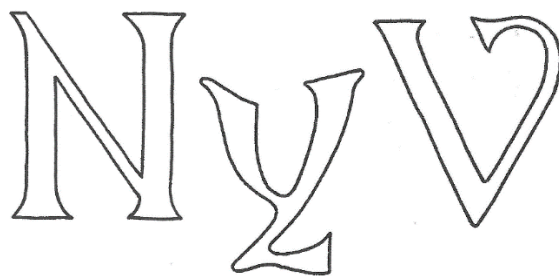
Conclusion

This paper first presented the theoretical background, aim, method setting and subjects of the empirical research carried out in winter 2016 at the University of Miskolc in Hungary. Sixty-seven international students, who previously attended or are presently attending the different Faculties of the University filled in the questionnaire in English. The second part discussed the results of the study. The outcomes showed that the participants arrived from 22 different countries, mainly from Europe and mostly within the framework of the Erasmus program. The majority of the respondents chose to attend a Bachelor's program at Miskolc University and most of them studied at the Faculties of Economics, and Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science for semester 1. The outcomes of the research imply that verbal communication is a great barrier in intercultural communication, especially conversing with Hungarian people in English. Therefore the teaching of English as a foreign language should play a crucial role at the University of Miskolc. However, it does not only mean the language training of Hungarian students, but the teachers of other subjects and administrative staff should also be involved in the language learning process. At the same time student personnel should be trained not only to be multilingual, but multicultural, as well. Furthermore, we can help international students by providing more efficient services at the international offices and offering support programs. Here students could receive further help, and they could also share and contribute their views. Finally, we must provide a supportive environment for students, where they feel valued and respected.

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Intercultural interpretation discourses, techniques and strategies used by tour guides in the Coach Museum, Lisbon: Eight issues

LUÍS MIGUEL BRITO

Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril

The Coach Museum in Lisbon houses one of the finest collections of coaches in the world. It is the second most visited museum in Portugal and it is often included in the Lisbon city tour. Tourist guides often perform visits to the museum. They are mediators between heritage and tourists, involving them not only in the collection but also in the life of the people who used the coaches. A guided tour to the museum can be either a nightmare or nice dream. It will be a nightmare if the guide conveys uninteresting information about the objects and vehicles exhibited, if s/he is centred on him/herself. But it can also be very lively and interesting if interpretation strategies are centred around the tourist and his/her culture. The aim of intercultural interpretation is to awaken different kinds of emotions in the tourist, from piety to amusement, using fantasy and reality. This paper discusses the different characteristics tourist guides' interpretation assumes in Lisbon's Coach Museum. The researcher heard the speech of fifty professional guides visiting the museum, during the months of September and October 2009. Data obtained were included in his PhD thesis. The anthropological technique applied is direct observation, defined as "direct involvement of the field researcher with the social group studied, within the parameters of the group standards" (Iturra, 1987: 149). The paper is divided into the following parts: introduction (including tourist information versus intercultural heritage interpretation, methodology, interpretation- eight issues, and final considerations. The observation of tourist guides in their working context allowed the identification of the intercultural skills developed by these professionals, the interpretative strategies adopted in communication, and some behavioural patterns of both guides and tourists.

Keywords: intercultural interpretation, tourist guides, Coach Museum, Lisbon

1. Introduction

We are living now in an era characterized by the abundance of international contacts between people from different cultures, and their ability to understand and communicate effectively is becoming very important (Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska and Radko, 2006: 75).

As a consequence of this present need to communicate with different cultures, intercultural communication sciences have been created and developed. Intercultural communication sciences study the communication process between cultures, asserting that:

Intercultural communication always takes place when a statement, which is to be understood, is created by a representative of one culture, whereas its receiver is a representative of another culture (Dobek-Ostroska, 1998: 24).

Nowadays, intercultural communication is performed in many different settings such as modern technologies (internet sites, social networks, email), in the media, international business, emigration, and also in tourism. Tourism may be regarded as a socio-cultural phenomenon – people of two different cultures have to overcome not only their communication barriers but also their cultural barriers in a strange society. They become aware of the values, beliefs and norms of the other culture by constantly comparing them with the ones of their own culture. In tourism, many intercultural communication issues have to do with three features: ethnocentricity, prejudice and stereotypes.

It is usually accepted that travelling reduces ethnocentricity, but according to a study conducted by Rogers and Steinfatt (1999) it can increase ethnocentricity, especially if the trip is short. The authors state that only through language competence and a long lasting contact with the representatives of another culture, one can overcome ethnocentricity. A tourist usually assumes s/he is coming from a better and richer world because s/he can afford the trip. Therefore, s/he treats native people from a perspective of a client who has to be attended by the locals. That prevents tourists and locals from treating themselves at the same level and establishes a barrier in intercultural communication.

Prejudice, based on abusive generalizations and incomplete information, also influences intercultural communication. For instance, people may think that the Portuguese are always similar to the Arabs, so when they see a blond blue-eyed person they think they cannot be Portuguese! This happens because “individuals who are prejudiced in any way think in categories of a stereotype” (Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska and Radko, 2006: 81). Actually, when we are in contact with a different culture we react according to our stereotype about that culture. When we get to know someone from that culture we find out that the stereotype doesn't match and we'll reach the conclusion that actually that culture is not as we thought.

Cultural differences are the most challenging obstacle in effective communication. Therefore total communication between the representatives of two different cultures is impossible. The key to overcome this problem is the development of intercultural communication skills, which should be taught and learnt in secondary and higher education by all the people who work in the tourism sector. Research shows that intercultural competence cannot be acquired in a short period of time or in one module. It is not a naturally occurring phenomenon but a lifelong process, which needs to be addressed explicitly in learning and teaching.

In this paper intercultural competence in tourism is regarded as the ability to understand differences in one's and other people's cultures, accept them and react accordingly, treating foreigners in a way which is not offensive, scornful or insulting. It includes the increase of knowledge, the improvement of attitude and the change of behaviour in professionals of tourism (Luka, 2011).

The present work also discusses the different intercultural communication features that tourist guides' interpretation assumes in the Lisbon Coach Museum. The main questions are how tourist guides overcome intercultural communication difficulties and which are the competences they acquire. We will analyse knowledge, attitude and emotions in the context of a standard visit of the Coach Museum, in Lisbon. The purpose is to identify and analyse eight intercultural communication strategies guides “choreograph” to interpret heritage and connect with their audience.

1.1. Intercultural Competence for Guiding

Culture can be defined as the sum of a way of life, including expected behavior, beliefs, values, language and living practices shared by members of a society. It consists of both explicit and implicit rules through which experience is interpreted (Herbig, 1998). Geert Hofstede (2001) refers to culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory describes the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behaviour, using a structure derived from factor analysis.

The author developed his original theory between 1967 and 1973. He proposed four dimensions along which cultural values could be analysed. Later on, a fifth and a sixth dimension of national culture were added. The six dimensions are labeled as follows:

1. *Power Distance*, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;
2. *Uncertainty Avoidance*, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;
3. *Individualism* versus *Collectivism*, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;
4. *Masculinity* versus *Femininity*, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;
5. *Long Term* versus *Short Term Orientation*, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past.
6. *Indulgence* versus *Restraint*, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life (Hofstede, 2011: 8).

The quantification of cultural dimensions enables us to make cross-regional comparisons and form an image of the differences between not just countries but entire regions. For example, the cultural model of the Mediterranean countries is dominated by high levels of acceptance of inequalities, with uncertainty aversion influencing their choices. With regard to individualism, Mediterranean countries tend to be characterized by moderate levels of individualistic behaviour. The same applies to masculinity. Future orientation places Mediterranean countries in a middle ranking, showing a preference for indulgence values (<https://en.wikipedia.org>).

For professionals who work internationally and for people who interact daily with other people from different countries within their job, Hofstede's model gives insights into other cultures. In fact, intercultural communication requires being aware of cultural differences because what may be considered perfectly acceptable and natural in one country can be confusing or even offensive in another. Professionals in the area of tourism should be aware of such cultural differences in order to deal with them correctly, preventing misunderstanding and avoiding cultural shock.

They should develop intercultural competences defined by Messner and Schäfer (2012) as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures. Appropriately means that valued rules, norms, and expectations of the relationship are not violated significantly. Effectively means that valued goals or rewards (relative to costs and alternatives) are accomplished.

According to Byram (2000) intercultural competence includes attitude, knowledge, interpretation and relating skills, discovery and interaction skills, and critical awareness of culture. The acquisition of intercultural communication competences is slowly developed in a life long learning process that starts in school (learning a foreign language and contacting foreign students) and continues while gaining experience in everyday life, meeting people from other cultures (Korhonen, 2004).

In the area of tourism, namely for tourist guides, cultural mediation consists in establishing connections between the audience and the resource. In order to do it, guides have to develop an intercultural competence, defined as “The degree to which a guide is capable of being an effective cultural mediator” (Yu, Weiler and Ham, 2001: 77). Tourist guides must have relevant communication competences in two or more cultures to act effectively as mediators, i.e. they have to be bicultural or multicultural to deeply understand the visitor.

Therefore, the success of mediation depends largely on the acquisition of intercultural competences. There are many different ways of representing these competences. The European Council (2001) divides them in four types:

- Declarative Knowledge (*savoir*) - includes the knowledge of the world; the knowledge of the society and the culture of the country where a given language is spoken;
- Know-how (*savoir-faire*) - is the capacity of establishing a relationship between the foreign culture and our own country's culture;
- Existential competence (*savoir-être*) it is about some aspects of the individuals' personality; the attitudes;
- Ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*) it is the ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to incorporate new knowledge into existing knowledge modifying the latter when necessary.

LOLIPOP (Language On-Line Portfolio Project), a project managed by the School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies, in Dublin City University, defines three types of intercultural competences: a) knowledge – general and specific culture, products and practices from our own culture and from other cultures, identities and social groups performance, intercultural interaction performance; b) capacities – effective and appropriate behaviour, knowledge acquisition and use, culture interpretation and comparison, and; c) attitudes – curiosity, tolerance, ability to “decentre”. In this paper three types of intercultural competences (cognitive, affective and behavioural) are considered: knowledge, attitude and skills.

Knowledge (cognitive) is related to the amount of information that the tourist guide possesses of the tourist site, the attractions and the products. But it is also a deep knowledge of the culture s/he is interpreting and the tourist culture (verbal and non-verbal language, communication styles, values, social codes, artefacts). A guide who is fluent in both the language of the tourist and the language of the host faithfully translates the culture of the place and successfully contributes to intercultural exchange. Thus, s/he provides the tourist with a deep insight of the destination, s/he can help tourists to understand and accept local customs without passing value judgment on them and s/he can show visitors how to act avoiding cultural shock. In order to develop these competences, it is important for a guide to travel, to know the geography, the history, the society and the culture of his/her guests.

Attitude (affective) has to do with the personality of the individual and include motivations, tolerance, and the ability to overcome stereotypes. Attitudes are also related to the respect and empathy for both visitors and hosts. The attitude of the guide will leave a lasting impression on the tourist about the destination, because tourists look at the guide as a representative of the whole population of the country, with whom they have usually limited contact, whereas hosts look at the guide as the representative of a group of tourists. From the guide perspective, it is important to realise which is the best attitude in each different situation. For instance: how to behave on a coach with Christians, Jews and two Muslim ladies wearing a *burka*?

Skills define the guide's capacity of acting as a culture broker in an effective way in situations of intercultural misunderstanding or conflict. Guides must constantly negotiate shared meanings and communicate with dissimilar individuals. For instance, gesture can be misunderstood, in intercultural communication, and cause trouble. It is the case of holding the lobe of one's ear between thumb and forefinger and moving it back and for - it means “good” in Portugal and “gay” in Italy.

Table 1 shows the suggested intercultural competences for tourist guides, i.e. the competences they should develop along their education and training process, but especially from the moment they start working with foreign people. The development of these competences starts with the left column, when they become aware of the other culture features, proceeds with the middle column, when the attitudes towards the other start to change, and finishes with effective adjustments of

skills patterns in order to communicate with dissimilar cultures.

Knowledge	Attitude	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about the tourist destination, its resources, attractions and products available to the tourist - Language level required – level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as minimum level to guide visitors and level B2 for the guide area-specific qualification – both in the language of the tourist and in the local language - Deep understanding of one’s own culture, of the culture that s/he interprets and the culture of the tourist (verbal and non-verbal language, communication styles, values, social codes, artefacts) - Be well acquainted with the geography, history and society both of the tourist place of origin and the tourist destination - Explain the meaning and implications of globalization and relating local issues to global forces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness and tolerance towards difference - Empathy and critical respect for the tourist and his/her culture - Empathy and critical respect for the host community and its culture - Focus tourist information and adjust it according to the tourist - Adopt the other’s perspective - Research and develop accurate information aiming to improve commentary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate and effective communication skills in accordance with the profession performance - Ability to seek out linkages, causality and relationships using comparative techniques of analysis - Use of verbal and non verbal language suitable to the working context - Act as a cultural mediator facilitating culture exchange and communication - Use correctly the tourists social codes

Table 1. Intercultural Competences for Tourist Guides. Source: Brito (2014).

To be a cultural mediator is not always easy. Every tourist brings a model of conduct, a code of values and behaviours, different from those of the country s/he is visiting, which necessarily interfere in social life. As mentioned above, the relationship established between the tourist and his/her host is an asymmetrical one, in which the visitor is the client and the visited is the service supplier. The visitor will always try to show his/her economic power and somehow its supremacy over the natives. It is at this point that the guide interferes with his/her know-how that Jafari (1982) calls cultural mix – a multi-directional interaction between:

- a) The imported culture, that is, the original culture of the tourist;
- b) The tourist culture, or behaviour patterns displayed by the tourist during a trip and;
- c) The local culture, understood as the host country culture.

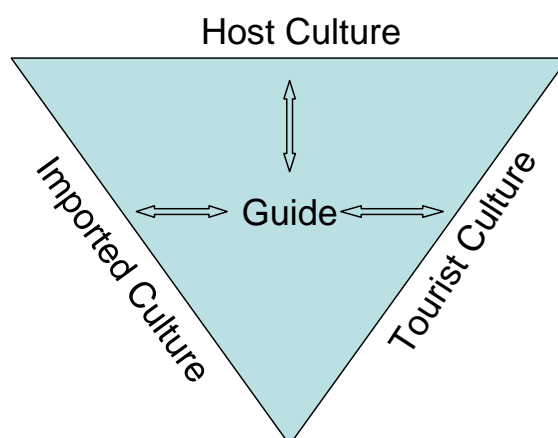


Figure 1. The tour guide in the centre of *Cultural-Mix*. Source: adapted from Jafari (1982).

The correct attitude of the guide in presence of this cultural mix will lead to the establishment of contact and the adoption of an acceptable behaviour for both parties, benefiting both the tourists and the host community. The wrong attitude will lead to social friction and conflict.

Still about cultural mediation, according to Salazar (2005):

Through their discourse and narratives, local tour guides are key actors in the process of “localizing” – folklorizing, ethnicizing, and exoticizing – a destination. [...] They are entrusted with the public relations mission to “encapsulate the essence of place (Salazar, 2005: 629).

Guides are prepared to be a window on to a site, region or even country. In a few words, they distinguish what is local (objects, concepts, or even feelings) and make it understandable to tourists’ global minds. To do that, they have to find the right words, both when conveying information and delivering interpretation.

1.2. Tourist Information versus Heritage Interpretation

Several authors have written about tourist guides, their role of information givers (Holloway, 1981) and interpreters (Almagor, 1985), pathfinders, mediators and leaders (Cohen, 1985) of intermediaries (Rabotic, 2010), their performance and discourse (Salazar, 2005), but very few adopted an intercultural approach when analysing guides’ professional skills. Tourist guides are the essential interface between the host destination and the visitors. In fact, they are front-line employees who are very much responsible for the overall impression and satisfaction with the tour services offered by a destination (Ap and Wong, 2001). Also Geva and Goldman (1991) found that the performance of a tourist guide is key to the success of a tour. From all guides roles, conveying information and interpretation are arguably the most relevant ones, but they are not exactly the same.

There are many definitions of information and interpretation. According to Cooke (1999) information is composed of a number of structured data, placed in a useful and significant context, which gives orientation, instruction and knowledge to the receptor, consequently s/he becomes more prepared to enhance a given activity or to decide.

The concept of information is related to entropy i.e. “randomicity, or absence of organization in a certain situation”. [...] “Information is a measure of uncertainty or entropy in a situation. The more uncertain one is, the more information he needs” (Littlejohn, 1988: 153). The aim of information is to reduce, completely if possible, the uncertainty of the receiver. When a situation is familiar to us, we need less information; when we don’t know anything about a subject, we need more information. Thus, if we have more information, we feel freer to choose and we will be surer of what we decide.

Accordingly, we can define tourist information as follows:

A set of services given to the tourist which aim to inform and guide him during his stay or, inclusively, all information that will help him preparing his stay in a more accurate way (Majó and Galí, 2002: 397).

For a tourist guide, tourist information is a set of simple and precise data: transport options, timetables, numbers, monuments location, how to use maps, etc.

Information is different from interpretation. Interpretation is personal, not repeatable and it gives to the guides’ speech a unique character. In a very simple way, it may be said that interpretation is to reveal meanings, or to give a meaning to something through a message. According to Tilden

interpretation is “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and connections through the use of original objects, direct experience and illustrative means, instead of simply to communicate factual information” (Tilden, 1977: 8).

On its Internet site, NAI (National Association for Interpretation) defines interpretation as “a communication process, which is based on the mission of establishing emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of an audience and the meanings inherent to a resource” (NAI).

In this definition we find the idea of “mission”, as the aim and the reason for interpretation, associated with emotion, knowledge and intellect, which are fundamental to understand heritage and transmit a message about it.

In the context of social sciences, tourism is in its essence a cultural and intercultural phenomenon. According to Rabotic (2010), the guide is an intermediary between the site and the tourist. In this intercultural relation, tourist guides have the responsibility and the power of being information givers – of hiding, showing, selecting and interpreting the information that is given to the tourist.

Nevertheless, it seems that the role of guides is changing. In the past few years, new roles have been attributed to guides, whereas others are losing their importance. This is the case of two roles – pathfinder and information giver. Nowadays tourists can easily access a GPS system, Internet, I-phone, Podcast or any other new technologies, which help them finding any site; maps, tips and all kind of specific information about any spot are always available.

On the other hand, communication and interpretation (as psycho-social roles which encourage values change), mediation (avoiding misunderstanding and conflicts) and leadership (especially in the caretaking and safety spheres), sustainability and responsibility (as a resource protector and heritage manager) and education (in an informal and intercultural perspective) are giving way to different types of guides and guided tours.

Table 2 shows some practical examples of how intercultural interpretation can change a dry speech into an interesting commentary, giving the tourist intangible emotions based on the five senses, but at the same time increasing the tourist’s knowledge (Brito, 2014). Lines present seven types of attractions suggested by Smith (2003), whereas columns represent three different levels of information/interpretation of several Portuguese attractions for English speaking tourists. If the same attractions were presented to another audience speaking another language and having a different culture, interpretation would be different, because it always has to be centred on the tourist (Tilden, 1977).

Guides work with culture and the main motivation of cultural tourism is to know, to discover and to explore heritage elements of a region or country. Among academics, the discussion is how to typify them, since the act of practising tourism is already a cultural act. Smith (2003: 103-104), suggests the following seven types of cultural attractions: built heritage (monuments, architecture, historic buildings), natural heritage (cultural landscapes, national parks, caves), cultural heritage (arts, crafts, festivals, traditional events), industrial heritage (factories, manufacturing works, mills), religious sites (cathedrals, abbeys, pilgrimage routes), military sites (castles, battlefields, museums), literary or artistic spots (houses or landscapes associated with writers).

	Information	Interpretation	Intercultural Interpretation
	Basic: Recognising	Advanced: Understanding	Proficient: Applying
A. Built Heritage			
	<i>Ajuda</i> palace, in Lisbon, was built in the early 19 th century.	This royal palace was never finished because the country was invaded by the French, in 1807 and the Portuguese king fled to Brazil.	In 1808, the English general Wellington came to Portugal to help us defend the country from the French invaders – alliance, friendship.
	That is <i>Batalha</i> Monastery. It was built in the 14 th century, in gothic style, under the orders of King John I.	<i>Batalha</i> (battle, in English) Monastery is called so, because it was built after a Portuguese victory in a battle against the Spaniards.	The Portuguese were helped by the English. Besides, the gothic architecture has English influences, because king John I of Portugal married Philipa of Lancaster, the daughter of John of Gaunt (son of Edward III) – alliance, family and love.
B. Natural Heritage			
	That is a cork oak field.	The bark of the tree is used for isolation of heat, humidity and vibrations and to make bottle stoppers.	The NASA uses Portuguese cork to isolate space shuttles – collaboration, connecting tradition with innovation.
	The town of Sintra is a world heritage site that combines natural and human-made areas.	There are magnificent palaces and villas scattered in the middle of exotic vegetation, imported from other continents.	Lord Byron, who called Sintra “The Glorious Eden”, in his poem Child Harold, described its romantic atmosphere – culture, beauty.
C. Cultural Heritage			
	Portugal is situated in the southwest of Europe.	Portugal is in a strategic geographic position that partly explains the 15 th Century Discoveries.	Some English words were imported from Portuguese because of sailing: <i>orientation</i> (the Portuguese wanted to reach the orient – India) and <i>risk</i> (once only spatial risk, related to danger in the sea) are two examples – culture, language connections.
D. Industrial Heritage			
	There are many windmills along the Portuguese coast.	Portuguese windmills are round. They don’t follow the European model, but the Arab one.	New mills are not used to grind cereals but to produce electricity, using the energy of the wind – connecting tradition and innovation.
E. Religious Heritage			
	Catholics believe Our Lady appeared to three shepherds at Fatima, in 1917.	Basically, the message of the apparitions of Fatima talks about peace.	1917 is the year of the Russian revolution and the 1 st World War was being fought. The message of peace made sense in this context – peace, faith.
	The cathedral of Lisbon was built in Romanesque style.	It has a fortress-like appearance because it was built to defend the people, after the conquest of Lisbon to the Arabs.	English crusaders helped the Portuguese during the conquest. To pay homage to them, the first bishop of Lisbon was English, Hastings was his name – alliance, friendship.

F. Military Heritage		
St. George Castle overlooks Lisbon on top of a hill.	The first king conquered the castle of the moors with the help of the crusaders, who came from several countries in Europe.	The name St. George was given to the castle in the 14 th century when the English, under the protection of St. George, helped the Portuguese against the Spaniards – protection, friendship.
G. Literary or Artistic Heritage		
Sintra was described by several foreign writers in the 19th century.	They all loved the nature and the romantic atmosphere of Sintra.	One of them was Lord Byron, who lived in Hotel Lawrence. It has a perfect atmosphere for a five o'clock tea. Shall we have tea there? – comfort, home.

Table 2. Three Information/Interpretation Levels (English speaking public). Source: Brito (2014).

2. Methodology

In this paper the anthropological technique of direct/participant observation was used, defined as “direct involvement of the field researcher with the social group studied, within the parameters of the group standards” (Iturra, 1987: 149). However “observation on its own is parcelled, insufficient, unfocused or inefficient. The other technique, which completes, corrects and improves observation, is the interview” (Ramos, 2002: 56). Therefore, 13 guides were interviewed after their observation in the National Coach Museum (NCM). These interviews are part of a PhD thesis but for obvious space reasons they are not analysed in this study. Nevertheless, this procedure allowed the confirmation of the results of direct observation. A new NCM was opened to the public in 2014 – the new modern building is right in front of the old one. The old NCM, where part of the collection can still be seen, was chosen for the observation of the guides work because it has very good conditions for the research: the visit is very structured (the pathway cannot be changed from the entrance to the exit, but guides can select the coaches they want to interpret along the way); it is a round tour, meaning that guides come back to the starting point; it is a short visit (it lasts from 20 to 40 minutes); there is not too much noise or other circumstances which prevent from listening to what tourist guides have to say. Typically, guided visits only include the ground floor of the museum.

Language/Nationality	Nr. of parties	Total nr. of tourists
French	17	556
Germans	5	129
Americans	5	125
Italians	4	98
Spanish	2	63
Portuguese	3	50
Others English speaking (Israeli, Chinese and Japanese)	3	84
Mixed (several languages)	11	176
Total	50	1281

Table 3. Tourists' parties observed in the Coach Museum. Source: Brito (2012).

According to table 3, fifty guides and 1281 tourists were observed, intermittently, in September and October 2009 (Brito, 2012). Most of them were French. The aim was initially to record behaviour patterns of tourists and guides as well as deviations to those patterns. However, as data were classified the idea of organising them according to guides' intercultural skills took shape and a grill was prepared. Afterwards, data were analysed and categorized so that the investigator could understand the interpretation strategies used by tourist guides (Brito, 2012).

2.1. Procedure

The investigator followed the guided visits observing guides and tourists' behaviour, and trying not to interact or talk with the tourists, if possible. However, when a tourist started talking to the investigator, he obviously had to answer. For that reason, the investigation technique is called direct/participant observation.

The investigator registered professional guides and tourists' behaviour patterns, but the observation concentrated above all in the use of guides' intercultural skills and cultural heritage interpretation strategies, although it also registered some tourists' behaviour typologies.

The investigation started by the previous analysis of figures and historical data on the NCM, in its library, collecting basic information about the monument, which was already familiar to the researcher, who was a tourist guide for 20 years and performed countless visits to the museum.

In the first day observation focused on the museum workers and their interpersonal relations. From the second day, observation of the guided tours started. The researcher waited at the entrance of the museum for the tourists' parties and asked the guide if he could follow the visit. If the answer was positive, he would discretely follow the group, usually right behind the last client, listening to the guide, looking at the selected coaches, observing the behaviour of both guide and tourists and writing some notes, which were completed after the visit.

At the end of each visit, the investigator talked with the guide, offered him/her a honey drop for the throat and collected some extra information about the party, such as the number which could complete the observation. After that, the investigator mentally revised the visit and wrote his last notes.

The researcher also evaluated guides' language skills. He did it automatically and instinctively, because that is his everyday work as a teacher, language coordinator and member of the official jury who evaluates candidates to the national tourist guide examination (for 15 years). The European systems of language skills evaluation was used because it is simple and clear, dividing competences in levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 e C2), in which A1 is the minimum and C2 the maximum.

3. Intercultural Interpretation – Eight issues

In this section we analyse eight issues related to the communication and interpretation of heritage in the context of the NCM in Lisbon. In order to keep confidential the identity of the guides (from now on G) conducting visits to the museum, they were given a number. The following intercultural interpretation issues of their performance were analysed: inter-language and inter-culture, non-verbal communication, cultural identity, cultural shock, ethnocentrism, intercultural conflict, stereotypes and generalization and *glocalization*.

3.1. *Inter-language and inter-culture*

Although the information given by the guides is not always accurate, it is passed on clearly, in an understandable and organised way. Most guides have a proficiency level in the languages they speak, between B2 (12 guides = 24.4%) and C2 (11 guides = 22.4%). But most guides have a C1 level (26 guides = 52.9%). If level C1 and C2 are considered together it is possible to affirm $\frac{3}{4}$ (75.3%) of the professionals are above the minimum language level for guiding and $\frac{1}{4}$ have the minimum level (24.4%). Furthermore, guides know how to use idiomatic expressions in the language of the tourists. G 17 talking about a very sumptuous coach: *It's a show-off coach*; G 38 referring the oldest coach in the collection: *It looks like it's falling apart*; or pointing out a fast coach: *Time is money*; G 40 explaining an aphorism in Italian: *This three coaches are the origin of the Italian saying Fare il portoghese (do it the Portuguese way), when you manage to enter in a theatre or stadium without paying the ticket.*

3.2. *Non-verbal communication*

Performing one of their relevant roles – heritage preservation – guides always advise tourists of the existence of two rules: *flash photography is forbidden and it is not allowed to touch the coaches*. Some guides prove to be good leaders and their rules are respected. Others are not. Leadership depends highly on how they use and relate verbal and non-verbal communication. While speaking, those who are respected look people in their eyes, use their hands to express that the matter is serious and their voice tone is sharp, followed with two or three seconds of silence. In opposition, the misuse of non-verbal language and the incorrect tone leads to the misbehaviour of tourists.

Another misbehaviour of the guides is related to the objects they use to point out details on the coaches, such as rolled magazines (G 9), plastic bottles (G 10), small flags (G 29), and so forth. The use of such objects is neither aesthetic nor appropriate for both the museum and the professional guide. Non-verbal communication influences both the image of the guide and the museum and also its comprehension. But there are other issues concerned with non-verbal communication.

3.2.1. *Environment*

Environment influences the people and the way they behave. But only about 50% of the guides introduce the environment to tourists. People should be introduced to what happened in that environment. G 12 says: *Let's imagine that today it's the king's birthday. You know how he loves horses. So there is a horse riding show in this room. Everyone is dressed up for the occasion. Ladies are wearing beautiful long dresses and men come in their uniforms. They attend the show from up there in the gallery, whereas the king and the royal family are up here in this balcony.* This kind of introduction to the museum can be thought of as storytelling. It appeals to the imagination of the tourists so that they understand better the context of the museum.

3.2.2. *Artefacts*

G 16: *Fancy those are some of the vehicles they used to come to the king's birthday party: Ferraris, a Rolls Royce and some Mercedes*; G 8: *The English carriage is like a Rolls-Royce*; G 13: *The berline of Queen Mary I? It was her Maserati, only air conditioning is missing*; G 16 and G24: *Think of the museum as a family garage*. Cars are a symbol of social status and power. They tell us about the social position of the owner. It was like that in the past and it is exactly the same in the present. The relationship between past and present is quite significant. Several guides also compare the museum to a garage, evoking the intangible notion of home, family and everyday life.

3.2.2. *Paralanguage*

Sometimes guides become boring (G 1, G 2, G 8, G 17, G 21, G 27, G 32, G 47). Visitors move way and spend the rest of the time taking pictures or visiting the museum on their own. Guides

should be more aware of how tourists' attention changes along the visit. Four different attitudes can be observed in the tourists:

- Participant – tourists ask and answer questions, so there is dialogue
- Attentive – tourists listen to their guide but don't talk
- Variable – tourists take pictures, read signs and listen to the guide
- Absent – tourists walk away from their guide

Arguably, these four attitudes are related to different factors, above all, the communication skills of the guide, but also to the existence of a real interest in the museum, the attraction exercised by the coaches and their magnificence, the environment and the actions of the other people around. Therefore, the four above mentioned attitudes correspond to communication styles: two-way communication; one-way communication; intermittent communication and; no communication.

Tourists react to the guide's statements. They make faces, they make sounds, they laugh and they demonstrate piety. Guides should be aware of the significance of these reactions. The reaction of tourists to what guides say is often very positive. They say: *Oh, I see! Oh, now I understand!* When you get such reactions from the tourists it means they discovered something they didn't know before – that is a purpose and a pleasure for those who make interpretation.

3.2.3. *Kinesics*

Body language is not the same everywhere. For instance, everyone knows that forming a circle with the thumb and forefinger means different things according to where you are: Ok (US), zero (FR), money (JAP), asshole (South IT), vagina (GREECE). Most guides smile and have an informal and pleasant attitude. They have their own style, eloquent and convincing, as you would expect from a good communicator. Nevertheless, sometimes gestures are not appropriate and they reveal hidden tension or even hostility. Hands, eyes and face expression are usually complemented with a nice voice modulation and follow verbal expression. Furthermore, attitudes are generally adapted to the clients and their nationality. For instance, G 4 makes a gesture with her arms while interpreting a coach for her German party that demonstrates force, courage and decision, which is very inappropriate for the Portuguese; G15 was working with an Italian party. He used hand gestures and face expression all the time.

3.2.5. *Proxemics*

It varies with culture. Some guides want English parties to get to close and invade their personal area – impossible. Other guides explain a detail under the coach for a party of 40 people. Of course, nobody sees what he or she is trying to explain.

3.2.6 *Chronemics*

The notion of time varies from one region or country to the other, from North to South and from West to Est. Guides usually settle the pace of their visit to the different notions of time their parties have. Otherwise, they can generate an intercultural conflict with their clients. Think of the difference between Germans and Brazilians, for instance. Brazilians like to stroll in the museum whereas Germans have to make sure that they see the maximum of coaches in the minimum of time.

3.3. *Cultural Identity*

Cultural identity is built on all the non-verbal and verbal issues we have been talking about. We create our cultural identity (the Self) to understand our position in the world, i.e. what is similar and different from the rest of the people (the Other). Cultural identity is neither universal nor absolute. It is dynamic and always changing. But it is absolutely fundamental to create boundaries so that we can constantly destroy them and substitute them with new boundaries. The whole visit of the Coach Museum is a process of identity building, a declaration of the Portuguese heritage

relevance. Guides do it showing the exuberance of the baroque period and the wealth of Portugal in the early 18th century, presenting the extravagant coaches of King John V and relating them to the gold and diamonds that came from Brazil. G 4: *These coaches are completely covered with gold leaf*; G 5: *Our embassy to the Pope was constituted by 15 coaches* (actually there were only five Portuguese coaches). Tourists react saying the coaches are too heavy or even despising them.

3.4. Cultural Shock

People affect the culture of the tourist destination and are affected by the interaction with that culture. So there is always some degree of cultural shock when dealing with a different culture. But cultural shock is not as negative, as one may think. It is a natural reaction people have when adjusting to new situations. In the museum, a typical cultural shock is when you call the attention of American tourists to the naked statues representing the four seasons or the four continents decorating the coaches, especially Pope Clement XI's coach. G 38: *There are naked women here. Who wants to see naked women?* Of course the guide was very acquainted with her clients and she knew that these jokes didn't offend them. Therefore, from cultural shock, through humour, we come to adjustment and knowledge about how the women's body was considered a beautiful piece of art in the 18th century. Therefore, intercultural communication is a process of dealing with cultural shock and adjusting. In this process there may be some degree of cultural change.

3.5. Ethnocentrism

Sometimes it is disguised in hyperboles. G 11: *King John V can be compared with the "Sun King" Louis XIV of France for his power and wealth that came from the trade of precious goods with Brazil*; G 17: *The Coach of Queen Mary Ann of Austria was built to impress*. We are used to think of ethnocentrism in a negative way, as a statement of the superiority of a given culture. But ethnocentrism is essential to maintain the integrity of a culture keeping it from the aggression of the other cultures. Tourists sometimes try to offend the guide's culture. It is an exercise (a sort of a game) to see how strong the guide's culture is and how long it can resist the tourist's culture. Take the French, or the Italians or other nationality as an example, when they say their heritage is superior or larger (they have better and bigger coaches), or when they say their culture is more important than your own. There is no such thing. Cultures can be dominant or not but only during a certain period of time. The guides' role is to promote their own culture and slowly change the ethnocentric mentality of (some) tourists.

3.6. Intercultural Conflict

Intercultural conflict is part of intercultural interaction. It happens all the time in guiding, for instance with the different conceptions of time. In order to keep with the time and to manage the tour itinerary, even in the coach museum, guides have to ask the tourists to be punctual and follow them. However, punctuality and organisation is something hard to attain for some nationalities and tourists. Therefore, guides have to be aware of the problem and understand why tourists are punctual or not. Their attitude may change in a positive or negative way towards these tourists – they may become more flexible and accept their clients will be late, or more inflexible and leave someone behind in the museum. The best way to solve the problem is negotiation, saying something like *if you are punctual I will show you something that is not in the itinerary*.

3.7. Stereotypes and Generalization

Stereotypes are normative when they are overgeneralizations that are based on limited information (Muslims are violent and terrorists is an information based on media news), or non-normative

when are purely self-projective – we project concepts from our own culture onto people of another culture (Italians might think that Portuguese love pasta).

In guiding, we tend overall to do something else: when we approach to another culture, we tend to abusive generalization: Germans are cold; French are arrogant; Spaniards love bullfights. The more stereotypical our perception of the culture, the less effective our interactions will be. We should avoid overgeneralizations, especially those beginning with *All*. Likewise, tourists also tend to abusive generalization. At the end of a visit to the coach museum you might listen to comments such as: *How come that the Portuguese have all this wealth in the museum. I thought they were poor!*

3.8. Glocalization

Glocalization (a combination of globalization and localization) is a term that describes the adaptation of international products around the particularities of a local culture in which they are sold. McDonalds is a good example of this with special menus using local products to satisfy local consumers' needs. Guides use stories that everyone knows such as Cinderella (global) to explain what they want about a coach (local) in the museum and convey the idea of elegance, wealth and fantasy to the tourists. They say: *This is Cinderella Coach* (G 5, G 13, G15, G 17, G25 and G40) or they evoke Sherlock Holmes and Jack, the Ripper (G 10) and immediately they activate the imagination of the tourists, globalizing a local coach.

4. Final Considerations

Tourism is a social phenomenon, defined by cultural contact. Tourism is not only cultural but also intercultural and there is always some degree of cultural exchange when two cultures are in contact. Within the tourism system, guides have a relevant role in cultural contact and eventually cultural change. Nevertheless, their crucial role is still today not recognised by stakeholders. Guides translate culture(s) in quite particular circumstances of cultural diversity, which may generate conflicts that they have to manage in the appropriate subtle way.

According to the participant observation in the Coach Museum of Lisbon, tourist guides are good communicators in foreign languages, 75% have a proficiency language level (C1 according to the European framework). They are very much aware of the tourists' cultural references and they easily convey their messages. As intercultural mediators, they live in a "cultural limbo" between the tourist culture and their own culture. They constantly and unconsciously use different intercultural communication strategies to deliver their messages. Nevertheless, they seem to be aware of their speech but unaware of their body language, which sometimes conveys incorrect or inconvenient information.

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Changing perceptions of others and self: ROTC cadets as learners of Arabic

EMMANUELLE CHIOCCA

University of Oklahoma

This case study explores the goal orientation of Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets learning Arabic. Although the need for language proficient military personnel has been recognized in the US military and as an asset in a globalized world, few such personnel are proficient in Arabic. Nevertheless, qualitative research in goal-setting theory and in directed motivational currents has neglected some cohorts of language learners such as ROTC cadets who are at the confluence of professional, military and academic paths and who might have particularities regarding their goals in learning Arabic. Because ROTC cadets tend to be more patriotic than other language learners, their goals and the factors influencing them might be specific to this subgroup. Therefore, understanding what their goals are and how they evolve might enable language programs to retain and even attract more military personnel in language classrooms and develop higher language proficiency and intercultural communicative competence if instructors know how to influence learning goals. In this qualitative study, semi-structured interviews of six ROTC students were conducted and examined through inductive, thematic analysis to explore the causes and effects of their decision to study Arabic. The findings imply that ROTC students often choose to learn Arabic to be more competitive, but also for the challenge it represents as well as for the financial incentive in the military. Their interests also seem to evolve through contact with the language and cultures, but also via the interactions they have in class and out. The students also increased their awareness of themselves and of other people's cultures, describing themselves as more curious, more open and humbler towards out-group members.

Keywords: intercultural education; goal-setting; critical languages; language learning motivation; intercultural communicative competence; directed motivational currents

1. Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

The increase in American involvement in the Middle East since the attacks on September 11th, 2001, has led to broader and deeper American interest in the region as well as an increase in the number of students enrolled in Arabic language, culture, and literature classes (Taha, 2007) – a six-fold increase from 1998 to 2013 (Goldberg, Looney, and Lusin, 2015). Unfortunately, language proficiency remains the “Achilles’ heel” of the US military, despite the latter’s interest in improving the language skills along with the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) of its personnel (Abbe and Gouge, 2012; Abbe, Gulick and Herman., 2007; Davis, 2006; U. S. Department of Defense, 2011; Watson, 2015). Thus, there is a need to increase the number of military students, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets in particular, who choose to learn Arabic. To accomplish this, it is necessary to understand what compels students to choose and persist in learning this language, to help both universities and ROTC programs attract and keep students in Arabic classrooms and enlarge the pool of military personnel proficient in Arabic language and culturally fluent in the Arab world.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Motivation and learning environment are deeply intertwined (Dörnyei, 1998; Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, 2014). However, studies rarely focus on critical languages (CLs), which could reveal significant differences in terms of how students keep themselves motivated. Indeed, these languages are often perceived to be more difficult than more commonly taught languages and some

students drop their courses in college if they do not perform well enough from the beginning. The effects of motivation constructs, including goal orientation (Ames and Archer, 1988; Maehr, 1984; Miller and Brickman, 2004), on language learning have been investigated within the personal investment framework revealing correlations between certain goals and language acquisition; the factors affecting these goals continue to be explored. However, as quantitative studies dominate the research on goal-setting, there is a dearth of research on the lived experiences of students, especially in CL learning motivation and with particular cohorts of foreign language learning (FLL) such as ROTC cadets who are at the confluence of their studies and of their military environment.

Therefore, the present study aims to contribute to the field of language learning motivation, with a focus on goal-orientation theories in critical FLL through the perspective of ROTC cadets enrolled in Arabic courses. It investigates how the goal-orientation of ROTC cadets to study a CL evolves while taking Arabic courses and what factors impact the development of goals. Understanding what their goals are and how they evolve might enable language programs to retain and attract more military personnel in language classrooms and develop higher language proficiency and intercultural communicative competence by influencing learning goals.

1.3 Literature review

Motivation and FLL

Motivation can be defined as a set of “factors and processes that contribute, initiate, and direct the importance, persistence, and quality of goal-directed behaviors” (Dweck and Elliott, 1983). Research has been interested in the correlation between motivation and language learning and explored what and how variables affect students’ motivation. Indeed, since the seminal work on motivation in FLL by Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), studies have investigated language choice and efforts and reported their impact on FL acquisition (Csizer and Dörnyei, 2005; Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2012). Others explored the process of motivation in FLL (Dörnyei, 2000; Waninge, Dörnyei and De Bot, 2014), arguing that motivation evolves constantly, yet others researched the variable factors affecting motivation such as classroom strategies and emotions (Dörnyei, 2007; Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, 2008), individual identities (Dörnyei, 2009), and goal-orientation’s impact on behavior (Dörnyei, Ibrahim and Muir, 2015; Henry, Davydenko and Dörnyei, 2015). These studies revolve around the idea that motivation is a fluid and multifaceted concept, affected by internal and external aspects, but they rarely explore the distinctions in motivation or language skills we might find in specific cohorts such as military personnel (Ellington, Surface, Blume and Wilson, 2015).

Goal Orientation Theory

Within the motivation framework, several theories have emerged, including personal investment theory (Maehr and McInerney, 2004), goal-setting theory (Locke and Latham, 1990; Schunk, 1991), and goal-orientation or achievement goals theory (Maehr, 1984; Ames, 1992). The goal-related dimension has been the focus of research exploring both the factors leading to developing certain goal types and their impact on learning strategies and outcomes (Ames and Archer, 1988; Ames, 1992; Elliot, 1997). Among the influential models is Maehr and Braskamp's Personal Investment theory (1986), which proposes 4 primary axes of goal generation: Task, Ego, Social Solidarity, and Extrinsic Reward. Later, Miller and Brickman (2004) added an axis, that of perception of future utility. In 1996, Locke summarized goal-setting theory, arguing that the more difficult and specific a goal is, the greater the achievement is if the goal is perceived as important and attainable. More recently, Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) have continued the reflection on the theory around the term of *vision* – along with the L2 self (Dörnyei, 2014; Dörnyei and Chan, 2013) – which they argue is distinct from a goal in that a vision is more related to one imagining oneself, almost feeling

what it is like to be what one wants to be, almost with a sensory component, whereas goals are more abstract. Dörnyei, Ibrahim and Muir (2015) define a vision as “a personalized goal that the learner has made his/her own by adding to it the imagined reality of the actual goal experience” (Dörnyei et al., 2015: 48). Later, by paying more attention to sociodynamics, they have challenged and expanded the model of goal-orientation theory with the directed motivational currents (DMCs) defined as “a prolonged process of engagement in a series of tasks which are rewarding primarily because they transport the individual towards a highly valued end” (Dörnyei et al., 2015: 132). In this case, they argue that the motivation and enjoyment comes from getting closer to the goal and not necessarily only the pleasure of learning, and is fueled by behaviors that enable to maintain efforts and learning strategies in the long term.

Therefore personal investment theory framed by goal orientation has identified five different types of goals: (1) *mastery goals*, (2) *performance approach and avoidance goals*, (3) *social solidarity goals*, (4) *external reward goals*, and (5) *future utility goals*, to which we will add (6) *vision of self*. Multiple studies have tried to identify predictors of goal-orientation but also of their outcomes. For instance, classroom environment perception impacts the development of certain achievement goals, which in return influence achievement outcomes (Church, Elliot and Gable, 2001), highlighting how goals are likely to be developed depending on the instructor and on pedagogical tools. Additionally, goal orientation and language learning have been the object of several studies focusing on how goals are related to language acquisition. For instance, mastery and future utility goals affect students' behavior in that the students develop strategies leading to a higher language proficiency than their peers led by other goal types such as performance avoidance goals.

Motivation and Arabic learning

Although theories have attempted to unpack the relation between motivation and language learning, few empirical studies have focused on the specificities of CLs, and rare are those investigating the question of who studies Arabic and why. For instance, some reported the importance of travel and world culture, political, instrumental and cultural identity orientations (Husseinali, 2006; Bouteldjoune, 2012) but disregarded some categories identified by the personal investment theory. However, Taha (2007) reported that utilitarian goals for diverse careers are the most dominant goals in students regarding Arabic. These various studies contradict each other regarding the dominant reason for students to learn Arabic as it appears goals are affected by social contexts, which could explain this discrepancy. Additionally, few studies have explored the motivation of military personnel for learning Arabic, even though a recent one has investigated why some veterans take Arabic in college after returning from deployment in Arabic-speaking countries (Nichols, 2014), arguing they do so because of their exposure while deployed.

2. Methods

2.1 Research Design

A qualitative case study methodology was used to explore the motivation through goal-orientation of ROTC cadets enrolled in Arabic language and culture courses at a Midwestern university, comprising a qualified group within a bounded-system in order to understand the participants within their environment (Creswell, 2007).

2.2 Participants and Sampling

Six students were recruited based on a criterion sampling approach: a) enrolled in an ROTC program in a Midwestern university b) taking Arabic language courses.

Participant	Race	Sex	Age	ROTC	Major	Minor	Arabic Flagship Program	Sem. of Arabic	Experiences abroad
Caleb	W	M	23	Air Force	International Security Studies + Arabic	Middle Eastern Studies	Yes	8	Lived in Botswana (2 years), SA Jordan, SA Oman
Anna	W	F	19	Air Force	International Security Studies + Arabic	None	Yes	2	Various travels in Europe
Jack	W	M	31	Army	Political Science + Arabic	None	Yes	6	None
Austin	W	M	18	Army	Arabic	None	Yes	2	Short mission trips in South America
Ella	W	F	21	Air Force	International Security Studies	ME Studies; Arabic; Poli Sci; Aerosp. Studies	No	6	Various travels in Europe with family; SA in Turkey
Rebecca	W	F	21	Air Force	Public Relations	Arabic; Aerosp. studies	No	6	Lived in Bahrain, various travels in Europe, SA in Tanzania

Table 1. The subjects of the research

2.3 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were administered individually, recorded and fully transcribed (Esterberg, 2002). Core questions were developed (Patton, 2002), and probes were asked.

2.4 Data Analysis

This qualitative data was analyzed through inductive, thematic analysis and constant comparison (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The data was tagged and labeled using in-vivo coding, and labels were compared, contrasted and aggregated into categories (Morse, 1994). Researcher triangulation was used to increase trustworthiness and reliability (Shank, 2002). Finally, the analysis was sent to participants for member check (Ezzy, 2002).

3. Findings

The participants all reported that their learning goals evolved throughout their exposure to the Arabic language and cultures, emphasizing a redefinition of their initial goals into more specific ones. Some, however, seem to have completely modified their expectations, leading to unexpectedly different not only learning goals, but also careers paths. The following chart summarizes the participants' goals, their evolution and the factors impacting them.

Participant	Initial Goals (1.a)	Factors Influencing Initial Goals (1.b)	Emerging Goals (2.a)	Factors Influencing Emerging Goals (2.b)
Caleb	Competitiveness on the job market + Use language skills in military career	9/11 and news; pressure to succeed	More define future use + pleasure to learn language and culture	Instructors' role; positive and meaningful social exposure to Arabic through AFP and personal; reflection and introspection; study abroad; expectation of study abroad
Anna	Wants to speak Arabic + Use skill to help in career	Interest in Middle Eastern music; early interest in languages; peer influence; media and news; military upbringing	Pleasure to learn culture and language + clearer future use of culture	Instructors' role; positive and meaningful social exposure to Arabic through AFP and personal; reflection and introspection
Jack	Take 3 semesters to graduate + be competitive + extra pay + perhaps use the skill in military	Pressure to succeed; 9/11 and news	Pleasure to learn language and culture + clearer potential future use	Instructors' role; socialization in Arabic through AFP and personal; grades; social support; expectation of study abroad
Austin	Skill to help in the military + happy to reach a certain level of proficiency	9/11 and news	Pleasure to learn culture and language + clearer future utility of culture	Instructors' role; socialization in Arabic through AFP and persona ; expectation of study abroad
Ella	To speak for pleasure + use skill in military career	9/11 and news; military upbringing; pressure to succeed; peer influence	Avoid losing face + potential use of culture	Instructors' role; peers' role; grades; little or no socialization in Arabic
Rebecca	Speak for pleasure + financial bonus + use skill in military	Military upbringing; has lived in an Arabic speaking country	Potential use of culture + Avoid losing face	Instructors' role; peers' role; grades; little or no socialization in Arabic

Table 2. Participants' initial and emerging goals to learn Arabic language and culture

3.1 What are students' initial goals to learn Arabic language and culture?

Four types of initial goals for learning Arabic emerged from the data in the form of clusters: (1) *career use*, (2) *competitiveness*, (3) *material reward*, (4) *pleasure of learning*.

Competitiveness and career use of the language

The most dominant initial goal type of the participants emerged as a cluster of *competitiveness* and *career use*. Most students explicitly emphasized that being better than others by having some knowledge of Arabic would be useful in their career. Caleb underlined how he used to perceive Arabic proficiency as a competitive asset, especially in the military:

I just wanted to be competitive, so I looked at the list of languages and how many people studied them in the US, and Arabic was the smallest percentage, so I, you know, being 'genius all me', thought that if I did Arabic, I'd be more competitive.

Material reward

Some students pointed out that the military offers an additional stipend to those who reach a certain proficiency. Jack insisted that speaking Arabic would allow him to receive more money but also to get promoted in the US military:

There's a financial incentive to know Arabic (...) if you do well at that test, they'll pay you more, they'll pay extra per month... and additionally as an officer, trying to get promoted and trying to make rank is about being an asset to the military.

Pleasure of learning

Anna emphasized how learning the language for her own understanding of music lyrics was an early endeavor that emerged before joining ROTC:

One of my friends' father came back from Afghanistan (...) and brought with him a CD by a Levantine Egyptian singer. And so I listened to that and I loved the language, and I wanted to start learning it, and, I wished for Arabic Rosetta Stone when I was in 8th grade.

Among the four categories that emerged, the students' dominant goal for learning Arabic prior to formal language instruction was *career use* and *competitiveness*. It seems that this cluster reveals their early commitment to their career, since they often choose to join the military before deciding to learn Arabic in college. Most of the goals appeared as clusters related to the *distal vision* of helping civilians in an Arabic speaking country. It appears that the other four goals are related to this ultimate vision in a recursively defined way, enabling the constant redefinition of the romanticized vision and simultaneously impacting the more proximal goals. These findings about the importance of the utilitarian dimension of learning Arabic are consistent with the studies by Grosse (2004), Taha (2007) and Husseinali (2006) on the future career use of Arabic language learners as they argue that FL learners study FL mostly for their future utilitarian aspects. However, these results contradict those of Taha (2007) as our participants are explicit about the career use of Arabic in the military, whereas Taha's participants mentioned leisure orientations more extensively. This discrepancy might be due to the fact that our participants are already contracted with the military.

3.2 Why do students adopt the initial goals?

Several factors led to the participants' adopting these goals, including: (1) *impact of 9/11 and news media*, (2) *influence of a peer*.

Impact of 9/11 and news media

The most dominant factors were the *impact of 9/11* and its consequences on the US military deploying contingents in the Middle East since then, affecting the American society. The majority of participants explained that they discovered the Middle East with the terrorist attacks of 9/11. For instance, Ella described her experience as being an early turning point in her life, shaping her goals:

[My mom] was supposed to be in the Pentagon on 9/11 (...) so I have been driven from that one experience ever since I was little, because that made me realize what is going on (...). I always grew up saying I wanted to establish peaceful relations with the Middle East, and I still want to do that.

The *news media* portraying the Arab world emerged as a significant factor raising curiosity for Arab cultures, as Caleb explains:

I wanted to do Arabic, one, because it's always in the news. (...) The competitiveness was the main reason, but the secondary would be, you know, 'what's going on in the world?', 'why is it always in the news?'

Peer influence

Friends or mentors appear to have had a significant influence on the definition of students' goals. Ella mentioned how talking with a close friend who had studied Arabic made her decide to follow the same path:

I decided it was something I should pursue when my best friend (...) was telling me about college and was telling me about his Arabic classes and how great his professor was (...). And I just really knew from then on that it was something I needed to study.

The findings suggest that the social impact emerged strongly, implying that the perceived future utility of the language corresponds to the socio-cultural context of the students. Indeed, 9/11 was mentioned by all as a turning point in their lives, and the involvement of the US military in Middle-Eastern countries being on the news contributed to their orientation in choosing Arabic as a language of study, concurring with the growing number of students enrolled in Arabic courses in the US since 9/11 (MLA, 2013; NSEP, 2015). Interestingly, most participants shared a vision of themselves as ambassadors of the US military, wishing to be perceived as learned, and comfortable in intercultural encounters, aiding populations in need. These findings about one's vision of the future self as the embodiment of patriotic and humanitarian values coincide with the DMCs (Dörnyei et al., 2015).

3.3 What are students' emerging goals for learning Arabic language and cultures?

After starting studying Arabic, the participants' goals evolved. *Military career use* maintained its central distal position, along with *pleasure of learning* which cluster revealed to be the primary emerging goal, whereas *fear of losing face* also appeared as the most significant goal for one student in particular.

Future career use and pleasure of learning

All participants expanded their interest in cultural understanding, creating a larger cluster of *future career use* and *pleasure of learning* goals. Anna explained for example how she became gradually interested in the culture by being exposed to it, and how she then considered it a more useful skill for her career, helping people in the Middle East:

When I started, my first interest was definitely the language. The more I learn about the culture, the more I become interested in it. (...) if for some reason, like, 20 years from now, if (...) I can't remember a word of [Arabic], I will remember the culture, and I will have (...) a potential solution to some problem.

Pleasure of learning

Although *pleasure of learning* and *career use* emerged together dominantly as new goals, the *pleasure of learning* became even more important for Jack who started from a purely distal and extrinsic goal and rapidly transferred to a deeply intrinsic motivation, where the *pleasure of learning* distanced the utility he saw for his military career:

I was in my Arabic class for about a week and I just fell in love with the sound of it. (...) And I was like “you know? No, I wanna do this.” (...) So, I was like... if I’m gonna take more of this, I’m gonna make it into my minor so that’s required that I take it with me degree plan. So I did, and then, at the end of the second week, I was like “*you know what? No, I’m gonna do this. I’m really gonna do this*”. (...) I changed my major to a double major in Arabic and political science.

Fear of losing face

However, not everyone changed their goals for the pleasure of learning the language. Indeed, *the fear of losing face* also emerged as a new goal for Ella and Rebecca. Ella explained:

I don’t think that language is what I’m truly passionate about. I like learning like little phrases in different languages (...) but, I don’t see it as something that’s going to fulfill a true need in myself (...) because my passion is like wanting to help people, and I just don’t see learning languages as necessary for that.

The negative attitude she demonstrated toward the language seems to reveal that Ella is more performance-goal oriented, which would concur with the findings of Ames and Archer (1988) on the value she places on her high-ability and the frustration she expressed with her achievement – and therefore grade – compared with her classmates: “*I’ve been successful in like a lot, and Arabic was like, the big thing, I have not been able to tackle.*” This might lead her to thinking the language is not useful for her career, and giving up the *vision* she had of being a proficient speaker helping people in the Middle East:

These findings seem to reveal that students’ goals evolved after they started formal Arabic instruction, which is consistent with viewing motivation as a process (Dörnyei, 2000). Indeed, the motivation and goals of most students evolved from the perception of Arabic language proficiency as a tool to be more competitive (*performance approach goal*) and to be used in a military career (*future utility goal*) to a deeper interest and instrumental perception of the culture seen as useful and applicable in intercultural situations, progressively integrating elements of integrative motivation. Classroom environment contributed to the renegotiation of the goals for all students. *Future career use* is central in instrumental motivation and seems to have been both the initial and emerging goal, confirming Taha’s (2007) and Atitsogbui’s study (2014). Indeed, while the students majoring in the language view themselves using it and applying their cultural knowledge in their career, Ella, who only minored in the language, expressed her growing interest in understanding the culture only. However, while she first planned on majoring in Arabic, she had to change in her 3rd year to minoring in it instead, as she found out that the language was not a passion to base her career on. She distanced herself from a future *career use* of the language, possibly because of her frustrating experience. Feeling constantly challenged and anxious, Ella described the rapid evolution of her interest:

I know that that’s not a language I want to pursue, I don’t wanna be a linguist and I know that for sure now (...) I don’t want to be responsible for knowing this language that I don’t really enjoy learning.

These findings about the apparent utility of learning Arabic or being knowledgeable about the cultures are consistent with the studies by Locke (1996) on the necessity of perceiving a goal as important and attainable to remain motivated and provide efforts in the long term.

3.4 Why do students adopt the emerging goals?

Several contextual factors emerged from the data regarding the reason why ROTC cadets renegotiated and redefined their goals after starting formal instruction: (1) *instructors' role*, (2) *peers' influence*, (3) *exposure to Arabic cultures and peoples*.

Instructors' role

The *role of instructors* impacted the motivation of the participants, leading them to either increase their efforts or reconsider their goals, the latter leading to a decreased importance of the Arabic language component in a future utility goal. All participants mentioned professors who kept them motivated. Jack explained for example how professors participated in developing more intrinsic goals, redefining his *pleasure of learning* goals and growing interest in individuals:

[My instructors] give me personal experiences, (...) they've been a big help in my seeing Arabs as the educated and enlightened people that they are. (...) So they've given me a human perspective on it, on the language and on the culture and on the people.

Although most students reported having had positive interactions with their instructors, Ella reported altercations, attributed them causal effects on her limited achievement in class, and even affecting negative perspectives on Arabs:

I really honestly got to the point where I was despising Arabic just because of the professors that I had because they weren't truly like teaching at our level, they were teaching at an advanced level because some people were in AFP. (...) I had to leave class one time because I had started crying because of [my professor], so he honestly did not give me a good impression of the Arab people but I have to remember he's not all of them.

Peers' influence

An additional factor that emerged was the *role of peers*, or *group cohesion* (Clement et al., 1994), perceived as a source of support in maintaining achievement goals and developing some performance approach goals, as explained by Caleb:

There's a few people in the class that are really competitive and they try to out-talk each other. So learning from them is a good experience. (...) So, we intrinsically push each other in that manner.

Similarly, Ella reported that one the best parts of the class was the relationship with her classmates from whom she received support. However, she also displayed resentment while mentioning that more advanced peers caused her to feel left behind, and that this feeling motivated her fear of losing face:

I felt like there were like the ones in Flagship were devoted (...) so, that was something that kinda motivated me also, like, I didn't want to look ridiculous in front of them in class if I didn't understand something, so um, I would try to be able to understand (...) because I didn't wanna look bad in front of them.

There could be a correlation between her developing performance avoidance goals and the anxiety she felt in Arabic classes, leading to negative feelings towards her instructors and classmates, to Arabs in general and to the language, which might explain why she did not express the desire to immerse herself in the culture through studying abroad, or even simply attend events related to Arabic and to develop friendships with international students. This is consistent with studies that

explored the relationship between instructors and students' motivation and achievement (Dörnyei, 1998; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant and Mihic, 2004; Guilloteaux and Dörnyei, 2008).

Exposure to Arabic

Exposure to Arabic cultures and peoples emerged, from the data, as an indirect cause and effect of students' goals. Caleb explained for example that he used to maximize his exposure to the language by meeting regularly with his language partner which enabled him to maintain a sort of flow: "[During the] first year of Arabic, you're super motivated. You're like 'okay, let's do this, let's kick some... some butt in studying Arabic'", whereas Jack immerses himself in the cultures through events and by having Arab roommates. However, students whose interest in and commitment to the language decreased – like Ella who admitted having little interaction with Arabic outside of class – which can be related to her feeling of falling behind in class, and might have prevented her from keeping up. Therefore, the exposure to Arabic through socialization and extracurricular activities appears to have impacted not only language proficiency and motivation, but also the development of ICC, leading students to be more appreciative of Arabic cultures and peoples.

4. Implications

The evolution of the goals and visions developed by the participants is consistent with goal orientation theories (Maehr, 1984; Miller and Brickman, 2004). Indeed, *career use* seems to be similar to *future utility*, *pleasure of learning* is close to *mastery goals*, *competitiveness* and *fear of losing face* could coincide with *performance approach and avoidance*, and *material reward* is comparable to *external reward goals*. However, the major difference with the theoretical framework is the appearance of clusters of distal goals, which could be due to the difference between qualitative and quantitative studies.

Factors contributing to FLL motivation are not limited to the impact of the classroom. Indeed, goals changed due to students' prior and changing experiences with Arabic language and/or cultures, but it seems that what took place in the classroom, through the interaction with instructors and peers impacted the overall vision of the students' L2 selves, affecting their L2 socialization and the development of their intercultural communicative competence. Language classrooms impact the goals of college students, increasing, or even tweaking what would initially be just a tool – language – to become a source of enjoyment expanded to a cultural component, and this process seems to be central in the definition of goals prior to and during classroom exposure. Impacting students' goals of *career use* and *pleasure of learning* and giving them clarity and pleasure can positively develop not only language acquisition but also cultural fluency and intercultural communicative competence, which, in the case of future officers of the US military, might affect the course of conflicts.

The participants expressed the central role of their *instructors' support*, through classroom activities, feedback, and especially the positive interaction they had together, on the development of *pleasure of learning* and on the precision of *career use*. Consequently, instructors need to be aware of their impact on their students and accompany them in their goals. Therefore, creating an environment where students feel safe and supported is essential as it prevents students from developing performance-avoidance goals and having a negative experience in the language classroom, which might affect their perception of the people, of the utility of language proficiency and the development of their ICC.

As all students expressed a larger interest in the culture across time, they developed a clearer instrumentality of such knowledge for their career, affecting the vision of themselves. Therefore, teachers need to provide frequent opportunities to discuss cultural knowledge and how it affects

language, either in the form of anecdotes about the target cultures, or in the form of reflections comparing American and Middle Eastern cultures. Additionally, encouraging interaction with native speakers or natural language settings might be a way of maintaining or increasing students' motivation and shaping their goals. Future research could include a deeper understanding of what specifically happens in the language classroom and how it affects goals; cultural exposure, both inside and outside of the classroom might be an avenue for future goal orientation research.

5. Conclusion

ROTC cadets learning Arabic develop new goals through the exposure to the language. From an initial utilitarian and career focus on the language, most students tend to renegotiate their goals into either placing more emphasis on cultures than the language itself for their careers, or even placing their love for Arabic – either the language or culture – above their military career. The emerging goals are influenced by the experiences in the classroom and the contact with Native speakers, both of which can be improved by adapting our language class curricula by increasing the interaction between students and native speakers and by creating low stress learning environments. This research argues that instructors and language programs as a whole can often impact the evolution of their students' goals, directing them towards a cluster of mastery and future utility goals, which often lead to higher language acquisition and potentially a higher level of intercultural communicative competence, which are both invaluable competences in the US military, but also in a globalized world. One could imagine that the current context in Syria and Iraq will continue impacting the US military, and therefore keep shaping the goal-setting of current and future ROTC cadets.

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CLIL as a challenge for intercultural learning processes

GRAŻYNA DUDA – HELENA PARVIAINEN

Silesian University of Technology – Häme University of Applied Sciences

This article presents a pilot CLIL project, which was carried out as a result of a collaborative effort between the Foreign Language Centre and the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice, Poland. The project lasted for one and a half semesters of the academic year 2015/2016. The participants were civil engineering students learning English as a second language. The project had two coordinators: a content teacher, and an English language teacher, both academic staff of SUT. The students worked in five teams, each of which had to design and make a prefabricated concrete bench. One of the aims of the project was to put emphasis on its intercultural awareness aspect presumed as understanding of a foreign view on construction technologies related to the work with concrete. While preparing for their main task students had to do research work in order to develop an understanding of different building technologies used in different countries and compare them with their own building culture. Later this foreign perspective on construction cultures was used with benefit by the students while working on their own projects. Moreover, this CLIL project had a coordinator and advisor from Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), Finland, who tele-cooperated with staff and students and who, during her visit to the university, carried out some practical language sessions.

Keywords: CLIL, pilot student project, collaboration, authentic materials, intercultural perspective

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to describe a practical implementation of CLIL and a CLIL research pilot project carried out at The Silesian University of Technology in Foreign Language Centre and Faculty of Civil Engineering in Poland. The project also included cooperation of an English teacher from Finland acting as external advisor. To provide some theoretical background information we will first discuss CLIL and its various definitions, related terms and educational approaches, especially from the point of view of higher education. Also, CLIL in higher education is briefly discussed by providing some ideas of how CLIL is being practised in Finnish tertiary level education. CLIL as a challenge and opportunity for intercultural learning and development of intercultural competence is also proposed.

Definition of CLIL

As is commonly known, the term CLIL was introduced in Europe in the mid-1990s. It has been promoted by the European Commission e.g. through funding various projects focusing on CLIL during the last two decades. The abbreviation CLIL comes from the words Content and Language Integrated Learning. It is defined as having a dual-focused aim of learning the content and simultaneously learning a foreign language (Järvinen, 2009). There are plenty of other similar terms and definitions used in Europe which all refer to the learning of the subject area and a foreign language at the same time (Ball, 2016; Greere and Räsänen, 2008). Such similar concepts or pedagogical approaches are e.g. English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and Language across the Curriculum (LAC) just to mention some of them. EMI is defined as teaching a subject through the medium of English in countries where English is not the first language of the population. It mainly takes place in higher or tertiary education and has no explicit aims of language learning, which is regarded as a by-product (Macaro, 2015; Madhavan and McDonald, 2014). CBI is defined as the integration of content with language teaching aims and language is seen as a tool to learn the content of a subject (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989; Cenoz,

2015). LAC means that languages are studied and used throughout the curriculum and language learning takes place in all subjects and not only in foreign language lessons (Bettencourt, 2011). These concepts are frequently compared with each other by practitioners or researchers of each approach. According to Cenoz (2015), there are no essential differences between CBI and CLIL as the most essential property of both is the integration of language and content. However, there are also differences between them; some of which are briefly mentioned below. EMI refers only to the use of English language whereas in CLIL any foreign language can be used. Whereas EMI was started in higher education, CLIL started in primary and secondary education. CBI has its origin in Canadian language immersion programmes in the 1960s and CLIL in Europe in the 1990s (Cenoz, 2015). One of the biggest differences between these approaches is the emphasis put on the content or language, i.e. whether teaching is driven by language goals or content goals. As to EMI, it is debated whether it can be considered a language teaching method as it is a vehicle of delivery of an academic subject (Cenoz, 2015; Madhavan and McDonald, 2014; Macaro, 2015). Both CLIL and CBI have been referred to as umbrella terms since they have broad definitions.

There have been attempts to limit the definition of CLIL. Greere and Räsänen (2008) classify CLIL based on the degree of integration, specification of aims and outcomes and the collaboration between the language teacher and the content teacher into pre-CLIL, partial CLIL, adjunct CLIL and (full) CLIL. They regard LSP (Language for Special Purposes) as pre-CLIL because discipline-specific language is taught by language specialists with no collaboration with content specialists. By partial CLIL they refer to courses taught by content teachers and language learning is considered to take place due to exposure to a foreign language. Outcomes are not specified, aims are implicit and collaboration between the content and language teacher is rare. In adjunct CLIL language teaching is coordinated with or integrated in content studies with specified outcomes and joint planning by a content and language teacher. Finally, in (full) CLIL language studies are fully integrated in content studies with specified outcomes and joint planning between content and language teachers. The CLIL pilot project described in this article can be considered adjunct CLIL as its aims are made explicit and the learning of the English language is coordinated with content studies including a joint collaboration effort of an English teacher and a content teacher.

CLIL in Higher Education

Having been common practice in primary and secondary schools worldwide, CLIL is gaining ground in higher education. It has been adopted in various fields, e.g. in business, medicine and engineering in Europe (Greere and Räsänen, 2008) and according to Fortanet-Gomez (2013) it has also been introduced more and more worldwide.

In Finland, there are over 450 degree programmes delivered entirely in English in higher education institutions (science universities and universities of applied sciences) at the moment, at Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor's level. (<http://www.studyinfinland.fi/database>). The introduction of degree programmes conducted in English has been promoted by the Ministry of Education and Culture. However, in general, it can be said that in terms of the definition of CLIL, only partial CLIL is taking place in these degree programmes. Tampere University of Technology, TUT, has adopted and adapted a model of CLIL where compulsory Finnish, Swedish and English language courses were integrated to substance courses at bachelor level (Niemelä and Jauni, 2014). According to them all degree programmes at TUT have their own adaptations of the CLIL model in Finnish, Swedish and English. What is important in implementing CLIL in higher education is the collaboration between content teachers and language teachers. They are both specialists in their own fields and both specialist skills are needed in the design and planning of CLIL projects and CLIL lessons. Their collaboration is essential for a successful implementation of CLIL in tertiary level education.

Basic Concepts of CLIL

The basic concepts of CLIL are the so called 4C's Framework i.e. content, communication, cognition and culture (Coyle, 2014). Content refers to subject matter e.g. a special field students are studying and teachers are teaching, e.g. civil engineering. Communication refers to language of and for learning, cognition means thinking processes and culture refers to the awareness of the students' own culture and other cultures. The 4C's and other basic concepts, such as higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) and the four basic language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking were taken into account in the practical implementation of our project. Higher-order thinking skills are defined as analysing, evaluating and creating and lower-order thinking skills as remembering, understanding and applying based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy in 2001 (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001).

CLIL as a challenge for intercultural learning

The dual focussed nature of CLIL, i.e., the merging of a foreign language with content subject matter seems to be an ideal environment to initiate intercultural learning since content is never culturally neutral. Analysing, (re)constructing, comparing, contrasting and relativising one's own cultural perspective and foreign cultural perspectives are essential elements in the development of intercultural competence (Sudhoff, 2010).

In our CLIL project, the students were immersed in the deeply rooted foreign perspective on construction culture. They were reading, discussing and analysing authentic materials in English, such as respected foreign professional literature and articles. They were also encouraged to use their ICT skills to access numerous films and other authentic materials in their subject area. All of those authentic materials represented foreign viewpoints on historically determined construction cultures, which later were compared and contrasted with their own building culture. This reconstructing and relativising cultural perspectives and the ability to shift between them can be seen as key elements in intercultural learning and the development of students' intercultural competence (Burton, 2013; Pérez-García, 2015). Drawing on foreign cultural examples helped the students not only to integrate work on their content subject matter but also to prepare them for a globalised world in which they will have to cooperate with others across cultures, as future specialists in their field.

Pilot CLIL Project Objectives

The aim of this pilot CLIL research project, which was carried out as a result of a collaboration effort between the Foreign Language Centre and Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice, was to learn English as well as gain experience in a certain content area, i.e. designing and making a concrete structure. The main goal was to make students learn professional competences through practice and to practise language skills, such as reading specialist texts, note-taking, giving opinions, writing reports and documentations and learning how to give presentations. We also aimed to encourage the students to use the English language to interact while solving problems, working in groups, communicating and collaborating. Our primary long-term goal was for the students to be able to analyse, (re)construct and create their own projects through a foreign, therefore intercultural perspective which will allow them to study and work abroad, and to cooperate in multinational communities. The authentic materials, such as foreign textbooks, professional magazines and videos were used to initiate this intercultural learning process (Sudhoff, 2010).

Project Design

The CLIL research project lasted for one and a half semester, from the beginning of October 2015 till the end of May 2016. The participants included seventeen second-year civil engineering students learning English as a second language. The project had two main coordinators: a content teacher and an English language teacher, both were academic staff of SUT. We also had a foreign advisor who participated in the project, an English language teacher from Finland, who provided us with some learning materials and gave us feedback on the proceedings in CLIL. In order for the Finnish advisor to tele-cooperate in the project, a group email was established. The students uploaded their portfolios, learning materials, assignments, reports, etc. on Google drive to be seen by other students and the teachers.

The students were working in five teams, each of which had to design and make a prefabricated concrete bench of different concrete mixture and colour. The subsequent stages of the projects were: planning, preparation (contacting building companies for materials, pigments, aggregates and reinforcement), designing the concrete mixture and casting the benches in a building lab.

The students' command of English was at C1 level. It had been assumed that they were ICT literate, i.e. were able to use their computer skills effectively and efficiently in order to deepen their knowledge of the subject area as well as to correspond with international building companies to obtain the necessary ingredients for their benches. We presumed that by participating in the project, the students would enjoy collaborating with one another, as well as gain some kind of intercultural perspective into the field of their professional interests.

Subject matter of the project

The subject matter of our project was to design and make five prefabricated concrete benches for utility purposes, therefore having an adequate load-bearing capacity and look.

Stages of the project

Planning

The CLIL project group of seventeen civil engineering students was divided into five teams, each of which appointed themselves a name, respectively: *Concrete Masters*, *Betonarme*, *MAP*, *SMB* and *Limestone*. Each team had to design a bench using different reinforcement, aggregates and colouring pigment. Therefore, during the planning stage of the project the teams were mailing dozens of Polish and foreign building companies, whose addresses they found on the Internet or via word-of-mouth inquiry among people associated with the construction industry. The students asked for samples of materials for their benches. In return they offered product promotion. This was one of the most challenging tasks for the students, since in many cases they had to communicate the idea in a foreign language and were faced with some intercultural barriers which they had to acknowledge and 'break through' in order to achieve their goals – free samples. Soft skills, such as problem solving and team work were particularly useful throughout the whole planning phase of the project.

Realization

Learning English

Students were provided with various learning materials on concrete which were worked out on the basis of CLIL criteria, to practice reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. The idea was to provide some tasks on the topic of concrete as the students had already studied related content

materials during their previous semesters. The CLIL learning materials were worked on, paying special attention to both lower order and higher order thinking skills and to activate the students' prior knowledge as well as process new content and concepts. Example task types given to students are a Read, Discuss and Fill in exercise (Appendix 1) and also some crossword exercises. In the Read, Discuss and Fill in exercise, student A gets a text excerpt on concrete with gaps, student B gets the missing words (verbs in this case). Together they discuss and negotiate which verb goes into which gap. In the crossword exercise students work in pairs and get a half filled-in crossword A and B. First, all A's get together, discuss and write definitions for the concepts appearing in the crossword, while B's do the same with their crossword. After this A finds a partner B and they take turns to read their definitions. They have to conclude what concept or term is defined and then fill in the missing word. This task combines thinking skills and the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. It also consolidates the new concepts learned.

Another source of learning English and broadening students' content knowledge about concrete were authentic materials in English, such as professional articles and specialist publications, found on the Internet. e.g. <http://matse1.matse.illinois.edu/concrete/concrete.html>, www.concretenetwork.com and www.cement.org. They were mostly used for practicing reading and note-taking skills, either as self-study materials or to be discussed in class. Having been downloaded from different English language professional magazines, they represented various new critical views on concrete technology and products and were used for group discussions. The so-called "Cement Talks" were organized to discuss differences between English, American, Canadian, and other foreign methods of concreting and concrete constructions. Additionally, instructional concrete videos, which can be found in online professional magazines <http://www.concretenetwork.com/videos.html> and on YouTube were provided for the students to watch, discuss and deepen their necessary content knowledge, especially for the working-in-a-lab stage of the CLIL project. Writing skills were mostly practiced by means of writing e-mails to sponsors, technical documentations, reports from meetings and final project reports.

Learning content – technical documentation

Technical documentations which the students had to prepare before entering the lab, consisted of concrete mixture recipes and technical drawings which helped them to calculate the mixtures' volume.

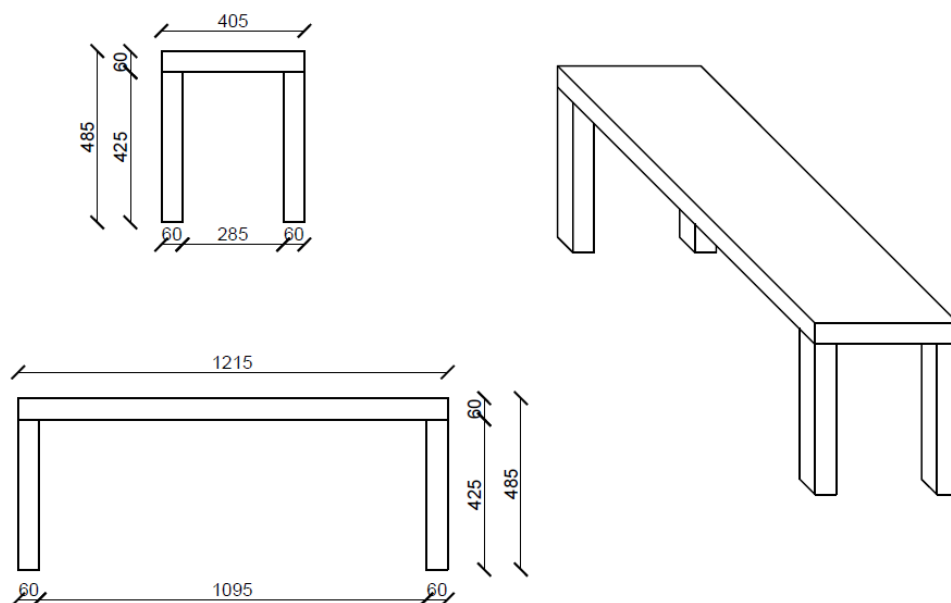


Figure 1. Bench visualization.

The teams' individual concrete mixture recipes differed in the choice of building materials, such as cement, aggregates, reinforcement, and pigments. The students' technical documentations of their benches were checked and assessed by the content teacher.

16.8 kg CEM 52,5 – Portland Cement 52,5
20.4 kg of white sand
12,6 of expanded clay aggregate 0-4mm
8l of water
35g of dispersed reinforcement
Green pigment in adequate quantity
about 1kg natural aluminosilicate Zeobau 50 – to improve the quality of concrete
Additional reinforcement – basalt mesh Ø4
All together: 58,0 kg

Table 1. One of the concrete mixture recipes

Learning content – casting the benches

The working-in-a-lab phase of the project was initiated by an OHS (Occupational Health and Safety) training during which students learned how to work with cement and fresh concrete safely and what kind of protective clothing was necessary for them to wear during the lab work. The training was carried out by one of the lab coordinators in Polish. Later, the students had to write group reports about the training in English.

The casting of the benches took place in the Faculty building lab under supervision of a lab coordinator and in presence of the language teacher whose task was to ensure that the English language was spoken by the students throughout the whole process of making the benches. Each team took approximately five hours to cast their bench in four major steps:

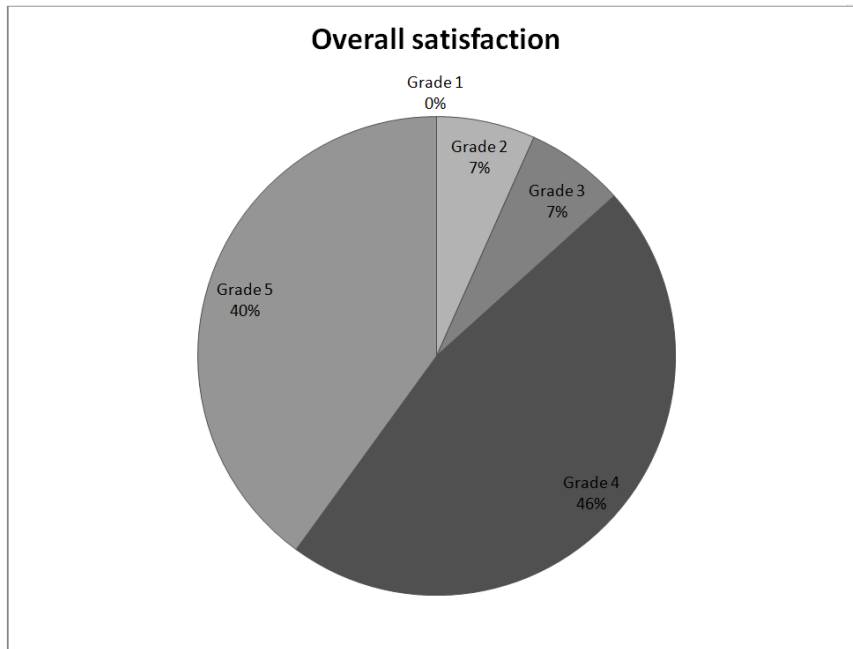
- 1) cleaning and preparing the formwork
- 2) weighing and then mixing concrete ingredients
- 3) pouring the concrete mixture into the formwork
- 4) polishing the surface.

Then, after a few days, the benches had to be demoulded and their parts mounted together. Although the whole process of bench making went smoothly, the students made some concreting mistakes such as miscalculating the amount of concrete, adding too much pigment, etc., which they considered to be the most valuable professional experience and which they documented in their final reports that each group had to write in English at the end of the CLIL project.

Results

Evaluation Questionnaire

A questionnaire to measure the results of the CLIL project was created and filled in by the seventeen students who took part in the project (Appendix 2). The results of the questionnaire are summarized in the tables and graphs below. The questions asked in the questionnaire could be answered using five-grade Likert Scale, where 5 is excellent and 1 is the weakest evaluation. Additionally, some open-ended questions, such as: “What would you do differently?” or “Say 3 things that were really valuable/frustrating during the project” were also provided to give the students an opportunity to express their opinions which were again incorporated into the project results.



Graph 1. The overall evaluation of the project.

Graph 1 refers to the overall student contentment with the project. The majority of the responses were favourable.

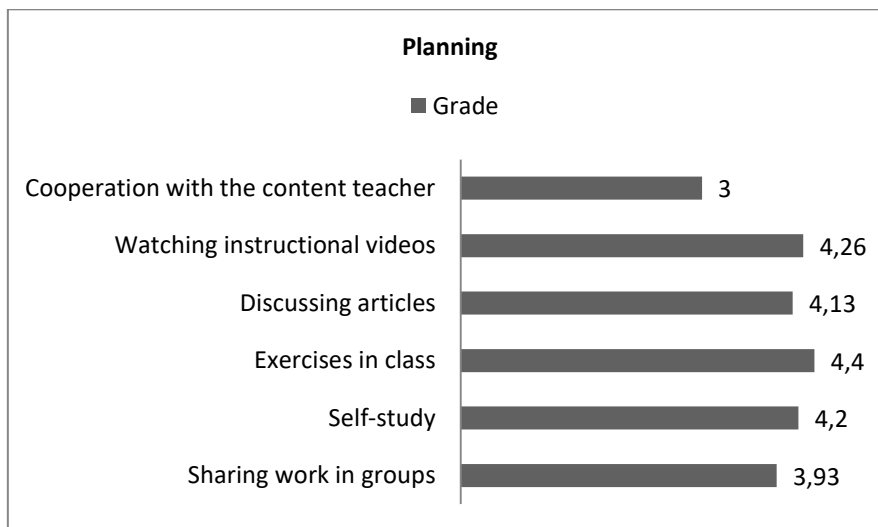


Table 2. Evaluation of the planning phase of the project.

Table 2 presents the evaluation of the planning phase of the project by the students (Appendix 2, question B). Almost all items, such as sharing responsibilities within the teams, self-study and classroom activities received rather high ratings. The only exception occurred to be cooperation with the content teacher, which could have been more intense.

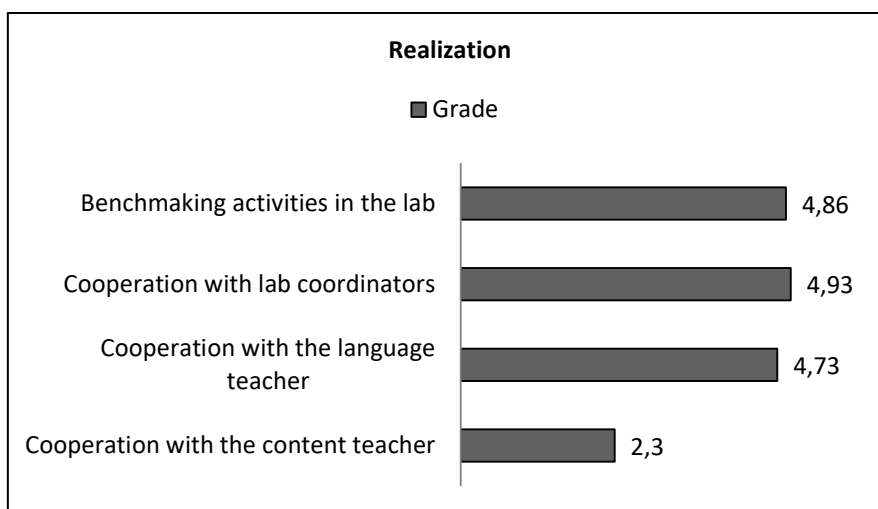


Table 3. Evaluation of the realization phase of the project

Table 3 refers to the realization phase of the project. Similarly to the planning phase, the lack of satisfactory cooperation with the content teacher has been shown. Cooperation with the language teacher was given rather high rating. The highest estimate was given to cooperation with lab teachers and lab-work itself.

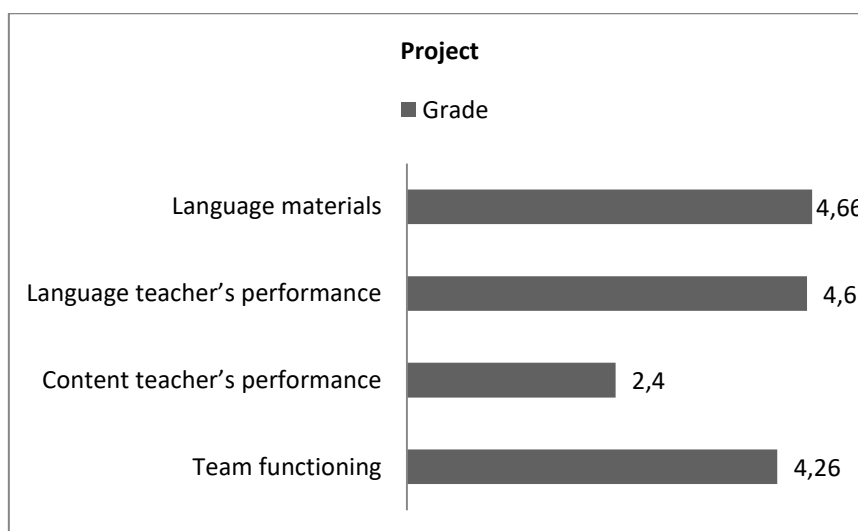


Table 4. Evaluation of the project

Table 4 summarizes the project work in general, i.e. the functioning of teams, the usefulness of language materials and the language teachers' performance. All three questions received positive feedback, while the item which concerns rating the content teacher's performance shows ratings to be much lower than expected. The content teacher's performance was also pointed out by the students in the open-ended questions as one of the issues which were frustrating and needed to be improved in the future. Other recommendations the students mentioned were related to spending more time on language work and gaining more content knowledge during the planning and preparatory stages of the project. As the most valuable things students mentioned the following: 'Learning by practical lab work, which is usually neglected during regular content training', 'Preparing materials', 'Writing reports and presentations', 'Broadening knowledge', 'Learning specialized language for writing documentations and communicating in the lab', 'Working in groups', 'Getting professional experience', 'Using authentic materials', 'Getting foreign perspective', 'Meeting with coordinator from Finland', 'Learning new vocabulary'. Positive comments were connected to team cooperation which was described as

friendly, effective and efficient and with the language teacher's performance, which was highly praised and valued.

Discussion

In the beginning it was a huge challenge to synchronize and implement a common project into the original syllabi of the two university units that decided to cooperate and carry out a CLIL project. The language groups were selected according to the students' level of English and were not the same as the content subject groups, i.e., the students who learn English in one group, attend their content classes in many other different groups, having to follow different timetables, i.e., starting and finishing their content classes at different times and on different days. This might have been a major obstacle in the precise planning of the tasks for both the language and the content teachers, predominantly affecting the content teacher's contact with the students, which was clearly reflected in the low ratings of the latter. The students would have appreciated more help in broadening their knowledge about concrete and making a bench from their content teacher. It seems to be more efficient to create CLIL groups of the students who belong to the same groups in both departments. Such readjustment would also make the cooperation between the content and language teachers much more effective, if not ideal.

Conclusions

In conclusion we can say that the pilot CLIL project was a great initiative and was appreciated by all the participating students who described it as 'pioneering' and important because of both the CLIL innovative approach and the project work itself with its subject matter, tasks and methods. The questionnaires proved that apart from gaining the content knowledge, the CLIL project had a lot of other benefits for the students, such as learning through practice and learning with one's mistakes, working in a group, managing stress, organizing work, solving problems or getting an international perspective, mainly through reading and discussing authentic foreign professional magazines and contacting big international companies to obtain necessary building materials. Sudhoff (2010) outlines the integrative nature of CLIL classes by mentioning their combination of foreign language learning, content subject learning and intercultural learning, therefore promoting intercultural communicative competence. In the case of our CLIL project the students' intercultural sensitivity improved, which was shown by the students' foreign perspective on construction culture and technology, which they gained during the whole project work. Such experience will definitely constitute a significant competitive advantage in the labour market for the students who took part in the CLIL project. On the whole, the cooperation between language and content teachers in an academic environment, as proved in our CLIL project, has a great potential and should be continued in the years to come.

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Appendix 1. Read, Discuss and Fill in Exercise

A. Work in pairs and fill in the gaps. Your partner B has the missing words. Read the text and discuss with your partner to fill in the gaps. (CONCRETE)

What does concrete _____ of? And how is it made? Well, when making concrete cement and water are _____ in certain ratios. But also other substances, aggregates, have to be _____. When this mixture is _____ to air or water it will _____. Cement _____ limestone and it _____ as a binder in concrete. By adding some type of admixture the properties of concrete can be _____. Because of its strength concrete can _____ heavy loads. Concrete does not have to be regularly _____ i.e. a concrete surface does not have to be _____ in any way. Concrete does not _____ or _____ like wood does. It is used e.g. for _____ the foundation of a building and it can be _____ to make it stronger and more stable.

B. Work in pairs and fill in the gaps. Your partner B has a text with gaps. You have the missing words. Discuss with your partner to fill in the gaps. Five extra words will be left over. (CONCRETE)

add	function	modify
carry	harden	reinforce
consist	insulate	require
contain	involve	resist
decay	lay	treat
develop	maintain	wear
expose	mix	

Appendix 2. Evaluation Questionnaire

CLIL Pilot Project 2015/2016

Please, answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. Remember that this is the first time we are trying this project so be constructive with your feedback. Please, circle one of the numbers from 1 – 5 where 5 is the highest.

A. How would you grade the whole project?

1 2 3 4 5

B. How would you grade the planning stage of the project?

- a) working in groups, sharing work and responsibilities 1 2 3 4 5
 b) broadening knowledge about concrete:
 - self-study materials and literature 1 2 3 4 5
 - doing exercises in class 1 2 3 4 5
 - discussing articles from professional magazines in class 1 2 3 4 5
 - watching instructional films on You Tube 1 2 3 4 5
 - cooperation with content teacher 1 2 3 4 5

Give reasons for your choice

C. How would you grade the realization stage of the project?

- a) cooperation with content teacher 1 2 3 4 5
 b) cooperation with language teacher 1 2 3 4 5
 c) How do you grade cooperation with lab coordinators 1 2 3 4 5
 d) bench making activities in the lab 1 2 3 4 5

Give reasons for your choice

D. How did your group function? 1 2 3 4 5 Give reasons for your choice

E. How would you grade the language teacher's performance throughout the whole project? 1 2 3 4 5

Give reasons for your choice

F. Open questions:

1. What would you do differently/the same way?

2. Say 3 things that were really valuable during the project.

3. Say 3 things that were frustrating during the project.

4. Any other comments, recommendations, improvements?

Thank you for your answers!

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Teaching multiculturalism for tourism students and developing their intercultural competence at the University of Debrecen

JÁNOS FARKAS

University of Debrecen

The aim of the present paper is to offer suggestions on how to improve tourism students' intercultural competence promoting the development of their professional skills and multicultural awareness. From the perspective of the UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education and considering the position of the Senate of our university on the importance of tourism as one of the main focus areas, we explore how to facilitate students' intercultural awareness and competence so that they can act efficiently in intercultural situations in the tourism industry. One of the key issues that higher education has to face nowadays is how to educate versatile, creative and knowledgeable tourism specialists who can work in the modern multicultural environment. During the seminars we cover a wide range of topics (a career in tourism, catering, accommodation, transport, tour operators, travel agents, business travel, economics, marketing, etc.), providing students with the professional terminology necessary for active interaction with people of different nationalities with varied cultural and educational backgrounds. The objective is to promote intercultural competence in the English-language lessons by applying specially designed teaching-learning aids and tasks e.g. case studies, role-plays, problem-solving situations, project work, etc. My experience shows that a proper multicultural teaching environment is crucial in the preparation of tourism students for the challenges of the labor market in the globalized tourism industry.

Keywords: intercultural competence, intercultural approach, multicultural awareness, communication skills, comparison and contrast approach

Introduction

The aim of the present paper is to give an insight into how to improve tourism students' intercultural competence promoting the development of their professional skills and multicultural awareness in the classroom by giving a short theoretical and institutional background and analysing a specific coursebook, i.e. *Tourism in Focus* (2008) by authors Fekésházi Márta and Máthé Krisztina. There have been political, socio-economic and cultural changes in the world recently, and these changes have influenced all areas of life, all industries and professional fields, including the teaching and preparation of tourism students for life. Graduating students have to possess a high level of professional language competence and intercultural communication skills, as they will probably work in a multicultural environment.

One of the missions of our Institute of Business Communication and Professional Language Studies at the University of Debrecen is to educate and prepare students of tourism for their future working life and increase their competitiveness in the tourism business. Higher education nowadays has to face the dilemma of how to educate versatile, creative and knowledgeable specialists able to work in the complicated economic conditions, taking into account cultural peculiarities of different nations and ethnic groups, as well as demonstrating efficiency and professionalism in providing clients with new experience and catering to their wishes.

Institutional background

In Hungary, it is up to individual universities to decide whether they regard it as important and effective to include language teaching in their study programmes, and it is the institutions' right

and responsibility to determine the number and aim of foreign language courses. For this reason, the range of language training programmes at Hungarian universities varies considerably. Although universities have autonomy to decide on their language programme, the degree requirements towards foreign languages are determined at a national level (Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh, 2006). According to Czeller and Hajdu (2014), language teaching in the Hungarian higher education has a two-fold objective: on the one hand it aims to provide students with the goal-oriented technical language skills required to meet the needs of the labour market, and, on the other, to prepare them for the language examination necessary for graduation.

The teaching and preparation are very challenging and complex tasks both from the students and the language instructors since tourism students of our institute need two B2 level special language certificates by the end of their studies, and the preparation time frame is rather limited. Our institute aims to provide a culture-specific knowledge for students of tourism which refers to knowledge about another culture, teaching the different customs, norms, and traditions of different countries. During language acquisition and language teaching, I find facilitating students' intercultural awareness and competence primarily important, and they should be part of any course material. The language itself is a means of communication and the road map to other cultures. The development and acquisition of intercultural awareness are inevitable and provides a base of effective and appropriate multicultural interactions. Students taking up our course will have to be open to other cultures, show curiosity towards tourism related issues, demonstrate sociolinguistic awareness, empathy, and adaptability combined with proper communication skills by the end of the course.

Cultural diversity education in the curriculum plays a pivotal role in systematically enabling students to develop cultural diversity competencies and skills. Intercultural competence is defined as the set of knowledge and know-how which allows individuals from a given culture to interact in a suitable and appropriate way with individuals from another culture. In a tourism related sense, it means "the ability for a professional to carry out occupational tasks satisfactorily in the tourist services with individuals coming from cultural groups different from his/her own" (Gremmo, 1997: 64-66).

I strongly believe that a proper university language teaching should combine intercultural competence with communicative competence, which results in a communicative intercultural competence and it adds value to the level of education and students will have a better chance of getting a job in the tourism industry both at home and abroad. The goal is to manage ESP education and the acquisition of competencies to reflect the cultural, racial, social and linguistic diversity present in both globalized trade and the world economy. The final product is a well-educated graduate student in tourism who is not only able to communicate in English but is well aware of the existing diversity and challenges which he or she will face in the future.

Diversity is an increasingly important factor in working life as tourism organisations, worldwide, become more diverse regarding the race, ethnicity, national origin and other personal characteristics of their members (Shaw and Barrett-Power, 1998). During university courses it is one of the tasks of teachers to encourage students to accept this diversity, be open towards cultures and show tolerance to otherness.

What approach does the coursebook *Tourism in Focus* take?

The coursebook provides a comprehensive examination preparation material for students who wish to pass the intermediate level KITEK foreign language examination. Its chapters are based on the different areas of tourism. It must be emphasized, however, that the book does not cover

the whole area of the tourism business, but its 22 units cover several tourism related issues providing the necessary knowledge and practising essential skills during the language examination preparation process. The book does not include grammatical explanations and specific grammar exercises. It incorporates reading comprehension tasks, picture description tasks, writing tasks, listening comprehension tasks, role-play activities and many other interesting activities which make the learning process fast, easy and versatile. The coursebook recognises that tourism is truly international, and people working in a modern, global environment will carry out both every day and tourism related tasks later in life and incorporates a very wide range of career-specific vocabulary and contexts. Each unit immerses students in the four key language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

The coursebook contains

- A variety of realistic, engaging reading passages about a given area of tourism, e.g., travelling by road, by train, by air, Hungarian cuisine, accommodation, hotels, and their services, hotel careers, travel agencies and types of tourism. During the development of reading skills, students find several authentic texts. The focus is on both on content and specific tourism vocabulary. The vocabulary is presented and practised using a variety of techniques, including gap-fills, creative writing, and word-building with prefixes and suffixes.
- As for listening comprehension, the recordings on the CD include conversations, news items and comments, discussions between experts in tourism.
- Speaking skills are developed by realistic and enjoyable situations. They include presentations, negotiations, discussions, simulations and career-specific role-plays. They improve professional communication skills with strategies for workplace situations such as giving advice, taking bookings, and dealing with complaints.
- Writing tasks include writing letters of complaint, letters of inquiry, newspaper articles, reports, and compositions.
- At the end of the book, there are two mock examination tests, a collection of pictures and role-play cards and an answer key to the exercises.
- A complete glossary of terms and expressions at the end of each unit.

Many of the activities are designed for use with groups of students, but they can be used in one-to-one teaching situations as well.

The coursebook ensures that students will be equipped with genuinely useful, transferable language that they can take out of the classroom and use later in their workplace. Additionally, the main emphasis of the coursebook is on intercultural competence development in the language classes.

How can intercultural and target culture-specific elements be integrated into a language preparation course?

I would like to suggest some ideas how to make the process of developing a student's L2 cultural competence easier and more efficient. The recommendations mainly concern the content of the *Tourism in Focus* coursebook, but they can be beneficial in other types of preparation.

I strongly support Wendt's (2003) view that "language is learnt in context, and any approach to research on language learning needs to take this fully into account" (Wendt, 2003: 92). Almost every context hides some intercultural elements which can be utilised in the classroom via discussions, comparisons, role-plays, case studies and project works developing students' intercultural competencies. For the duration of the course, I get each student to choose a country and collect as much information about that given country as they can, because that country will be their special subject. Whenever a discussion task occurs, they can be the experts and refer to this

country for examples and information. They have to be very well prepared to defend their culture/tourism related views in case of arguments or discussions.

Unfortunately, the book only includes texts on Hungary and the target language countries i.e. the UK and the United States, but it does not mean that other countries should be excluded from class discussions. An extensive and comparative method to discussions and talks has to be present in the classroom. First of all students have to know the tourism of their own country, but know some others as well; they have to be able to compare these countries and increase their cultural awareness. However, teachers also have to be culturally aware themselves because if a teacher is not aware of their culture and the culture of the target L2 language, the effective education process might be at risk, students will realise the teacher's incompetence and this may lead to the complete failure of the course.

According to a publication of the Council of Europe

”[w]hat language teachers need for the intercultural dimension is not more knowledge of other countries and cultures, but skills in promoting an atmosphere in the classroom which allows learners to take risks in their thinking and feeling. Such skills are best developed in practice and in reflection on experience. They may find common ground in this with teachers of other subjects and/or in taking part themselves in learning experiences which involve risk and reflection.” (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002.)

During the course, I never consider the different topics authoritative and definitive. I always start with the content in the textbook and later encourage students to ask further questions about the relevant topic and make comparisons, share their experiences at home and abroad. I find this comparison and contrast approach very pivotal in my teaching because I am sure this is one of the methods intercultural competence can be developed effectively.

The coursebook contains authentic materials presented in their context but as I have mentioned the context is very limited to Hungary and some target language countries, therefore, students are free to use online resources to find information and formulate their opinion and views of different cultures. However, the Internet as a source can sometimes be very biased or misleading concerning the content. I always ask my students to be very careful about the different websites. Teachers should suggest some websites at the beginning of the course where relevant information can be accessed.

Every unit of the coursebook contains a picture description task which can be very useful in starting a multicultural debate or a comparison. Here the teacher's role is pivotal in encouraging students to take part in the descriptions and comparisons (e.g. comparing countries, different airlines, types of accommodation, tourist destinations, cuisine, landmarks and world heritage sites) and make them come up with their cultural experience if there is any.

An extremely useful technique that can be successfully used in the intercultural approach is project work. Students are asked to introduce a tourist destination, national cuisine or landmark. They can find much information about the given culture, using various sources (the internet, newspapers and magazines, TV, people they know). The next step is a synthesis of the collected information and, very often, some artistic preparation. I have found students can be very creative and imaginative, and many project presentations are really interesting. A follow-up, in-class discussion is necessary, concentrating on the content of the end-product. Project work lends itself very well to the development of learners' intercultural knowledge because it is typically content-oriented. Additionally, it has a lot of other advantages: it develops students' language skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, imagination, research skills, and teamwork skills. There is much emphasis on

individualization and the development of students' interests. Because the responsibility and choice are theirs, each project is a unique, personal, and memorable experience for students.

Another very challenging and interesting task for the students to develop their intercultural knowledge is a sightseeing simulation exercise during which they can simulate a sightseeing tour in the classroom using PowerPoint slides. There is an appointed guide from the students, and the rest of them will play the role of tourists who can ask questions, interrupt, agree and disagree by practising communication skills.

Another interesting task is when students have to give a short presentation of a Hungarian or something that is unique to another country e.g. spice, wine, food, tool, an item of clothing or even a breed of animal, etc. and therefore representing great value with it.

Cultural differences might come to the fore during role-plays. A typical exercise in the coursebook is the travel agency role-play where the travel agent has to recommend tailor-made programmes for tourists who arrive from different parts, cultures of the world. The travel agent has to be culturally aware what programmes offer for tourists for example from Arab countries, the Far East or Africa. A role-play in a restaurant where the owner has to recommend different kinds of menus for local and international guests is another good example of teaching language in an intercultural context. I also encourage students to acquire a sort of critical way of thinking, to analyse the coursebook we learn from critically because without criticism it is very difficult to make comparisons and contrasts.

Classroom procedures during the class

Whether the context is pair work, group work or whole class discussions, the following rules are applied:

- students have to listen to each other and respect the others' opinion even in the case of heated debates; only polite language is allowed.
- discriminatory remarks, particularly racist, sexist and homophobic discourse and expressions are totally unacceptable at any time.
- students are allowed to use stereotypes and suggest or present other viewpoints. This is an essential part of developing intercultural competence.
- students have to be able to defend their point of view while acknowledging the legitimacy of others.
- students have to accept differences and otherness.

Conclusion

My experience shows that a proper multicultural teaching environment is crucial in the preparation of tourism students for the challenges of the labor market in the globalized tourism industry. Implementing the intercultural approach during the courses for tourism students is a challenging, demanding task for the language teacher, who must possess at least some intercultural knowledge and has a major role in guiding the students to the acceptance of different values, beliefs and behavior. However, teachers must implement the intercultural approach in a tactful, skillful, and conscious way. Teachers have to educate a generation of students who will not only tolerate, but also understand, accept, and respect people from different cultures of the world, will communicate with them successfully, and will learn from them through that communication. All the notions mentioned above can be fully or partially satisfied by the courses for tourism students but it requires hard work and the total involvement of both the students and teachers in the classroom.

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The impact of interconnectedness: culture, language, communication

JUDIT HIDASI

Budapest Business School

“Every time we speak we perform a cultural act.”

Kramersch (1993: 9)

It is assumed that we live in a world of connectedness due to our being linked (Barabási 2002, 2010; Newman, Watts and Barabási, 2006) through our networks. But our human interconnectedness would not work without three significant attributes of our human nature: culture, language and communication. Their intersections and their overlapping nature can be best studied in everyday as well as in education- related interactions. The strong interdependence of cultural heritage, of languages (both native and learned) and of social traditions in the functioning and effectiveness of communication have an impact on the responses that we give to the newly emerging challenges of the globalizing context that we live in. These issues are interrelated and interconnected with each other through a common denominator, namely “cultural-mental programming” which increasingly requires “reprogramming efforts” in order to adapt to the occurring communication and interaction needs within the ever-intensifying shift from an intercultural to a multicultural environment in communities, in business and in workplaces. This contribution does not offer ready solutions but rather serves as fuel for further discussions.

Keywords: interconnectedness, cultural-mental programming, language and communication, cultural heritage

Interconnectedness as an ever-intensifying phenomenon

Interconnectedness as a phenomenon existed long before the IT revolution, but the IT revolution and digital technology developments have speeded up the process and functioning of interconnectedness. Interestingly, the notion itself was first put forward not by a scholar but by a novelist in 1929; Frigyes Karinthy (a Hungarian literary genius of the twentieth century) in his volume of short stories titled *Everything is Different* which included the story “Chain-Links”, which investigated in abstract, conceptual, and fictional terms many of the problems that would captivate future generations of mathematicians, sociologists, and physicists within the field of network theory. In particular, Karinthy believed that the modern world was 'shrinking' due to this ever-increasing connectedness of human beings. He assumed that despite great physical distances between the globe's individuals, the growing density of human networks made their actual social distance far smaller. As a result of this hypothesis, Karinthy's characters believed that any two individuals could be connected through at most five acquaintances, described as follows:

To demonstrate that people on Earth today are much closer than ever, a member of the group suggested a test. He offered a bet that we could name any person among earth's one and a half billion inhabitants and through at most five acquaintances, one of which he knew personally, he could link to the chosen one (Barabasi, 2002: 26).

Karinthy has accordingly been regarded as the originator of the notion of *six degrees of separation*, an idea that both directly and indirectly influenced a great deal of early thought on social networks, whereby everyone and everything is six or fewer steps away, by way of introduction, from any other person in the world, so that a chain of a “friend of a friend” statements can be made to connect any two people in a maximum of six steps. Albert-László Barabási, another Hungarian genius but in the field of science, duly pays tribute to his countryman in the 2002 volume that brought him international fame (Barabási, 2002). His later works (Newman, Watts and Barabási, 2006; Barabási

2010) elaborate further on the interconnectedness and network concept with application to a great many fields of science and everyday life, examining the relationship of complexity and networks and how they affect our lives.

However, our human interconnectedness would not work without three significant attributes of our human nature: culture, language and communication. Globalization and the European integration process notwithstanding, in two fields, namely in culture and language, efforts aimed at maintaining diversity are also apparent. We witness a strong interdependence in the functioning and effectiveness of communication of cultural heritage, of languages (both native and learned) and of social traditions.

21st century trends and adaptation requirements

With respect to the world surrounding us as well as the different walks of life, lifestyles, objects and behavioral patterns in it, these days we perceive and witness two worldwide tendencies. One of these tendencies points towards unity, whereas the other towards its opposite, i.e. diversity (Hidasi, 2008b). On the one hand, what we experience is that in the developed world people more or less dress in the same way, young people mostly listen to the same songs, and surround themselves with very similar objects, be they smart phones, portable players or any other novelties. At the same time, bigger towns offer an unprecedented range of culinary delights and workplaces and residential areas are increasingly multicultural. The first tendency of unification is generally attributed to globalization (Lewis, 2001), while the second tendency can be connected to the process of diversification. In other words, multiculturalism is perceptible in all countries of the world thanks to the intensification of both mobility and migration (Hidasi, 2011). Irrespective of whether multiculturalism in a given country, community or region is temporary or permanent, challenges related to interculturalism will lead to conflicts in the value systems relating to the formation of opinions about healthcare and educational services or to residential and living conditions among groups of diverse cultural backgrounds, workplace communities, residential communities and the individuals themselves who constitute these communities (Hidasi, 2008a). Difficulties caused by communication about these issues are also prone to appear even if the people involved in such discussions communicate about these topics using the same language (Földes, 2007).

While diversification is connected to internationalization and refers to the fact that apart from a given nation's or country's culture, other nations' or countries' cultures should likewise be present in a geographical area, globalization exhibits a countertendency and denotes unification on a global scale. Linguistic globalization is taking place right in front of our eyes. The expansion of the English language is a clear example of a cause and effect relationship: globalization causes English to spread, and the spread of the English language reinforces globalization. Put differently, the English language constitutes both the result and the means of the same process, notably that of globalization. At the same time, it must also be noted that knowing a mutually-understood language does not necessarily mean knowledge of some commonly used terminology or shared rules of communication. The imperative of "speaking the same language" and "using the same language" is especially marked in multicultural and multilingual Europe (Falkné-Bánó, 2001).

The ever-intensifying shift from intercultural to multicultural environment in communities, in business, in work places and in educational settings requires a permanent need to adapt to changes. Hence flexibility and adaptability are those core competences that serve as prerequisites for survival and for keeping pace with the required changes. Suffice to remind the reader of the words generally attributed to Darwin, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, it is the one that is most adaptable to change".

Are we ready to address internationalization needs in education?

Education experts and practitioners confirm that the foremost aim of internationalization – particularly in higher education – is to benefit from sharing knowledge and skills, and from the exchange of the experiences of institutions in different countries – in order to best adapt to changes of our changing world. This can be achieved by addressing diverse areas of the educational domain whilst operating international educational programs that cover foreign language teaching (FLT), communication, intercultural interactions, and the like.

For a better understanding of the internationalization possibilities of education we turn to the model of the GATS (General Agreement on Trade and Services) modes to demonstrate the similarities in approaches and solutions because it helps to understand the different modes as for transfer of people and services. If we look at education as a form of delivering a service to consumers (students) then this model can be transferred to the domain of education and used as a tool for systematizing the possibilities. GATS as a treaty of the World Trade Organization (WTO) entered into force in January 1995 as a result of the Uruguay Round negotiations. The agreement includes four modes of supply for the delivery of services in cross-border trade: presence of natural persons; consumption abroad; commercial presence; cross-border supply. Adapting these modes into the domain of education, we come to the four-mode model of educational supply for the delivery of cross-border education.

A four-mode model of educational supply

GATS modes	Educational adaptation
<i>M1. presence of natural persons</i>	teachers move in order to deliver educational services abroad
<i>M2. consumption abroad</i>	students move to institutions abroad to study for a period of time
<i>M3. commercial presence</i>	program / course / module is transferred and delivered on site in the foreign country
<i>M4. cross-border supply</i>	virtual mobility / e-learning no-one moves physically

Table 1. A four-mode model of educational supply.

Upon closer examination, this adaptation suggests that when talking about international or cross border education, we tend to think in terms of teacher mobility (M1) or student mobility (M2) in the traditional sense. In a digital world, however, emphasis is increasingly placed on “exported” educational programs or franchisings (M3) or generally on e-learning (M4). In the practice of Budapest Business School, we have had examples of both versions of (M3). For a couple of years, the Business Economics Program of the Faculty of International Management and Business was “exported” to EMTE Sapientia University in Cluj (Romania) and run there with the same content leading to the same degree – until the launch and accreditation of an independent program of Sapientia University with a partly similar content by the Romanian authorities. At the same time, we had an MA franchise program of Anglia Ruskin University running for some 15 years in International Business at the graduate center of BBS.

It is not by chance that since 1995, at the subsequent conferences of European ministers responsible for higher education, recommendations have regularly included directives on the importance of not only improving the role of information communication technology (ICT) in education but also enhancing the impact of virtual mobility in the internationalization of education. Despite the benefits in terms of cost and accessibility anywhere, anytime, anyplace as well as matching individual needs as for the pace and tempo of learning, the demand for traditional mobility seems to remain a growing market both for students and for professors (Fallon, 2013).

The explanation for this growing need for advancing traditional mobility is twofold: on the one hand, expectations related to the almighty role and impact of IT solutions have not been fully met; on the other hand, the benefits of real-life mobility have not so far been successfully compensated by virtual interactions.

Among expectations that have partly failed, those listed below refer only to IT solutions that were supposed to have a great impact on the improvement of education:

- Machine-translation – the godfather of which was Jehoshua Bar-Hillel (1951) (cf. 1st International Conference on Machine Translation 1952 at MIT) – has developed significantly, but still in many instances "google translation" cannot satisfy quality expectations.
- Distance learning, popular as it might be for particular reasons in many regions of the world (in Canada, South-Africa, and Australia, for example), has been increasingly transformed into an element of blended learning, the mix of distance and in-class, or tutor-to-student educational constructs which combine self-study with relevant classroom material.
- Digital libraries are necessary and serve many specific purposes, but in the developed countries they still cannot replace traditional libraries; consumers still demand access to books. In the educationally-advanced countries of East Asia like Japan, South-Korea and Taiwan, traditional libraries still have their place in academic settings and are constantly developing.
- E-learning turned out to be not the almighty substitute for contact-teaching, but rather a complementary tool. The much advertised and triumphantly publicized MOOCs (massive open online courses) which took the world by storm in 2012 (Pappano, 2012) were clearly destined to transform learning. Examples of the potential for transformation can be found in MOOC providers often in partnership with the big learning establishments as it can be seen in Table 2.

Place of origin	Institution	MOOC
USA	Stanford University, Johns Hopkins University, etc.	Coursera
USA	Stanford University	Udacity
USA	MIT, Harvard, Berkeley etc.	EdX
Great Britain	Lancaster University, University of Aberdeen, etc.	FutureLearn
Europe	European Commission	OpenEducationEuropa
Germany	iversity GmbH, Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft	iversity
Hungary	Óbuda University	K-MOOC
Hungary	University of Miskolc	MeMOOC

Table 2. MOOC providers in partnership with learning institutions.

The number of MOOC courses has exceeded 4,500 globally by January 2016 and is growing by each day (*State of the MOOC*, 2016). Although they bear many markers of convenience, it was clear early on that MOOC programs cannot be substitutes for traditional college or university education – neither in terms of effectiveness, nor in terms of quality or academic experience. The connectedness and interconnectedness is successfully established, but the human dimension that can matter most in the success of teaching and learning is missing (Miller, 2014).

A discrepancy in digital technology, however, is due to a number of factors, like the generation divide as the young and the old vary in their attitudes and skills (Comba, 2011); the digital literacy divide, where accessibility to IT technology is often a question of being rich or poor; acceleration of technologies, whereby new developments might overwrite previous versions (TeachThought, 2013); and differences in learning attitudes, which include the (lack of) individual affinity for self-study (Hofstede, 1986). Nevertheless, the demand and need for virtual mobility in education continues to exist for both faculty and students.

What we see from the changing landscape of education in terms of needs and requirements, we have to admit that the preparedness of particular countries and of particular institutions to meet these newly emerging demands shows a very diverse state. Education policy makers and education management professionals should work closely on raising awareness about the importance of addressing international education needs.

Having in mind the growing number of incoming foreign students to Hungary (partly due to the ERASMUS exchange programs and partly to the launch of the *Stipendium Hungaricum* scholarship scheme) we will examine the benefits of the latter in detail.

What are the benefits and challenges of traditional mobility?

Student mobility in the traditional sense is undeniably more costly than virtual mobility, but it has so many – often intangible – benefits that in the final stock-taking the advantages for the host-institution, the home-institution, the mobility student, and the host country largely outnumber the disadvantages.

The benefits for the host-institution are manifold: it can address internationalization requirements set out by educational policy makers, for which technical and budget support can be claimed; it can provide diversity in thinking, life-styles, skills, and know-how; its staff can learn by and profit from synergy; it can create and offer an international context to all its students and faculty – foreign and domestic alike; and finally internationalization itself has a self-perpetuating effect in the sense that the more international the institution, the more attractive it is for international students.

The benefits for the home-institution – apart from the economic gain of having fewer students on site during the absence of their outgoing students – arise mainly from the fact that upon return of the outgoing students they get back young people enriched by knowledge, language skills and intercultural experience. These interculturally trained and experienced young people exercise a multiplicative influence on the student-community back home: they are able to share and promote intercultural knowledge, skills and competences that might help their peers to adapt better to international requirements. Their examples serve as “good practice” to the others.

The benefits for the individual student are also numerous: mobility students have a chance not only to gain “foreign-country experience” but also to improve their communication skills and to be exposed to intercultural experience. They will possibly acquire new skills and know-how through experience working in international teams or reaching interculturally-appropriate solutions while working on problem-solving tasks and even improve their language skills. The international environment might beneficially stimulate their entrepreneurial spirit, flexibility and creativity.

Finally, the benefits for the host country can be counted on a larger scale: to disseminate the local culture; to get economic gains (fees in case of paying students + students as consumers); political capital gain (to raise „bridge-people” who act as “ambassadors” between the countries involved); and finally look at foreign students presence as an opportunity for country-branding (future investment carriers, etc.).

The successful management and handling of multiculturalism in educational settings poses challenges both to those who wish to enter a given country and to those who receive people with diverse cultural backgrounds in their country (Malota, 2015). The greater the cultural distance (i.e. the national, ethnic, religious and linguistic distance) between the receiving institutions or community and the incoming students, the more likely it is that challenges will be present in increasingly marked ways and that they will constitute a source of conflict.

For the students in mobility, it is assumed that a great amount of the difficulty arises not so much from the difference of language but rather from the difference of interaction by that language and through that language. Note that it is not only the difference and/or difficulty of the “language” in the Saussurean sense that presents a problem, but also the process of acquisition and the difference in language usage (“parole”) that also contributes to the extraordinary efforts that are to be taken by learners (Kasper and Rose, 2002; Hidasi, 2003; Devlin, 2015).

Challenges in the educational domain derive from differences in academic culture, in classroom interaction, in teaching and learning methods, in communication styles and in academic administrative culture. Students must be aware of the respective importance in the host environment regarding performance or process; achievement or critical thinking; written achievements or oral discussions. If students are not familiar with the values of the host-community, they risk irritating their hosts. For example, they may be expected to watch or instead to be an active part of the process, to stay silent and listen rather than ask questions. These expectations regarding student behavior vary according to cultural heritage, just as much as the expectations and behavior of the teacher, who might see students as co-operators or as an audience, behaving as a “coach” or as an instructor.

The methods of teaching and learning are both affected by culture. In the 1970s, Henry (1976) listed 55 teaching methods, the number of which must have considerably grown since then. The greatest divide though exists between the so-called receptive methods and proactive methods. Whereas receptive methods put emphasis on observing, watching, imitating, repeating, and memorizing, proactive methods require doing, problem solving, comparing, and discussing. While receptive methods are well represented in the arsenal of teaching and learning of several Asian or African cultures, the concept of the proactive method constitutes the base of the Western teaching-learning approach. The former focuses on the perception and consideration of the whole context (high-context culture) prior to understanding, the latter concentrates on the overt (mostly verbal) message (low-context culture) and expects a prompt reaction to it. The former is nearer to the defensive, the latter is nearer to the offensive type of communication behaviour (Hidasi, 2003). Students might behave very differently from what is considered to be the norm in the host country but an often-neglected aspect of the difficulties might be attributed to the cultural differences in communication strategies of the teaching and of the learning side. It is hypothesized that there is a strong interdependence of communication strategies and of teaching/learning strategies (Hofstede, 1986; DeKeyser, 2003; Jin and Cortazzi, 2013) – both acquired in childhood as part of the home country culture. Raising teachers’ awareness about differences between communication styles and language behavior might help avoid misunderstandings and stereotyping (Hidasi, 2014).

Finally, one of the greatest challenges for the host and home country institutions is to be aware of the differences in the role and operation of the academic administration. The role of the academic unit and administrative staff in providing service to students must be defined and is often one of two polar solutions: to serve students, that is to “find and provide” accommodation for them or to coach, that is to offer “support for the student” in finding accommodation, among other basic needs.

These questions are interrelated and interconnected with each other through the common denominator designated as “cultural-mental programming” (Hofstede, 1986). As stated by Powell and Andersen (1994: 322), “culture provides us with a heritage and a set of expectations about educational settings” such that, when these expectations concerning the whole educational process itself are not met, those affected become disappointed or frustrated. Although this disorientation comes from a feeling of loss, which gives rise to the question, “Why not do it the way we always have?”, the reality is that ways that function well in one particular setting might prove less effective

in a different setting. Awareness should be raised with respect to the ways in which people's worldviews affect their learning, understanding, production, and interaction. Neglecting differences in mental programming – and for that matter in communication – might lead to low effectiveness. A better understanding of the differences might also help to avoid frustrations arising from misunderstandings on either side. The issues connected with foreign language acquisition and communication are gaining importance within the process of internationalization and globalization. Still, we are left with the question of discovering the most effective ways and means of mental programming and reprogramming.

Conclusions

In the context of globalization the relevance of the topics discussed is reinforced by the need to adapt to changes within the ever-intensifying shift from intercultural to multicultural environment in education, in communities, in business and in work places. We can agree that while the need for real as opposed to virtual or online intercultural experience remains, and has to be satisfied, it has to be acknowledged that understanding of interculturality deepens through “real-life” experiences (Ricks, 2010).

Institutions should be prepared for the acceptance of a growing number of other-cultural input: in human terms, in cultural terms, in language terms and in terms of customs and habits as well as “civilization” terms. Given that it is no longer enough to observe and acknowledge cultural differences, interculturality must be handled and managed. Efforts are to be mobilized on both sides: on the side of the students and also on the side of the host-institutions. Students have to make efforts of assimilation to a certain extent: the new environment cannot be expected to accommodate all individual needs separately. Hence a mental reprogramming of expectations and behavior is a successful path towards smooth adaptation to the host requirements. The host institution for its part should make efforts to enhance intercultural sensitivity and culture-specific comprehension among its academic staff, faculty and administration as well as among the community members.

Living and working in a multicultural environment, we should make the utmost of it by coming to a synergy within the wealth of talent and of human capital.

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Teaching intercultural communication in English degree programmes – the practitioners' voices¹

DOROTTYA HOLLÓ

Eötvös Loránd University

Intercultural communication is particularly important in the education of future foreign language teachers and other foreign language professionals, yet the institutional framework of degree programmes does not necessarily offer opportunities for the adoption of interculturality. This article sums up an exploratory research project based on written interviews with the tutors of courses with intercultural content, language tutors and educational managers responsible for the various English major programmes at a prestigious Hungarian university. The respondents were asked about their views on intercultural competences that English major graduates should possess, and about their experience concerning the possible ways of developing these at BA and MA levels as well as in the framework of teacher training. They also shared their concerns, the challenges they face in integrating interculturality in well-established curricula that impose copious requirements on them anyway, as well as their rewards for doing so. The practitioners' voices shed light on various possibilities for good practice but also raise questions for further consideration.

Keywords: intercultural communication, English major degree programmes, practitioners' views

The aims and realities of language learning

Using foreign languages is an unquestionable imperative of our age although different views exist as to what constitutes the aims of language learning. While in the early history of language teaching the emphasis was on perfectionism as regards linguistic form, since the introduction of the communicative approach, the focus has shifted to competent language use and communicative ability. Based on Hymes (1972), Canale and Swain (1980) identified the components of this concept of communicative competence as grammatical (or linguistic), discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competences. These were complemented by van Ek's (1986) socio-cultural and social competences and Bachman's (1990) pragmatic competence as part of language competence in his highly complex communicative language ability model. But for real life communication foreign language users have to develop intercultural communicative competence, which in Byram's definition means that

someone with *Intercultural Communicative Competence* is able to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language. They are able to negotiate a mode of communication and interaction which is satisfactory to oneself and the other and they are able to act as a mediator between people of different cultural origins. Their knowledge of another culture is linked to language competence through the ability to use language appropriately – sociolinguistic and discourse competence – and their awareness of the specific meanings, values and connotations of the language. They also have the basis for acquiring new languages and cultural understandings as a consequence of the skills they have acquired in the first. (1997:71)

Byram (1997) also identifies the elements of intercultural competence, which – on top of language proficiency – are:

- *Knowledge* – about e.g., other people's and cultures' values and ways of thinking, the processes of interaction, the nature of cultural differences and similarities, language use in terms of connotations, pragmatics, sociolinguistics;

¹ A modified version of this article focussing on teacher training appears in Hungarian in Holló (2016).

- *Attitudes* – e.g., curiosity, openness, willingness to suspend disbelief and judgment, relativizing oneself, empathy, respect, ethnorelativism;
- *Skills* – of interpreting and relating, i.e., understanding and comparing, and of discovery and interaction, i.e., learning and using the learnt knowledge; also of interpersonal communication, mediation;
- *Critical cultural awareness* – an awareness of cultural difference even if unapparent, and the ability to evaluate objectively and analytically cultural products and phenomena of one's own culture and that of others.

Those who possess the appropriate foreign language skills along with intercultural competence can be described as intercultural speakers. Byram's (1995) definition of the *intercultural speaker* highlights the complexity of the abilities needed to become one:

Someone who can operate their linguistic competence and their sociolinguistic awareness of the relationship between language and the context in which it is used, in order to manage interaction across cultural boundaries, to anticipate misunderstandings caused by differences in values, meanings and beliefs, and thirdly to cope with the affective as well as cognitive demands of engagement with otherness. (Byram, 1995:25)

Barrett, Byram, Lázár, Mompoint-Gaillard and Philippou (2014) also emphasise the importance of intercultural competence in creating positive and constructive as well as respectful interaction with others. All these attributes are tied to language learning in the Council of Europe's *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008) in the sense that

[l]anguage learning helps learners to avoid stereotyping individuals, to develop curiosity and openness to otherness and to discover other cultures. Language learning helps them to see that interaction with individuals having different social identities and cultures is an enriching experience. (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, 2008:29)

At the same time, while becoming an intercultural speaker would be the most useful aim for language learners, it is obvious that apart from language proficiency the language learner is required to acquire a whole range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, including cultural knowledge, learning skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, positive attitudes and empathy. The list is far from complete but it illustrates well that it is impossible to achieve all this in the framework of language learning. The possibilities are largely restricted by the available time, which is often too short for dealing with language development in the strict sense of the term, but also by possibly inadequate teaching materials, large groups of learners and a host of other factors.

One such factor is the washback effect of language testing. The success of language learning is assessed by a variety of language exams, as the standardised measurement of language proficiency provides easy-to-use guidelines for decision makers on the job market or in the process of university admittance. The need for objective measurement, however, means that a number of components of communicative and intercultural competence – which are intertwined in real-life communication – cannot be part of language testing. The reason for this is – as Bachman (1990) asserts – that as most components of language proficiency are culturally determined it is very hard to separate language knowledge from background knowledge but every effort must be made to do so. North (2000) affirms that the sociocultural and sociolinguistic competences are particularly difficult to test objectively and to create appropriate descriptors for. For this reason, international standardised language exams, which are most sought after by language learners, exclude cultural content as much as possible. This means that in many foreign language education settings the development of measurable language proficiency and the focus on linguistic form take priority over

the fostering of practical language proficiency or, in other words, the training of intercultural speakers.

Another factor influencing the reality of integrating the development of intercultural competence and language teaching is the interdisciplinary nature of interculturality. Foreign language teachers are often frustrated by the demand placed on them to teach intercultural speakers rather than develop foreign language proficiency for a number of reasons: Most language teachers practising currently have not been trained (appropriately) to become intercultural speakers nor to include interculturality in their teaching (Medgyes, 1994; Castro and Sercu, 2005). Therefore, their own lack of intercultural awareness and/or their shortcomings in developing their students' intercultural competence while teaching foreign languages also reduce the chances of their language learners' becoming intercultural speakers. No wonder that, for the purposes of developing intercultural speakers, Byram (2009) redefines the role of language teachers as follows:

In short, this means that language teachers should plan their teaching to include objectives, materials and methods that develop the specific elements of intercultural competence. The specification of competences encapsulated in the notion of the intercultural speaker provides a framework for doing this. Teachers of language need to become teachers of language and culture. (Byram, 2009: 331)

However, the competences required of an intercultural speaker are far too overwhelming to be developed only by language teachers. In addition to involving other subjects, interculturality should also be part of all levels of education. At the same time, teachers need thorough training to become interculturally competent themselves and to be able to transmit the values and practice of interculturality in their respective subjects.

The role of universities in intercultural competence development

The role of higher education in interculturality training is also recognised by the Council of Europe such that

the university is ideally defined precisely by its universality – its commitment to open mindedness and openness to the world, founded on enlightenment values. The university thus has great potential to engender “intercultural intellectuals” who can play an active role in the public sphere. (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, 2008:31)

The document also refers to teacher training in particular in stating that “Intercultural learning and practice need to be introduced in the initial and in-service training of teachers” (*White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, 2008:43).

Universities are thus entrusted with the training of intercultural intellectuals, and while mostly disciplines in the fields of humanities, social sciences and education are to be involved, others also can and should contribute. However, in striving to assure high academic standards, universities tend to focus on theoretical approaches, and thus stick to teaching “pure” disciplines, which may not always allow the inclusion of innovative and complex perspectives. As Braun (2014) explains, new areas of knowledge are challenged by established fields and take time to be accepted by academia. Despite rejection of interdisciplinarity, many researchers and practitioners advocate including knowledge from different disciplines to better understand the world, including Buanes and Jentoft (2009), Nissani (1997) and Ruscio (1986), who stresses the importance of taking a more complex approach to understand the connection between disciplines. This is particularly important in the case of training intercultural intellectuals, as interculturality itself is interdisciplinary.

Relating the issue of interdisciplinarity to the focus of this study, i.e., the training of foreign language teachers and other language professionals, it may be useful to examine the components of the education programmes they receive. As in all training programmes, a number of disciplines are combined, such as language development, literature, history, linguistics, civilisation and area studies. Future language teachers are also given classes in general pedagogy and language teaching methodology. At first glance, the framework of these subjects seems flexible enough to accommodate the training of interculturality. However, the integration of the components of intercultural competence (see above) requires a very complex approach from the trainers and lecturers. Interculturality can and should be dealt with from a variety of perspectives, such as linguistics, linguistic anthropology, ethnography, sociolinguistics, genre analysis, stylistics, critical discourse analysis, as well as literary, media and cultural studies (Corbett, 2003), while even communication studies and interpersonal psychology could also be added to the list. Whereas several of these areas are included in the training programmes, it may prove hard for the tutors of particular subjects to step outside the borders of their own field of expertise and introduce an interdisciplinary approach to developing university students' intercultural competence. The reasons for this are manifold. To learn about these and to find out how intercultural communication is actually taught in foreign language BA and MA programmes, I conducted an exploratory study with university tutors.

Teaching interculturality – the practitioners' views

A study in the form of written interviews was carried out at the English departments of a university in Budapest in 2016 to investigate how interculturality is viewed and taught by practitioners at these departments. The aim was not to map the practices and policies of a training centre, but to explore the tutors' views and identify good practice, issues to consider and opportunities for improvement.

The practitioners involved are tutors and educational managers in the BA and MA programmes for English majors as well as future teachers of English. In many ways they serve as models and are multipliers in the dissemination of their subject area. As the practitioners were chosen based on their professional role, the study was not anonymous, but the respondents were anonymised in the stage of data processing. Three types of educators made up the respondents:

1. Tutors of courses with intercultural content (henceforth, *IC tutors*): 25 such courses were offered out of the departments' total of 721 courses in 2015-16. These courses were taught by 14 tutors, 8 of whom responded to questions. Their courses ranged from language development classes to intercultural communication, English language teaching methodology classes and cultural studies focusing on literature and film.
2. General language development tutors. Only 5 tutors responded of the 15.
3. Educational managers: coordinators of various training programmes. 4 managers out of 5 responded.

The results of the inquiry are detailed below, organised according to the three groups of participants.

The IC tutors' views

The IC tutors were asked about the aims and content of their courses, their teaching approaches, good practices, challenges, the effects on the students and their own rewards from teaching these courses. The data speak louder than any interpretation, so the responses are presented in the form of thematically grouped and condensed concepts and – when indicated – as direct quotes taken from the practitioners' answers.

The IC tutors' aims

To develop:

- Awareness of
 - different cultures, differences and similarities
 - cultural and personal differences
 - social diversity
 - psycho-cultural processes in intercultural communication
 - discourse structures and understanding of connotations for better comprehension
- Communication skills
 - Intercultural skills
 - Cultural and intercultural awareness
 - Attitudes for intercultural communication
 - Learning and self-development skills
 - Skills for using multiple perspectives in interpreting and understanding different phenomena
 - (e.g., linguistic, historical, psychological, aesthetic, etc.)
- Teaching skills for ICC

Aspects of interculturality in the IC tutors' courses

- English speaking (and non-English speaking!) cultures
- Processes of acculturation, culture shock, anomie, survival, adaptation
- Similarities and differences
- Cultural clashes, conflicts
- Values, beliefs, rules
- Stereotypes, prejudices
- Non-judgmental communication
- Cultural dimensions
- Identities and representation of identities
- Behaviour patterns, routines; e.g. time management, (eating) customs
- Emic and etic interpretation techniques
- Ethnocentrism, ethnorelativism
- Racism and other forms of discrimination (ageism, sexism)
- Cultural cringe
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- Interpersonal and intercultural communication

Methods and approaches for integrating interculturality

- Experiential learning, approaching intercultural phenomena through the students' own experience
- Awareness raising through films and texts
- Cooperative learning: role plays, discussions, debates, etc. followed by reflective activities
- Analysing films and texts – using questioning techniques, discourse analysis, student research
- Objective and subjective summaries
- Reading comprehension development, analysing sociolects
- Analysing gender representation
- Studying discourse structures (English vs. other; direct vs. indirect) and genres to discover thought patterns of different languages

The IC tutors' good practices

Students understand theories better if we first find metaphors and associations to intercultural phenomena.

We spend 10-15 minutes reflecting on issues of the previous class.

Intercultural activities are followed up by reflective and analytical discussions.

The methods and materials have to be adapted to every group.

Continuous self-development on the part of the teacher

Comparison of intercultural issues in general and particular examples from travelogues

Comparison of the students' self-image of their countries and written accounts of the countries by others; this is a good starting point for discussing stereotypes

Challenges experienced by the IC tutors

The respondents' own words are quoted:

"To find my personal reading of the individuals and the group as a whole."

"To gradually nudge the group into a more open, 'empathetic' mind-set, e.g. one with which fossilised social/cultural patterns are noted and broken (e.g. from 'the Hungarian students sit next to each other' to 'people choose to sit with peers from a different culture without prompting')."

"I feel I'm making them swim against a very strong current at a Faculty where very few of their other courses incorporate the intercultural dimension (and cooperative learning or formative assessment)."

"Usually the students come from different backgrounds and react differently to certain things."

"Getting students to read."

"The screenification of the brain and cognition"

"Almost total ignorance and apathy of most students who appear blithely unaware that even popular and low culture may be analysed in a scholarly manner."

"Students just do not see the relevance of learning about theories of culture."

Effects of the courses with intercultural content on the students

The respondents' own words are quoted:

"They (and I) certainly tend to notice significant shifts in their (self and other) awareness and also often comment on a change of viewpoint if not attitude as a result of working intensely and over a period of time in an environment which encourages sharing personal background and experience and questioning habitual ways of seeing and thinking."

"Awareness raising of the importance of ICC in real life, perhaps a more open and accepting attitude, the ability to question stereotypes"

"The students learn good skills of decoding the meanings."

"They learn to see the film not as transparent reality but as a construction which aims to have an effect, deliver a message, influence the audience etc. as well as raising awareness of an issue. If students are able to see this they will develop more of a critical and questioning attitude which will help them to relate to others more competently."

"The students understand the connections between perception, linguistic expression and intercultural experience, the relationship is between cultural identity and the path to self-discovery."

"They understand how travel can precipitate the unfolding of intercultural skills such as receptivity, openness, curiosity, empathy and humility and that the travel experience is

antidote to prejudice, stereotyping, ethnocentricism and other pathologies that afflict the world today.”

“Augmenting their INTRAcultural awareness”

“They learn how to see the world from somebody else's viewpoint, or at least they learn there is another perspective which we should I always take into account.”

The IC tutors' rewards

The respondents' own words are quoted:

[The courses are] “rich in terms of experience and insight.”

“Rare opportunities to influence the thinking and feeling of young people positively, i.e. to help them to look at themselves and the world around them with an open, questioning frame of mind.”

“Possible to make students see the aims and conditions of their language learning and of communication with people from different backgrounds from new perspectives and especially with the trainee teachers it is good to see that their beliefs about teaching can be challenged and modified and that there is hope for change in education to help us make this world a better place.”

“To learn more and more about intercultural communication, and not only by reading more books and articles but learning from my students as well”

“To have students recognize how the travel experience can be a vehicle for self-discovery and provide them with the requisite vocabulary to articulate the complexities of this experience”

“To share experiences with students and have them share theirs with me. The reciprocal energy between my students and me helps in expanding my awareness of not only being a teacher of journeys but an awareness of being a teacher who is on journey himself”

“I teach texts that I genuinely enjoy rereading. I do occasionally get responses that make me re-evaluate those texts.”

“Very bright motivated students”

“The mindset of different people has always interested me.”

It is important to note the emphasis that these tutors put on integrating interculturality in their subjects. Language and culture development as well as interpretation are fused in all forms of student activities ranging from individual tasks to group work. The responses also reflect that fostering cooperative learning and formative assessment are also part of the courses and this way multiperspectivity is not only present in the content of the courses but also in the approach to teaching and teacher training.

Considering that – as Cabello and Burstein (1995) found – teachers very rarely change their approach to teaching, it is no wonder that an interdisciplinary approach and intercultural content are not frequently present in degree programmes. It takes the tutors' initiative to train themselves and consciously use these in their courses. Therefore, the commitment of the IC tutors is all the more commendable.

The general language tutors' views

The respondents were all tutors in the first year language development programme whose aim is to prepare the students for a language filter exam at around C1 level. They all confirmed that intercultural topics surface often but in a haphazard and unplanned manner. These are topics they mentioned:

everyday routines, customs, traditions, attitudes, job interviews, education, teacher-student relationships, gender roles, differences between British English and American English, cultural clashes, culture shock, stereotypes, cultures and religions, terrorist attacks, refugee issues, nationalism, empathy, human relations, accommodation, healthy lifestyle, social issues, environment

On the surface these are not all intercultural topics, but it is easy to add this aspect. The topics mostly arise from the course book, the students' presentations, and the presence of international students. The discussions rarely go very deep, but superficial comparisons are made and personal opinions are encouraged. While the washback effect of the end-of-year exam sets the focus of these classes on language development in the strictest sense, maybe some more awareness raising could take place in these courses.

The educational managers' views

The educational managers were asked about their views on the role of intercultural communication and intercultural awareness in the different English major programmes. They were also asked what they thought the students would need to acquire appropriate intercultural competence. Their answers show clearly that interculturality is still not part of the mindset of professionals even at the highest academic level of foreign language education and teacher training. Three out of the four respondents reject the need for intercultural education and accept only the implicit presence of interculturality. Their views are paraphrased below:

Interculturality and intercultural communication are buzz words; they are devoid of any real meaning. Many get on this bandwagon to sell their ideas. Interculturality has nothing to do with ELT or teachers training. It is another dimension. Developing the acceptance of difference and the rejection of hate speech are part of the socialisation process, and the domains responsible are the family, churches, schools and beyond...

A good language teacher teaches communication in a foreign language with people from other cultures. So our whole programme is centred around ICC.

Foreign language proficiency is an open and complex skill that can be used for millions of purposes. I don't have a direct influence on whether someone becomes an arms dealer, the marketing manager of a tobacco company or fights for world peace.

We teach culture, and interculturality is part of it. However, it is more important to experience it than to define it or learn about it in a theoretical manner.

We have had more and more international students in recent years. Their presence adds to the intercultural experience of our students.

Several geographical areas are represented in our cultural studies programmes, e.g., Australian, Canadian, Irish, Scottish. They also add to the intercultural nature of our training.

These three respondents did not deal with the question regarding what their students would need to develop appropriate intercultural competence, which is perhaps not surprising given their lack of concern for the topic. They not only shun the issue of interculturality but there are also quite a

few fallacies in their arguments. While it is true that apart from developing the students' competence in the different subjects, the training in the different English degree programmes does contribute to the development of intercultural competence, but only implicitly. Also, if interculturality is part of socialisation, and schools have a role in its development as one respondent says, then teacher training, and particularly foreign language teacher training should prepare future teachers for the task. There is no doubt that language teachers or university tutors have only an indirect influence on their students' life choices, but they can and should show them different mindsets and approaches which can affect their interpersonal and intercultural communication in the future. And finally, immersion and experiential learning can be useful ways to acquire intercultural competence but, in a foreign language situation, conscious and carefully planned training is necessary in the training of foreign language professionals. These issues are reflected in what the fourth educational manager wrote:

Interculturality is vitally important in language pedagogy but this field is not accepted widely enough yet, and therefore IC only appears in classes of committed teachers, and does so rather randomly. The students would need at least one compulsory course in IC. They should be given the opportunity for both theoretical and experiential learning as well as focussed development of intercultural competence and training in ELT methodology for future teachers. They should understand their responsibility in forming their future students' views of the world.

Conclusion

Despite the belief voiced by some respondents in the study that students are able to acquire intercultural competence by learning about culture and communication in general or by studying at a school with a large number of international students, it has to be emphasised that the very intricate aspects of interculturality cannot be understood if these are only taught implicitly. Based on the responses by IC practitioners at the university involved in the research, it can be affirmed that the development of intercultural communication and intercultural competence, which are of crucial importance for future language professionals, can be integrated in the development of the various content areas including language proficiency development in countless ways. Yet, this can only happen through the explicit teaching approaches that the IC practitioners showed, as it takes very conscious learning on the part of the students to understand and internalise interculturality and intercultural competence as a complexity of knowledge, attitudes, skills and critical cultural awareness.

At the same time, because of the rather strong reluctance to include interculturality in the training, it would be worth investigating how traditionalism, professional insecurity or unease with the interdisciplinarity of IC development hold tutors and educational managers back from integrating interculturality more in the training programmes. As a further task it would also be important to identify ways of awareness raising, training and self-development to help increase commitment for teaching intercultural communication and developing intercultural competence in the training of foreign language professionals.

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Steps towards innovating ICC teaching, telecollaborative tasks and other designs

MONIKA HREBACKOVA

Czech Technical University, Prague

In education, innovation is usually not the result of a lone genius. It is often a collaborative process where people from many fields contribute to the implementation of new ideas. Setting up good teams and brainstorming are both crucial to the process, but the subsequent ideas must be identified and agreed upon and then the innovation process leads us from the vision to our varied cultural and instructional realities. The process involves developing effective strategies, adapting our communication styles, overcoming crisis and finally taking action.

In this paper, we illustrate what challenges and needs teachers/educators face in the changing global environment, as well as innovative approaches to a foreign language affecting in-and-out of class tasks and activities. These include telecollaboration and several other designs. Based on recent experience, we focus especially on an intercultural context, and look briefly at some categories of ICC tasks and activities. This paper is primarily aimed to suit university education, whilst incorporating students of different abilities, diverse cultures and various types of courses: language, business and intercultural, as well as those focusing on communication skills.

Keywords: innovation, ideas, intercultural, experience, collaborative

Introduction

*“You see things and you say, why?
But I dream things and I say, why not?”*
George Bernard Shaw (n. d.)

The way we live and work has changed under the influence of technology, socio-political developments and rapidly increasing interconnectedness among people and economies. We need to generate ideas, collaborate to implement them, and build innovation skills throughout the organization to result in a competitive edge if we want to succeed. In this paper we briefly look at the factors, approaches and skills that influence the innovation process, and describe some opportunities and challenges of intercultural and language teaching which have arisen from the globalization trends and changes in the job market of the 21st century. Based on recent experience, we illustrate outcomes of an international project cooperation and best practice implemented by four European higher education institutions from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Portugal and Spain.

What is innovation and why do we innovate?

We innovate for a competitive advantage, for the progression of human well-being, for economic growth, as well as to improve disappointing performance, to jump up to another level, to take advantage of opportunity, or simply out of curiosity. The question asked by innovators around the world, no matter which sector of the economy they work in, is *What’s coming next?* Unfortunately, most people know very little about what makes one person more innovative than the other. Perhaps for this reason, “we stand in awe of visionary entrepreneurs like Apple’s Steve Jobs, Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, eBay’s Pierre Omidyar and P&G’s A.G. Lafley” (Dyer, Gregersen and Christensen, 2009: 60). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes innovation as “a new idea,

device or method or introducing a new idea, device or method” (Britannica digital learning Unabridged, n. d.). But how do we find innovative people with bright ideas and how can we become more innovative ourselves? What skills do we need? What is hidden behind the ability to innovate which is considered the secret sauce of success both in business and education and which can make people shine above the others? A six-year study was carried out by the researchers at MIT Leadership Centre, who put under microscope and interviewed more than 3,000 executives and 500 individuals who had started innovative companies or invented new products. The investigation uncovers the origins of the innovation process and describes five ‘discovery skills’ that distinguish the most creative executives. The skills are associating, questioning, observing, experimenting and networking. They make up what Dyer, Gregersen and Christensen call “the innovator’s DNA” and the good news is that if we are not born with them, we can cultivate them (2009).

However, to be able to discover and develop the innovative potential, we may face several myths about innovation. One myth Charan and Lafley (2008) identify is that innovation is always about new products, which might be an important factor in success but create only part of the entire picture. Another myth is that innovation is for geniuses. We cannot deny that geniuses exist and may contribute amazing inventions like Steve Jobs, for example. But companies that just wait for their "Aha!" moments may never succeed. To get the full value, it is important to regard innovation as something that either special people can do or can be collectively pooled, using ordinary people’s capabilities. Especially those called knowledge workers by Drucker (1959) can contribute substantially to innovations. The term knowledge worker (Techtarget, n. d.) is used mainly for experts in the information technology fields, but may include professionals from other fields, too, such as lawyers, teachers, researchers and scientists of all kinds. Furthermore, innovation is not just about ideas. The problem is that people often do not capture ideas or do not know how to implement them. Finally, innovation is not only about individuality in thinking. “Innovation is rather a collaborative process where people and teams in many fields contribute to implementing new ideas” (Stanleigh, n. d., no page given). It is about reengineering both future and present procedures. And it is about involving people who will challenge the existing conditions. The people in our workplace who complain may be the source of the next great innovation. On the other hand, they can easily block the innovation process with what we call innovation blocking agents. The excitement about an idea can be destroyed by bureaucrats, people who are always terrified of taking the risk or do not care. We must be prepared to oppose statements such as “We can’t do that! We’ve never done it that way! It’s against our policy! We don’t have the rules for that! We don’t have the budget! We don’t have the time! We’ll never get it approved!” To handle them, we need a set of competencies, each playing its specific role. We select four core ones without which we can hardly hit the target: autonomy, knowledge and courage which goes hand in hand with persistence. If we miss them, the pace of innovation slows down, the ideas may die on the vine or fail to take hold (see Figure 1).

Innovations can be put off easily because we are rewarded for today's results, because the organization doesn't seem to support or value innovation, because we don't know where to find ideas, because innovation is risky, or because it is not easily measured. But these are more excuses, not reasons. We need to stop observing and practicing innovation as a process that only leaders can use and continue to improve. It is broader, involves more people, can happen more often, and is more manageable and predictable than most people think (Charan and Lafley, 2008, no page given).

The innovation process can be divided into several stages, starting with generating ideas, capturing them through a team discussion and brainstorming, describing how they fit the organization objectives, quantifying the benefits and estimating the outcomes. We need to make sure that our innovative intentions will bring us relative advantage (is it better than what it is replacing?) and we will be able to implement them and see how/whether they work effectively. We also need to

consider factors such as compatibility (is it compatible with the way people currently do things?), complexity (is it too complex to use?), trialability (will it work if we try it in small doses?) and observability (can we watch other people use it?). We develop the “picture of the future” for which we need to work out an effective strategy, estimate the difficulties and describe risk mitigations.

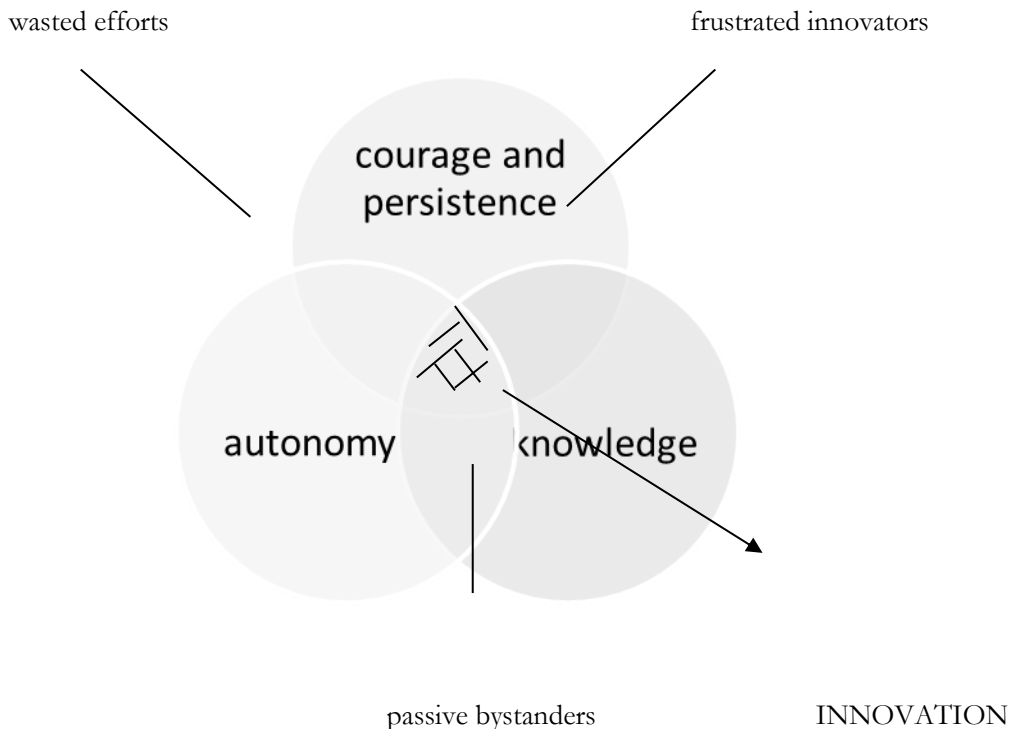


Figure 1: Core competencies for successful innovation. Source: Hrebackova, 2016.

Globalization and the changing needs in education

As educators, we want to enhance the quality of education, to keep our 21st century skills up-to-date, to adapt to geopolitical developments and changes in a globalizing job market, to meet new standards and requirements, internationalization being one of them. Higher education institutions across Europe claim in their strategic documents that innovation is inevitable because students have to be trained to function well in the globalized future society, which requires new ways of learning, living and working. The basic requirements the new generations have to meet include transferable skills that enable them to continuously adapt to the changing environment: core skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and communicating and cooperating across cultures. Toffler (1970) already assumed in the 1970's that “Tomorrow's illiterate will not be the man who can't read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn” (414). Very simply explained for the purpose of this article, we describe transferable skills as those versatile skills that we can apply and make use of in a number of different roles in the workplace. The list is long and includes several categories such as interpersonal skills, technical skills, organizational skills, foreign language skills, etc. (Cambridge University Skills Portal, 2016). But what transferable skills in particular do graduate employers want and why are they so important? Although employers report difficulties in finding qualified graduates to fill positions in their organizations, only few openly admit that they, in fact, do not wish to hire them in many cases. Studies reveal that 70 per cent of companies prefer experience over academic record (Dolezalova, 2014). They point out that recent graduates often do not know how to communicate effectively, struggle with problem-solving, taking responsibility, applying a foreign language and making decisions. Such attitudes are reflected in unemployment

rate charts according to which youth unemployment often exceeds the overall unemployment rate of the country (Figure 2).

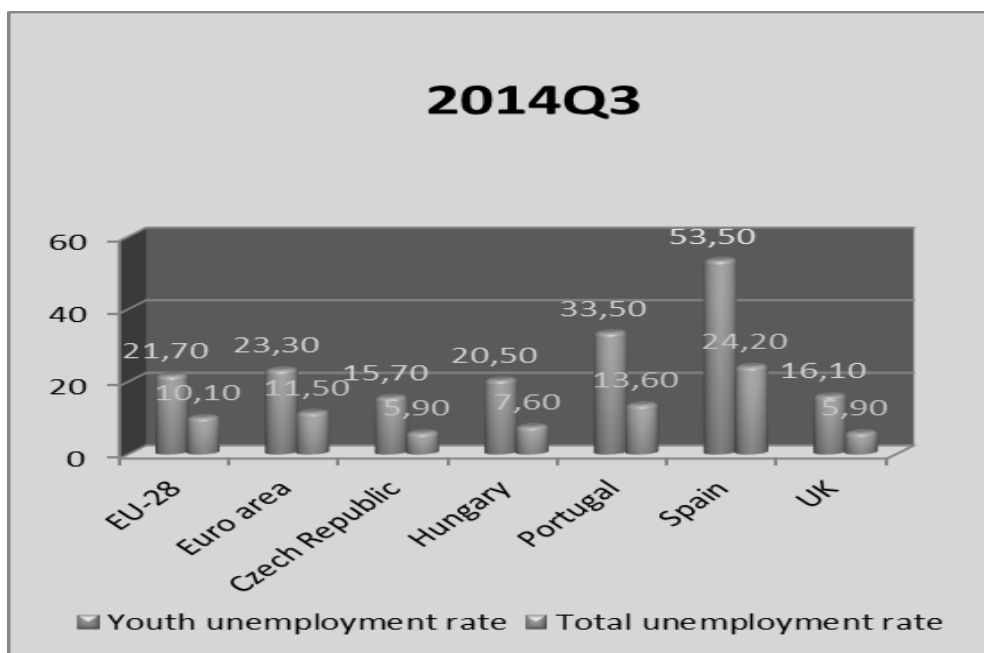


Figure 2: University graduates unemployment rate in 2014. Source: European Commission - Eurostat: Unemployment statistics, 2014.

The mantle of preparing the work force better has been passed to higher education and it seems that although business and higher education may use the same language, it doesn't always have the same meaning. Educators often think of competencies in a purely academic context while employers want book smarts to translate to the real world (Alssid, 2012 quoted by Fischer, 2013: no page given).

What does innovation, in fact, mean to most education institutions? The narrow approach is assuming that “innovation” is simply a substitute for the word “technology”. A broader approach considers access to new ideas and concepts and using advantage of access to one another. We have at hand access to a huge amount of people inside as well as outside education. So the new ideas can be seen, adapted and applied to education in much easier way than at the time when that access was limited. Educators need to take advantage to see what other institutions are doing – which does not necessarily mean competition but to push one another or – even better – to cooperate. However, to change the title does not always mean to change the approach.

Taking the perspective of employers, a research project carried out in the Czech Republic reveals similar priorities described by more than 150 Czech employers (Figure 3). Communication skills, flexibility and team work are placed on top of the list among the most valuable and frequently required soft business related skills. 83 percent of employers also agree on the rapidly increasing desire for language competence, as they expect a new hire's ability to use language to express himself/herself effectively inside and outside the organization. However, language competences, including not only theoretical knowledge but also skills and experience to apply a foreign language in many practical situations, are often found to be deficient among employees.

Competence	Very important (percent)	Important (percent)	Less important (percent)	Arithmetic average (percent)
Communication skills (oral and written)	88.1	11.4	0.5	1.12
Reading comprehension–work instructions	82.7	16.2	1.1	1.18
Use of foreign languages	58.4	37.3	4.3	1.46
Operating with numbers	71.7	26.6	1.6	1.3
Decision making	86.3	13.1	0.5	1.14
Problem solving	87.5	12.5	0.0	1.13
Taking responsibility	88.6	11.4	0.0	1.11
Team work	71.2	27.7	1.1	1.3
Processing information	76.6	23.4	0.0	1.23
Dealing with people	83.7	16.3	0.0	1.16
Presenting views and opinions	78.3	21.7	0.0	1.22
Dealing with stress	74.5	25.5	0.0	1.26

Figure 3: Employers perception of importance in selected competences of university graduates in tertiary sector in the Czech Republic (the lower the arithmetic average, the more important the competence). Source: Dolezalova, 2014.

Opportunities and challenges in language education

In the context of globalization, foreign language teaching inevitably develops toward the direction of intercultural education focusing on intercultural competence (see Figure 4). Developing intercultural sensitivity allows us to interact more effectively with others, to accept other perceptions of the world and “to mediate between different perspectives and to be conscious of their evaluations of difference” (Byram, Nichols and Stevens, 2001: 5). Hall and Cook (2015) emphasize that increased mobility, migration and integration, combined with developments in online communication, have led to substantial changes in the objectives of English language teaching, its use and practices. Consequently, a gap, possibly generational, is developing, in which the practices of teachers, testers and curriculum designers no longer match the needs of students – especially young-adult learners, who are inevitably most receptive to change (Hall and Cook, 2015: 3).

Changing approaches to language teaching & learning

Intercultural Communicative Competence
language, communication, culture (context)

- Lingua franca
- Avoiding misunderstanding
- Checking understanding
- Adequate response
- Minimizing conflict

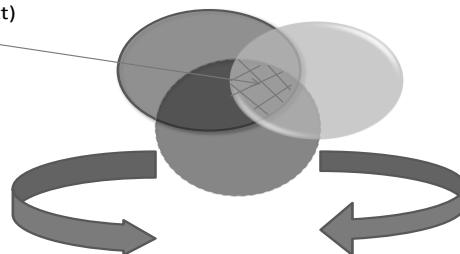


Figure 4. Changing approaches to language teaching and learning. Source: Hrebackova, 2016.

Reality shows that most language course books are still designed from traditional perspectives that do not allow learners to develop their abilities to deal with intercultural encounters. On the contrary, some reinforce stereotypes and strengthen national primacy (Troncoso, 2012: 133). Physical mobility, that is the period of learning abroad, has been gaining a much stronger place in universities' internationalization policies and budgets, although statistics reveal that only a small percentage of the student population actually benefits from this. The number of physical mobility students currently stands at 1% in the US and about 5% in Europe (Helm, 2015). Some new trends and directions offer opportunities for universities to support their internationalization policy by 'globalizing their curriculum'. They engage students in an online dialogue with partners in other countries as they build on Internet communication tools and online intercultural exchange (Helm, 2015; O'Dowd, 2007), most recently called telecollaboration. Although it is obvious that investment in education about other languages and cultures can result in significant economic and technological advantages, culture is often the weakest component of the curricula and cultural teaching remains insubstantial and sporadic in most language classes. Salem (2012) identifies two major challenges educators may face. Firstly, many teachers face an overcrowded curriculum. They often feel they cannot afford to spend too much time on culture teaching and they tend to assume that students will be exposed to intercultural experience later, perhaps after finishing their language studies. She recommends language and culture to be taught in an integrative way, from the very beginning and gives the following advice to practicing teachers (Salem, 2012: 1):

- Plan cultural activities as carefully as language tasks and integrate them into the lesson;
- Use specific cultural contexts for language-practice activities;
- Use a variety of techniques for teaching culture;
- Maximize the use of illustrations and photos to raise students' awareness. Have them analyse cultural differences;
- Teach students about the cultural connotations of new words and phrases;
- Use debates, and role-plays for culture teaching;
- Test cultural understanding as well as language.

Secondly, teachers lack adequate training and in-service support and often admit uncertainty ensuing from insufficient knowledge. Many of them are afraid to teach culture because they are afraid of not knowing enough, not having sufficient experience and they limit their intercultural role mostly to passing the facts (Salem, 2012). Teachers' own knowledge may be limited, but they are not expected any longer to be the only fount of knowledge. Teachers and students should build up knowledge together, and teachers should mainly focus on developing students' skills enabling them to interpret the facts themselves. Therefore, they need to compare or contrast competence and facts and take into account that they are always measured through their own cultural context. The objectives that are to be achieved in cross-cultural understanding involve social and intercultural competencies rather than facts. A 'facts only' approach to culture, for which the only goal is to gather bits of information - sometimes limited to teaching about life and institutions - is ineffective.

Goals and objectives have to be set that relate not only to descriptive or analytical knowledge of facts, but also to procedural knowledge that would enable students to observe and analyze cultural elements and patterns (Salem, 2012: 2).

If we consider students' point of view and investigate their intercultural preparedness for the global workplace, we deal with similar common challenges to those of the teachers. Needs analysis carried out among students at four European universities in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Portugal and Spain between December 2014 and January 2015 showed that 61% students have never been trained in intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and only 36% realise they lack opportunities in higher education to develop intercultural skills (Morgado, Gomes and Arau

Ribeiro, 2016). The need for graduates to have effective ICC skills and training was also reflected in a need analysis among employers in the same study. 58% of respondents say students lack sufficient ICC competences and 63% do not provide ICC training for new employees. These findings resulted in an extensive pilot project ICCAGE (Intercultural Communicative Competence – Advantage for Global Employability) which discovers the new potentials of teaching intercultural communicative language competence. It combines topic based modules and task based activities with the main objective aimed at incorporating innovative intercultural elements and online virtual intercultural exchanges into higher education language teaching, English and Spanish teaching in particular. The selected topics include working in international teams, mediating between cultures, dealing with space and time and collaborating online. The task based approach uses three main categories of tasks such as information exchange, comparison and critical analysis, and collaboration and product creation. Examples of these tasks are providing information, comparing products from both cultures and joint production of an essay, a presentation or video.

The project also created a pool of experts who share ICC best practice and train other colleagues in ICC skills. In-service support for university educators in the ICC area, which could either be approached through language courses or transversally in the curricula, may prove helpful in overcoming barriers in local contexts of cultural and linguistic homogenisation in European countries such as Hungary and the Czech Republic, that require strategies to motivate teachers and students to go beyond their own cultural comfort zone.

Conclusion

Intercultural encounters have nowadays become an everyday occurrence for large numbers of people in many countries. Therefore, it is vital that their intercultural competence is developed in order to enable them to understand, appreciate and respect each other across cultural differences, to enable them to contribute actively to societies that benefit from diversity and to be able to succeed on the globalizing job market. Developing intercultural competence in the English language has been a powerful tool for achieving this as over 74% of communication is carried out by non-native English speakers (Graddol, 2006) and there is an increased interest in intercultural competence-based communication which has become a competitive advantage for managers, project teams and businesses. Only through innovation can these elements be developed and implemented in higher education curricula, a prerequisite if these institutions want their graduates to succeed in the 21st century society.

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Stereotypes of orientalisation in intercultural communication

ANDREA HÜBNER

Budapest Business School

In my interdisciplinary study I wish to investigate how stereotypes are being operated in various fields of communication between the West and the East. Newly initiated (personal) psychology tests seem to be rooted in the topos of dichotomy of collective vs individualistic societies whereas the latest fashionable study books on organizational culture also explain schemes of cultures and cultural differences simplifying interrelations, causes and motives on the basis of a structure derived from Said's (1978) *us* and *them* dichotomy. Although the schemes mentioned wish to help solve mutual misunderstandings and try to give solutions for a better communication, simplification often seem to work exactly against this endeavour: simplified structures help sustain stereotypes. In my research I would like to analyse texts and images in comparison with colonial missionary guide books to prove how topoi survive and may work against the imagined goal.

Keywords: organisational culture, AAVS test, stereotypes, orientalism, *us* and *them* dichotomy

The analysis will be done among others along the theoretical approaches of *culture clash* (Huntington, 1998), of the so-called *orientalism debate* (after Said, 1978) and theories of organisational culture of Trompenaars (1997), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and Lewis (2006). It seems useful to compare the so called American Asian Value Test to intercultural organisational culture books since the background of both is evidently the East-West dichotomy which in turn seems to be rooted in the saidian theoretical system. While postcolonial theory studies born on the basis of the so-called *orientalism debate* impelled by Said's Orientalism postcolonial theory studies have been working against for decades (Loomba, 1998: 104), the intercultural organisational culture theories in turn seem to follow a simplified saidian structure of categories. Reicher (2004) claims, if categories relate to social forms, then taking categories for granted removes our choice over the type of world we live in. Thus, "the reification of social categories is a raw road to tyranny, a healthy democracy depends on a continuous questioning of the terms of identity" (Reicher, 2004: 941).

There was a project initiated by the psychology department of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church to introduce the so called AAVS (American Asian Value Test) in Hungary in 2013. Psychologists will know that in such cases translations are done from English to Hungarian, then again back to English and to Hungarian so that misunderstandings could be avoided as much as possible. The AAVS test was also piloted among European and Hungarian students to see whether it could have an international reference. I participated in the testing of the AAVS test among Hungarian students whose reaction was basically disinterest and boredom concerning the questions that mainly focused on issues of how a person is appreciated by his/her community and to what extent they feel responsibility in producing results towards their parents and family whose basic expectation is to see results they could be proud of. This kind of values seemed totally disinteresting for Hungarian students, which meant it was inadequate for them as they remained neutral or negative and did not feel touched by the problems the test focused on. Statistically speaking the test did not have either validity or reliability among European or Hungarian students. If European people do not feel touched by community value issues, the next question is who the test was written for. The question seems easy as it is in the title: for American Asians (Park and Kim, 2008: 47-56). My question is then what *Asian* means for the Western culture.

What does *Asian* mean?

The problem will be investigated with the help of two theories, namely *intercultural (organisational) studies* and *postcolonial theory*. These two terrains of study can be brought into both interrelation and mutual controversy at many points that are raised excitingly by the AAVS test. The AAVS test is based on a field of study mostly provoked by business studies that has lately become especially fashionable but have been studied since the 1970's: intercultural organisational culture studies are interwoven with intercultural communication studies and were born on the crossroads of culture theories, communication theories, business theories and psychology. The basic assumption is that cultures of the non-Western cultures live, think and communicate differently from Europeans and Americans (USA). The investigation of the idea that a basically homogeneous Western culture exists is itself problematic, but it exceeds the volume of this paper.

East-West dichotomy seems unquestionably the cultural theory behind the questions of the test. The basis of the communication difference is assumed to be between how Eastern and Western people utilize the context as information source (Park and Kim, 2008). Eastern cultures are assumed to demonstrate a so-called *high context communication*, which means the majority of information is embedded in the physical context or in the person's internalized context while only a small segment of the information is explicit or possible to decode or get through (Hall, 1976: 79). According to this concept the majority of information comes from the context and there is a lesser focus on direct communication (Gudykunst, 1986). High context cultures refer to societies where people have close connections and many aspects are not made explicit because most people know what to do and how to behave in given situations of everyday life. Low context cultures, on the contrary, refer to societies where people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration and for some specific reason. Cultural behaviour, thoughts and beliefs need to be uttered explicitly to make others possible to direct and locate themselves in social behaviour. Trompenaars (1997), the doyen of the topic describes high context cultures with a line going from the outside to inside of the curve (diffuse, from the general to the specific), while low context cultures are characterised by a curved line starting from the inside and getting to the outside. He adds that "both approaches claim to save time" (1997: 89).

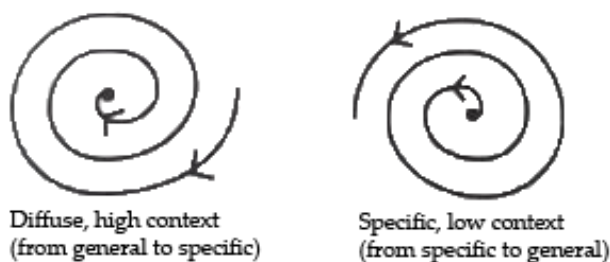


Figure 1. Cycling round or getting straight to the point. Source: Trompenaars (1997: 89).

Diffuse is meant to indicate that the business partner first has to map the partner in high context communication, which is mostly speech. First, a so-called private space relationship has to be formed (1997: 87). Hofstede and Hofstede, the authors most often quoted in this topic say concepts like *guilt* and *shame* are to be connected to high-context cultures especially in relation to successful or unsuccessful production in terms of family relations (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005: 89-93). The question of losing face turns up several times in the AAVS test:

- We have to work hard so that our family may not be disappointed (AAVS 21).
- Unsuccessful results in our studies brings shame to our family (AAVS 31).

The equivalents of Hall's (1976) concepts *high context* and *low context* cultures are the terms *collectivist* and *individualist* according to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), with detailed analysis of what these mean in family relations, studies, job successes, etc. Although the AAVS test seems to originate in the dichotomical structure of intercultural communication schemes, the idea of collectivism is much less refined and complex. In terms of education, for example, collectivism is handled absolutely one-sided: students seem to be expected to fulfil obligations while teachers do not seem to face any expectations:

- Our school results are important because it strengthens our family's renomee (AAVS 17).
- We have to reach as much as we can in our studies to support our family' renomee (AAVS 4).
- Your successes in your studies and in your profession reflects your family's reputation (AAVS 18).
- Success in our professions is an important way of making our family proud (AAVS 12).

Besides the fact that these four questions sound the same not only in their contents but even in their wording; they cannot be considered fully collectivist, and do not cover both sides of expectations. Actually, in terms of education collectivism Hofstede and Hofstede's idea (2005: 181) is more complex referring to every member in the system i.e, both teachers and students. Whereas students have to produce their maximum (as in the AAVS test) teachers' obligations are also underlined:

- Teachers are supposed to have all the answers.

While the AAVS test only considers students' obligations at school, the Hofstede structure is more refined and also more *collectivist*. The school, although very different from the Western educational system, is collectivist in a complex way: students have obligations but teachers are also expected "to have all the answers" (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005: 181) In a truly collectivist mind all sides of expectations and responsibilities have to be accentuated, otherwise the balance may be hurt and the collectivist thought might move to a pathological compulsion conformity.

Confucianism

Park and Kim (2008) claim high context communication is basically due to Confucianism in case of American Asian students, which term in the article clearly means only Chinese students. The authors support their view with an extensive religious-cultural overview unusual in psychology studies. They claim that Confucian thought endeavours to maintain harmony in human relations (Park and Kim, 2008: 44-45). This kind of popularized and simplified approach to ancient cultures is a favourite element also of intercultural organisational culture study books. According to these approaches everyday behaviour of Asian people can easily be understood after a short summary of Confucianism.



Figure 2. Confucian Training. Source: Lewis (2006: 489).

.A figure in the widely known and studied book by Lewis (2006: 489) depicting a stereotypical Asian face with cut eyes in a nice little hat circled by determinative factors *Taoism* and *Confucian training* suggests that there *are* simple and logical structural interrelations among traditions, religions of different cultures and their present behaviours and business mechanisms. Lewis demonstrates his ideas in tables containing short descriptions and suggestions concerning the way of communication. Concerning Chinese people you can read lines like: “Show compassion for Chinese difficulties. It will pay off. Learn all you can about guanxi. Tell subordinates what to do” (Lewis, 2006: 53). In the Lewis’ model there are three categories: *linear-active*, *multi-active* and *reactive* (Lewis, 2006). Without going into the meanings of these categories let us suggest that his *multi-active* category covers roughly Hall’s (1976) *high context* and Hofstede’s (2005) *collectivist* type, while *linear-active* corresponds to *low context* or *individualist* culture.

Linear Active	Multi-Active	Reactive
Talks half of the time	Talks most of the time	Listens most of the time
Sticks to facts	Feelings before facts	Statements are promises

Figure 3. Common Traits of Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive categories. A shortened internet version image adapted from Lewis, 2006: 33.

Details of the above mentioned concepts of leading organisational culture books prove a strong tendency of stereotypization on the basis of the assumption that simplifications help a better structural understanding and such simplified models can well be adapted to concrete situations. Such categorisations are always very dangerous. Although it has been evident since the earliest social psychology studies that “we need a sense of difference or otherness to develop a sense of self or identity. Reification of social and cultural categories is dangerous, so too is the conceptualization of diversity in terms of fixed differences between social and religious groups” (Howarth and Andreouli, 2012: 11). Boards, tables and diagrams used for categorisation of peoples, races, cultures and religions used to be typical features of the genre called church missionary atlas, handbooks of British colonisation of the late 19th century. Different people of the world viewed as subjects of subjugation and places as objects of conquest were listed in tables shortly characterised according to their looks, religion, habits and behaviour and temperament. The aim was to make it possible for colonists to decode the phenomenon of the *Other* without deep investigation or thorough knowledge. The categorisation is shocking in its simplification and short circumscription of people like Mongolians are “intellectually arrested in their adolescence” or that black people “have a tendency to be arrogant” (Church Missionary Atlas, 1879: 27). These characteristic features are listed as equal to features of appearance like color of skin and body proportions. Such categories have long been analysed in terms of racism in various cultural study fields and social psychology whereas in the past decade a very similar categorisation tendency has started to spread with the goal of a better understanding in intercultural communication (ICC) study books. Short and simple descriptions of peoples and cultures are very dangerous as they are stereotypical and inhuman. Furthermore, such structured and short interpretation on the comparative method of primary phenomena of human existence are exclusively demonstrations of power with an intensive drive to make the unknown consumable.

The nature of the simplifications in organisational culture study books seem to resemble church missionary atlases of the colonial period when comparison and structuring of people acceptably served colonial goals. Without going into deeper philosophical analysis about margins and centers in terms of power, it is possible to say that simplifying categorisation may be a phenomenon along the *us and them dichotomy* in the saidian sense (Said, 1978) and might do more harm than good. The clearly recognisable dichotomy in the above mentioned organisational culture books and in the AAVS test as well is all the more interesting because almost at the moment when Said’s *Orientalism* book was published, it initiated what has since then been labelled as the *Orientalism debate*. Said has been attacked for identifying an imperial totalising project, a master narrative of “Western power”

(Mackenzie, 1995: 6). Although in postcolonial studies the saidian dichotomy has been questioned and criticised from the beginning, organisational culture studies seem to have maintained it completing it with Hall's (1976) tradition. One of the recurring criticisms is that Orientalism suggests that "binary opposition between East and West has been a typical feature of Western discourses from classical times" and the saidian tradition claims a static and fixed East versus West (Loomba, 1998: 48-49).

High context vs. low context, collectivist vs. individualist and multi-active vs. linear-active divisions seem to be rooted in the *us and them structure* postcolonial studies have endeavoured to criticise for decades. There is no space here to prove that Lewis' triangular model (2006) is also basically structured along the above mentioned binary oppositions. The new wave communication techniques are burdened with hidden contents fostering stereotypes instead of tolerant attitude and an intention to get a thorough knowledge concerning non-European cultures.

Asian values

The above mentioned AAVS test was made by Park and Kim (2008), who we can assume (stereotypically enough) are Chinese American people. Why do they use the generalising concept *Asian* although they surely have their own ethnic relations? What does the term *Asian* mean without any more concrete reference? Does it mean anything at all? Or does it have a meaning mostly in terms of a Eurocentric world view? If a Chinese person determines himself as *Asian* it means he accepts the cliché the majority culture forces on him so that he could be safely categorised. The phenomenon if someone appreciates and judges his own culture according to the register of another is called *cultures colonising themselves* by Kiossev (2000). Regarding Bulgarian culture Kiossev claims some ethnic groups tend to look upon and determine themselves through the value register of another one in power position.

The AAVS test may be claimed as a perfect example of Kiossev's term (2000): it assumes that there is something as *Asian value*, it assumes Asian cultures are homogeneous and collectivist and it assumes such a value system can be grasped, determined and described in some points. Most of the questions are created on the basis of the assumption that Asian cultures are collectivist and the person when filling in the test is basically expected to answer along a yes or no structure. The background idea of the test seems to be deeply rooted in the same categorisation and stereotyping the above mentioned organisational culture books seem to derive from. Postcolonial studies after Said's (1978) *Orientalism* extensively mapped the terrains where the European man considered non-European artistic, literary or other production in relation, comparison and in opposition to his own (Hulme, 1994: 73-88). The AAVS test even tends to exoticise the so-called Asian person: in a schematic relational structure the other is being not only distanced but is also domesticated, with Greenblatt's expression *othered and brothered* (1992). The sentences of the test seem sometimes almost ironical caricatures of what Europeans usually think of what they call Asian.

Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI) survey among Chinese students

A stereotypical approach to cultures in terms of *collectivist* and *individualist* societies can well be questioned by a survey of narcissism in China (You, Leung, Lai and Fu, 2012). The hypothesis of the study was that narcissism is typically a personality disorder originating in individualism, hence it should be expected in societies considered collectivist in a much lower number. Narcissism is actually a form of pathologically exaggerated individualism. Due to social changes like the one-child policy introduced in 1979, a generation, called *me generation* appeared in China (McLoughin, 2005) and children became little emperors. Parental behaviour, extreme esteem, permissive attitude,

learned exploitative behaviour and personality characteristics of this generation have started to show unexpected features. You et al. (2012) proved narcissistic grandiosity showed largely higher values than in Western cultures. Among the subscales of narcissism DEV (devaluating others), GF (grandiose fantasy) and HS (hiding self) dominated, which means all the results found were exactly the contrary expected in a so-called collectivist society.

Conclusion

The AAVS test together with the intercultural communication study books rely on stereotypical assumptions that are not eternal, not general and are even permanently changing. Both in a test like the AAVS and in leading organisational culture books (Trompenaars, 1997; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005; Lewis, 2006) cultural traditions are oversimplified suggesting there is no need for a deeper knowledge in terms of history, religions, sociology, psychology, etc., but some generalising terms in ICC studies would do. Through dialogue and INTERACTION ACROSS DIFFERENCE we become self-conscious and develop what Mead (1934) called the “generalised other” which support “shared communities as well as PARTICULARIZED OTHERS” (capitals mine) (Howart and Andreouli, 2012: 4) To teach young generations on the basis of materials that seem to be rooted in the Western *us and them* dichotomy in the Saidian sense will not work against stereotypes, the starting point of racism and prejudice, but, on the contrary, will strengthen them by ignoring both a subtle and educated handling of many old civilisations and quickly changing political, economic and cultural changes in a globalized world.

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Intercultural encounters between Hungarian learners of Spanish and senior Spanish L1 speakers: a collaborative experience

JULIANA PATRICIA LLANES SÁNCHEZ

Eötvös Loránd University

The present small-scale study with a qualitative focus describes the experience of three Hungarian learners exchanging e-mail messages with senior Spanish L1 speakers located in Colombia. The author's intention is to provide a deep understanding of how Hungarian learners used computer mediated intercultural encounters with L1 speakers to learn Spanish as a foreign language. Data was gathered from a variety of sources: The messages of research participants, semi-structured interviews with each of the students and the researcher's journal. Content and interpretive analyses were carried out on the data. The findings suggest that computer mediated intercultural encounters have led to linguistic, cultural and personal gains. Besides, the outcomes indicate that it is the entering into a collaborative and personal friendship stage that resulted in the long term continuation of the correspondence. Limitations and pedagogical implications are advanced at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Spanish as a foreign language, e-mail exchange, collaborative learning and intercultural encounter.

1 Introduction

The use of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in educational settings has the potential to promote the development of learners' linguistic skills and personal capabilities (Warschauer, 2002). In other words, it is suggested that at the classroom level it is important to use technology and to help students make use of it as "a medium of communication, research, and knowledge production" (Warschauer, 2002:472). The present study unfolds in computer mediated encounters that imply mostly written language typed via a keyboard (Warschauer, 2002) and require the application of electronic literacies, such as computer and multimedia literacy. CMC has also been regarded as a fertile ground for social interaction and in the field of foreign language (FL) learning and teaching, web-based written communications have provided learners with opportunities to construct learning communities and affinity groups (Kern, 2006). The research presented here intends to understand how Hungarian learners of Spanish use computer mediated intercultural encounters with L1 Spanish speakers for FL learning purposes. Accordingly, the paper proposes to describe the kind of efforts and productions provided by research participants as well as their interpretations and practices they enact in online interactions.

The rationale for the focus on computer mediated intercultural encounters is fuelled by an interest in comprehending the particular experiences and motivations of language learners in interacting online with L1 speakers. Additionally, this study is encouraged by Kern's idea that "intercultural projects have the potential to enhance learners' communication skills and to enrich their knowledge of another culture, as well as to provide a context for viewing one's own culture from another group's perspective" (2006:198). As a result, the current article reports the reflections and words of three Hungarian learners of Spanish exchanging e-mail messages with L1 speakers of Spanish located in Colombia. The originality of the present study lies in the objective of providing an insight into naturally evolving computer mediated intercultural encounters in which the teacher does not take on the role of facilitator or evaluator. In the following section, the theoretical background is presented with the objective of defining key terms and giving a framework to research on computer mediated intercultural encounters for FL learning. Then, the methods section describes the

research participants, the data sources and the methods of data collection and data analysis. Subsequently the outcomes are presented. At the end, conclusions and some implications are also outlined.

2 Theoretical background

This section begins by examining the use of e-mail exchanges for FL learning; then intercultural encounters and collaborative learning are defined with the purpose of establishing a common understanding of the key terms used in this research.

2.1 The use of e-mail exchanges in FL learning

It is acknowledged that nowadays online exchange for FL learning entails a large number of possibilities. For example, native speakers of the target language, virtual partners from different locations or even fan groups can exchange in closed platforms like Moodle or in private environments such as eTwinning or e-PALS. Besides, other popular tools like blogs, forums, skype telephony or e-mails are equally used. In front of such a variety of online communication tools and environments and notwithstanding the significance of more modern tools; in this study, the participants only exchanged through e-mails. The first reason is because e-mailing appears to be widely-known and easy to access (Bourques, 2006) and most importantly, since this study also aims at facilitating intergenerational encounters, e-mailing emerges as a shared tool that both groups, young people and elderly people, are ready to use frequently.

The use of e-mailing in classroom settings has become a potential tool to develop various skills. For instance, Kern (2006) highlights that learners' reading and writing skills can be developed because they have ample opportunities to focus on form and content. Charron (2007) underlines that pen pal programs through web-mailing afford students with opportunities to set a purpose for their writing and learn about another culture. More recently O'Dowd (2013) describes, in connection with a study in online collaboration that "the accounts which students receive from their partners [...] tend to be of a subjective and personalized nature" (O'Dowd, 2013:198); and so it is about a different kind of knowledge that is opposed to objective factual information. This is why knowledge about cultures in intercultural email activities, according to Chen and Yang (2014), is largely improved through the process of interaction where students not only develop cultural awareness of the cultures of their correspondents but also about their home culture.

Furthermore, cultural understanding in e-pals projects is also related to the experience of using technology learning tools and intercultural communication (Chen and Yang, 2014). Thus, the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has also been emphasized as an outcome of e-mailing (Chen and Yang, 2014; Gomez, 2010; Greenfield, 2003; Itakura, 2004; Liaw, 1998; Liaw, 2006; Liaw and Johnson, 2001; O'Dowd, 2003, Schenker, 2012). In particular, O'Dowd (2003) proposes three characteristics exhibited by e-mail exchange that facilitate the development of aspects of ICC. First, e-mail exchange provides opportunities to students to express their feelings and views to a receptive audience. Second, it encourages critical reflection on students' own culture. Third, exchange of this kind engages students in a dialogic interaction that led to an increased awareness of the home and target cultures. Accordingly, scholars have recommended that email exchanges should be incorporated into the class curriculum in order to be successful (Müller-Hartmann, 2006; O'Dowd, 2003).

2.2 Intercultural encounters

An intercultural encounter “is an encounter with another person (or group of people) that is perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself” (Barrett, Byram, Lázár, Mompoin-Gaillard, and Philippou, 2014:16). Thus intercultural encounters entail otherness and difference as key elements; it may occur in face-to-face or mediated by technology or any media. Additionally, in an intercultural encounter, people from different nations, regions or ethnic, linguistic or religious origins meet together. However, people differing each other from lifestyle, gender, social-economic status, age or orientations may be involved in intercultural encounters too (Barret, et al., 2014). It is important to note that there is a difference between an intercultural encounter and an interpersonal encounter. In the former cultural differences are perceived and made salient either by the situation or by the individual’s own orientation and attitudes (Barret, et al., 2014). In the latter, cultural differences are not emphasized or noticed and one “respond to the other person (or people) on the basis of their own individual personal characteristics” (Barret, et al., 2014:16).

2.3 Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning has been related to social constructionist views of knowledge (Bruffee, 1994). This perspective assumes that knowledge is a social construct and that “learning occurs among persons rather than between a person and things” (Bruffee, 1994:40). Thus, following the social constructivist approach, the dynamics of the learning process in a collaborative structure often incorporates three essential elements: Spaces of appearance, active engagement and ownership (Maltese, 1991). The first element refers to the need of every individual to construct a public persona, to appear before one’s peers, in simple words to have a public image. The second element makes reference to the engagement and the interaction with the material or to the involvement with the subject matter through the notion of doing as a component of learning. And the third element relates to ownership or the acknowledgment of materials, works and products as part of the individual’s domain (Maltese, 1991). The present study reports an experience where learners on their way to becoming fully competent speakers of Spanish exchange e-mails with L1 speakers and engage in various communicative actions and processes of collaboration with their correspondents. Therefore this qualitative study seeks answer to the following main research question: How do Hungarian L1 learners of Spanish make use of computer mediated intercultural encounters with Spanish L1 speakers?

3 Methods

This study followed a qualitative approach involving a “close examination of issues, [...] and a production of in-depth descriptions and interpretations” (Hays, 2004:218). The purpose of this paper is to understand how Hungarian learners of Spanish use computer mediated intercultural encounters with L1 Spanish speakers. This piece of research focuses on individuals’ involvement, performances and perspectives rather than concerns of generalization therefore a small number of subjects were involved.

3.1 Participants

The research participants were three students of Spanish at a university in Budapest, hereafter Beáta, Szonja and András (pseudonyms). They were enrolled in teacher training programs and are 3rd and 2nd year students of BA Spanish philology programs who desire entering the teaching profession. Among research participants two students are females and one is a male; their ages range from 23 to 25 years old. The participants have been learning Spanish for eight years in average and all of them assured that they had already visited a Spanish speaking country. The students were

given the e-mail addresses of volunteer senior e-pals located in Colombia. The Colombian correspondents are part of the author's network of relations in Latin-America. They are retired professionals who come from various fields, such as sociology, anthropology and education. Beáta writes to Miguel, Szonja exchanges messages with Raquel and Andrés interacts with Pedro.

3.2 Instruments

For the purposes of triangulation three data collection instruments were used in the study. (1) The participants' e-mail messages: They were tools to access the specific and illuminating examples of the students' understandings and practices. (2) Semi-structured interviews with the participants: These enabled the researcher to find out what was important for research participants. The interview guide was piloted with a research expert during a debriefing session and was then translated into Spanish (see Appendix 1). (3) The researcher's journal: The aim of the journal was to record personal perceptions and preliminary interpretations about the participants and their practices. The journal was equally valuable for building an audit trail (Dörnyei, 2007) by recording each step and the sequence of decisions made during the whole research process.

3.3 Procedures of data collection

The data collection process was carried out over approximately 5 months, from September 2015 to January 2016. The collection of data was progressive and cyclical (Friedman, 2012) therefore, research participants' e-mails were received fortnightly. The ongoing analysis enabled beginning discoveries that supplemented the research process and guided the questions of participants' interviews. Research participants were interviewed once and all the communication in the research process was carried out in Spanish. Semi-structured interviews were audio-taped and took on the features of a purposeful conversation that let the researcher and the participants deviate from the guidelines to elaborate on topics arising during the course of the discussion (Friedman, 2012). The audio-taped interviews were transcribed by me. The transcription process took several weeks by listening to and writing down the exact words used by research participants. Excerpts from the original Spanish data are presented in the author's translation (see Appendix 2 for the transcription conventions applied).

3.4 Procedures of data analysis

For the purposes of this paper interpretive content analysis was fundamentally used as a procedure for data analysis. Prior to the handed-coding, the transcriptions of the interviews were submitted to respondent feedback (Dörnyei, 2007). Subsequently, the scripts of the e-mail messages and the interviews were subjected to content analysis. Two rounds of analysis were conducted with the collected data. In the first round I identified similar comments expressing research participants' practices and experiences related to the e-mail exchange in order to present a general picture of their points of view. Then I examined their ideas about the gains obtained with the e-mail exchange; and I organized the comments into recurrent views and these views were categorized in three salient themes: linguistic, cultural and personal gains. These preliminary findings were connected to the results obtained in a second round of analysis in which I concentrated on the emerging collaboration between the students and their correspondents. Therefore I explored repeated collaborative practices and finally I linked these practices to the previously stated gains. At the end three stages emerged: Apprenticeship, partnership and personal friendship according to which the results are presented in the following section.

4 Outcomes

4.1 Learning Spanish collaboratively through computer mediated intercultural encounters

4.1.1 Stage I: Apprenticeship

The research participants of the current study produced notably long messages and engaged in active e-mail communication with their correspondents. On average the three students sent three messages per week and spent time and effort into creating various kinds of texts attaching images, photos, links and quotations of other texts as well as audios, videos and emoticons. It is important to highlight that the experience of writing and exchanging e-mails with L1 speakers of Spanish, primarily, engages research participants in a stage of apprenticeship in which active authorship was the key element. For example Szonja first wrote drafts in advance and asked friends to correct her texts before sending them to Raquel. Beáta used online dictionaries and edited her messages on the screen before sending them off to Miguel. András, on the other hand, looked for and tried to self-correct mistakes in his texts but relied on his acquired vocabulary and communication strategies.

The opportunity to write various kinds of texts helped research participants to exercise themselves in writing and using Spanish language. Their participation in genuine communicative language practice with Latin-American speakers also enabled them to formulate many questions to dig deeper on their correspondents' lives. In addition to active authorship and communicative language practice, research participants engaged in collaborative writing. At the beginning of the exchange, the e-mail messages dealt with assignments so learners asked questions to their correspondents and submitted them drafts of their writings in order to complete homework. The Colombian correspondents answered, corrected grammar and gave feedback and suggestions on the students' assignments.

As a result of the stage of apprenticeship, Beáta, Szonja and András became aware of linguistic gains such as vocabulary enhancement as the more important gain of this phase. Each of the students mentioned, in the interviews, the enrichment in idiomatic expressions and words:

...At university we learn philosophic and specialized terms but not simple daily words like 'toilet paper tube' [...]. Now I use frequently Latin-American vocabulary like 'chequear', 'chance', I never say "hasta luego" but 'chao'... (Interview (Int.) Beáta).

...With Raquel's e-mails I had to use my dictionary a lot, there were always unknown words and so I learnt new words [...] I wrote them out in a list and I studied the glossary regularly... (Int. Szonja).

...I learnt a lot of words related to daily situations... things of the daily talking that one cannot learn at school or at university, like the word 'plata' to mean money... (Int. András).

Learning new words is a benefit highlighted by research participants in this stage. However, it is also an illustration of an emerging expert-apprentice relationship that leads to collaborative writing. The Colombian correspondents let students have access to significant practice and at the same time, they provide grammar corrections of assignments as well as suggestions and feedback about the students' understandings of Spanish language.

4.1.2 Stage II: Partnership

After a while the e-mail exchange turned into correspondence in which assignments were no longer at the center of the conversations and the expert-apprentice relationship changed into partnership. Beáta, Szonja and András were eager to continue communicating with their receptive correspondents and started to collaborate mainly to understand cultural information. The conversation below between Szonja and Raquel illustrates this point:

...I'm sending two photos of my favorite chocolates, the first is a '*Cherry Queen*' it's a dark chocolate, with sour cherry and sweet, filled with brandy. I don't like alcohol but the taste of this candy is unforgettable. The second is called '*túro rud?*' it's composed of a thin chocolate-flavored outer coating and an inner filling of curd. There are differently-flavoured varieties of the bar, like apricot, strawberry and raspberry. [Answering Raquel's question] *it is true that Hungarian people love paprika and salt* because most of us eat spicy dishes... And how about Colombian people? Do they like spicy dishes? Or do they prefer sweet ones? What's your favorite food? And what kind of sweets can we find in Colombia? (Mail# 13. Szonja to Raquel)

As a result, research participants highlighted their improvement in cultural learning as the main outcome of the partnership stage. When discussing cultural issues, the Hungarian students showed they were also knowledgeable about the topic of Colombia by presenting their own point of view of the topic:

...I'm not only interested in James and Falcao García [Colombian soccer players], I love cycling so I know Nairo Quintana who took the 2nd place in the 2015 Tour de France and Mariana Pajon, the queen of BMX. I also heard about this black athlete, Caterine Ibargüen, she won in Moscow and Beijing ... (Mail #10. Andrés to Pedro).

The role of expert exerted by the Colombian correspondents at the beginning of the exchange was put in question since a mutual relationship between equals was taking shape. Each one contributed to the conversations and learned from each other. For example, Szonja taught some Hungarian words to Raquel:

...Thanks for your feedback and corrections... now it's my turn to teach you something, [...]. Here in Hungary we say 'anya' or 'anyu' for mommy, you can pronounce it as 'añu' and 'apa' or 'apu' for father. For grandparents we say 'papa' or 'papi' and 'mama' or 'mami'. In Colombia you use the word 'mami' to call your mother, that's interesting, we have the same word but it has a different meaning... (Mail# 20. Szonja to Raquel).

4.1.3 Stage III: Personal friendship

Progressively the three research participants appeared to gradually become better friends. They started to personalize their topics and included very personal concerns and opinions in their written interactions. For instance Szonja chose to share something very personal with her exchange partner, something one does not reveal to casual acquaintances:

...On Sundays we go to visit my grandparents, we bring them sugar, eggs, meat and oil... they're very old and ill [...]. My grandma imagines things that she thinks are real but in fact last year she had a stroke and now it's very difficult for her and for everybody in the family... (Mail# 11. Szonja to Raquel).

In one of Béata's messages she also shares some intimate information about her family with Miguel:

...I have a little family [...] that's not totally true, there are some brothers of my father but due to an argument before my birth they don't see each other anymore. That's very sad! Can you imagine that I have my grandparents somewhere and that I have never seen them in my life? [...] It's a very sensitive topic for my father so I can't even mention it in front of him [...] but anyway I'm used to the family I have now [...]. I would like that my parents get along well together but I cannot complain even if they don't love each other anymore, they help me and support me a lot ... (Mail # 7, Beáta to Miguel).

At the end of the e-mail exchange, the three students highlighted their bond of friendship with the correspondents:

...At the beginning I simply wanted to use the language and to improve my Spanish [...] but then everything changed and I knew Miguel, *I loved his life story and I liked imagining his life* [...] You know you become attached to people and you want to spend time with them... the same as with every friend you have, *it's a real friendship*... (Int. Beáta).

"I think we have a *personal relationship* [...] our relationship is very special [...] I told her very personal and private things [...]. It may be funny ((laughs)) but I feel *she is my little Colombian grandma*" (Int. Szonja).

Likewise, András emphasized that his friendship with Pedro was a manly and buddy-buddy relationship.

5 Discussion

The outcomes presented above need to be discussed and most importantly understood as products of personal involvement and individual expertise in FL learning. In other words, research participants made use of the e-mail exchange with L1 speakers of Spanish to learn Spanish collaboratively by creating and taking advantage of the opportunities to use the language outside the classroom through computer mediated intercultural encounters. Indeed, the fact of having access to significant practice and collaborating with a receptive correspondent enabled research participants to continue writing in creative, meaningful and purposeful way. The results are also illustrations of successful intercultural relationships through e-mail where participants provide personal opinions, chose topics, ask questions and contribute autonomously in genuine language communication. This finding is consistent with the ideas that the use of emailing not only promotes language learning but also lets people learn to communicate effectively via e-mail (Warschauer 2002), experience with intercultural communication and improve collaboration skills (Chen and Yang, 2014).

Three stages emerged from the analysis of the data. In the first one, called apprenticeship, research participants engage mainly in active authorship for classroom assignments. As a result, Spanish L1 speakers take on the role of experts and Hungarian students position as apprentices. The former provide feedback to students about their writings and the latter receive, discuss and incorporate the suggestions to produce new drafts. This kind of collaborative writing is mainly governed by spaces of appearance (see 2.3) or ways to appear before ones' peers. Research participants succeed in creating a public image as apprentices to announce that they also exist in the intercultural encounter. This may explain the emphasis on writing and reading skills development and vocabulary enhancement as the main gains obtained within the apprenticeship stage.

The second phase is labelled partnership since research participants and L1 speakers of Spanish position as equally knowledgeable individuals. They engage in a reciprocal process of exchanging and interpreting cultural information and finally enhance their understandings of the target language. In this stage learners take on the role of cultural informants who not only discuss issues related to the target culture but also develop awareness of their own culture. These outcomes bring into the focus the possibilities favored by e-mail exchanges for giving a voice to students; a non-conventional voice (Kramsch and Lam, 1999) that is connected to personal purposes and that is not governed by subordination and powerlessness regarding the target language-culture. Rather, it entails active engagement (see 2.3) with the correspondents and the e-mail exchange to allow learners to "construct their personal meanings at the boundaries between the native speaker's meanings and their own everyday life" (Kramsch, 1993:238).

Furthermore, in the partnership stage research participants not only continue developing their communicative skills by using Spanish in real life situations; but they also increase their intercultural capabilities (Scarino, 2010). We can agree with Liaw and Johnson's (2001) observation that "e-mail writing does make personal cultural contact possible and cultural learning contextualized" (249). We can presume that e-mail exchanges, as it is understood in the literature, proved to be beneficial for these learners in developing "more sensitive and complex views on culture" (Itakura, 2004:49), since, learning about culture was seamlessly intertwined with the use of the target language through dialogue.

Finally in the third stage, named personal friendship, the e-mail exchange experience seems to move away beyond a language and culture learning opportunity and becomes a place for establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships. Indeed previous studies had already indicated that "setting up a trusting atmosphere" (Liaw and Johnson, 2001:249) and developing "personal ("friendly") relationships with their partner" (O'Dowd, 2003:138) are crucial for e-mail exchange projects that intend to develop students' ICC. In addition, in the friendship stage, research participants underline ownership (see 2.3) towards Spanish language and the people they had discovered. Therefore, the written exchange becomes a matter of expression and personal involvement. That is to say, e-mail exchange enabled learners to externalize and verbalize their deepest convictions. This finding is in line with Kern's (2006) conclusions that point out personal involvement as a key ingredient for successful intercultural exchanges.

6 Conclusion

The aim of the present small-scale investigation was to study how Hungarian L1 learners of Spanish make use of computer mediated intercultural encounters with Spanish L1 speakers. The data analysis indicates that research participants use the email exchange experience to produce engaging and in-depth correspondence and to obtain linguistic, cultural and personal gains. Besides, three stages emerged from the e-mail exchange experience: Apprenticeship, partnership and personal friendship. These phases are linked correspondingly to elements of collaborative learning such as spaces of appearance, active engagement and ownership. Some of the findings give an indication of areas that may be helpful in the development of intercultural approaches of FL teaching and learning. To start, interaction and interpersonal relations ought to be fostered. The e-mailing exchange studied in this study proves to be purposeful and challenging for the research participants since interaction with receptive correspondents implies opportunities for significant and nonthreatening language practice. Additionally, when students take on the role of cultural informants, they tend to reveal their own culture and develop partnership with their correspondents.

It would be also essential to favour student-centred approaches so that the discovery of the target culture and FL learning strategies emerge from learners' own practices, choices and initiatives. The consideration of this orientation might be equally useful in language teaching to develop flexible pedagogies that position learners as independent producers and analyzers of knowledge (Gan, Humphreys and Hamp-Lyons, 2004) and culture learning as a contextualized practice that entails personal cultural contact (Liaw and Johnson, 2001). Some suggestions for further research and limitations need to be pointed out too. First of all, this research was conducted during a relatively short period of time and among learners who succeeded the e-mail exchange task. Forthcoming studies should focus on failed correspondence or stagnant interactions in order to provide deeper support to the findings. Another limitation of the study is related to the interpretations suggested here. They are to be understood bearing in mind the multiple roles of the researcher in this study. The author was the tutor of the research participants and provided an insider view of the issues because she also benefited from a Latin-American native-speaker perspective. Future studies ought

to take into consideration the relationship between the researcher, the target culture and the participants with the purpose of reflecting on how this might influence the analysis, the findings and the interpretations.

The results of the current study, as it was suggested by O'Dowd (2003), revealed that "the area of intercultural e-mail exchanges continues to offer fertile ground for further research and analysis" (139). The present study is not only a contribution that emphasizes on communicative skills, cultural and personal development but also an experience that highlights the salient processes of collaboration among different participants of the process of FL learning and teaching. Last but not least, the possibility to connect generations through computer mediated intercultural projects is another salient aspect too complex and beyond the purposes of the present paper. But raising it momentarily gives us a hint about the ways in which collaborative intergenerational encounters could develop cultural understanding and provide language learners with opportunities to examine the concept of culture as a dynamic and multifaceted construct (Franson and Holliday, 2009) beyond the confines of university classrooms.

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APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANTS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Could you explain your reasons / your motivations for exchanging e-mails with your Spanish correspondent?
2. In what manner do you take distance/ differentiate from your correspondent?
3. How do you see your role in this exchange? Did you notice an evolution of your roles?
2.1 Why it was so important for you to talk about your future profession?
4. How would you describe your relationship with your correspondent? What kind of personal information did you provide to your correspondent?
3.1 QUESTION FOR SZONJA what was important for you to ask a photo of your correspondent?
5. What have you gained from this exchange? What are you taking away from this e-mail exchange?
6. Have you ever used any of the information coming from this exchange in your language learning? / In your language classroom? / In your homework? If yes, why and what kind of information /knowledge have you used? / If not, why not?

APPENDIX 2

Transcription conventions applied in the participants' interviews

[...]	Text omitted
[text]	Paraphrase or author's note
<i>Italics</i>	Emphasis
(())	Comment on voice quality or paralinguistic features (e.g., laughter, gestures)

Multicultural and digital challenges in education and student expectations at the Medical School of the University of Pécs

TIMEA NÉMETH – ALEXANDRA CSONGOR

University of Pécs

The University of Pécs is one of the most active Hungarian universities in attracting international students through various mobility programmes and as degree-seeking full-time students. A high ratio of them study at the Medical School. In this multicultural environment teachers are faced with various challenges and expectations on a daily basis originating from students of diverse cultural backgrounds. This paper presents the results of an online survey and the interviews conducted regarding students' expectations in order to improve the quality of education at the Medical School and enhance student satisfaction with respect to their studies. The results suggest that both international and Hungarian students would like to have more mixed classes where they could study together with students coming from all parts of the world and thus enhance their intercultural, as well as language skills in English, German and Hungarian. There is also an emerging need for the use of more digital tools and 21st century educational methods, as students may come from various cultures, however, one thing they have in common is that they are all "digital natives". They speak and understand the same digital language, which is a challenge for teachers, who were not born into the world of digital technology.

Keywords: international students, Medical School, multicultural study environment, digital educational tools, quality of teaching and learning

Introduction

"Today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach."

Prensky (2001: 1)

Prensky (2001) claims that since the last decades of the 20th century students have changed drastically due to the development and fast spread of digital technology. He also argues that they have spent less than 5,000 hours reading books, but over 10,000 hours playing video games. As a result, it is no wonder, why this generation thinks and processes information profoundly differently from their predecessors. Although, in Füzesi's view (2016), the students today are neither better, nor worse than those fifty, hundred or even five hundred years ago, they are just different. Prensky (2001) presents a list of eight items regarding digital natives' needs for education, which include fast access to information, multi-tasking, active personal involvement, use of graphics, visual aids instead of plain texts, fast access to information, social networking, playing games rather than doing serious work, and being rewarded frequently. These needs are very different from those of the previous generations. Multinational and global companies, like Google and Microsoft have realized this and construct their latest technology-based educational programmes and mobile apps to serve the above needs. Therefore, due to the rapid changes in educational science, what was once regarded as science fiction is more and more becoming science reality. As a consequence, in education today, it is crucial to modify and adopt instructional methods and activities in order to meet these needs. Dudeney (2015) also points out that we can make our classes more relevant for students if we integrate 21st century skills, such as digital skills into our methods of teaching.

However, it is not only the students, who have changed, but their study environment has also undergone radical modifications in the past few decades. In Hungary there is a significant demographic decline in the population, the government provides less support and funding, while

operational costs are continuously increasing (Pozsgai, Kajos and Németh, 2012). After Hungary joined the EU and the Bologna process the number of international students began to soar steeply. Their number increased from 11,187 (2001/2002 academic year) to a total of 17,112 by the academic year of 2011/2012 (Császár and Wusching, 2014). In particular, Hungarian medical education has been very popular among international students, therefore, the vast majority of this student population study medicine at one of the four medical schools in the country.

There are significant restrictions in the number of students admitted to medical schools in several European countries, and as a result, Hungary is one of the target countries. As Berács, Malota and Zsótér (2010) claim, the high quality of the services provided for the students both by the universities and the towns they are located in also contribute to the substantial increase in the number of international medical students, which was more than 34% between 2001 and 2011.

The medical schools started to introduce their programmes in different languages to attract more and more students from all over the world. Initially, it was the Semmelweis University in Budapest that launched the first German programme in 1983, followed by the first English programme at the Medical School of the University of Pécs (hereinafter referred to as UPMS) in 1984. Shortly thereafter, the Medical School of the University of Szeged introduced its English programme in 1985 followed by the Medical School of the University of Debrecen in 1987 (Császár and Wusching, 2014). In 2004, twenty years following the initial launch of its English programme, the UPMS introduced its medical education in German targeting the student population in German speaking countries, such as Germany and Austria.

As enrolment data indicate (Student statistics, 2015), the total number of students enrolled in September 2015 at UPMS was 3,647 students. Analysing the data further, it is suggested that the number of Hungarian students today only makes up 45% of the total student population. The majority of the students (20%) are from Germany, close to 9% come from Iran and Norway respectively, and the remainder arrive from various countries spanning the globe.

Consequently, from the perspectives of teachers, we can state that these are demanding and challenging times for educators. Not only do we have to meet the needs of this diverse, multicultural student population, but also provide them with classes which meet the expectations of the digital natives.

Marc Prensky (2001) created the term *digital native* to refer to those who are all “native speakers” of the digital language of computers, online games and the internet, whilst those, born prior to the mid-nineties, are therefore *digital immigrants* only trying to catch up with the latest developments of new technology. Consequently, there is an ever-increasing gap between the two digital generations as the expectations of the digital natives do not always meet the educational know-how of teachers. However, there are teachers who regard it an imperative to integrate digitally mediated activities and tools into their syllabus. The present paper aims at summarizing the results of a survey concerning teachers’ and students’ experiences and feedback regarding the use of online tools while teaching medical English and medical Hungarian at the Medical School of the University of Pécs.

Method

This study is blended-method research incorporating both an online questionnaire and structured interviews with the aim of gathering an in-depth understanding of the use of digital study tools while teaching medical English to Hungarian students and medical Hungarian to international students. This mixed method survey enables a multidimensional approach to the same subject matter from various aspects.

The aim of the longitudinal study was to gain insight into the use of digital study tools by a multicultural student population, as well as to identify these while teaching medical English for Hungarian students and medical Hungarian for international students. The questionnaire contained twelve questions and was divided into three main sections. The first one focused on the demographic background of the students. The second section comprised of questions regarding students' use of online educational tools. The third unit included an open-ended question concerning suggestions for the quality improvement of teaching at UPMS. The survey was conducted in March 2016.

In this paper, only the answers submitted for the third unit will be discussed. This included an open-ended question regarding the quality improvement of teaching at UPMS. The question was as follows: "What recommendations would you make in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the Medical School?" Approximately 200 students were asked both during classes directly and online to fill in the questionnaire, which took approximately five minutes to be completed. There was a significantly higher response rate of students asked in class (100%) than that of those asked online (15%). This suggests the importance of personalizing surveys as that yield a considerably higher response rate. The language of the survey was English, to enable both Hungarian and international students to complete it. Anonymity was ensured.

Structured interviews were also conducted with students and teachers from all of the three programmes (German, English and Hungarian) with the purpose of approaching the research topic from various angles. Interviews also facilitate asking more complex questions due to their interpersonal nature. The interviews contained a structured set of questions to gather identical data to be analysed. Participants taking part in the survey typically spent between five to ten minutes in providing their responses.

Participants

A total of 141 students responded to the survey. More than 68% of the respondents were females. The majority of the students (98%) were between the ages of 18 and 25. Responses included students from all of the three programmes of UPMS: 57% of the respondents study medicine, 28% study dentistry, whereas 15% study pharmacy. Additionally, 40% of the respondents were students from the Hungarian programme, 46% were English programme students, whereas 14% were students from the German programme. In summary, the respondents represented all of the study programmes run by UPMS including both Hungarian and international students.

Altogether 23 students were interviewed, 17 females and 6 males. Their ages ranged between 18 and 25. The majority, twelve interviewees, were English programme students, eight were Hungarian and three German programme students. Three teachers participated in the interviews, two teaching medical English and one teaching medical German. Additionally, all three teach medical Hungarian as well.

Results of the open-ended question of the online survey

The total number of valid answers was 116 to the open-ended question regarding recommendations on how to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the Medical School. 25 respondents did not answer the open question at all, or the answers were not relevant or could not be interpreted. Out of the 116 respondents 38 (33%) would encourage the use of more online or web-based educational tools and applications for studying on language courses, such as Quizlet, Anki, Duolingo, TedEd and podcasts and videos. Some of the typical recommendations for improving the quality of teaching and learning include the following:

- Use more online apps for teaching.
- Let students to use their electronic devices for more help.
- Please increase the online/web education at university.
- More apps and online tools will be very helpful in the exam period.

Although it was not within the scope of this questionnaire, 5 students indicated the importance of these tools in other classes as well. Only 5 (4%) students pointed out that they prefer traditional methods with respect to learning. Three students mentioned the idea of tandem classes, which is a method of language learning based on mutual language exchange between students coming from different cultures. It is a great advantage of studying in a multicultural environment and should be more integrated at the level of university education. Twenty-two responses (19%) focused on ideas improving the quality of study materials and teaching methods including the platforms to share information.

When commenting on the quality of teaching and learning, respondents referred to the importance of more interaction and project work. It clearly marks the students' need to move away from traditional lessons in which they are passively listening to their lecturers. They would like to be integrated in the learning process and actively participate in the classes. The respondents' comments also demonstrate that they would like to focus on understanding and practical skills rather than memorizing information. The respondents answered that they prefer to study in smaller groups and also to learn at a more moderate pace. The students also indicated that they recommend improving the quality of study materials and the platforms to share these. The following are some common answers of the survey:

- More interaction and project work.
- Some knowledge that we can actually use, not just tons of dumb details.
- Study slower plz.
- To have more proper materials to study from.
- More well-structured and defined materials.

In summary, the responses of Hungarian and international students were similar. They all suggested that they prefer to study in a more personalized, interactive as well as digital technology based environment. The launch of mixed or tandem classes recommended by some of them will no doubt serve their future improvement not only in language classes, but also in the development of their intercultural competence and sensitivity. After earning their degrees they will all have to provide medical aid to patients coming from diverse cultural backgrounds and studying in mixed classes during their undergraduate years would contribute to developing these skills.

Results of the interviews

Twenty-one (91%) of the student interviewees reported that they had benefited from classes mostly due to the use of online tools. They highlighted that studying medical vocabulary on the move with the help of various apps (Quizlet, Anki, TedEd, Duolingo, Learningapps, Socrative, Kahoot, podcasts and videos) is most beneficial and this is precisely what this generation needs. The majority of students (79%), however, still regard the use of mixed methods (both traditional, frontal teaching and the integration of online educational tools) to be the best means of high quality teaching and education.

Regarding the *advantages* of the online tools they mentioned the easy to use features and that it motivates them to study more due to the competitive nature of some of the tools (Kahoot, Quizlet live).

The best way of learning new words and phrases for me is when I have access to them any time, any day. I have some apps on my mobile that make it easily accessible.

Regarding the *disadvantages* of the online tools they mentioned problems with accessing wifi, and that some of the smart gadgets are slower when compared with the others.

I was upset sometimes when I knew I was going to win the Kahoot game, but then all of a sudden my phone went dead.

Two of the three teachers who were interviewed used online tools regularly, yet one did not. The latter one still prefers the use of traditional methods, using books, handouts and she still favours writing on the blackboard compared to using power point slides. They all claimed that using digital tools in class is an advantage for the students, yet, a disadvantage for teachers due to the lack of sufficient digital knowledge and skills of many of the digital immigrant generation.

In conclusion, it can be claimed that the majority of the students considered the use of online educational tools as a positive attribute to developing students' medical English and medical Hungarian knowledge, however there are also specific downsides in the use of digital technology which deter some students from participating, such as slow internet connection or gadget failure. One of the three teachers said she was still reluctant to use online tools and prefers books and handouts. She also claimed the high number of classes as a burden that prevents her from spending more time towards developing new methods as well as her digital skills. However, all of the teachers believe that mixed method education works best.

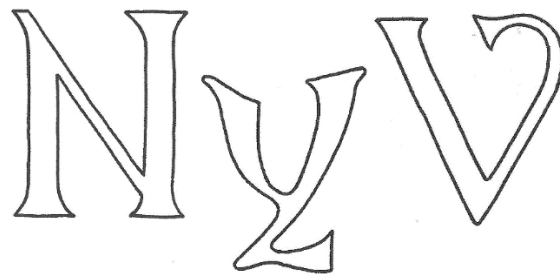
Conclusion

Owing to all the fast changes in the world, the student environment has become diverse and more and more multicultural. We are faced with various expectations from students of different cultural and social backgrounds at the UPMS. The survey aimed to explore their opinions with respect to the quality of teaching and learning in language classes. The results suggest that this student population perceive both face-to-face learning and learning with digital technology important. Their answers to the open-ended question of the survey and the interviews imply that teaching and learning methods are enhanced by exploiting the use of digital technology and the opportunities offered by the multicultural environment. If online educational tools and students' continuously developing intercultural skills and competences are applied properly and adequately, they will contribute to improving students' motivation, knowledge and personalized active learning.

An essential element in 21st century higher education is that teaching has become a reciprocal process between teachers and students, or in other words between digital natives and digital immigrants. Students are continuously teaching and motivating their teachers as they are way ahead of them regarding their digital skills. To improve the quality of teaching medicine intercultural and digital competences are of major importance. Therefore, life-long learning is an imperative for the academic staff in higher education to meet the needs of digital natives of diverse cultural backgrounds.

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The intercultural component in two editions of a Business English course book

EDIT RÁCZ

University of Debrecen

Research into the intertwined nature of language and culture provided the theoretical foundation for language pedagogy to integrate the teaching of foreign languages and their cultures. Educational policies worldwide, in line with research, incorporated the need for equal emphasis on intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and other skills and competences. The teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is no exception. My research focuses on two editions (2005 and 2010) of an intermediate course book (Cotton, Falvey and Kent, *Market Leader - Business English Course Book*). First, I examine whether the authors have made any changes to the cultural curriculum of the course book in the later edition. Then I discuss the cultural content of each edition in detail. Finally, based on the results of the comparison, I draw the conclusions. In my paper I argue for a comprehensive cultural curriculum in business English course books so that learners can master intercultural communicative competence and become intercultural speakers.

Keywords: business English, culture, cultural curriculum, ICC, intercultural speaker

Introduction

In a globalized world, where the international embeddedness of personal encounters is daily routine, the importance of intercultural knowledge and that of specific intercultural skills is a priority. This holds especially true for corporate settings where employees of both multinational and local companies function in the complexity of culturally diverse environments, which expects them to possess the necessary skills and competences to tackle these situations correctly. In order that the labour market be set up of interculturally competent workforce, educational institutions, with special emphasis on business schools, are expected to reflect upon this demand in their curricula and in the teaching materials used. In this paper I argue that, as language teaching cannot be separated from the teaching of culture, course book writers, in compliance with relevant research and educational policies, have recently made a remarkable shift towards incorporating the teaching of business English and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) jointly. I compare two editions (2005, 2010) of an intermediate level business English course book, *Market Leader*, from the point of view of how each approaches the issue of intercultural communicative competence. After a detailed analysis and comparison, I present my conclusions.

Theoretical background

Language and culture

Culture is “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings” (Kramsch, 1998: 10). Theoreticians have used various categories to distinguish between the more easily perceivable, tangible elements of culture and those which are intangible, less easily noticeable: Brembeck’s iceberg analogy - visible vs. invisible culture (1977, quoted in Lázár et al., 2007:7); Hofstede’s (1984) culture one vs. culture two; Decapua and Wintergest’s (2004) “big C” Culture vs. “small c” culture. Besides these two component systems, Holló (2008) introduces a categorisation which divides the content of culture into three broad areas: civilisation (e.g. history, geography, economy, arts, scientific achievements, customs and traditions, holidays, cuisine, taboos as well as the cultural connotations of vocabulary), behavioural culture (e.g. greeting and leave taking, giving and asking for opinion, agreeing and disagreeing,

interrupting, complaining, giving and asking for advice, as well as non-verbal elements of culture like body language, gestures, proximity or forms of politeness), and text and discourse organisation (e.g. cohesion, coherence, logical reasoning, arguing as well as the structure of written or oral genres). In the present paper I use this latter categorisation.

Undeniably, language is part of culture, the two are intricately intertwined. Language expresses, embodies and symbolises cultural reality (Kramersch, 1998). From the point of view of language pedagogy, foreign languages and cultures are bound to be taught together. Let me quote some of the reasons Tomalin and Stempleski (1993:7-8) give for this. I have selected those arguments which are of crucial importance from the point of view of ICC.

- to develop the necessary skills to locate and organise information about the target culture
- to stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people
- to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviors
- to become more aware of conventional behavior in common situations in the target culture
- to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence

Cultural competence in the communicative competence model

Researchers have studied various facets of communicative competence, a term first used by Hymes (1966, 1972), for several decades. The first communicative competence model was developed by Rivers (1973), who, relying on Chomsky's (1965) terminology (competence and performance), used three categories: linguistic competence, linguistic performance and interaction. In language pedagogy the best known and most frequently quoted model of communicative competence is that of Canale and Swain (1980) who distinguish four competences (linguistic, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic) as essential to communicate in a foreign language. Van Ek (1986) augmented this model with two other competences (sociocultural and social) whereby the cultural and social embeddedness of language use became more emphatic. It was not until Bárdos (2004) compiled his model of five competences that cultural competence gained an independent status.

Why is this model a breakthrough in language pedagogy? Because it has directed attention to the importance of cultural competence in communication by three important means. First of all, because cultural competence is now a factor in its own right. It is no longer limited to sociocultural aspects of communicative competence, it is now on a par with the other four, conventionally more recognised competences. Second, it is latently present (i.e. embedded) in every other competence of the model. And finally, its central position indicates that cultural competence keeps the other four competences moving.

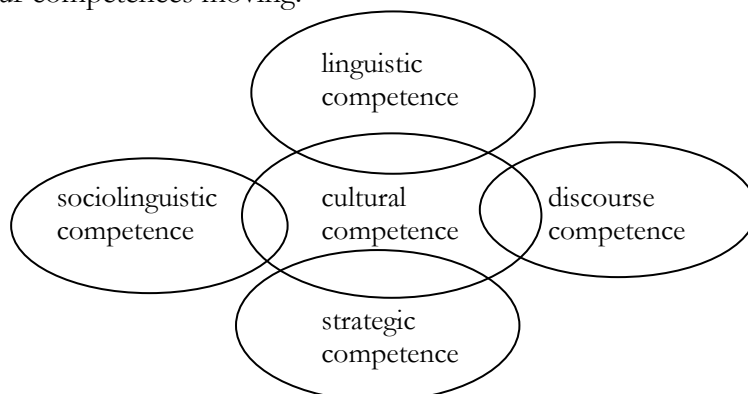


Figure 1. The position of cultural competence in communicative competence (Bárdos, 2004).

Intercultural communicative competence

When people from different cultures communicate with each other, they need special skills and competences to keep up a conversation, and to avoid culture clashes. An intercultural speaker is someone with “an ability to interact with ‘others’, to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, to be conscious of their evaluations of the difference” (Byram, Nichols and Stevens, 2001:5). Intercultural speakers possess a specific competence, which comprises certain attitudes (curiosity, awareness, ability to decentre), knowledge (about specific cultures, social groups and their products, practices, processes of interaction), skills (of interpreting and relating, and that of discovery and interaction) and critical cultural awareness (the ability to evaluate).

Consequences of the changes in the theories

Changes in the theories of what proficient knowledge of a language means and what competences proficient language use requires are reflected in educational policies as well as in language teaching materials. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) defines intercultural skills and know-how as follows.

[...] the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other; cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures.

Course books have been traditionally acknowledged as key resources for language instruction. They “exert a considerable influence” on language education and language pedagogy (Cunningworth, 1995:7). English for specific purposes is no exception in this respect. Consequently, in the era of globalization writers of business English course books are expected to expand the cultural horizons of learners and enhance intercultural communication.

Discussion

The research material of the current study is two editions of the same intermediate level general business English course book, *Market Leader*, (Cotton et al., 2005) and (Cotton et al., 2010). The term “general” is used in the sense that the volumes do not focus on any particular field of business, like finances, or on any specific skill, like reading. The intermediate level was chosen for two reasons; first, because it is in the middle of the learning-teaching continuum, which means that the language learner is no longer struggling with the new foreign language, s/he is capable of communicating in everyday business situations. Second, as in Hungary an intermediate level state language exam is a prerequisite for a college or university degree, the majority of courses in business schools use intermediate level materials.

My research questions are as follows:

- 1) Is there any (noticeable) difference between the two editions in their approach to the teaching of intercultural communicative competence?
- 2) If there is, how do the two approaches differ?

The research method

In order to survey the intercultural content of each edition, first I examine the presence of the concept of intercultural communicative competence and the level of its importance in the books. Then the content of culture (civilisation, behavioural culture, text and discourse organisation) is discussed. Third, the variety of cultures present in the books is examined. This is followed by

exploring whether there are opportunities for learners to make comparisons to their own cultures. And finally, conclusions are drawn concerning the cultural content in the two editions.

Market Leader (2005)

The earlier edition of *Market Leader New Edition* (2005) comprises fourteen topic-based units and two revision units. The fourteen units have a consistent and invariant structure: a lead-in section called *Starting up* is followed by a *Vocabulary* section and two specific skills sections, *Listening* and *Reading*. The *Language review* section revises essential areas of grammar, whereas the *Skills* section focuses on key business functions. Each unit is concluded by a *Case Study*.

One of the fourteen units, Unit 7, entitled *Cultures*, explicitly addresses issues of culture. This shows that the authors find culture as important and relevant in business contexts as any other topic of the book (e.g. Brands in Unit 1, Money in Unit 5, or Trade in Unit 9). The authors' specific note to teachers is worth quoting here. „Throughout the unit, be very tactful about how you treat cultural issues. It is probably wise not to praise or criticise any particular country's way of doing things” (Mascull, 2005:58). Each section of Unit 7 discusses cultural issues in business contexts.

In the *Starting up* section learners are invited to think about what culture means in general, and what relevance certain cultural issues (like punctuality, shaking hands or accepting interruptions) have in business in their own country.

In the *Listening* section, in the context of international business training, an expert at the International Briefing Centre (UK) talks about three issues: course content with focus on cultural input, typical cultural misunderstandings and preferred personality traits for doing business internationally, which echo Byram et al.'s (2001) definition of the intercultural speaker. “Flexibility and adaptability [...] the ability to observe [...] adapt your own set of skills and knowledge and your own way of doing things [...] to listen more carefully” (Cotton et al., 2005:162). Even in the *Vocabulary* section, which teaches idioms in business context, there are two practice sentences with cultural relevance (Cotton et al., 2005:56, task A, sentences 3 and 8).

The *Reading* section is a valuable source for intercultural comparison as four very different countries (Italy, United Arab Emirates, South Korea and Brazil) are compared and contrasted from three aspects of culture: conversation topics, gift-giving and entertaining. The section ends with a task which directs learners' attention to their own culture (Cotton et al., 2005:57, task D).

In the *Language Review* section modal auxiliaries are practised in the context of giving cultural advice. A text on US business protocol (Cotton et al., 2005:58) provides input on six aspects of American business culture (timing, greetings and polite conversation, business cards, smoking, gift-giving, entertainment at home) and invites learners to make comparisons with their own cultures.

In the *Skills* section learners develop their general social English skills in the context of meeting business partners for the first time. Cultural issues like how to start a conversation, what (not) to talk about, levels of (in)formality, how to accept or refuse an invitation are discussed. The final section of the unit, the *Case study*, is based on the context of a business visit promoting business relations between a Chinese manufacturing firm and a local subsidiary of a US company located in the learners' own countries. Learners are given input on Chinese culture including the following aspects: building relationships, importance of status, familiarity with the local language, conversation topics, gift-giving, punctuality and sincerity. Apart from Unit 7 entitled *Cultures* there is only one more reference in the whole course book to the importance of cultural awareness and the ability to work with people from different cultural backgrounds (Unit 8, p. 74).

Summary of the cultural content of Market Leader (2005)

- 1) Only one unit is devoted to the topic of culture, which means 7.1% of the whole course book material.
- 2) Besides this unit, only one section of another unit (p. 74) has some explicit cultural relevance.
- 3) There is a considerable range of cultural issues discussed in the book, see Table 1. Some of the issues recur several times (e.g. topics for conversation or gift-giving), whereas others are mentioned only once. Using the categorisation of Holló (2008), the first three items in Table 1 are part of civilisation, the last two belong to text and discourse organisation, and the majority of the cultural content presented belongs to behavioural culture.

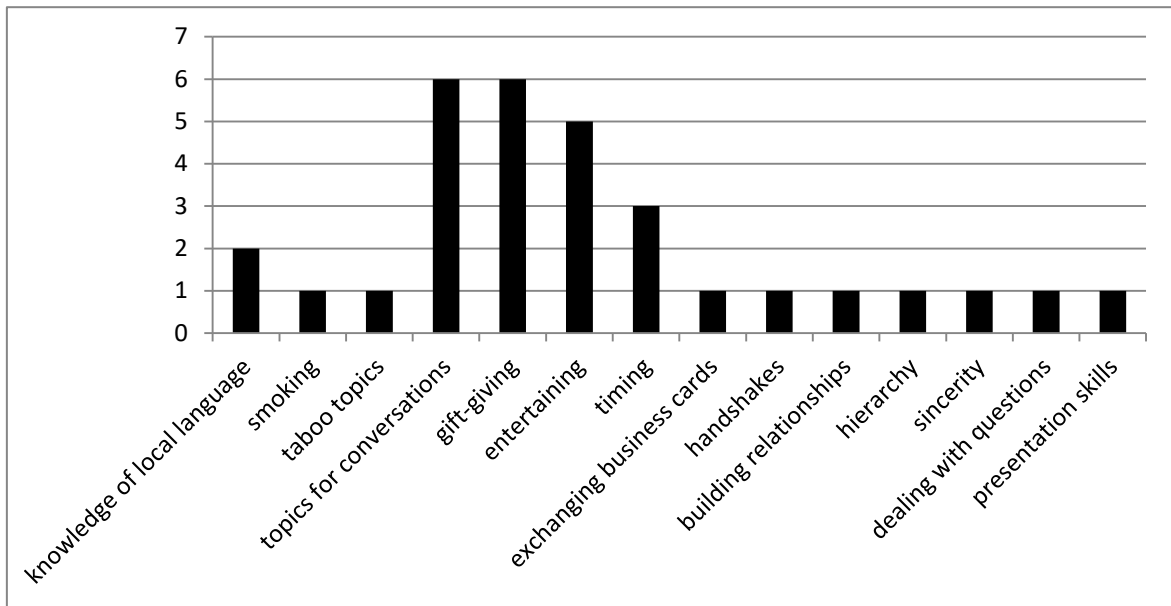


Table 1: Aspects of culture discussed in *Market Leader* (2005).

- 4) There is a significant dominance of Asian cultures explicitly discussed in the course book, see Table 2.
- 5) Comparison to learners’ source culture, requested four times, is important to develop learners’ skills to relate to their own culture. If the course book is used in a multicultural classroom, this comparison has a multiplier effect: it multiplies the information learners gain in a class.

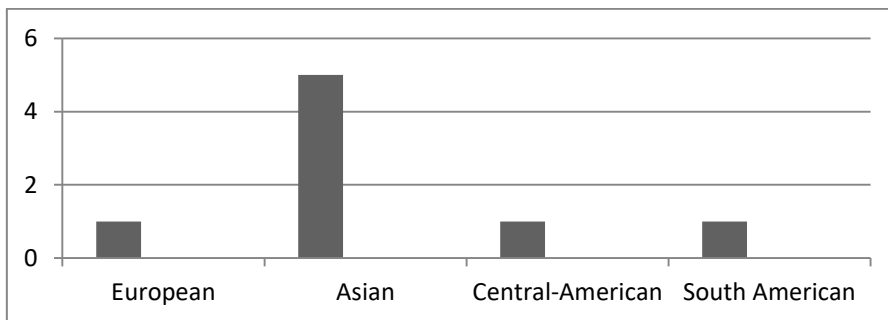


Table 2: Cultures explicitly discussed in *Market Leader* (2005).

Market Leader (2010)

Only five years after the publication of *Market Leader* (2005), *Market Leader* (2010) features completely updated content (p. 4) in twelve units, one of which, just like in the previous edition, is entitled *Cultures* (Unit 7). More importantly from the point of view of teaching intercultural communication, a new module, a series of four units entitled *Working Across Cultures* (WAC), is spread out evenly after every three content units, which implies that the authors aimed to put considerably more emphasis on the teaching of culture and on that of ICC.

Here students are introduced to key intercultural concepts, developing their awareness and skills in order to function effectively in international business situations (Mascull, 2010:3).

Cultural content of the new module

These four units focus on various aspects of international business culture and try to call learners' attention to the potential dangers and pitfalls of doing business with people from different cultures.

The culture we come from or live in influences what we see, do, believe and say. It affects our expectations and behaviour and we need to be very aware of it. ... what's normal or appropriate for us may seem very strange or even rude to someone from a different culture (Cotton et al., 2010: 158).

The four business contexts in which intercultural issues are discussed are as follows: meeting business people for the first time at a conference, an expert's talk on some areas of culture affecting communication at international meetings, the experiences of three business people from western cultures doing business internationally and a talk at a workshop on communication styles and cultural awareness.

WAC Unit 1, *Socialising*, is apparently a modified version of the Skills section of Unit 7 of *Market Leader* 2005. Focus is put on small talk and social English when one meets business people for the first time. What is new in the unit is a discussion of various strategies to deal with foreign accents. Although the basic idea of WAC Unit 2, *International meetings*, is drawn from the Skills section of Unit 8 of *Market Leader* 2005, it is supplemented and put into an intercultural context. Here learners are asked to discuss and comment on five different business meeting cultures. However, when they are asked if they can recognise any of the styles from their own experience, teachers are instructed to be tactful when dealing with learners' findings. This is very important: the authors try to avoid the danger of sweeping generalisations and sheer stereotyping. In WAC Unit 3, *Doing business internationally*, three business people from Western cultures give an account of their experiences, astonishments, embarrassments and the mistakes that they have made due to the lack of knowledge of the local culture in Saudi Arabia, Japan and Brazil. In WAC Unit 4 focus is put on communication styles, both verbal non-verbal, with new aspects like the meaning of silence, eye contact or proximity discussed in various cultures. To sum up, the units of the new module (WAC) of the 2010 edition aim to provide information about various aspects of a wide variety of cultures so that learners can improve their knowledge and skills as well as raise their cultural awareness.

Cultural content of Unit 7

Besides the four WAC units there is one more unit (Unit 7, entitled *Cultures*) with cultural content. As the previous edition had a similar unit, I only discuss how the later edition differs from the previous one. The first section, *Starting up*, has not changed much, though new elements of the notion of culture appear, such as behaviour and attitudes or bowing. The *Listening* section of the later edition has a narrower focus than the earlier edition inasmuch as it concentrates on only two

cultural issues: culture shock and personality traits of an intercultural actor. Time as a frequent reason for intercultural misunderstanding is retained from the previous edition, but different aspects of the concept are touched upon here: Arabian timing and priority of relationship building in Chinese culture. When it comes to personal characteristics, being a good listener, being non-judgemental and accepting are emphasised, all of which are traits of an intercultural speaker. A new feature of the *Vocabulary* section is that the issue of cultural differences is explicitly present in the practice sentences: “We don’t see eye to eye with our US parent company about punctuality. It’s a question of culture” (Cotton et al., 2010:68).

The *Reading* section is completely new. The topic is culture shock, and the text is about how a South African bank with overseas offices works to ease and overcome cultural misunderstandings among its multicultural staff. The *Language review* section has also been revised. Instead of the business protocol of an English-speaking country, that of China is in focus. Some practice sentences also have specific cultural content. For example: “You mustn’t give purple flowers as a gift in many countries” (Cotton et al., 2010:70) The *Skills* section of the unit has not been altered at all. It focuses on general social English skills without reference to any particular culture. Unlike in the previous edition, in which certain aspects of only one culture (China) were discussed in the *Case study* section, the later edition offers a wider variety of cultures (Germany, France and Russia) from the point of view of forms of greetings, topics of conversations, gift-giving and formality. In addition, comparison to local culture is also requested. Changes made to Unit 7 in the later edition show definite improvements inasmuch as new topics (like culture shock), new aspects of culture (like priority of relationship building) and communication (like bowing) are present in the unit. Apart from Unit 7 (*Cultures*) and the four new WAC units, there are only two more references in the course book to cultural differences and the awareness of them: in the case studies of Unit 3 (Cotton et al., 2010:154) and Unit 8 (Cotton et al., 2010:80).

Summary of the cultural content of Market Leader (2010)

- 1) There is a whole new module, *Working Across Cultures*, in the book which comprises four units exclusively devoted to cultural awareness raising. In addition, one of the twelve topic-based units, entitled *Cultures*, also deals with various cultural issues. This means that 31% of the course book deals with intercultural issues.
- 2) Besides this, two case studies in the topic-based units mention the problem of cultural differences.
- 3) The book presents a wide scope of cultural issues. According to the categorisation of Holló (2008), most of the twenty-four aspects of culture are part of behavioural culture and communication styles. Only one aspect (taboo topics) belongs to civilisation issues, and another one (presentation skills) is part of text and discourse organisation. It is not only the number of cultural issues which has almost doubled, but their occurrences have increased from 31 to 65. Some of the issues have received much more focus in the later edition (like timing), some have been dropped (like knowledge of local language). Four of the new issues receive special emphasis (interruptions, business meeting styles, forms of address and proximity) and recur several times.

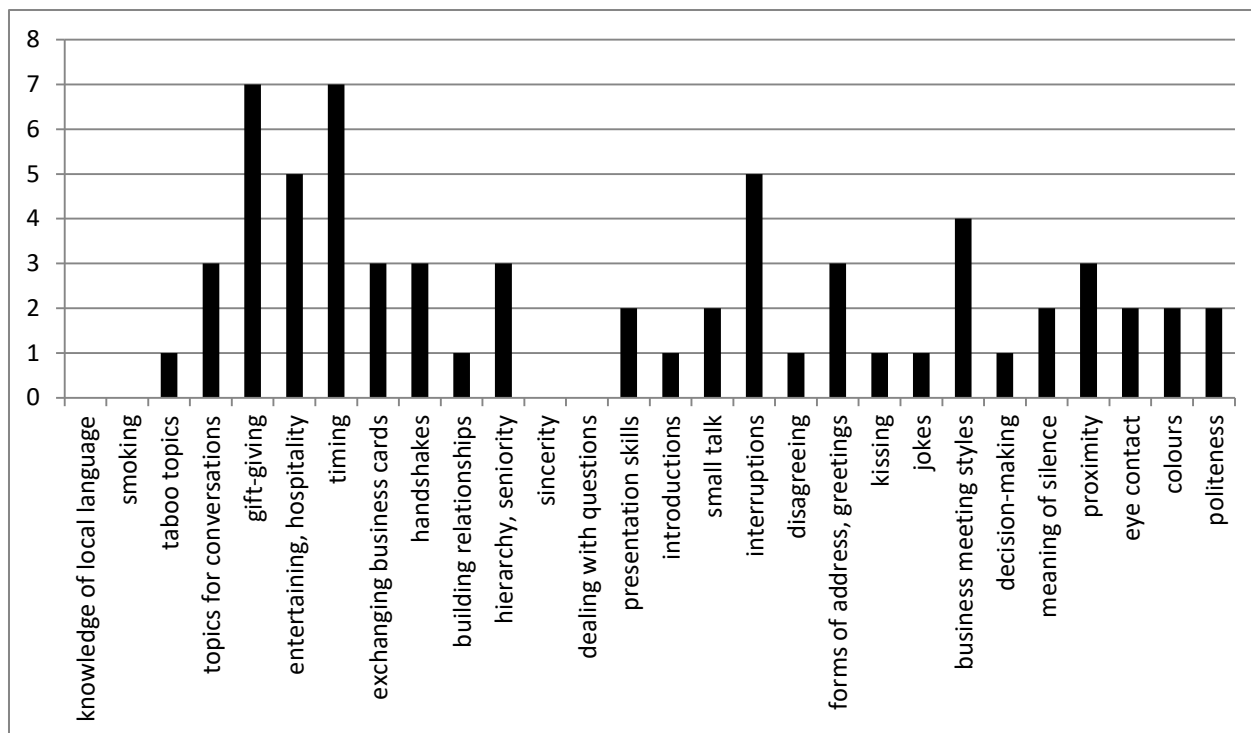


Table 3: Aspects of culture discussed in *Market Leader* (2010).

- 4) There is a wide variety of cultures explicitly present in the book, see Table 4. Whereas *Market Leader* (2005) discusses only eight cultures (five Asian, one European and two American), *Market Leader* (2010) presents a much wider spectrum of cultures.
- 5) Comparison to the student's own culture is requested six times.

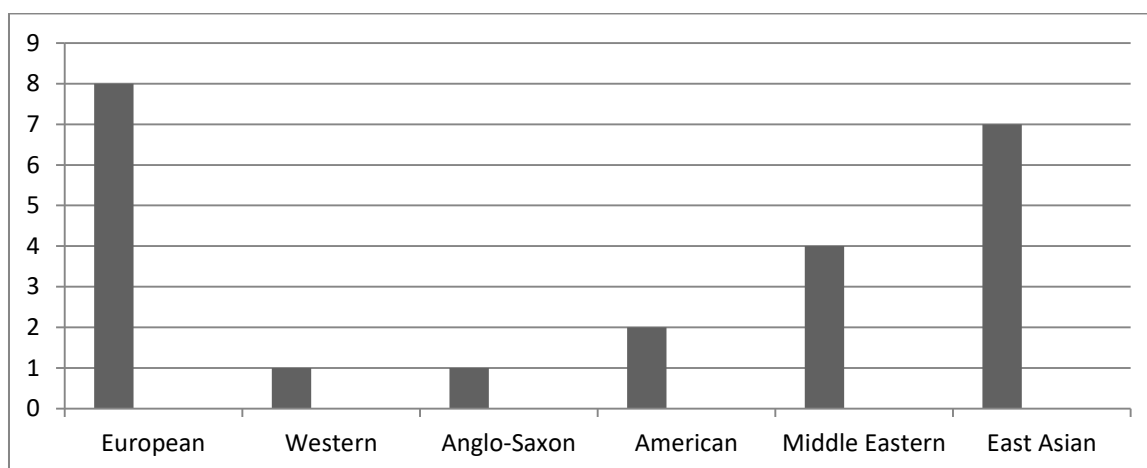


Table 4: Cultures explicitly discussed in *Market Leader* (2010)

Conclusion

There is a considerable difference in the approaches of the authors to the teaching of culture and intercultural communicative competence in the two editions. By adding a whole new module of four units to the course book, more than four times more material is primarily devoted to the teaching of cultural issues as compared to the earlier edition. Fourteen new aspects of culture appear, like proximity, eye contact or the meaning of silence. Some of these new aspects recur three to five times. Cultures are drawn from a wider geographical spectrum in the later edition, with the dominance of European and East Asian cultures. More emphasis is given to attitudes and skills,

such as observing otherness, being non-judgemental or balancing between typical features and stereotypes. Reflexivity to source culture is more frequently required. In addition, the integration of skills and culture teaching is more prevalent in the later edition. We can conclude that Market Leader (2010) is a much better choice from the point of view of teaching intercultural communicative competence. The authors have consciously opted for including more material on culture in the course book, hence the major structural change. In addition, there are more tasks for learners to develop the necessary skills to become culturally competent speakers in a business environment.

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Prospective English teachers' acceptance of pronunciation variation in English in international contexts: Distinguishing between models and norms in a teacher training setting in Hungary

DAVID VELJANOVSKI

Eötvös Loránd University

Diversity in the pronunciation of English in multi- and inter-cultural environments where English is used as a lingua franca (ELF) or as an international Language (EIL) on a global scale is a widely experienced phenomenon. Despite a host of frequently cited estimates suggesting that non-native users of English worldwide by far outnumber native speakers, and that about 80% of English teachers around the world are non-natives (Canagarajah, 1999), the audio-materials offered with the majority of internationally used course books continue to be dominated by voices from well-established national varieties. As Jenkins (1998) recommends, irrespective of learning goals, teachers of English are expected to approximate to a particular native model. Certainly, in institutionalised teacher education, becoming acquainted with the phonological properties of a high-prestige standard native variety is taken for granted. However, when it comes to future ELT professionals' familiarity with the pronunciation of other, socially less prominent but numerically and culturally powerful varieties (major regional accents in the UK and the USA, postcolonial 'descendants', or ELF and EIL varieties and usages), students of English are faced with a daunting task. In an effort to bridge this gap, the author of the present article designed a listening skills development course for 2nd year students of English at Eötvös Loránd University, affording a survey-like overview of the major native and non-native varieties around the globe. Based on the retrospective reflections of the course tutor, as well as the observations and self-reflective comments of the participating students, elicited by means of semi-structured interviews, it is argued that this interactive co-constructed syllabus with a focus on raising awareness of geographical and social variation contributed to a fuller appreciation of the distinction between linguistic model and norm, as well as the tolerance of accent diversity in ELT.

Keywords: ELF, EIL, language variation, varieties of English, pronunciation models and norms

Setting the scene: English and ELT around the globe

As Crystal (2003) notes, obtaining realistic figures for speakers of English as a global language could be rather problematic (59-67). Despite some impressive looking data on the number of L1 (339,370,920) and L2 speakers of English (603,163,010) published by the widely recognised online source of facts on languages and their speakers, Ethnologue, largely drawing on national census statistics, the number of both L1 and L2 users seems to present equally troubling dilemmas. With regard to the former, issues such as whether to include statistics for speakers of pidgins and creoles derived from English, or how to treat the populations of countries where English has an official status appear to be particularly difficult to resolve. The latter, in turn, raises question marks around the concept of language proficiency, as well as the reliability of data on the number of language users from countries where English has no special status. Although these circumstances naturally necessitate a healthy degree of caution in making any definitive assertions about the worldwide spread of English in numerical terms, three essential observations in this regard could safely be made.

The first one concerns the overall presence of the language throughout the world both geographically as well as with reference to the total number of users irrespective of the sociolinguistic background of language use and level of command. According to moderate estimates, the grand total of individuals exposed to English around the world was 2,236 million in

2002 (Crystal, 2003:67) (contrasted with 1,200-1,500 million users with a reasonable degree of communicative competence in 1997 (cf. Crystal, 1997), figures that are likely to have further increased in the intervening period as a result of the burgeoning of online communication, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries.

Secondly, these numbers seem to considerably eclipse the traditional estimates for users of English around the globe, with a tripartite division into three concentric circles with roughly 380 million native speakers in the Inner Circle representing major Anglo-Saxon nation states, 150-380 million in the Outer Circle associated with post-colonial territories and a disproportionately wide margin comprising 100-1,000 million users in the Expanding Circle, conventionally referred to as EFL users (cf. Kachru, 1985). Apart from highlighting the absolute supremacy of English as a world language and its unprecedented geographical dissemination, as well as the strikingly large proportion of non-native language users against speakers who have learnt English as their L1, this conceptualisation of the world's English speaking population fails to take account of the unique role English has acquired in international communication and the distribution of interaction between language users across the three circles. As Mollin (2006) points out, the application of the Kachruvian labels to indicate speakers' attitude to other varieties and norms of usage, such as norm-providing, norm-developing and norm-dependent, corresponding to the three circles starting from the inner one, is slightly obsolete especially vis-à-vis the Expanding Circle, where communicative competence is increasingly attained primarily with a view to communicating with other Expanding Circle members rather than conversing with speakers in the Outer or Inner Circle (41-42). This raises questions about the traditional view on the ownership of English (cf. Widdowson, 1994; Brumfit, 2001), proposing conspicuous overlaps between speakers of the Expanding Circle and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) users (Jenkins, 2003).

In the realm of ELF/EIL-related statistics, a third remark is also due to be made, in conjunction with the involvement of non-native or Expanding Circle speakers in ELT. Despite the fact that Canagarajah (1999) is dismissive of the native vs. non-native opposition in global English contexts, in his denunciation of the 'Native Speaker Fallacy', he argues that about 80% of the world's English teachers are non-native speakers of English. This preponderance of non-native practitioners in the ELT profession again underscores the need to reconsider previous notions of linguistic model originally solely associated with the native speaker. In the terminologically often bewildering, abbreviation-laden context of WEs (World Englishes), EIL, ELF and WSE (World Standard English), this apparently irresolvable controversy is somewhat alleviated by the introduction of a highly useful distinction between norm and model. According to a definition proposed by Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994), a linguistic norm is characterised by the endeavour to sound correct, a particularly high degree of invariability when it comes to choosing between alternative constructions, the willingness to imitate target patterns without considerations of language use and a desire to fully attain the norm (27). In contrast with this norm-oriented approach in ELT, Jenkins (1998) identifies the target variety/varieties as a model instead (124). In outlining the major ingredients of a model, she advocates the presentation of a native variety as a point of reference and encourages the comfortable production of a set of core phonological features (consisting of core sounds, nuclear stress, nuclear placement/articulatory setting), an expanded version of which she later decides to call the Lingua Franca Core (LFC) (cf. Jenkins, 2009: 12). Except for the segmental and supra-segmental characteristics listed in LFC, Jenkins promotes the use of L1 forms and puts a premium on accommodation skills. (For other discussions supporting this orientation, see: Cook (1999), Kirkpatrick (2006; 2007) and Li (2009). The former two stress that native speaker-based models are mostly unattainable for non-natives, whereas the latter points to the pluricentric nature of English as a world language.)

Awareness of the phonological characteristics of WEs, EIL and ELF in teacher training: the rationale for the current project

As for the implications of the multifaceted context of WEs, EIL and ELF for teacher education, two general tendencies may be recognised. On the one hand, as Jenkins (1998) observes, prospective non-native teachers of English are still expected to approximate to a standard native model as points of reference and models for guidance in the classroom (124). Advances in WEs and ELF research, on the other hand, have created a slightly disturbing disconnect between academia, heavily dominated by meta-talk championing the notion of pluricentricism and reinforcing the relevance of scholarly inquiries into varieties outside the major recognised national dialects, on the one hand, and ‘grassroots practice’ limiting exposure to less established varieties in the classroom (Seidlhofer, 2005:170) and almost totally denying them any part in testing, on the other (Canagarajah, 2005). At the same time, Jenkins (2006) also identifies a rift within academic settings as well, where teacher training programmes appear to be trailing behind flagship institutions running undergraduate and graduate programmes in English, in terms of their coverage of WEs- and ELF-related studies in the curriculum.

It was the realisation of these two circumstances also common to ELT teacher training programmes at Hungarian universities that prompted the author to design and implement a listening skills development course with a special focus on spoken varieties of English around the world. The one-semester course was followed up by a small-scale investigation aimed at exploring the participating students’ attitude to accents of English in a global context, their perceptions of linguistic norm and model, as well as of linguistic imperialism (cf. Phillipson, 1992) and some aspects of the overall impact of the course on the participants’ professional growth.

The course: Listening to World English Voices

The course was attended altogether by 19 second-year BA students of English and students from the five/six-year English teacher training programme at the School of English and American Studies of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. As for any other skills development course offered by this institution, the total number of contact hours was 28 in a 90 minute-per-week weekly breakdown. The main objectives for the course were defined along the following lines:

- Improve listening skills through exposure to different varieties of English
- Highlight the phonological, lexical and structural properties of the varieties covered
- Encourage the students to search for audio-samples of varieties of English and identify the highlighted features jointly in class through interactive peer-conducted activities
- Foster accent tolerance and develop accommodation skills
- Broaden the students’ knowledge of English as a world language

In line with the academic orientation delineated in section 1, as part of the course, a conscious attempt was made at ensuring that the students would be familiarised with a relatively wide range of varieties, encompassing not only geographically distant accents but also Englishes that show diverse historical trajectories and are set against disparate social backgrounds. Accordingly, in addition to some lesser-known accents within major national varieties (e.g. the Englishes of Scotland and Northern England in British English, as well as African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and Southern American English in American English). Furthermore, the selection of dialects to be exploited in class primarily for their phonological and lexical peculiarities also included Australian English, African Englishes (including West African pidgins and East African post-colonial varieties, along with South African English), South-East Asian Englishes (with special attention to Indian English), the English(es) spoken in Hong Kong and China, English in various

ELF contexts and Euro-English (as an example of the latter). To provide the participants with appropriate background reading conducive to their effort to synthesise the observations made through self-discovery as well as with the help of the explicit presentations and explanations delivered by student presenters and the course tutor as constant components of the in-class audio-sample analyses, the book 'World Englishes: implications for international communication and English language teaching' by Kirkpatrick (2007) was recommended for regular consultation.

The research questions and the instrument of data collection for the small-scale investigation

The inquiry, intended to generate data about the participants' attitude to accents, understandings of norm vs. model, views on linguistic imperialism, as well as the overall perceived usefulness of the course, sought to answer five research questions:

1. What is the attitude of the participating students like to different accents of English including their own?
2. Which accents do the participants view as a norm/model for ELT?
3. Do they make a distinction between norm and model in pronunciation teaching for ELT purposes?
4. What are the students' views on linguistic imperialism?
5. Did attending the course have an impact on their perceptions of the targets in research questions 1-4?

In order to elicit information in response to the research questions above, fourteen students who had attended the course were invited to share their opinions at the end of the term in mini-interview sessions. The semi-structured interview format was partially adopted from Jenkins (2005). (For the ten guiding questions for the interviews, see the *Appendix*.) The mini-interviews lasting 6 minutes on average were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed for data analysis. The resultant qualitative data was analysed by means of the Constant Comparative Method (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) to identify common and especially salient themes.

Results and discussion

Since, as has been mentioned earlier, the present undertaking was defined by four major empirical foci, in what follows, the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews and the related discussions will be presented in a fashion reflective of the correspondence between the findings concerned and the research focus to which they pertain.

Attitude to accents

From the data provided by the interviewees in conjunction with guiding question 1-5 from the semi-structured interview protocol employed for the purposes of the investigation, two prominent themes emerged: the respondents' self-reported identification of their accents, as well as the subjective sentiments they attached to these. Interestingly enough, nearly all of the participants labelled their accents as either British or American, many of them even admitting to unconsciously mixing the two as a matter of course. The majority also conceded they were aware of their extensive reliance on Hungarian phonological arrangements, such as the absence of vowel reduction in unstressed syllables, all-across-the-board rhoticism without the yod-dropping so typical of a number of rhotic dialects.

With regard to their feelings concerning their accents, most of the interviewees expressed largely positive sentiments but, at the same time, evinced their wish to develop a more consistent British or American accent. The reasons the respondents cited to account for their position included

arguments such as *I would like to sound more professional/elegant/smoothier/appealing*, and three of them also used the term *'achievement'* to describe the prospect of attaining a 'purer' British or American accent. This kind of positive attitude virtually echoes the quasi-superlative adjectives listed by Jenkins's (2005) subjects in this relation: *'good', 'perfect', 'correct', 'proficient', 'competent', 'fluent', 'real', 'original'* (541).

Perceptions of norm and model

Question 6-8 in the interview protocol probed into the interviewees' understanding of the differences between linguistic norm and model, as well as how this distinction could be applied in the context of exposing learners to different varieties of English, including explicit instruction in the phonological characteristics of a particular variety. The question 'Do you think that learners of English should be taught the pronunciation of a particular variety / particular varieties?' was answered by half of the respondents in the affirmative, specifying their preferences by mentioning British English (RP), General American (GA) and 'Standard English' (presumably a geographically neutral standardised variety alluded to by three interviewees). Those who objected to the idea of presenting the target variety as a norm adduced a wide array of reasons ranging from practical considerations to declarations of egalitarian thinking. Some argued that choosing any dialect could by necessity only be arbitrary, and making a choice in favour of a specific variety might be difficult to vindicate in political and pragmatic terms alike. They also underlined the significance of granting learners the freedom of choice in selecting a variety that is appealing to them. An intermediate position on this political-pragmatic scale was adopted by two respondents suggesting that a 'neutral variety' is also more likely to be easily understood in various communicative situations in international settings. Towards the pragmatic end of the spectrum, a few interviewees reasoned that in-depth scrutiny of the phonological features of any given variety ought to be an academic concern and not an issue language learners outside university programmes in linguistics should be burdened with. Four of those who rejected the norm-centred approach, nevertheless, made a point about the importance of consistency in pronunciation irrespective of one's preferences for any particular varieties.

Guiding question 7 was meant to tap into the respondents' openness to introducing dialects other than their primarily preferred ones in the language classroom. Although the phrase 'model' was deliberately avoided in the wording of this item (see *Appendix*), the concept was nonetheless apparently clear for the interviewees as their narratives revealed considerably different attitudes in comparison with their responses to the previous question focusing on their assessment of a target variety as a norm. All the fourteen participants were unanimous in their approval of exposing learners to a range of varieties during language lessons. They justified their stance in unequivocal terms enumerating the assets that may be gained from the enrichment of ELT syllabuses through drawing on model-like samples from various varieties. The benefits listed by the respondents included aspects such as the value of general awareness raising about the ubiquity of English across geographical areas, cultures, ethnicities and social strata, the broadening of learners' factual knowledge about the English speaking world, the improvement of comprehension skills and greater success in communication in general, as well as the potential for making lessons more varied and colourful in a content-related sense.

Question 8 confronted the interviewees with a series of 'less established' varieties of English designated by relatively broad labels: regional accents in English speaking countries, accents from post-colonial countries, accents of English as a Lingua Franca, accents of English as an International Language. After discussing their attitudes in relation to exposing their learners to any of the varieties fitting the respective descriptions, the participants were also requested to indicate whether they would ever consider explicitly teaching the accents in question once they became

teachers themselves. As for regional accents in English speaking countries, the majority of the respondents commented that they did not regard these as particularly relevant in a Hungarian ELT context. Accents from post-colonial countries were relegated to the level of limited exposure. The category 'ELF accents' turned out to be interpreted in rather divergent ways by the respondents precluding any meaningful generalisations in this respect. The category 'EIL accents', on the contrary, was handled by the interviewees not only conclusively but also in a way that was indicative of a markedly positive attitude with most participants. 16 respondents sounded definitely appreciative of making EIL accents part of an English class, prizing the notion of neutrality, its pivotal role in communication with other non-native speakers of English, as well as the space it affords for the formulation of local and national identities and affiliations. When the participants were asked whether they would promote any varieties represented by the four categories in question 8 as a goal of instruction, the overwhelming majority expressed reluctance or, in some cases, outright refusal, their comments including a few recurrent elements, such as '*shortage of time*', '*only for fun*', '*only when grammar and vocabulary are consolidated*' or '*I can't teach these authentically*'.

Perceptions of linguistic imperialism

Question 9 in the interview protocol was intended to elicit data about the respondents' views on the theme of linguistic imperialism in a relatively unobtrusive and easily accessible manner, personalising the concept and situating it in the context of the rest of the interview. When the participating students were asked how they felt native speaker teachers would react to their responses they had provided up to that point in the discussion, they would frequently produce succinct but all the more revelatory remarks about native speakers' sense of ownership of the language ('*Native speakers are conservative about their language*'), their regional identities ('*Most native speakers are proud of where they come from*'), differences in emphasis in teaching English ('*Native speakers would emphasise the need to learn different regional accents, but, I, as a non-native language teacher, should primarily be concerned with grammar and correct usage*'), limitations imposed by their linguistic background ('*Native speaker can't teach a variety other than their own*'), as well as their unwillingness to acknowledge and accommodate to the global presence of English ('*Native speakers can't accept the worldwide spread of English*'). Besides these intimations, some respondents also recommended a higher degree of accent tolerance and less bias on the part of native speakers: '*If native speakers think there are no good or bad accents, they should be OK.*' '*Native speakers don't imagine non-natives can teach the language with their accent perfectly.*' Regarding the division of labour between native and non-native teachers of English, as well as their shared commitment to the ultimate success of the learning process, one student-participant's comment sounded somewhat reminiscent of some of the highlights made by Medgyes (1992:346-347) and Gill and Rebrova (2001) in their respective treatment of the values of native and non-native teachers: '*Teachers, both natives and non-natives, should provide as much information as possible, and this applies to knowledge on different varieties*'.

The impact of the course

The last prompt in the interview protocol was envisaged to encourage the students to reflect on the usefulness of the course they had attended as well as the changes in their perceptions of and attitudes to the accents covered as part of the syllabus. On the whole, it seems safe to conclude that all respondents sounded positive in their overall evaluation of the course. Comments in this regard were made with reference to a number of benefits like a better grip on different varieties, the acquisition of new lexis crucial to discourse comprehension in regional accents and insights into varieties previously lesser known or completely unknown to the students. Apart from the participants welcoming the sense of novelty represented by this new listening skills development course with a focus on WEs, ELF and EIL, it is also remarkable to notice to what extent many of them felt the relatively comprehensive scope of the course enabled them to appreciate variation in

English and embrace a more holistic and less judgemental approach in their development as language learners and future teachers of English:

I think it [i.e. the way I responded to the previous questions] could be connected to the fact that we did not deal with different English accents in high school. All of my English teachers spoke a kind of neutral-kind of British English kind of accent (which I think also have). It was only at university where I began thinking about accents as most of my teachers have strongly distinguishable British accents, and I started thinking about how I will speak in my lessons, but I haven't decided yet. I did not know most of them [i.e. the accents covered during the term]. But the main idea that I realised during this course was that these are all existing varieties, and it is not incorrect if they use different grammar or pronunciation than what I am used to (or what I was taught as correct), so I think it made me more tolerant about different kinds of English (or even other) accents.

The course made me see how English is spoken on different continents. This approach of English gives me the idea that I should also teach English as a 'universal' language.

As though reflecting the Shakespearean maxim 'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet', some respondents hinted at their respect for varieties of different types, indicating a sense of interest in the history and the conditions of the communities speaking them:

I think that every accent is beautiful in its own way, and the course reinforced this.

Maybe the difference [i.e. the difference in my attitude to the varieties covered during the term] is in knowing that these accents and varieties exist. I don't feel negatively about any varieties of English, so in that sense they are not different from Standard English.

Yes, now I consider those varieties unique and exciting and I think all of them have their own beauty. And the progress in which they have developed [sic!] is even more interesting.

In lieu of a conclusion

The semi-structured interview study conducted in conjunction with the newly designed and newly implemented course 'Listening to World English Voices' reported on in the present paper has yielded a number of valuable insights into the attitudes, perceptions and professional orientations of the fourteen second-year students on the BA programme in English and on the English teacher training programme, respectively, who volunteered to participate in the project. The four main empirical foci (i.e. attitude to accents, perceptions of norm and model, views on linguistic imperialism and the impact of the course on the participants' professional maturation) have permitted observations in areas of teacher training that were previously under-researched in Hungarian ELT and Central European intercultural contexts. From the findings corresponding to the research foci, the following concluding remarks may be made:

- Most of the respondents described their accent as containing elements mainly from RP and/or GA with inconsistencies stemming from L1 interference.
- Their attitude to their accent is mostly positive, combined with a desire to achieve a higher degree of consistency within their chosen variety.
- The idea of becoming acquainted with varieties outside the major established national varieties is welcomed by nearly all respondents as a means of '*broadening horizons about the English speaking world*' but is considered acceptable only via exposure (i.e. model-based learning) as opposed to designating such a dialect as a norm constituting the goal of pronunciation teaching.
- Grammatical accuracy and lexical appropriateness are valued over familiarity with aspects of linguistic diversity.
- A greater degree of accent tolerance and more profound appreciation of the unique function of English in global communication are expected of native speakers affiliated with particular regional varieties.

- The course 'Listening to World English Voices' is assessed as importantly contributing to prospective teachers' professional development by virtue of its novelty and eye-opening nature.

It is well worth remembering that these findings are based on the perceptions of only a handful of students, imposing considerable limitations on any attempts at generalising the results, yet juxtaposing some of these points with the concluding comments from Jenkins's (2005) study of largely comparable phenomena appears to be wholly apposite. The points presented above bear a striking resemblance to the final outcome of Jenkins's investigation. Just as she concluded her discussion on teacher attitudes and identity in ELF settings, the bottom line of the present inquiry embedded in an intercultural context of ELT and teacher education in Hungary may also be captured by reiterating her closing assertions: Non-native teachers'/teacher trainees' attitude to ELF is characterised by ambivalence expressed in contradictory statements, manifest in a strong desire for a native speaker identity with strong attachments to L1 and its cultural context (542). To put it another way, a concise disclosure made by one of the respondents contributing to the present study may be invoked:

I just realise that it is OK to have your own accent, and your English won't be any worse if you don't sound like British people ... However, I would still like to sound so ... [mild laughter].

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**Appendix: Guiding questions for the semi-structured interview
(partially adopted from Jenkins, 2005)**

1. a. What English accent would you say you have?
b. Which features made you decide?
2. Do you like it?
3. Is it OK with you if people recognise that you speak English with your non-native speaker accent?
4. How would you feel if someone thought that your accent was a native speaker accent?
5. If you could choose any accent including your own, what accent of English would you most like to have?
6. Do you think that learners of English should be taught the pronunciation of a particular variety / particular varieties?
7. Do you think that learners of English should hear any other accents in the classroom?
8. a. What do you think about the idea of the goal of pronunciation teaching being a less established variety? Could you comment on the following categories?
 - regional accents in English speaking countries
 - accents from postcolonial countries
 - English as a Lingua Franca accents
 - English as an International Language accents
 b. Would you teach any of these accents once you become a teacher of English?
9. a. Do you think native speaker teachers would like your answer to the previous question?
b. Can you think of some reasons behind native speaker teachers' reaction to your position?
10. a. Do you think that attending the course 'Listening to World English Voices' has anything to do with the way you have responded to the questions so far?
b. Do you feel any differently about any of the varieties covered during the term as a result of the course?

Culture, language and competency: Introducing students to real world employment challenges in the classroom

TROY B. WIWCZAROSKI – TÜNDE CSAPÓNÉ RISKÓ

University of Debrecen

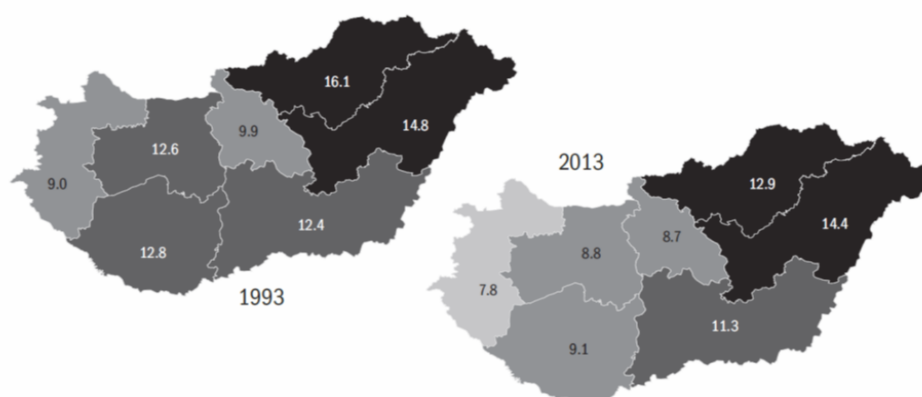
Years of offering workshops to employees of international companies with subsidiaries in Hungary have raised questions of the efficacy of intercultural elements in L2 courses in higher education. Although graduates from economic faculties receive training through several courses, L2 and otherwise, unless they have spent time working or studying abroad, their attitudes and daily interactions with non-Hungarians betray a lack of understanding of the importance of intercultural competencies. Soft skills development in university classrooms, be they L2 courses, professional communication courses or intercultural communication courses, seem to fail to have the desired impacts, once those who have completed such courses have been employed. This article discusses methods of evaluating these lacks and remedying them in L2 classrooms.

Keywords: Competencies, Intercultural, Employability, L2 education, Soft skills

Worrisome trends

In Hungary, the labor market is moving definitively towards one demanding ever higher levels of education (Bakó, 2014). In the present situation, in which almost 60,000 jobs go unfilled, with more than 10,000 of these alone in the IT sector, over 14,000 unfilled in the finance and accounting sector, education needs to become more of a partner to business and its graduates. The growth of the automobile sector is one of the country's showcase industrial sectors; yet, over 2,500 well-paid jobs remain unfillable, due to a lack of qualified applicants. *Világgazdaság* Online reports in July 2016 that the number of unfilled positions has grown by more than 9,000 in comparison to 2015 – a growth of 33%. Indeed, there is a worrisome disconnect between the broadening of degree course offerings and the persistence of high unemployment rates throughout Hungary. While the Northeast and Southwest of the country have shown slight improvement, most of the country has floundered at roughly the same level of high unemployment for two decades. In essence, these unchanging rates could be interpreted as meaning that an entire generation of Hungarians has either been directly or indirectly affected by endemic unemployment. By indirectly, we refer to unemployed family members and friends of those who could find jobs.

Figure 9.2: Regional inequalities: LFS-based unemployment rates in NUTS-2 level regions



Source: KSH MEF.

Online data source in xls format: http://www.bpdata.eu/mpt/2012ena09_02

Table 1. Hungarian unemployment rates, by NUTS region

In light of the percentages above and seen in Table 1, how can it be that - as only one example - the Hungarian IT sector offers fresh graduates salaries up to 30% higher than other sectors, yet IT-related companies cannot find or keep employees more than an average one year, before most new hires quit? Even gloomier are the figures showing that approximately 25% of all new IT studies students in Hungarian higher education drop out before completing their second semesters (Csókás, 2014). One of the answers to these questions may be found in the lack of key competencies which all employees should possess. The article below discusses other responses, as well.

On Competencies

Workplace competencies refer to a set of skills complementary to academic or more technical skills taught formally by colleges and universities. Presently, employers at companies across the globe use a range of hiring techniques adopted and/or developed by their HR departments, in order to identify the presence or lack of such skills in deciding whom to hire. Although there is no agreement on any list of these competencies, the Nielson Group (n. d.) has published a detailed list of its own as a guide to employers and prospective employees in most economic sectors. As their list shows, workplace competencies are not some theoretical concept, but are essential for any worker to function effectively within any business organization. Economic developments and the demand for a highly skilled workforce, as brought to bear by the pressures of the knowledge-based economy, only sharpen the need of HR management to find already workplace-competent employees.

This explanation is consistent with the literature. Reich's (1991) definition of knowledge workers refers to the ability for problem-identifying, problem-solving and strategic brokering capabilities. A main characteristic of knowledge workers, apart from having higher education degrees, is their direct connectedness to and reliance on IT systems and solutions in conducting their daily activities. Less important in many cases is the subject area knowledge they bring to their organizations from formal education; the more imperative skills such employees bring to their workplaces include an ability to conceptualize problems and solutions. Reich argues that organizations should focus on the development of four basic skills: abstraction, system thinking, experimentation and collaboration. In other words, even twenty years ago, before the days of handheld 'smart' devices, tablets and laptops, workplaces were requiring some of the most integral skills used in negotiation, even for those employees who would not be thus utilized. Regardless of their formal fields, these IT-connected employees are also known as knowledge workers.

The ability to use cognitive, communication and management skills further defines the knowledge worker in today's job market (Béjaoui, 2000). Identically, these are some of the skill domains frequently acknowledged as being most crucial for all those working in a knowledge-based economy, as most of these abilities have developed from new work organization practices brought about by technological and IT advances in the past several decades. Economic crisis and innovation in management concepts and work organization have also contributed to the restructuring of the workplace. Changes include job rotation, team-based work organization, greater involvement of lower-level employees and compacted management structures. Some analyses have found that, with new work organization practices being brought to bear, the use of different workplace competencies increases (Green, Ashton and Felstead, 2001).

The appearance of the knowledge-based workplace environment was complemented by more demands for competencies specifically needed to cope with the new changes managements were implementing: the workforce's ability to function in an uncertain and ever-changing environment, the aptitude to successfully handle non-routine and abstract work processes, the ability to make

decisions and accept the corresponding responsibilities, the ability to harmoniously function in group and interactive work situations and to support system-wide interpretations and standards (Compare Bekman, Bound and Machin, 1997). The study also advocated the need for improved interaction and communication skills for all workers, thus promoting strong capabilities for them to work in group situations and to provide more workers with high levels of specialized professional expertise and entrepreneurial skills, especially among middle-level professional and managerial personnel.

Considering the importance of developing employees further, in order to remain competitive in the knowledge society, it is important to take account of the fact that such workers are often expected to do more than simply carry out a set of prescribed tasks. This demand relates not only to the innovation capacity of new employees, but also to the ability of HR and management as a whole to create an environment in which knowledge production and diffusion are optimized and to implement innovation in their own work in HR, as well as in their organizations as a whole. Indeed, new employees who possess a high degree of innovative capacities, creativity, curiosity and a willingness and ability to question the status quo can directly contribute to the development of new knowledge and ideas for the organization to use. Moreover, since not all innovations need to be developed within an organization itself, graduates can contribute to innovation by gaining access to new ideas developed elsewhere. Since even the greatest ideas rarely implement themselves, an ability to take an idea from the drawing board to the work floor requires a high degree of organizational abilities, negotiation skills and assertiveness.

Hungarian Employees and the Need for Soft Skills

Research by Ablonczy-Mihályka (2009) shows the need for the development of intercultural empathy in the Hungarian employee, demonstrating how vital such soft skills are to both personal professional and an employing organization's success. However, in order to develop empathy for others, an individual must first be comfortable with who he/she is. Identity in Central Europe is a political hot potato, with any topic related to that of national culture in Hungary being hyperpoliticized and, therefore, difficult to define without sparking controversy. There are numerous socio-historical reasons and events which shape the debate on national culture. In critical research, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) examined Hungarian national culture, and their findings show that it can be characterized as possessing middle power distance, strong individualism, weak masculinity and high uncertainty avoidance. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2000) posit that Hungary has a strongly affective and diffuse culture, while Hall (1966 and 1990) argues that Hungary has more of a polychronic and high-context culture. Whichever research findings one agrees with, Hungarians share one common trait when it comes to their own culture: they will always be happy to tell you what they think.

Regardless of one's understanding of Hungary and Hungarians, the current economic circumstances place the onus to adapt squarely on the shoulder of our graduates and employees. The unemployment rate simply does not make sense, given the number of unfilled jobs at international companies located here. Additionally, society misunderstands the need for meaningful and constructive communication across cultures, as reflected in the demonization of international companies in politics and some media. Whether in the workplace or with clients, suppliers and business partners globally, Hungarians have to decide to embrace the opportunities international business presents them at home and not just whenever a Hungarian leaves the country to work abroad.

In sum, intercultural communication occurs whenever a message is successfully crafted by a member of one culture for a member of another culture. In other words, the intended message

must be understood by its receiver in the way it was originally intended to be. Intercultural communication research often focuses on the cultural differences which inform these kinds of interactions, examining how great or small the potential for misunderstanding and disagreement may be and how to minimize them. In Hungarian education, intercultural competencies are often attempted to be transferred to students via L2 courses. Those of us active in L2 education understand how greatly the scope and depth of L2 course offerings among institutions is. Invariably, L2 education in secondary and tertiary education in Hungary is focused primarily on the student successfully passing a state accredited L2 examination certificate, in partial fulfilment of degree requirements. As one negative consequence, our students are being exposed to – and therefore interpret – intercultural communication as a study burden, rather than as a tool with which they can successfully build their careers. This situation is a disaster for companies seeking to hire our graduates; understanding the severity of this problem is crucial for understanding attitudes towards otherness, L2 learning and intercultural communication in the average Hungarian student. In response, human resource departments are often the lynchpins to the introduction of related soft skills training programs at organizations. Moreover, it is up to HR managers to ensure that the decision-makers higher up in their organizations' structures understand the rationale behind soft skills training and that they are fully informed about the deep learning that can occur when participants fully engage in the soft skills learning process. Dajnoki (2013: 103) argues that it is “absolutely necessary” in order to have an “effective and successful organization, that the employees possess appropriate competencies.”

Of course, globalization and the opening of national borders to workers from increasingly more nations raise the significance of an organization to have a strong international orientation. This need requires not only employees with a strong command of foreign languages; more importantly, they must also possess an ability to understand and empathize with counterparts from other cultures (compare Mocsáriné Fricz, Hajdú, Juhász and Wiwczaroski, 2010). Organizations must cultivate an in-house culture which facilitates in its employees a willingness and ability to further maintain and develop their English language and intercultural competencies. They can do this by making workers cognitively receptive to accepting the parity of the importance of English language command with the employees' command of their areas of expertise in guaranteeing task fulfilment by contractors or negotiating in considerably stressful situations using English as the language of communication. Indeed, without the honing of the requisite linguistic skills needed for effective and successful English negotiation, business opportunities may be lost or even left unexplored through misunderstanding, failure to understand or downright incompetence.

There are many dimensions on which the characteristics of the worker can be matched with the requirements of a job. There is of course the level and the field of education that the job requires and that the worker has acquired at school or by training. But level and field of education are only two dimensions or rather approximations of the many different cognitive skills that might be required for a job. In addition to cognitive skills, a job also demands non-cognitive and ‘soft’ skills, such as interpersonal skills, persistence and communication skills. These skills cannot always be objectively measured.

In the recent human resources literature, the term ‘competence’ is often used to denote the combination of knowledge, skills and behavior needed to improve the performance of a worker on a job. A perfect match in terms of competence would occur when the worker has the exact right combination of knowledge, skills and behavior to get maximum performance on a job. What is interesting about the term competence is that it stresses that the perfect match arises from a combination of characteristics. A worker has many characteristics. Some of these will weaken and others will strengthen one's performance on-the-job. Sometimes, strong characteristics will

compensate for weak ones, but not always. Also, workers will grow into the job, over time or the specific requirements of the job will over time be adjusted to the competences held by the worker.

Worker competencies are those talents, skills and capabilities that contribute to multi-factor productivity gains and which are key for the sustainable economic growth and development of an organization (Hartog, 2001; Sianesi and Van Reenen, 2003). Heijke, Meng and Ramaekers (2002) distinguish three groups of competencies: those acquired at school and then used in the workplace; those acquired at school, which assist workers to gain new competencies on-the-job; and those acquired mainly in a working context. Kellermann (2007) classifies competencies into five groups: academic, general-academic, scientific-operative, personal-professional, social-reflexive, and physiological-handicraft. Bunk (1994) aggregates these competencies into four different groups: specialized, methodological, participative and socio-individual. Other classifications are added depending on the data available (Allen and Van der Velden, 2001). Thus, there is no general agreement about competency classifications, and economic theory does not provide any clear categorization.

Organizational competencies refer to the ability to work under pressure, to work independently and with attention to detail. Specialized competencies require an ability to carry out activities and tasks responsibly and competently and presume that the specialized individual possesses the required knowledge and skills to successfully do so. Methodological competencies include the ability to react to problems appropriately, using proscribed procedures and being able to find functional solutions to problems, based on experience. Generic competencies may be applied in many different contexts. Such competencies include critical thinking skills, as well as (in)formal communication skills. Participative competencies include those involving planning, accepting tasks in a positive manner, decision-making and even the willingness to assume responsibilities. Team-oriented behavior and interpersonal empathy belong to the sphere of socio-emotional competencies.

A 2013 published Protiviti survey specifically identified key workplace skills requiring immediate improvement, such as “persuasion, negotiation and dealing with confrontation” (Protiviti, 2013: 3). Survey respondents reported that soft skill development “represents a way of improving working relationships and heightening credibility with other parts of the business” (28). Not only is there no difference in the high priority given to the need to improve soft skills in employees, regardless of company size (see table on p. 35 of the survey), but the survey’s results also identified soft skills development as one of the key issues targeted by corporate Chief Audit Executives as vital for enhancing organizational strength and competitiveness in the immediate future. Across the board, whether on the level of office employee, internal auditor, HR manager or executive, improvement of intercultural soft skills, such as negotiation skills, presentation skills or customer care skills, through further training are rated highly as crucial to business success.

Conclusions: What we can do

Years of offering workshops to employees of international companies with subsidiaries in Hungary have raised questions of the efficacy of intercultural elements in L2 courses in higher education (compare Ablonczy-Mihályka, 2009 and Dobrai, Farkas, Karoliny and Poór, 2012). Although graduates from economic faculties receive training through several courses, L2 and otherwise, unless they have spent time working or studying abroad, their attitudes and daily interactions with non-Hungarians betray a lack of understanding of the importance of intercultural competencies. Soft skills development in university classrooms, be they L2 courses, professional communication courses or intercultural communication courses, seem to fail to have the desired impacts, once those who have completed such courses have been employed. This article has heretofore discussed

the needs remaining in the workforce today. Below, we will now outline remedies for them in L2 classrooms.

In respect to the competencies Kellermann (2007) classifies and the need to enhance our L2 education towards improving confidence in (intercultural) communication, in instructing our students on how to communicate convincingly and in a controlled manner, we need to ensure that each student is afforded thorough instruction and practice in how to give presentations in their chosen target language. Within such a syllabus, the student must learn how to understand their target audience by learning how to assess their needs and requirements. The student furthermore needs to understand the importance of actually dialoguing with the audience, rather than reading off slides and simply lecturing. Equally important is that the student learn how to handle questions – especially difficult questions from key persons who are also often from other cultural backgrounds, possessing ‘foreign’ management styles. Learning to ‘deal with’ cultural differences in such situations is crucial for successful intercultural communication at any workplace. In other words, presentation skills training on how to use Prezi or PowerPoint effectively to present one’s research results of a thesis or what one did on one’s holiday to the United Kingdom is not enough: real-life business topics and an understanding of the multicultural and different business cultures confronting our graduates must be built into any such course.

Student training must also explore the misunderstandings surrounding competitive and collaborative business communication, and identifying how they and their employers can benefit by converting competitive business activities into collaborative approaches, in order to develop partnership-type relationships. Students must gain an insight into how alternative approaches can be best employed in various intercultural situations, and discover how to achieve a positive outcome with cooperative, uncooperative and hostile opponents. One tool for achieving such insights is the use of role plays, but their use requires experienced colleagues. Where these are unavailable, higher education should seek partnerships with specialists in the business world to fill this gap. In some cases, universities and colleges already possess faculty members with such experience, but fail to recognize this.

In business, highly competitive work environments mean that companies are grasping the significance of ensuring that every existing and potential customer receives the best possible attention. The customers a company has already won naturally expect some form of appreciation, whether in the form of a courteous ‘Thank you!’ or more formal, follow-through communication. Equally important, prospective customers are constantly busy looking at one’s competitors and/or waiting to see which of its potential business partners possesses the know-how to treat them like a customer should be treated, before making their buying decision. The customer is truly ‘King’ and is looking for the company which cares enough about their business to submit a proposal, stay in touch, pass on necessary information or proactively solve problems before they develop. We need to cultivate customer-focused and customer-friendly culture in our students. Our own personal experience in doing business in Hungary for over two decades has provided us with abundant examples of just how unfriendly and unprofessional all too many Hungarian employees across business sectors are. Our students therefore need us in higher education to develop their customer care skills and acumen through a range of follow-through role play activities that will be effective in helping them in maintaining excellent customer relations. Our lessons should focus on a creative, controlled approach to meeting any customer’s expectations of customer care excellence, including elements of business etiquette, business ethics, internal and external customer care and sales support techniques for growing even a small business. Moreover, educational modules must provide students with practical tools and skills to use in their day-to-day interactions with the difficult people they may have to deal with to do their jobs effectively. Are we providing our students with the L2 vocabulary and phrases necessary to achieve all this?

Equally, our students often fail to recognize the importance of their colleagues in their daily customer care and sales routines, once they land a job. In fact, it is usually their colleagues with whom the most conflict can arise on the job. Therefore, our syllabi must include real-life focused, L2-based exercises to help them identify the most common types of difficult behavior, as well as their underlying sources, situational behaviors in others that interfere with getting work done, recognize behaviors in the self that impede one's own performance and learn strategies for effectively listening to people one normally rejects. Our students need to learn vocabulary, phrases and appropriate strategies in their target languages to use when confronting difficult people – not only to confront them, but to resolve conflict.

If we work to establish dialogue with locally operating businesses – great and small – we can identify the challenges each faces in filling open positions, maintaining employees and closing gaps in key areas in which we are competent to assist, both through adult education programs and especially in helping to train future employees before they graduate. Business is telling us, through statistics provided, through public news channels, government publications, professional/sectoral publications, and university research findings that companies located in Hungary need our help. There are a variety of ways L2 educators can assist. The challenge of doing so is an opportunity worth taking up.

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TÜNDE BAJZÁT is an associate professor at the Language Teaching Centre of Miskolc University, Hungary. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Pécs, Hungary. Her research interest includes language use at the workplace, intercultural communication, developing intercultural competence and foreign language teaching.

MIGUEL BRITO is a coordinator at the Foreign Languages Department of Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril, Portugal. In 2011, he delivered his PhD Thesis in Tourism, entitled: *The Tourist Guide: Facilitator of Cultural Tourism*, at the University of Évora, Portugal. His professional interests cover different areas, from Italian language and literature to intercultural communication, particularly when related to tourist guiding, and urban tourism.

EMMANUELLE CHIOCCA, a French national, is a PhD student in world language and curriculum education at the University of Oklahoma. As a multilingual, she is interested in world language education and how it plays into intercultural competence development. She has experience teaching French, English, history and culture. Her diverse research interests revolve around curriculum ideologies, language learning motivation, Native American language revitalization, international education, and US Military critical languages.

TÜNDE CSAPÓNÉ RISKÓ, PhD, is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Debrecen. She teaches classes in foreign trade, intercultural marketing, CSR in practice, basics of CSR, ethics of commerce, business etiquette and protocol in BA and MA programmes. Her research interests relate to cultural differences, intercultural communication, effects of cultures on marketing. She is editorial board member of the *International Journal of Social Science* at New Delhi Publisher and general board member at the AgriMBA network.

ALEXANDRA CSONGOR has been employed at the Department of Languages for Specific Purposes, Medical School, University of Pécs, Hungary, since 2002. Her professional profile includes the education of English and Hungarian, in support of medical and medical research purposes. Her professional interests also relate to the language use of written genres, the study of net linguistics and new, emerging online genres, such as popular science articles. Currently, she is performing research throughout intercultural language learning and online educational tools predominantly used today in higher education. She earned her PhD in 2014.

GRAŻYNA DUDA is a senior lecturer at the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice, Poland, where she teaches English to engineering and business students. She is an experienced teacher and trainer. Her interests include practical ways to engage students in active learning with the use of multimedia, video and new technologies as well as the role of the teacher in modern language teaching.

JÁNOS FARKAS is a language instructor at the Faculty of Economics, University of Debrecen and a PhD student at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Debrecen. He has been teaching EFL and ESP courses for Hungarian and international students in BA and MA programmes for over 25 years. He holds degrees in English and Russian languages. His research focuses on higher education ESP teaching and intercultural communication. He is an examiner of several accredited language examination centres.

JUDIT HIDASI holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics and has been active in intercultural communication education and research for three decades. With an outstanding publications portfolio she has been member of several professional societies. She has worked as a professor of communications at Kanda University, Japan and as the dean of the College of International Management and Business of BBS, Hungary; since 2012 she has been professor at the Social

Communication and Media Studies Department of BBS and visiting professor at Sapientia University, Cluj, Romania and Josai University, Japan.

DOROTTYA HOLLÓ, PhD, is associate professor at the Department of English Language Pedagogy at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. She is a teacher and teacher trainer in English as a Foreign Language. She teaches classes in intercultural communication, language development, Australian studies and research methods in the BA, MA and PhD programmes. She is co-editor of the journal WoPaLP – Working Papers in Language Pedagogy.

MONIKA HREBACKOVA, PhD, is the Director of Language Studies at MIAS School of Business, Czech Technical University in Prague. She leads courses in English for Specific/Academic Purposes, Business English and ICC, and Czech for foreigners. She supervises foreign language teacher training and development. She has been involved in several national and international projects and currently coordinates ICCAGE - Intercultural Communicative Competence – Advantage for Global Employability.

ANDREA HÜBNER, art historian, literary critic and psychologist has specialized in ICC for several years as a result of research in orientalism, postcolonial theory, social-psychology and cultural anthropology. Her interdisciplinary approaches usually investigate the inter-relations of text and image.

JULIANA PATRICIA LLANES SÁNCHEZ graduated in Modern Languages in Colombia and finished a Master degree in Modern Languages applied to Communication in France. She is currently working as a French teacher at the Sabana University of Bogota and she is also part of the staff of the Master degree in Applied Linguistics and Spanish as a Foreign Language Teaching Programme at the Javeriana University of Bogota. She enrolled in PhD studies in Language Pedagogy at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. During her studies at ELTE, she worked as a Spanish teacher at the Spanish Department and designed the programme of individual consultations for BA and MA students associated with intercultural issues. Her most important research and teaching interest concern cultural growth in foreign language teacher education, collaborative learning, learner-centred approaches and intercultural communicative competence development.

TIMEA NÉMETH, PhD, is an assistant professor at the Department of Languages for Specific Purposes, at the Medical School, University of Pécs, Hungary. She teaches English and Hungarian for medical purposes and intercultural competence for Hungarian and international medical students. Her research interests include intercultural competence, intercultural language learning and the use of online educational tools in foreign language education.

HELENA PARVIAINEN is a senior lecturer at Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), in Hämeenlinna, Finland, where she teaches English to civil and construction engineering students. She is interested in CLIL and its application in higher education, English for Specific Purposes and teaching language skills needed at the work place.

EDIT RÁCZ has been a language instructor since 1997 at the Faculty of Economics, University of Debrecen, Hungary, teaching EFL and ESP courses for Hungarian and international students in BA and MA programmes alike. She holds degrees in English and Hungarian language (1983), Applied Linguistics (1995) and Management (2001). Her research focuses on language pedagogy. She is particularly interested in how the teaching of language involves that of culture, and how course books reflect upon the need for teaching intercultural communicative competence.

DAVID VELJANOVSKI, PhD, has been a teacher and teacher trainer of ELF since 2001. He teaches ELT Methodology, Research Methodology for ELT, English as a World Language and English Speaking Cultures at the Department of English Language Pedagogy of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. He wrote his PhD thesis in Discourse Analysis. His fields of expertise include spoken discourse in the EFL classroom, public oracy for teachers, teaching genres in the EFL classroom and World Englishes.

TROY B. WIWCZAROSKI, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of Debrecen University, where he has been active in teaching LSP courses in English and German since 1995. He specializes in research in and the teaching of soft skills in English, such as public speaking, international negotiations, assertive communication, customer communication and value creation.

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