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INTRODUCTION

The wider context of the second volume

The experiencing of language, which was the eponymous issue of the first volume and which acquires both an individual and social character, laid the foundations for ERL Journal. It has prompted us, meaning academics involved in the informal so-called “ERL circle”, to seek what can be referred to as the **glottodidactic paradigm**, the essence of which is consideration of educational phenomena through the prism of language. Its scope is very wide and implies far-reaching interdisciplinarity and assistance of a large community of researchers including theoreticians of education, applied linguists, psycho-, socio- and neuro-linguists, to mention just a few subgroups. ERL Journal remains open to papers by all of them due to the simple fact that only through their systematic and well-informed cooperation can we get “to the heart” of the educational role of language. By referring to the general goal of those whose interests intersect language and education as “a paradigm”, we convey the view that owing to the salience of language across multiple subjects and disciplines, the world of education can well be studied and advanced by application of terms and methods traditionally associated with language and (especially second) language learning.

We welcome and publish both theoretical and empirical papers. By combining the two directions “**from theory to practice**” and “**from practice to theory**”, we strive to examine how theoretical knowledge concerning the importance of language is applied in practice, and, conversely, in what ways educational practice informs theory. Such double lenses we see as reflective of educational reality, where theory and practice need to matter in a comparable degree and where their mutual reinforcement – addressed in ERL Journal on an international scale – can be observed on the level of teaching methods, cultural influences, teachers’ and students’ beliefs, and personal understanding of the learning or teaching of any given subject. It is only through a joint analysis of theory and practice that we can arrive at answers to questions which are crucial for the understanding of the linguistic edge of education such as *How does the language of schooling support students’ beliefs, activity, affect, and thinking?*; *How is the intercultural competence developed through first/native and second/foreign language education?*; *What implications for research and teaching methods follow from the so-called “linguistic turn”?*; or, by definition, *How personally relevant is the language employed in educational theories and practices?*

All the theoretical considerations and empirical studies published in ERL Journal, the common denominator of which is the authors’ pursuit of the educational position of language, contribute to what we have now come to refer to as the **ERL framework**. Hence, all the “ERL papers” jointly erect a kind of “scaffolding” which – in accordance with the journal’s mission, which is to boost the position of language in education – may lead to the construction of educational systems upon language and how it is acquired/learned, used, processed and continuously developed. This aspiration makes us, the journal’s editorial team, open to new proposals of how to bridge the gap between linguistic and educational studies, and necessitates publication of both qualitative and quantitative studies falling within the two scopes outlined in the previous volume. Once this gap has been successfully bridged, we shall start observing solutions which from today’s perspective appear very attractive – that is such educational systems occurring around the globe in which predominant questions concerning education are language-oriented and can be exemplified by the following: *How do L1 and L2 interplay with each other and all the other subjects?*; *How much can students say on particular issues?*; *What words and expressions do students find useful and which of them do they simply (dis)like?* or *What do teachers believe their students read for?*

This volume, centered around **MULTICULTURALISM IN COMMUNICATION**, follows and complements the previous one in that the eponymous concept, similarly to the category of (personal and social) experience, co-defines today's reality of the functioning of language in education. It is omnipresent throughout learners' and teachers' developmental encounters, so to speak, and yet largely taken for granted and, consequently, not subjected to scientific studies. For this very reason, it appeared to us that our search for the aforementioned glottodidactic paradigm, theoretically-informed as well as practically-directed, needs to proceed from 'boosting the experiencing of language' to 'enhancing multiculturalism in communication'. We presumed that by theoretical consideration and empirical examination of the two volumes' eponymous concepts we can best pave the way for narrower issues partaking in the ERL framework. The volume strives to do it as comprehensively as possible with two spectrums making up its four parts, that is offering texts which, first, address multiculturalism "on paper", on the one hand, and in didactic reality, on the other hand, and, second, pertain to what teachers and students believe in and what they actually experience on the level of multiculturalism. Finally, we also present two reviews of publications which fall within the ERL scopes and additionally enrich our perspective of the multi-dimensionality of language learning and its persistently emotional experience.

M. Daszkiewicz

Part I
Theory and Practice of the Educational Role of Language
PAPERS

Teaching foreign languages by means of CLIL in selected European countries

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present the outcomes of the recently finished project in selected European countries, supported by the European Union, particularly within the project Erasmus+, KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices, Strategic Partnerships for school education. This paper presents the project outlines and interprets the project outcomes carried out in primary and secondary schools in Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, and Italy. It focuses on interpretations of data collected through document analyses and observations concerning the CLIL lessons carried out in the above mentioned European countries. The project has been considered a "Good practice project" by the Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation.

Keywords: CLIL, primary and secondary schools, multiculturalism, diversity, good CLIL practice

Introduction

CLIL has developed into a holistic approach, since it was first coined by David Marsh in 1994, to deep learning of foreign languages in which all learners can succeed. Empirical research carried out, not only in this project, confirms that there is no one model for CLIL. This statement has also been verified in the recently finished project, named "Transnational exchange of good CLIL practice among European Educational Institutions". The project set up the crucial question in its beginning – "What is a good CLIL practice?" We have carried out document analyses and observed diverse forms of CLIL application and we think that CLIL diversity is the good practice we were looking for obviously if CLIL basic principle of duality is followed in CLIL activities or lessons. Finally, it has been proved that due to the diversity of historical, economic, national, and educational contexts there are several good CLIL practices.

Theoretical background

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has become more and more popular in Europe since its emergence in the mid-1990s. It is a 'dual focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language' (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh 2010). Marsh states that CLIL is an umbrella term covering methods used in educational settings to combine the teaching of subjects, such as geography or science, with the learning of a foreign language (Marsh, 2002). One of the best-known CLIL conceptual frameworks is the 4Cs framework (culture, communication, content and cognition) (Coyle et al. 2010) embedded in a relevant context, which can provide a background for the development of all CLIL activities in a given learning environment.

Since CLIL was presented for the first time by Marsh in 1994, the European Union has been actively encouraging its citizens to learn other European languages in order to understand and communicate in more than one language. Moreover, many researchers have published in their papers a rapid growth of CLIL implementation in European primary and later also secondary schools (e.g. Coonan 2005, Dalton-Puffer & Nikula 2006, Coyle et al. 2010). The CLIL boom has resulted in involvement of this new innovative approach into the mainstream education throughout Europe (Coyle 2009).

CLIL has also been applied in Slovak schools, both primary and secondary, for nearly 15 years (Pokrivčáková et al. 2015). Pokrivčáková (2015) summarized results of CLIL research projects conducted at some universities in Slovakia (e.g. Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra and Žilina University), and also at the National Institute of Education in Bratislava and they all proved positive impact of CLIL on the development of learners' communicative competences in a foreign language (Pokrivčáková et al. 2015). Based on above mentioned findings, a new project was submitted with the aim to share Slovak outcomes in selected European countries (Kováčiková & Luprichová 2018).

Methodology

The project was proposed in accordance with the Education and Training in Europe 2020 document (European Commission, 2013) highlighting that “Foreign language skills can enhance the employability of young people”. The submitted project followed recommendations in a mentioned document and set up the following objectives:

1. Setting up essential components of good CLIL practice in the classroom by face-to-face observations.
2. Preparing Modular e-training course for European CLIL teachers.
3. Providing countries with none or less CLIL experience with essential training and learning opportunities so that they can commence implementing this approach in their schools.
4. Training teachers from the project partner countries on CLIL.
5. Setting up an open database of class recordings and other teaching and methodological materials for CLIL teachers.
6. Collecting research data and conducting a comparative analysis of CLIL practice.
7. Providing universities and other public bodies dealing with educational research with the results and main conclusions of the project as a possible basis to start providing either English-medium instruction study programs or study programs for future teachers.

The coordinating institution was Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, and participating countries included Sweden (Alströmergymnasiet upper-secondary school in Alingsås), Latvia (Daugavpils pilsetas Izglītības parvalde – Education Department – offered three different primary and secondary schools in Daugavpils), Lithuania (Vilnius Jonas Basanavicius progimnazija in Vilnius), Italy (Liceo Statale A. Manzoni secondary school in Caserta), and the second university from Slovakia (the Slovak University of Technology in Trnava). The project consisted of partners from various educational levels - universities, educational institution, and representatives of primary and secondary schools. It was the unique partnership of people with experience of implementation of CLIL in a learning process on one hand, as well as institutions with none or less experience with CLIL itself. From another point of view, the strategic partnership involved countries with a vast CLIL experience (Latvia, Slovakia, Italy) and also countries with none or less experience in implementing the CLIL (Sweden, Lithuania). All partners were actively involved in activities which included: observation classes, preparing video recordings of CLIL classes, preparing a Modular e-training course, Open CLIL Database and finally, the university partners prepared the research data collection and comparative analysis of lesson plans and curriculum. The last mentioned activity is a part of this paper. The project coordinator, together with the other university partner from Slovakia and a partner from Italy, developed and implemented the CLIL pilot training for teachers within the partnership.

The project focused on the research of the document analyses (lesson plans, curriculum), particularly in the following areas:

- CLIL as a part of a national curriculum;
- Compulsory or selective teaching and learning through CLIL;
- Economic or other financial advantages concerning CLIL implementation at schools;
- The willingness of stakeholders, teachers, learners and parents to educate or be educated through CLIL;
- Future visions of CLIL in respective countries.

A qualitative design of research was chosen for this study as the aim of the research was to capture a holistic view on CLIL issue. The methods of document analyses and observation were employed.

With the aim to find out the good CLIL practice we have stated the following research questions:

1. What are the historical, economical and national official requirements regarding CLIL in respective countries?
2. What is the practical implication of CLIL processes in educational institutions?

CLIL lessons in all involved countries were observed by the project participants, for instance each lesson was observed by at least three to a maximum of seven people from participated countries. Observations were carried out in the period from February 2016 until February 2017. The observation sheets involved following information:

- CLIL language;
- CLIL activity time;
- The language used for communication;
- Content language;
- Scaffolding techniques used for the content and language;
- Code-switching (L1 versus CLIL language);
- Materials/resources used;
- Assessment.

The observation aimed to find out the practical implication of CLIL as well as finding a good CLIL practice that could be recommended to the institutions dealing with implementation of CLIL (primary and secondary schools in respective countries).

Results and discussion

The document analyses

The first research question was followed by the document analyses with the aim to find out whether the context for CLIL implementation in selected European countries, within the project, is the same or comparable. Documents are considered the standardized artefacts and they are written for a purpose, such as notes, reports, statistics, policy documents, expert opinions, etc. (Flick 2010). Therefore, research was aimed at comparison of similar categories found in the documents of participating institutions.

It shows that out of all participating project partners, only Italian Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca (MIUR 2010) introduced CLIL into the Italian school system as mandatory in *Licei* and *Istituti tecnici* in 2010. MIUR set up the parameters of CLIL courses for teachers who wanted to know more about CLIL and teachers' competences in foreign languages. MIUR (2010) specified the level of the foreign language of CLIL teachers, at least C1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference, and it also set up specifications for students in all lyceums and technical institutes, where CLIL has been implemented. Teachers were allowed to apply the CLIL in the fifth year of all lyceums and technical schools in the following subjects: History, Geography, Philosophy, Math, Physics, Natural Sciences, Art History, Physical Education, and Religion.

Bilingual education in Latvia was developed and introduced to schools very quickly due to the State Program of Latvian Language Acquisition, and presented by the Latvian Language Agency on 1st November 1995. The Agency offers teacher-trainers' courses, the development of future plans in bilingual education, as well as the program of sustainability. As of 2006, the Agency has introduced the professional development program for CLIL teacher-trainers, teachers, and materials for students in cooperation with the British Council using the experience of bilingual education. They were offering in years 2006 – 2017 further education for teachers willing to achieve CLIL methodology, including:

- The professional development program with master classes – 36 hours;
- The professional development program for teachers of history, biology, mathematics, economy, culture – 60 hours;
- CLIL methodology course – 36 hours;
- British Council course on CLIL methodology – 50 hours.

Schools in Latvia provide two approaches to CLIL – traditional and non-traditional. The traditional one involves learning the subject content in a foreign language at the subject lesson. The second one focuses on non-traditional work forms, such as projects, creative workshops, surveys, experimental laboratories, etc. The content is given wider and deeper than it is defined by standards provided by the Latvian Language Agency in cooperation with the British Council. It is organized as an optional lesson, after classes.

The most sceptical partner, at the beginning of running the project, was Sweden. They had doubts that they would ever utilize the CLIL because the proficiency in English is highly valued in the society as well as within the school system in Sweden, as it is mandatory from primary schools throughout to upper secondary schools. Therefore, there was disbelief that it could increase students' foreign language skills as they are exposed to English outside the school a lot. CLIL has been offered to Swedish schools, mainly to upper secondary, since 1977, but only a few of them joined the CLIL consortium. As of 1992, after formulating national objectives and general guidelines in the new school law, many upper secondary schools, and later compulsory schools, have offered CLIL programs for their students. The CLIL boom finished by 1999 in secondary and upper secondary schools but it is still widespread within the schools in Years 10 – 12 with a variety of forms (Dentler 2007) because the main aim is to increase learners' motivation for studying foreign languages and thus promote their good command of communicative competences for future work and study abroad. Although CLIL is not directly endorsed in the Swedish curriculum, it is offered as an option at approximately 27% of all upper secondary schools in Sweden and students can choose if they want to follow regular programs or CLIL ones (Kristiansen & Vikor 2006). Our partner, finally, appreciated their involvement in the project because they found the CLIL an effective method for teaching not only their students with lower communication skills but mainly refugees to make them familiar with the Swedish language.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education in Lithuania initiated bilingual education as a part of the educational reform. A year later, the CLIL methodology was introduced to the education system with the Guidelines project aiming at encouraging a wider implementation of CLIL in the system of general education in Lithuania. Since that time, several projects, co-funded by the European Union, have been carried out in Lithuania, but findings revealed the lack of a systematic approach towards the implementation of CLIL in Lithuania (Targamadžė & Kriaučiūnienė 2016). Therefore, the British Council together with the Ministry of Education and Science organized events aiming at teacher training throughout the country with a focus on the development of teaching content through the medium of English. The main outcomes of all meetings included:

- Development of teaching resources;
- An increase in methodology and content knowledge;
- Development of schools' and teachers' network;
- Gaining more experience in CLIL.

Nowadays, learning content through the CLIL methodology is offered as an optional lesson once a week in some Lithuanian schools mostly in a tandem mode, it means that both content and language teachers are available at lessons. Most of these lessons are provided in a soft version, except Information technology and Science, which are taught in a hard version (more than 50 per cent of a lesson is in a target language).

The CLIL methodology was perceived positively by teachers, pupils, parents, and institutions in all involved countries. Practically, all principles and models of CLIL were adapted to the educational, institutional and personal contexts of the particular countries. The positive sides were visible in the enthusiastic and supportive approach of teachers, innovative model of language- and subject-teacher cooperation. The challenges were seen in the model of the whole CLIL lessons instead of shorter and more effective CLIL activities in some cases. The same applies to the content and language scaffolding techniques where the collective forms of pair and group work are applied through the project work,

discussions and role-plays engaging and activating the pupils aiming towards the learner-centered approach. Regarding the teaching material, the only country with ready-made published CLIL textbooks was Italy. The rest of the project countries searched for the materials on the websites, Internet or authentic textbooks in the target language.

None of the countries assessed the performance of the pupils with grades. Instead, positive oral or written feedback was used to motivate the learners. All in all, we can say that CLIL was adjusted to teachers' possibilities, educational background, and learners' language proficiency.

Observations

Observation in Italy was carried out at the upper secondary school *Liceo Statale Alessandro Manzoni* Caserta in May 2016. Generally, this school offers to its students CLIL lessons in French or English in the following non-linguistic subjects – History, Physics, Drama, Literature, Civics, Arts and Economics, and all CLIL teachers are fully competent to teach their subjects in foreign languages because they are both content and language teachers and they are experienced in providing CLIL lessons for a long time.

One lesson, History, was provided in French and other subjects were instructed in English and Italian languages. They applied the model of the hard version of CLIL. Scaffolding techniques for content and language were visuals such as pictures, maps, miming, and gestures. Code-switching to mother tongue was used by teachers when explaining the details, discussing issues more in detail as well as the disciplinary problems. The materials used for CLIL lessons were published materials directly for CLIL either in French or English. Italy was the only country with such an advantage where the CLIL materials are ready-made for the teachers and learners. The assessment was provided orally and no grades were given throughout the observed lessons. Observers provided some negative comments on the teaching styles of the teachers – for example, teacher talking time prevailed, in lots of cases students may have been more actively involved and engaged during the lessons.

The second country, Sweden, particularly in a town Alingsås, *Alströmergymnasiet* – the upper secondary school, three CLIL lessons were observed. As it was mentioned earlier in the paper, CLIL is not directly endorsed in the Swedish curriculum and this school has proved that the use of CLIL is unnecessary because a large number of teachers have good command in English and the most of students' proficiency level is also high. The observations were carried out in the following subjects – Sociology, Linguistics and Health Care. As for the time devoted to CLIL, they also applied a hard form of CLIL, the whole lessons were in a target language. Scaffolding techniques for content and language were mainly group discussions, pictures, and videos used in the lessons. Only the pair or group works were in Swedish. The lessons were supported by the use of the internet and IT technologies. They had no printed textbooks or materials which could be used in the lessons. Comparing to Italian lessons, Swedish students were actively engaged, and they used computers with every given task. The observers highly appreciated the development of critical thinking which was evident through discussions, role-plays and project works. As for the assessment, students were given no grades, just oral evaluation, including support and encouragement. Only one lesson was taught in a tandem mode because a subject teacher was not skilled enough in the target language, so the language teacher took a part in the lesson, however, they were both actively involved.

The following observed partner was an educational institution in Latvia – *Daugavpils pilsetas Izglītības parvalde* in Daugavpils, which has many primary, lower secondary and secondary schools with CLIL classes in its competency. These schools provide two approaches to CLIL – traditional and non-traditional. The traditional one involves learning the subject content in a foreign language at the subject lesson. The second one focuses on non-traditional work forms, such as projects, creative workshops, surveys, experimental laboratories, etc., and CLIL lessons are optional and most recommended to the best students. Most of the observed classes, including Biology, Math, Science, Geography, Civic Education and History, were provided in a tandem mode, in other words, with both subject and language

teachers. While a subject teacher was responsible for the content, a language teacher was responsible for the linguistic issues in the lesson. CLIL was applied during the whole lesson and mother tongue was used just for explanation, instructions or disciplinary issues. Scaffolding techniques ranged from visual aids, through stories, miming, discussions, and debates. Materials used in the lessons were chosen by the teachers, including original outdated English textbooks, which were provided to schools by different donations and charities. As for grades, students were provided oral feedback by teachers and encouragement during the lessons. Given the fact that the language competence of content teachers was in some cases much lower than the B2 level, the presence of a language teacher in the lesson was appropriate.

The last project partner was from Vilnius, Lithuania, particularly *Vilnius Jonas Basanavicius progimnazija*. This partner did not have much experience with the CLIL methodology. They had implemented it only in the music lessons in French. After joining the training course, offered by the project, CLIL was implemented with English in Mathematics, Biology, and Arts. The school followed similar criteria than Latvian schools – it means that CLIL lessons were only for the selected pupils, chosen mainly according to their language proficiency. In spite of this fact, students were motivated, supported and encouraged, but not graded. The whole lessons were instructed in English with code-switching to Lithuanian language in case of giving instructions, or disciplinary issues. Regarding the content and language scaffolding the pictures, videos, pictures, and project work were used unfortunately with the very widely used translations. The provided materials in the lessons were mainly authentic ones from the internet or English textbooks. The pupils were supported and encouraged by the positive approach of enthusiastic teachers. However, the teaching style was rather teacher-centered and sometimes students could have been more actively engaged in the learning process by pair or group work.

Conclusion

The question, set up at the beginning of the project (*“What is a good CLIL practice?”*), proved that there are several types of good CLIL practices. It is caused by different economic, historical, national and educational contexts:

- post-soviet countries, Latvia and Lithuania, apply a very strong teacher-centered education in schools, and the level of the language proficiency of teachers is insufficient. Therefore, some schools prefer a tandem mode (both subject and language teachers in a class) while using the CLIL methodology. Moreover, the CLIL lessons are provided for the students with the best level of foreign language proficiency and not for all of them. Even though students are not graded, they received a good amount of motivation, support, and encouragement. The most important fact is that students achieve better results in a foreign language since they attend CLIL lessons;

- Italy and Sweden belong to countries where teachers have good command of English or other foreign languages which are used in CLIL lessons. Sweden uses modern technologies instead of the textbooks with various learner-centered techniques such as project work, debates, role plays, etc. while in Italy, teachers are supported by the state with the published textbooks, workshops, and trainings for the CLIL teachers. In spite of the fact that Sweden considered the CLIL methodology not important to be included in their curriculum, they found it a good way in achieving adequate language skills for arriving immigrants.

To sum up, each country which has not still included CLIL into their curricula needs paradigm shifts in the organization of education and an update it to serve the world of today and tomorrow. The whole process should start at teachers' training colleges, preparing student-teachers for their future profession. However, not only students at departments of foreign languages but also students of other study programs, so-called content teachers. They also should achieve adequate foreign language skills, including a methodology of teaching foreign languages.

We may consider it as an advantage that CLIL is still not unified model applicable for any educational institution in any European country as a rigid set of rules, but rather a holistic approach to education itself. Teachers, within the CLIL lessons, use most current and authentic learning materials to inspire and motivate their students to be active participants in their mission for skills and knowledge, and on the other hand, students learn to communicate about subject matters in a non-invasive way (they do not concentrate on a language itself). Moreover, they practice problem-solving skills, communication skills, cooperation skills, and critical thinking, as well as they are scaffolded to build their own frames of knowledge.

Finally, there is necessary to mention one more note, considering the outcomes and experience from the mentioned project. Various educational agencies or departments have taken over themselves a role of trainers in the CLIL methodology. We may assume that this role belongs to Faculties of Education, Colleges or Universities providing either English-medium instruction study programs or study programs for future teachers. Based on this experience and a study the university partners involved in the above mentioned project have recently carried out (Luprichová & Hurajová 2017), a new project will be submitted soon, but now within the university environment.

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Developing intercultural communicative competence – the two sides of the coin

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Abstract

Effective intercultural communicative competence goes beyond a good command of the foreign language and an insight into the foreign culture. What real-life intercultural communication often calls for is an ability to present one's own cultural identity in the foreign tongue. Are our learners empowered to face this challenge and how can the foreign language teacher cater for this need? The aim of this paper, which was developed on the basis of the author's presentation at the 4th conference of the Educational Role of Language network "From theory to practice, from practice to theory", is to outline the contemporary understanding of the essence of intercultural communicative competence underpinning the need for language teachers to devote equal attention to both the target and the local culture and language in order to prepare competent language users who can function as efficient mediators in the process of intercultural communication. In an answer to some of the deficiencies identified in educational practice, some practical ideas are also shared on how to exploit the rich affordance of language classes to enhance both the language command and the intercultural communicative competence of the learners.

Keywords: *intercultural communicative competence, foreign language education*

Introduction

The understanding of the "cultural dimension of language" (Bennett 1997) is not a current phenomenon: nowadays both language theoreticians and practitioners in the classroom readily agree that without cultural awareness of "the social or philosophical content of that language" (ibid., p.16) the language learner would be just a "fluent fool", and that artificial languages without the cultural context to enliven and root them to real life have little chance of survival, let alone of becoming a lingua franca (e.g. Esperanto). The interrelationship between language and culture has been the subject of many studies over recent years, and acknowledged as a fundamental component of the language learning process (Kramsch 1993/1998, Byram 1997/2009, Davcheva & Docheva 1998, Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001, Murray & Thorne 2004, Byram & Phipps 2005, Lázár et al. 2007, Candelier et al. 2007, Huber 2012, Beacco et al. 2016, etc.). This cultural turn in language teaching has been reflected in the *Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*, the key document of the Council of Europe as far as language education is concerned, emphasizing the role of modern language education in promoting "mutual understanding and tolerance, respect for identities and cultural diversity through more effective international communication", as well as in meeting "the needs of a multilingual and multicultural Europe by appreciably developing the ability of Europeans to communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (ibid. 2001: 3). Thus the plurilinguistic and intercultural communicative competences are seen as the essential features of the European democratic citizenship, built on a strong sense of European identity and understanding of the values and foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their development today – i.e. the principles of democracy, social justice and respect for human rights (cp. Heater 1992). The *Companion Volume [to the CEFR] with New Descriptors* (Council of Europe 2018) has taken a step further in updating and extending the descriptors of language communicative competence to reflect the complexity of language proficiency and multifaceted character of language use: one of the major amendments concerns the addition of special descriptor scales for plurilingual/pluricultural and mediation competences.

As a result of all those developments in the field of language education (incl. FLT textbook publishing) it could safely be argued that today more and more foreign language teachers see themselves as teachers of both language and culture. However, they are often primarily engaged in developing their students' cultural competence associated with the target language culture only, ignoring almost

completely the students' own cultural background. So, it is still mostly up to the individual teachers to introduce elements of intercultural learning, i.e. to elaborate on the topics of textbook materials in a way that allows the students to enhance their intercultural communicative competence and personal development through reflecting on and discussing various aspects of their own culture and/or cultural assumptions in parallel and comparison with the target language culture.

The aim of this paper is on one hand to outline the contemporary understanding of the essence of intercultural communicative competence underpinning the need for language teachers to devote equal attention to both the target and the local language and culture, and on the other to share some practical ideas on how to exploit the rich affordance of language classes to enhance both the language command and the intercultural communicative competence of the learners.

Theoretical background

What is the essence of intercultural communicative competence? The understanding that effective foreign language communicative competence requires something more than just a good command of the vocabulary and grammar structure of the foreign language itself is not new to the theory of foreign language education. At the turn of the century Milton Bennett humorously referred to a person who "speaks a foreign language well but does not understand the social or philosophical content of that language" as a "fluent fool" (Bennett 1997: 16), and Claire Kramsch takes language as cultural semiotic and holds that "as long as culture acquisition means the ability to momentarily see the world through the eyes of a native speaker or to occasionally behave in ways that conform to native speaker expectations, culture acquisition should be a desirable goal of language learning" (Kramsch 1998: 33).

Noam Chomsky (1965) was the first applied linguist to differentiate between "linguistic competence" and "linguistic performance"; he described competence as the idealized mental capacity, the knowledge that a speaker or listener has of language, and performance (which he called *parole*) as the actual use of language in concrete communicative situations. Chomsky later introduced two more terms to elucidate the distinction between competence and performance: namely, "grammatical competence" and "pragmatic competence", restricting the former to knowledge of language form and meaning and the latter to knowledge of how to use language appropriately, in conformity with the communicative purpose (Chomsky 1980: 224). A similar emphasis on language as "a social semiotic resource" used by people "to accomplish their purposes by expressing meaning in context" (Halliday 1978: 111) is put by the representatives of functional linguistics and sociolinguists. For them the communicative context – extended to include the nonverbal environment in which the communication takes place – is determined by two major factors: the communicative situation itself and the culture of the participants. Thus, they argued, different facets of the social context may have an impact on language use, such as role relationships, "power structure and patterns of social control", culturally-determined symbolic systems and systems of values (Halliday 1973: 63).

The term "communicative competence" itself was introduced by Dell Hymes (1972) to refer to the potential of a language user to communicate effectively with the other language users, i.e. the ability for effective performance in real-life communicative situations. For him the concept of communicative competence subsumed not only the grammaticality / linguistic accuracy of language use but also the contextual appropriacy and social acceptability of verbal behavior. In other words, although one can have linguistic competence and be able to produce linguistically correct utterances, s/he will not be able to communicate effectively if s/he lacks knowledge of the rules for language use: "There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (Hymes 1972: 278). It is interesting to note that in the concept of communicative competence Dell Hymes includes some non-verbal elements related to appropriate communicative conduct such as "attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and users" (ibid.) which could be used to distinguish even between native speakers of the

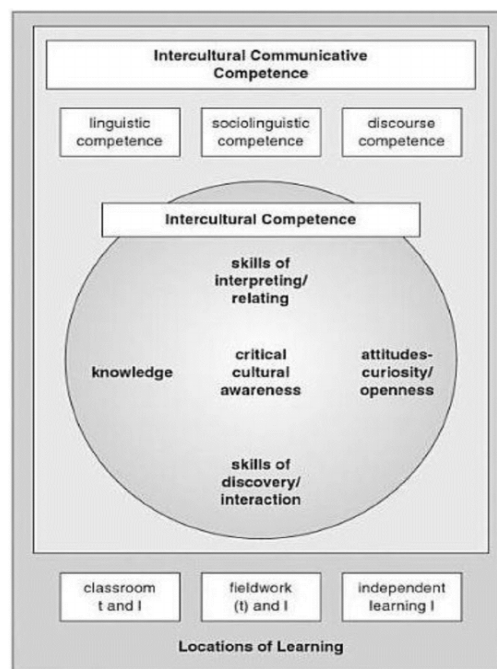
language in terms communicative competence (e.g. native speakers may be equally linguistically competent but they vary in their confidence or ability to integrate humor in their speech).

In the 1980s Canale and Swain (Canale & Swain 1980, Canale 1983) provided a more detailed description of the communicative competence along the same lines (which later was used as the theoretical foundation of the Communicative Approach to language teaching and incorporated in the *Common European Framework of Reference*¹), comprising the following components:

- *grammatical competence*: the knowledge of the lexical items and grammar rules;
- *sociolinguistic competence*: the ability to communicate appropriately in a variety of contexts (incl. both verbal and non-verbal communication);
- *discourse competence*: the ability to use language in communication cohesively and coherently (i.e. familiarity with the structural and semantic ties that keep a text together);
- *strategic competence*: competent usage of communication strategies to overcome or repair communication breakdown, resulting from lack of linguistic competence or background information on cultural frameworks of communication and social taboos (cp. Canale & Swain 1980, Canale 1983).

Thus the concept of communicative competence and the prominence given to its sociolinguistic/sociocultural dimension (i.e. the skills for effective language use in real-life communicative situations) turned into the cross-section of language and culture in language education theories. Taking into account the culturally determined character of communicative competence (which may only be realized by native speakers of the language in situations of intercultural communication - i.e. when interacting with people from another culture), Michael Byram (1997) proposes his multidimensional model of intercultural communicative competence (see Figure 1) as an extension of the communicative competence concept which includes intercultural competence.

Figure 1: Michael Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence (1997: 73).



¹ "Communicative competence refers to a person's ability to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate way" (CEFR, 2001: 9).

Byram's (ibid.) conceptual model of intercultural competence comprises five specific, interrelated components – culture-relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes, or *savoirs*, as he calls them – which, together with communicative competence itself (which in itself can be considered a sixth *savoir*), allow a person to adequately function in situations of intercultural communication, i.e. be an *interculturally competent speaker* (Byram 2009). The first of these *savoirs* has been defined as "knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor's country on the one hand, and similar knowledge of the processes and interaction at individual and societal levels, on the other hand" (Byram 1997: 35), as well as an insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language and communication. These *savoirs* (the term is deliberately used in the plural), according to Byram (ibid.), constitute a culture-specific frame of reference for interpreting meaning in intercultural communication: i.e. the words and gestures people use, the behaviors they display, the values they cherish, etc. are always culture-bound and "carry specific meaning within a particular cultural frame of reference". Hence, he argues, in situations of intercultural communication it is important to be sensitive to potential referential differences. Notably, Byram (ibid.) holds that along with exploring the national identity of the target culture and the home culture, the interculturally competent person also needs to acquire "a certain amount of culture-general knowledge" (ibid.) which will allow him/her to deal more successfully with the diversity of foreign cultures and accept the existence of "otherness" (i.e. different behaviors and ways of thinking, even ones s/he may not necessarily agree with). *Savoir-apprendre*, *savoir-comprendre* and *savoir-faire* together constitute the skills dimension of Byram's intercultural competence conceptual framework. *Savoir-apprendre* refers to the ability to acquire new knowledge about cultures and cultural practices, incl. making use of metacognitive strategies to self-direct one's own learning and seek out and discover aspects of culture even while interacting, under the constraints of real-life communication. *Savoir-comprendre* refers to the capacity to relate (compare and contrast) cultures and interpret them, assigning meaning to cultural events and phenomena in an independent, unbiased way, as well as relate those interpretations to one's own culture and experience. *Savoir-faire* refers to the overall critical cultural awareness of the language speaker/user and the ability to act in an "interculturally competent way" in situations of intercultural contact, i.e. to take into account the specific cultural identity of the interlocutor and to behave in a respectful and co-operative way (ibid.). Finally, the intercultural speaker's attitudes of openness and curiosity – *savoir-être* and *savoir-s'engager* – are related to the general disposition of the individual to critically engage with the foreign culture in relation to one's own, i.e. to acquire intercultural competence (*savoir-s'engager*), and "the capacity and willingness to abandon ethnocentric attitudes and perceptions, and the ability to establish and maintain a relationship between one's own and the foreign culture" (*savoir-être*) (Byram 1997: 54). Byram (ibid.) also argues that the first factor an individual must address when trying to acquire intercultural communicative competence is the right attitude: he believes that one must be ready to "suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own", to be willing to "remain open to learning about new beliefs, values, and worldviews in order to participate in relationships of equality" and respect for human dignity when communicating with people from other cultures.

Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence is used as a point of departure in a number of studies – some more theoretical in character, others with a more pragmatic focus – attempting to further elucidate the essence of the conceptual construct and/or decompose its cognitive content (e.g. Candelier et al. 2007: 50-52, *Companion Volume [to the CEFR] with New Descriptors*, 2018: 30, 157-159), or to propose some practical approaches to developing and accessing intercultural communicative competence in the foreign language classroom (e.g. Davcheva & Docheva 1998, Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001, Murray & Thorne 2004, Byram & Phipps 2005, Lázár et al. 2007, Huber 2012, Beacco et al. 2016, etc.). It is worth noting that in all of these publications intercultural competence goes hand in hand with plurilinguistic communicative competence and mediation skills as its indispensable pillars, as well as that there is at least an awareness that language teachers need to teach both the

foreign and the local culture when trying to develop their students' intercultural communicative competence.

Initially, however, there seemed to be a greater focus on the target language culture and on making sure that foreign language learners acquire the whole pack of culture-specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to communicate effectively with native speakers of the target language. Here are two examples of the traditional early definitions of intercultural communicative competence, which although implicitly suggesting that both participants in the communicative act should adopt these attitudes, do not seem to take into account the learner's own cultural background and imply that in order to be successful the learner should probably mimic the target culture and model his verbal behavior on the communication protocols of native speakers of the target language:

"Thus, developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching involves recognising that the aims are: to give learners intercultural competence as well as linguistic competence; to prepare them for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; and to help them to see that such interaction is an enriching experience." (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey 2002: 10)

or

"Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from other language and cultural backgrounds.

Effective intercultural communication requires:

- **EMPATHY:** an understanding of other people's behaviors and ways of thinking;
- **RESPECT:** genuine admiration and appreciation of different ways of thinking and communication;
- **TOLERANCE:** the ability and willingness to accept and acknowledge different behaviors and ways of thinking, the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with;
- **SENSITIVITY:** the awareness and responsiveness to other people's behaviors and ways of thinking;
- **FLEXIBILITY:** willingness to adapt and open to change and different ways of thinking." (Sun 2014)

The learners would indeed be well-advised to conform to these requirements for effective intercultural communication when immersed in a target language communicative context, e.g. when they are in a country where the target language is spoken, though they need to pay heed not to sound and/or look unnatural (cp. Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001: 5). The problem with this one-sided interpretation of intercultural communicative competence arises when learners find themselves in situations of intercultural interaction with other non-native speakers of the language they use as lingua franca (when such awareness of the culture and communication protocols of native speakers of the target language would be of very little if any practical value) and/or in intercultural communicative situations when they have to present their own cultural identity in the target language and not display knowledge of the target culture (e.g. when working for the tourist industry in their own country, or when using the target language simply as lingua franca at international forums²).

Optimistically, attempts to rehabilitate the "other side of the coin" – i.e. the students' awareness of their own cultural identity and ability to present it adequately in the foreign tongue, underpinned by the skills and attitudes, empowering them to engage in a process of discovery of "otherness", reflecting on various aspects of their own culture and/or cultural assumptions in parallel and comparison with the

² Aware of this pragmatic value of foreign language competence as one of the life skills in the 21 century guaranteeing academic and professional success and mobility in our globalized world, Norwegian educational experts and policy-makers are planning to scrap intercultural communicative competence (incl. knowledge of the culture and the literature of the people speaking the target language) from the goals underpinning their foreign language school curriculum (Høvik 2019).

target language culture, keeping an open mind and remaining respectful of different behavioral patterns and ways of thinking – are becoming ever more frequent and more successful.

“... when teaching intercultural communicative competence, teachers need to teach both the local and international cultures. Teachers and native speakers of English need to be aware and respect nonnative speakers’ different ways of communicating.” (Yilin Sun, ex-president of TESOL International Association 2014)

Another good point in case is the recently revised national foreign language school curriculum in Bulgaria which now incorporates this modern interpretation of intercultural communicative competence (as an amalgamation of culture-relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning both the local and the target cultures) in the core content of the syllabi even for young learners at beginner level and all the way through to the final grades at school (foreign languages being one of the compulsory school subjects³). This educational reform has had a kind of knock-on effect on both textbook content and teaching practices, forcing major publishers to come up with Bulgarian adaptations of their foreign language coursebooks, including whole sections devoted to developing the intercultural communicative competence of the learners, encompassing both the target language culture and the local one, inviting students to critically reflect on their exponents and draw parallels, thus gaining deeper understanding of both cultures, fostering attitudes of tolerance and respect for "otherness", but also promoting stronger awareness of one's own cultural identity and safeguarding against blindly assimilating target language cultural patterns of behavior and/or foreign values (cp. Ivanov 2018).

The *Companion Volume [to the CEFR] with New Descriptors* (Council of Europe 2018: 30, 157-159) also does justice to the two sides of the same coin – i.e. that of intercultural communicative competence. The development of the new descriptors for *plurilingual and pluricultural competence* was underpinned by the beliefs that "languages and cultures are not kept in separated mental compartments" and that the success of intercultural communication depends on the speakers' willingness to act as intercultural mediators and their "capacity to deal with 'otherness', to identify similarities and differences, to build on known and unknown cultural features, etc., in order to enable communication and collaboration", as well as on their "readiness and capacity to expand linguistic/plurilinguistic and cultural/pluricultural awareness through an attitude of openness and curiosity", incl. towards their own cultures (ibid., pp. 157-158). The authors of this key document of the Council of Europe in the area of language education explicitly posit that the new descriptors of plurilingual and pluricultural competence are there to warrant the balance between the target language culture and the culture(s) of the learners, as well as to acknowledge the fact that such competence should not be taken for granted but rather be carefully fostered by the language educators, providing the necessary scaffolding:

"The main reason for associating descriptors in this area with CEFR levels is to provide support to curriculum developers and teachers in their efforts (a) to broaden the perspective of language education in their context and (b) to acknowledge and value the linguistic and cultural diversity of their learners. The provision of descriptors in levels is intended to facilitate the selection of relevant plurilingual/pluricultural aims, which are also realistic in relation to the language level of the user/learners concerned." (ibid., p. 158)

At beginner levels (A1 and A2) the target language user/learner is more passive, only capable of recognizing culture-bound differences in communication (and possibly in life styles – e.g. differing ways of measuring distance, or telling the time), interpreting their meaning correctly and accepting "otherness"; gradually s/he begins to learn how to "apply basic cultural conventions associated with everyday social exchanges" and act appropriately in everyday transactions (ibid., pp. 158-159). At intermediate level (B1 and B2) the language user/learner builds up the needed intercultural competence and confidence to be more active and effectively engages in intercultural communication: s/he starts to

³ <https://www.mon.bg/bg/1698>

"respond to the most commonly used cultural cues, act according to socio-pragmatic conventions and explain or discuss features of his/her own culture", as well as recognize and repair simple culturally-based misunderstandings (ibid., pp. 158-159). At advanced levels (C1 and C2), this develops into an ability to critically reflect on and sensitively explain the cultural beliefs, values and practices of his/her own and of other communities showing awareness and respect for cultural difference, an enhanced capacity to interpret and discuss them, successfully coping with socio-linguistic and pragmatic ambiguity, expressing reactions constructively with cultural appropriateness and generally acting as an intercultural mediator in order to reach mutual understanding and collaboration (ibid., pp. 158-159).

Practical perspectives

Most publications related to intercultural communicative competence also offer practical suggestions on how to develop it, or rather, how to help and guide language learners to acquire it successfully. In his book "Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence" Byram (1997: 73) describes intercultural learning as a "linear process", beginning in the classroom under the direction and guidance of the teacher, through fieldwork and projects in which the learner is the main driving force only steered by the teacher, until s/he is ready to embark on his/her own journey of discovery and independent learning even beyond the classroom. When describing the intercultural classroom environment, authors recommend a type of learning which is "learner-centered, engaging, interactive, participatory and cooperative" (cp. Byram, Gribkova & Starkey 2002). The student is often defined as "a researcher or discoverer of knowledge", very much like "an anthropologist who explores and investigates a topic both in and outside of the classroom"; foreign language teachers are no longer expected "to transmit to learners detailed information about the culture being studied", rather they assume the role of facilitators who only guide the learning process in order to actively involve learners and scaffold their intercultural experiences as they explore, discover, analyze and evaluate meaningful information in authentic materials (cp. Byram 1997, Byram & Phipps 2005, etc.). Byram et al. (2002) also emphasize the fact that since culture itself is ever-changing and dynamic in character, foreign language teachers must create a learning environment of openness and curiosity in the classroom, thereby minimizing judgment about the "other" culture, and promote an attitude of inquiry in order to guide learners toward independent discovery of differing worldviews and self-directed acquisition of intercultural competence.

For Byram (1997) there is a logical progression in the process of intercultural learning. Initially, teachers should get their students to consider and start questioning their own preconceived ideas, beliefs and stereotypes in relation to the foreign culture before embarking on a process of discovery about the "other". This is done with the intent of fostering the "right" mindset of openness and tolerance of diversity along with developing a toolkit of skills for critical reflection and analysis, making students better equipped and more capable intercultural learners, as well as more willing "to seek out and engage with otherness in order to ultimately experience relationships of reciprocity and equality" (ibid., p. 71) when communicating with people from other cultures. Remarkably, in parallel to the analysis of otherness and the acquisition of knowledge about the target language culture, Byram (ibid.) argues that it is imperative for the foreign language educator to make time for his/her learners to explore the national identity of the home culture in relation to the target one in terms of history and present day socio-political institutions, geography, folk traditions and behavioral patterns, science, art and literature, etc. Once learners have discovered the similarities and differences between their culture and that of the target language, they must be provided with the educational affordance to develop skills in interpreting and relating (e.g. sensitivity, tolerance, respect, empathy, flexibility, adaptability, etc.) which will empower them to build effective relationships with people of diverse cultural backgrounds, speaking the target language (ibid.). When students begin to identify "ethnocentric perspectives and misunderstandings related to cross-cultural communication", they become able to understand and then explain the origins of conflict and mediate such situations appropriately in order to avoid

misinterpretations and facilitate the achievement of communicative intentions (ibid.). Finally, skills in discovery and interaction allow intercultural speakers to independently seek out opportunities to meet people from diverse cultures and gain new information in order to develop as individuals and establish meaningful relationships based on equality with people from other cultures (ibid.).

Unlike Byram (1997), in recognition of the fact that language learners enter the process of intercultural education from different points based on their diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives, and they move at different speeds, Deardorff (2006) offers a process-oriented, circular model of intercultural competence development in which the journey toward intercultural competence is never ending as the learner continues to learn, change, evolve and become transformed with time. The individual can enter the cycle at any point and move freely from internal outcomes – acquired culture-specific attitudes, knowledge and skills subsumed under an informed frame of reference (any shift in this frame leading to adaptability, flexibility, empathy, etc. would constitute an outcome), and external outcomes related to intercultural interactions (e.g. effective and appropriate communicative behavior in a context of intercultural contact) (Deardorff 2006: 254).

Publications on the practical perspectives of intercultural language education also offer a rich repertoire of learner activities aimed at developing the dichotomous unity of intercultural communicative competence. Depending on the targeted component of intercultural competence in focus, these activities can be grouped as follows (although distinctions are often blurred and savoirs of all sorts are tapped in one single activity):

- cognitive, or related to enhancing intercultural knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in the target language country and in one's own resulting in deeper understanding of both the "other" and the local culture (e.g. extracting culture-bound information when working with authentic materials, incl. literary and media texts, TV and audio broadcasts /podcasts, etc.; a discussion with a native speaker of the target language during which s/he talks about and explains his culture-specific beliefs, values and/or behaviors⁴; a theme project related to the gathering and presenting of some culture-specific information about local and foreign traditional celebrations and folk customs, or popular myths and legends, or national music and cuisine, etc.; producing a written or an online guide to learners' own country/hometown and local culture for foreign visitors, etc.);
- behavioral, or related to training the intercultural skills of interpreting and relating, of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (e.g. critical reading of an article or a literary text and reflection on the culture exponents present in the text; observation and critical evaluation of an event or cultural practice from the "other" culture, followed by its discussion, explanation/interpretation and possibly comparison with a similar event from the home culture; writing a travelogue of one's stay in the foreign country, reflecting on what one sees and how one feels in situations of intercultural communication; setting up video-conferences with peers from the other culture for them to share experiences and/or opinions about a document or an event; role-plays and simulations of critical incidents in cross-cultural communication leading to misunderstanding in which the learners are invited to take the role of mediators, identify and explaining the origins of conflict and intervening appropriately in order to facilitate communication, etc.);
- attitudinal, or related to developing the attitudes of openness and discovery which may require the relativisation of one's own values, beliefs and behaviors⁵, i.e. being ready to accept "that they are not the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from an outsider's perspective who has a different set of values, beliefs and behaviors" (Byram, Gribkova &

⁴ However, as most native speakers of the target language would not be aware of the differences and similarities, learners must be ready to ask relevant questions, which capacity taps on their skills of discovery and interaction (cp. Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001: 6).

⁵ A process which could be very challenging, because "however open towards, curious about and tolerant of other people's beliefs, values and behaviours learners are, their own beliefs, values and behaviours are deeply embedded and can create reaction and rejection" (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey 2002:13).

Starkey 2002:12) (e.g. reading and discussing guidebooks written by visitors to the learners' home country, commenting on their views; reading about a current, possibly controversial topic in the target language media and the ones in the home country, comparing the authors' viewpoints and public reaction to it; watching a relevant movie and reflecting on the exponents of cultural diversity; retelling a story from a different point of view, etc.).

Here follows just one example of how language teaching can acquire an *intercultural* dimension (not just cultural) and provoke learners into reflecting on and expressing their own cultural identity as they acquire the target language and learn about the culture of the target language speakers⁶.

MYTH or HISTORY

- A** What do you know about the man in the picture? If you do not know who he was, talk about what you see in the picture and make a guess about who he was and when and where he lived.
B Quickly read the text in **C**, ignoring the gaps and answer the questions below.

- 1 Who was Robin Hood?
- 2 What was he famous for?

C Read the text below and decide which answer (a, b, c or d) best fits each gap.

Robin Hood is a legendary English folklore hero (1)___ was a highly skilled archer and swordsman. Some believe that he was a brave and witty outlaw who robbed the rich and (2)___ the wealth to the poor; others describe him (3)___ a nobleman who was loyal to King Richard I and helped him recover his throne.

The stories about Robin have appealed (4)___ common people throughout the ages because he stood up against social injustice and helped those (5)___ need. Furthermore, his life in Sherwood Forest with his fellow outlaws, the Merry Men, seemed like a great and noble adventure. His main opponent was the cruel and oppressive Sheriff of Nottingham. Robin Hood had a girlfriend, Maid Marian, and his companions included Little John, Alan-a-Dale, Much, Will Scarlett and a bit (6)___ a monk called Friar Tuck.

A collection of ballads about Robin Hood was published in England around 1489. (7)___ have been numerous variations and adaptations of the story (8)___ the following years, and the legend continues to be widely represented in literature and films.

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 a what | b which | c who | d whom |
| 2 a took | b gave | c brought | d carried |
| 3 a as | b so | c like | d such |
| 4 a at | b for | c of | d to |
| 5 a of | b in | c on | d at |
| 6 a on | b late | c later | d after |
| 7 a That | b It | c Those | d There |
| 8 a about | b over | c through | d at |

D Work with a partner and answer these questions.

- Can you think of some popular Bulgarian folklore heroes (e.g. Krali Marko, Hitar Petar)? What do you know about them?
- Can you retell one of their stories?

E Read the text and complete it with these prepositions.

about for from into of on with



Krali Marko is a favourite Bulgarian folklore hero famous (1)___ his great power and kind heart in all Balkan countries. He helped the poor and punished the evil. He fought (2)___ wild beasts and killed dragons. He was so strong that he could lift big rocks and throw them far away or cut them (3)___ two with his sword. People admired him.

There are many folk tales (4)___ him. Some even say that he was breastfed by a wood nymph and that baba Vida, whose castle you can still see in Vidin, was his girlfriend. According to another legend, one day, when Krali Marko was riding on the back (5)___ his horse, Sharkolia, he jumped (6)___ the Konyavska Mountain and landed (7)___ a rock near the village of Katrishte. Today, you can still see the place where the horse's foot sank into the stone.



F Find and read one of the stories about the Bulgarian folklore hero Hitar Petar [Witty Peter]. Then retell the story in English. Use the *Speaking strategies* to help you.

Hitar Petar,
a portrait by Ilia Beshkov

Speaking strategies: Retelling a story

- Set the scene (time/place) and introduce the main character(s). Make the introduction sound interesting.
- If necessary, give background information about the characters and/or what is happening.
- Describe the main events in logical order (from the problem to its solution) or follow the order in the original text.
- Use linking phrases (incl. time phrases) to sequence the events in the story.
- Use narrative tenses.

⁶ The sample activities are part of the Bulgarian adaptation of the coursebook "Close-up B1.1" (Healan et al. 2019)

In the sample coursebook section above devoted to the expansion of the intercultural dimension of communicative competence, learners are initially invited to embark on a process of discovery about the iconic heroes, historical events and social values of the “other” culture (in this case related to the legend of Robin Hood). Then, in parallel to the analysis of otherness and the acquisition of knowledge about the target language culture, the learners are encouraged to explore the counterpart exponents of their home culture (Krali Marko and Hitar Petar) and improve their skills of presenting their own culture in the foreign tongue (i.e. their ability to “explain or discuss features of their own culture” – a B1 skill on the pluricultural competence chart from the CEFR, 2018: 159). Thus, through this set of language-focused activities, harnessing all the savoirs of intercultural competence from the three plains of reference (the cognitive, the attitudinal and the behavioural), learners not only enrich their knowledge about the target language culture, but also develop their interpretation and evaluation skills and adopt an attitude of appreciation for the beliefs and values of the people from the “other” culture as they gradually become aware of the similarities between their own culture and the foreign one.

Conclusion

It is a well-established fact that good educational theory informs and improves practice in the classroom, and practical experience from its application should serve as a corrector of theory, making it even more helpful for classroom practitioners in enhancing the quality of their teaching. The methodology of developing the intercultural communicative competence of language learners is a good example of this cognitive principle.

Communication skills and foreign language competence (or ever more often plurilingualism) have always been among the most essential life skills in any modern educational, professional or social context as every day we come in close contact with people of diverse cultural backgrounds speaking various languages. Training students for successful interaction in such multicultural settings predetermines the intercultural dimension of foreign language education (Sercu 2005) and highlights the close relationship between language and culture in the classroom. However, it should also be remembered that effective intercultural communicative competence goes beyond a good command of the target language and an insight into the culture related to it. Learners need to be aware of their own cultural identity and empowered with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to function as efficient mediators in the process of intercultural communication. Thus this plurilinguistic and intercultural communicative competence can indeed become the main pillar of the European democratic citizenship, underpinned by an understanding of the values and principles on which the European peoples intend to base their development – democracy, social justice and respect for human rights (cp. Heater 1992). The educational role of language and the mission of language learning is probably best expressed in the following quote:

"There is nonetheless a fundamental values position which all language teaching should promote: a position which acknowledges respect for human dignity and equality of human rights as the democratic basis for social interaction" (Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001: 7).

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Promoting EFL learners' exposure to multiculturalism using Skype in the classroom - a case study

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Abstract

The study aims at indicating the effectiveness of employing Skype in the classroom to promote chances for EFL learners to expose to multiculturalism. Action research was carried out via a one-year case study on a teacher-participant. The data was collected by observation during Skype connections, the participant's reflections before and after the connections, and interview of the teacher-participant for his reflections for enhancing his learners' chances for acquiring multiculturalism. The findings of the study showed that Skype benefited the teacher-participant in facilitating multiculturalism in EFL learning contexts, how Skype could be useful for multicultural connections, and the development of learners' common curiosity about other cultures through the exposure to multiculturalism.

Keywords: multiculturalism, Skype in the classroom, language teaching and learning

Introduction

Being exposed to the multicultural learning environment in Europe for a few years has actually been a chance for any EFL teachers to be aware of the benefits, diversities, and possible problems during the fast era of globalization and the 4th generation of industrial development. The idea of showing how the world is different in other cultures is important and should be noticed to EFL learners in this context. Several reasons for the quest of promoting more learners' exposure to multiculturalism should be implemented and observed.

First, language learners should be aware of the differences in the real world. Currently, no fixed national barriers can be found easily in many aspects of human life. We can understand this reason in a way that the more they know about the diversities in different corners of the world the more success they may achieve in the future. The awareness about the variety of cultures, language (or even just English itself), foods, living styles and so on will prepare their mind and conditions for their learning and their future.

Second, suitable exposure to multiculturalism allows EFL learners to widen their knowledge, experience from their adventure and activate their potentials and reactions in different circumstances. *"Multicultural education is highly wondered by many critics, which is considered to be an alternative for the solution and educational problems"* (Sengul 2015: 342). This author also emphasizes that the existence of multicultural societies is obvious and its interactions also occur in education. From that aspect, equal learning opportunities are essential for any individual, regardless of gender, social status, or ethnic, racial, and cultural background.

When teachers create suitable learning environments for learners to experience multicultural differences and perspectives from using Skype⁷ in Education⁸ including Mystery Skype and Virtual Skype Trip for young learners, Skype in the classroom for any type of learners and guest speakers for a specific group of learners on different themes and purposes.

"Skype provides a variety of educational opportunities for classrooms. Students can connect with other students, increase their knowledge, and interact with other cultures. In addition, Mystery Skype is

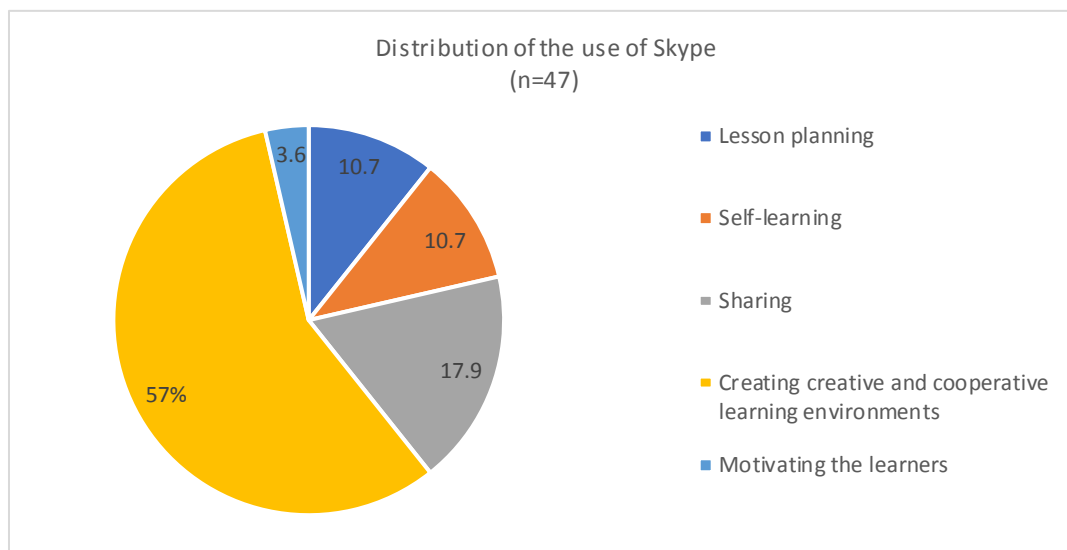
⁷ Skype is not the only tool in digital environment

⁸ A new version of Skype - Skype in Education is the advanced application of Skype under Microsoft for educational purposes

both fun and instructive game for learners with different time zone connections with educators, students, and interesting people across the world.”⁹

Third, essential opportunities to expose to multiculturalism in the real-life and even from online conditions would create favorable conditions for the language classrooms to connect with authors, experts, guest speakers, and researchers around the world. Through these connections, the concept of multiculturalism can be embedded naturally in classroom situations.

Regarding the aforementioned reasons, a lot of research has been conducted relevant to multiculturalism from different perspectives about the societies for fewer discriminations, more equalities, and conditions in multicultural education. Similar cases are found related to the use of Skype in the classroom for developing one or some language skills or communication. However, the gap of these studies is that none is found related to the learners’ exposure to multiculturalism through the use of Skype. From the reality of the teaching practice in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, the data from a survey shows that only 8 (approximately 5.6%) out of 144 participants have used or have been introduced to Skype in the classroom to connect with teachers from other places regardless the purposes of their connections. In a different public poll recently this year to quickly grasp the way how Skype has been used by teachers on social media, forty-seven participants responded to the poll and the distribution of the purposes to use Skype can be found in the following graph. It can be seen that more than half of the population has used Skype for creating a creative and cooperative learning environment that shares some possibilities and common ideas with using it for the exposure to multiculturalism in the focus of this study.



From that, this paper focuses on using Skype in the classroom to promote EFL learners’ exposure to multiculturalism from a case study. The study has attempted to address the key points of (1) the motives for bringing different values of culturalism to the learners in the research context, (2) the practices of how Skype in the classroom can be applied for multicultural connections around the world, and (3) the common curiosity about other cultures through the exposure to multicultural classrooms.

⁹ Online Tools for Teaching and Learning (Unknown Published Date). Skype [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://blogs.umass.edu/onlinetools/community-centered-tools/skype/>

A review of relevant literature

The key concepts of this study include multiculturalism (1) for the future multicultural societies and (2) in language teaching and learning and (3) digital learning environment and the use of Skype in the classrooms. In these societies of multiculturalism, Smits and Janssenswillen (2019) imply that the teachers in the 21st century including the preparation for future teacher educators should be equipped with experiences and awareness about classroom diversity. The ability to deal with diverse learners in different educational contexts for multicultural teaching should be developed during the process of theoretical transference of culturally responsive education to varying classroom settings. Besides, Sengul (2015) highlights that accommodating all differences in cultures, races, and religions in multiculturalism turns to be more and more important in the current era of globalization. Its objectives aim at preventing potential conflict and chaos. These efforts, when being successful, may lead mankind to a peaceful life and equal rights in a bigger community.

Multiculturalism for the future multicultural societies

Different perspectives about multiculturalism can be found in Smits and Janssenswillen (2019), Jee (2016), Taylor (2010), Bruna (2009), Gorski (2009), Riley et al. (2004), and Muenstermann (2001). One side focuses on the benefits, rights, and opportunities of minorities in the societies with good preparation for multiculturalism to deal with possible problems and the other side goes for the possibilities of alternating and weakening the host cultures.

In any society, conflicting perceptions about culturalism and multicultural education can be found regarding the possibilities of diminishing the common culture in a host place or the balanced focuses on a democratic position for unity and solidarity. In Taylor (2010 as cited in Sengul 2015: 341), without mutual respecting rationalist, intellectual, political and cultural differences, multicultural societies may witness more potential problems which may be prevented only through meaningful knowledge and interaction of multiculturalism.

For a possible solution, Smits and Janssenswillen (2019: 15) raise the importance of teaching cultural varieties so that learners can be successful in both the existing society and the diverse future which need more possible unfamiliar adjustment and achievement (Gorski 2009: 310).

In Riley et al. (2004), a culturally-diverse society with a monocultural perspective is not appropriate and does not educationally prepare well for the next generations of the current globalization. In a different context of Australia, the manner in which perceived multiculturalism has changed dramatically since 1973. Multiculturalism is connected to the rights and opportunities of minorities (Muenstermann 2001: 93).

From a different perspective, Jee (2016: 244) analyzes how “critical multiculturalism is socially and culturally constructed”. Regarding this belief, Kubota (2004: 37) states that while liberal multiculturalism focuses on universal commonality and natural equality among people, critical multiculturalism ... recognizes that social and economic inequality does exist and it critically examines how inequality and injustice are produced and perpetuated in relation to power and privilege.

It is also important to credit the concentration on multiculturalism with the work of Bruna (2009). This author points out five assertions for future multicultural societies as follows:

Assertion 1: all children bring differences to school

Assertion 2: only some of the differences children bring to school are associated with social disparities

Assertion 3: we need to make formal provisions for the disparity-related differences

Assertion 4: to both understand and respond to disparity-related differences, we need to practice from a material theory-of-cumulation standpoint

Assertion 5: practicing in this way means seeing the other as oneself

With a slightly different concentration, Riley et al. (2004) implement four practices to connect different groups of learners for a better understanding of the world beyond their own community and become aware of global issues.

Multiculturalism in language teaching and learning

From different practices but similar concepts and goals, the importance of multiculturalism has been recognized in different language and teaching contexts as in Smits and Janssenswillen (2019), Sengul (2015), Milans (2006), Riley et al. (2004), and Gay (2002). They all put an emphasis on the possible successful conditions for future multicultural preparation and the benefits of being knowledgeable with proper interaction with multiculturalism, especially from the classrooms.

Being compatible with Riley et al. (2004), but with a further probable tool for promoting multiculturalism, learners' global-multicultural perspective and knowledge about distant locations can become great opportunities for language development through the use of video-conferencing, including Skype in the classroom. This author emphasizes the benefits of multicultural understanding in language learning through interaction with people in other cultures. In different cultural targeting lessons, students will be more aware of the fact that their understanding of other cultures, perspectives, and reality may be more alike than different.

Sharing similar perspectives, Milans (2006: 63) specifies the multicultural goals of understanding "the differences between the two forms of education including (1) learning teaching ideologies, (2) social practices in the implementation of language teaching methods and (3) interactions in classrooms as a consequence of these methods."

Relatedly, Smits and Janssenswillen share the ideas of developing the curriculum with the combination of "Teaching with Multicultural Competence" and "Teaching in Sociopolitical Context" (2019: 3) with the focus on interculturality and diversity of *multi-perspectivity into educational practice*. According to Gay (2002: 106), the keys for a successful teaching and learning environment is "*using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively.*" In case that the contexts of multiculturalism is not obviously recognized, EFL learners still differ in various religions, languages, family backgrounds, races, and genders.

With the objectives of offering education without differentiation, language instructors should have multicultural competence and awareness as the means of promoting respect towards different cultures and a suitable setting for mutual understanding for multiculturalism (Sengul 2015). According to this researcher, although the world has different emphases on multiculturalism and multicultural education, a classroom with no discrimination may create a peaceful feeling of belongingness. From that sense, bringing multiculturalism to the classrooms that are far away in any corners of the world with the internet and the interactions between learners would build up more values for the practices of language learning and teaching.

Digital learning environment and the use of Skype in the classroom

Digital learning environments enforce communicative and cultural integration. Riley et al. (2004) state that the existing curriculum with extra video-conferencing could be a meaningful and purposeful way to facilitate students' benefits *including promoting a global-multicultural perspective, increasing students' knowledge about distant locations, developing problem-solving skills, increasing student motivation, and providing opportunities for language development*. In a different way of understanding, the authors emphasize that Skype is a type of video-conferencing that provides the capability to connect students who are separated by great distances, who otherwise would likely never have the opportunity to communicate face-to-face (or screen-to-screen) with one another. Through video-conferencing, learners

move beyond the confines of their classrooms and transcend geographic boundaries. (Riley et al. 2004: 43)

According to Morgan (2013:197), Skype is a free service for education and allows the users to make video and voice calls using the Internet with the advantage of *“teleconference with others even if they live in a remote area”*. Regardless of the problematic sides of the new technology, no connection, or any drawbacks, Skype creates more awareness about the language differences, various targeting classroom locations, diverse expertise, understandings of cultural contexts, and new learners’ interests.

In a different context of Taiwan et al. (2013) conduct an experimental study about the strategy to enhance learners’ writing and speaking skills using Skypes and other voice over instant messaging platforms. In different phases, the authors find that the quality of their competence increases on the applications of Facebook and Skype. However, in this study, the effectiveness of Skype shows a negative correlation between learners’ learning effects and those who posted more messages in Skype discussion activities. Since this study focused on a different measurement and instant messages on Skype only, the concentration of the current study was on a different aspect of online video connection with other cultural settings or contexts. For that reason, the use of Skype may purposefully influence the effectiveness of any teaching and learning situations, including those for multiculturalism.

Tian & Wang (2010: 185) clarifies the advantages of using Skype from *“its affordability, reliability, ease of use and, more importantly, its pedagogical soundness.”* Compatible with Riley et al. (2004), this reliable and user-friendly tool supports good quality video and audio transmission in 28 languages for most countries in any corners around the world with Internet availability. In a different practice of Skype, Tian & Wang (2010) cite the project with the development of speaking skills by pairing learners of Spanish with expert speakers by videoconferencing.

In any effective connections in the classroom, the development of a multicultural understanding with whom they interact can be found in both students and the teacher (Cifuentes & Murphy 2000). In a special and successful digital learning environment, a clearer understanding of various global perspectives can be learned and acquired naturally and interactively. These authors also highlight the values of learning to communicate across different cultures and the possibilities to introduce cultural practices and distinctions to the connected contexts. The possibility of using Skype basically for distance learners that itself is actually a limitation for face to face learners; however, Skype can commonly be integrated with one-to-one learning settings too.

Research methodology

In order to collect data for these main focuses, action research was conducted in the research context with a one-year case study. The researchers have joined the study from the beginning stage for a year with the tendency of bringing more multicultural conditions to the classrooms. The data was mainly collected in the forms of qualitative observations of Skype connections, in-class discussions with the learners before and after the connections, the teacher participant’s reflections after every trial-and-error step from Jan 5th, 2018 to December 20th, 2019, and an interview to confirm and clarify the information related to participant’s reflections. The length of the connections is varied from 7 minutes to 45 minutes approximately. Therefore, the limitation of this research includes the size of participants and the self-reported type of data. However, in a quite long process, the qualitative data after collected was framed and analyzed using the new version of Raymond Padilla’s unfolding matrix as in Nguyen (2018).

This one-year action research – simply a way to do research (Mcniff et al. 1996) - was implemented with a case study because it needs a process that involves the teacher’s epistemology, ideology, and generalization from the past to present experience about teaching, learning, and classroom with new application of technology with Microsoft in Education. The choice of action research for the methodology of a one-year case study would allow the researchers and the teacher to have more understanding, experiences, improving the approach to teaching during the teaching and learning

process (Kemmis & McTaggart 1988) and the professional development with ICT in the classroom (Elliot 1991). In this study, the loops of stages include different cycles of action – multicultural connections with observation, participant’s reflection, and interview. These actions are repeated for the connections in every month. However, it shows no clear starting points of planning, teaching, self-reflecting and modifying as in the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection in Bustingorry (2008), in which observation was conducted during the connections with other classrooms through Skype and it was a minor action during the teaching practices.

Findings and discussions

In a new forum on Facebook which was recently created in 2019 in the research context, there are about 4.700 members across the country and educators from different places in the world. They have joined this secret group for different purposes as (1) learning how to do Skype in education in the classroom from other educators, (2) connecting with classrooms around the world, (3) playing games with classrooms in other places, (4) visiting other places through Skype, and so on. From a similar curiosity at the beginning of 2019, the participant of this study has attempted to use Skype in the classroom with these aforementioned purposes and then to achieve the goal of letting his learners have more exposure to multiculturalism through the Skype connections. As mentioned earlier in the introduction in a public poll on social media, none out of the five purposes that teachers have used Skype in their classroom, none of that directly indicates the use of Skype for promoting learners’ exposure to multiculturalism.

From the findings, the 69 extracts have been classified into three different groups of information related to (1) the participant motives to facilitate multiculturalism in EFL learning contexts, (2) the praxis of how Skype could be used for multicultural connections, and (3) the development of learners’ common curiosity about other cultures through the exposure to multiculturalism.

The motives for bringing different values of culturalism to the learners

The findings from different coded extracts¹⁰ are varied regarding the motives for taking more chances to expose to culturalism. From different types of data from researchers’ interviews and observation as well as participant’s reflection, the consistency for the goal of facilitating learners’ exposure to multiculturalism is recognizable.

“After a year of utilizing Skype in the language classroom, my students and I have visited 10 countries with 32 connections for a distance of 232038 miles. We have met and learned a lot about their cultures, the differences, the similarities, and the new way of educational innovation in various places.” [ID036]

“In my mind, language learners must understand that the world of English is so much different out there. If they have no awareness of the diverse cultures, no learning or changing will be made for their future.” [RJ007]

“On the first connection, the teacher shared that he registered the schedule to have the first Mystery Skype with a group of high school international students from Poland. Some problems with the connections could not stop both the teacher’s and learners’ eagerness of meeting new friends and learn about their cultures like in the real-life through an Ipad screen.” [OJ011]

“My students can’t wait for the next connection next week with an American writer. I know that reading book is not their favorite activity and the first connection was not very

¹⁰ The extracts were first selected and coded in the form of [[I - interview/O – observation /R- reflection] [Month – the first letter of the month, except for j-June, jx- July, m-may, a- August] [3 digit numbers – ordinal numbers of the extracted codes] and then classified one more time into three groups of findings related to the motives, the practices, and the curiosities.

smoothly organized, but I just want to do my best for my students to meet people from different cultures.” [IF004]

Not only the teacher-participant but also the learners are motivated a lot after the first partly successful connection with a country far away from the research context.

“I learned a lesson today. When my students can speak English, it does not mean that they are ready to speak with foreigners, even using an iPad. It was good that both sides are tolerant and understand the situations well. Eliciting questions are really good to activate or lead my students’ responses. I will continue with the next connections.” [RF017]

“Most learners are shy when they need to say something. In this connection, some good students volunteered to move to the front and the teacher organized students sitting close to each other in 2 rows so that the screen can cover all their faces.” [OF006]

“Skype is not simply a type of connection for multiculturalism. We can feel that the teacher becomes more skillful in his technological skills. He can transfer the screen of the Skype connection to the big TV screen in the classroom. He is very happy with that and this Skype turns to be more successful than the previous ones.” [OM013]

“As long as my students want to try something new, I will continue my ways. More Skype may take times and it was not well on the first day, but with the same will, we will do it together.” [IF005]

As educators or language teachers, when there is something good for the learners in limited conditions, the logical requests anyone to have a choice or to give up. Any instructors had better try it at all costs. Similarly, the participant in this study has some unique motives for utilizing Skype in his classrooms in the long run.

“I use Skype because it allows my learners to access different types of accents, and a variety of cultures. That is enough and better than telling them a thousand times about the diversities in the world. Even when I show them videos about different accents of English, they just laugh. They think of English spoken by the native speakers in Britain, USA, Canada, Australia..., not the lingua franca.” [IM022]

“The important things in learning a language should be linked to the knowledge and experience of different cultures. However, it is hard to find a chance to meet people from other countries if you are not in big cities. What my students need is real-time conversations with speakers of English from different contexts, a type of free education for the future of globalization.” [IM058]

“It will be very interesting and cool when your students might have some problems in understanding the conversations from the other sides of the world for their first time, but you do not. It is just simple that you learn the language in a longer period of time and you have more friends from different contexts and you have spoken English to different accents before. Learners will pay attention to that sense and decide on their learning routes or what they need for a new future.” [IM025]

The values of exposure to multiculturalism would be very significant only if the language learners and their teachers have some recognitions, like the participant in this study. Although not much research has been done regarding the use of Skype for facilitating more exposure to the diverse cultural contexts, the compatible perspective with this study can be found in Smits and Janssenswillen (2019) ^{and} Bruna (2009) because teaching cultural varieties is very important to the success of learners. As from the extract IM022, students laugh when they have conversations with students or teachers from other contexts and cannot understand them. Their accents may be different and it may not be related to respect or similar issues. However, it should be obtained as a problem without mutual respecting rationalist, intellectual, political and cultural differences in multicultural contexts as compatible with Sengul (2015).

The practices of Skype for multicultural connections around the world

As quoted in the extract of ID036, the participant has made 32 connections to educators and classrooms in 10 countries including Japan, Poland, the USA, India, Spain, Vietnam, Argentina, Norway, Russia, and Canada. The findings indicate that Skype provides the counterparts of the connections more chances to have more awareness about the world and its multicultural aspects.

“I have to admit that Skype in Education being utilized in the classrooms is really helpful for different purposes. However, when my students realize that their English is so much different from what they have learned from the textbooks. They have some types of awareness for their learning autonomy. They may have some questions, they may want to research that, and they may also have new goals for their learning. The same English differs in various cultures and in itself.” [Im031]

In most connections, both learners and teachers have great opportunities to study and possibly join global projects like “No Hunger” and “Let’s practice English together”. However, the findings show that students in this context are still not interested in actively participating in these projects for their extra curriculum. The values from practices of Skype have been reduced accordingly.

“During the first time of having Skype about the project of No Hunger, students seem to be out of track. The language is somehow different from more standardized accents so they lost the information. In the repeated version of a different connection, the project manager of No Hunger enthusiastically introduces it again with more time for ways to connect, guides after the Skype and actions. However, no further interests or actions have been registered or recognized from the participant context.” [OA018]

Sitting in a classroom but learners can travel with the connections on the other side of the world is really a great adventure. Both the participant and learners in the research context have experienced real historical places or famous sightseeing through a screen. Skype through Virtual Field Trip (VFT) not only gives learners more direct motions and views but also creates a desire to commit similar VFT for other viewers in different connections.

“One of my impressions during my Skyping goal is that my learners have developed their eagerness and willingness to share their cultures with the world too. You can see how my students and I learn through Skype and the culture of sharing and understanding others in any place. Learners enjoyed the tour through the World behind the Wall from an educator from India. Although I am not sure that they understand the core meanings of the activity, they start to brainstorm things they can do or places they can show people when they connect with them again.” [Im021]

“I have never tried or developed any ideas to show anyone through Skype about places I live, work, or visit. I am always worried about the quality of data without a strong Wi-Fi connection. However, in a connection with a changing in the place of learning from a classroom to a tourist island, I connected my class in a tourist place with an educator from Gdansk. We were in the house of Coconut and everything is made by coconut trees. At that time, I just thought that it is something unique in my place with different kinds of tropical fruits on the trees. Different groups of my students took my iPad with that connection to move around the places and introduced what they know in English.” [Rj038]

Of all connections, it is a process of teaching, learning, and professional development for the participant. In every connection and every new form of Skype, the participant shows his ability to learn from trial and error and his enthusiastic attitudes to sharing and bringing multicultural conditions to his classrooms. All in all, the findings are compatible with Milans (2006) for a new chance of practices and different forms of interactions, in this case, the classroom is not inside four walls with the facilities and learning becomes more productive with more output directly through the Skype connections. In addition, this study shares the common values with Morgan (2013) when the connection with the

available Internet, this free service allows the learners to have VFT under the sense and the advantage of using teleconference in a remote area. Skype in this practice really facilitates learning and sharing from different cultures and perspectives. Similar to Morgan (2013), Yen, Houb & Changa (2013) also share the same goals, no matter with and without the facilitation of multiculturalism, the chances to enhance speaking skills using Skypes and other platforms.

The development of cultural curiosities through exposure to multicultural classrooms

Not racism, but the different color, voice, race, language, learning majors, food, fruits, vehicles, housing, education... all become the target of new phases for asking questions. Students become curious about cultural differences. The development of cultural curiosity may trigger their desire to learn and the exposure to multicultural classrooms would really be a surprise for the fast movement of the globalization.

"I am sure that students understand why in Russia students are diverse and each of them is usually from different countries including Vietnam. However, I do not think that they agree with the phenomenon of having individuals from different contexts in their place. They cannot see and understand that from their classrooms and reality. I believe that they are curious because they care about the possibility of having the same conditions as in European and ASEAN territories." [ljx042]

"At the end of most Mystery Skype, students usually ask why friends on the other side of the connection know that they are Vietnamese. In most guests-speaking Skype, they always want to know more about the cultures of the speakers – the place they live, the language they speak, the food they eat, the clothes they wear, the education they are in, and what similarity or difference would be. It seems that the participant has a well- prepared lesson so most curious quests have been responded." [Oa033]

If not separating the art of teaching in general to language teaching, one of the most important components of learning must be "curiosity" and "the desire to understand" which would facilitate the learners' learning process and autonomy (Rancière, 1991). In most teaching cases, developing curiosity for students is important. This viewpoint commonly shares the same ideology with Nguyen (2015) about the core of learning and the roles to activate learners' curiosity and learning desire (Rancière, 1991). When learners become aware of their curiosity in learning about multiculturalism, notions of cultural difference should be truly recognized as part of the essence of the human being in which the values of different perspectives should be enhanced for learners' process of significant learning (Nguyen, 2017)¹¹

Conclusions

Studying in recent days has not bound in the four walls of a classroom anymore. The development of technology has provided learners with favorable conditions for acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills, especially learning about the world in the most practical way. The awareness and knowledge of multiculturalism which helps contribute to the integration capabilities of one have become the priority of any education in such a flat world today. Regarding this, the application of Skype as one of the ICT in education demonstrates its effectiveness in promoting EFL learners' exposure to multiculturalism with the cheapest price from this case study should be encouraged for its use worldwide.

Teachers, one of the educational stakeholders are believed to play an active role in inspiring their learners to discover the other cultures so that they can adapt well to social situations related to multiculturalism in the era of the coexistence of diverse cultures nowadays. Learning, discovering places and sharing with each other from different countries regardless of race, religion, complexion, and cultures via Skype is worth considering for applying in an EFL classroom for learners' development of

multiculturalism. In other words, with the knowledge of multiculturalism, a learner can be prepared well for his later life or career.

Limitations

This study was conducted with a case study in only one year. The values of its influences may not be fully observed and analyzed in such a short time to generalize for possible lessons regarding the implementations of Skype for multiculturalism. For the data, it should be exploited deeper into the beneath layers of information with more cases and entries.

Recommendations and suggestions for future research

Despite such limitations, the study should focus on a broader aspect of distance learning regarding multiculturalism with a proper comparison among different digital tools and settings. More cases should be investigated from different contexts for possible diversity. More studies should be conducted about the users of Skype or other digital tools for teaching and learning not only in multiculturalism in such limitations of direct contacts but also in other learning demands.

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An exploratory study on application of WhatsApp for enhancing language learning skills in multicultural environment

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Abstract

Language learning cannot be done in isolation as it is a social process and helps in interacting with people of diverse culture and tradition. This Multiculturalism enables any language to become more alive, vibrant and meaningful. In today's context; social media applications or software, undoubtedly, directly or indirectly strengthens the process of language learning in multicultural milieu. The application of WhatsApp is growing at a very fast pace across the globe. It is gaining popularity among students as it enhances the LSRW skills in a multicultural and multilingual environment. English as a language has occupied a very prominent place in Indian society. As a Lingua Franca, it is being used by a great number of Indians and this number is increasing steadily but gradually. It is emerging as a link language for the people of North, South, East, and West, where regional languages like Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, and Kannada are widely spoken along with regional dialects. In this background, the present exploratory study discusses the application of WhatsApp for enhancing language learning skills in multicultural environment.

Keywords: language, learning, multicultural, multilingual, environment, WhatsApp, English

Introduction

The country like India is known for Unity in Diversity and since time immemorial it is an abode of various cultures and traditions. By keeping this fact in mind, the ancient Grammarians like Pāṇini and Bhartṛhari have also put emphasis on learning a language in a natural setting and thereby focusing on word and sound. Pāṇini was of the opinion that the meaning of the word is bound to change by the passage of time as also in varying contexts. The users who use the language in their mundane affairs are, therefore, the best judges who derive meaning from the words. On the other hand, Bhartṛhari accepts that a word is vital in any sentence and can have multiple meanings. He propounded the theory of *Sphoṭa* and it is the real experience of listening to a sentence and obtaining its multiple layers of meaning through perception. It is not something that can be inferred but something that can be perceived. The role and particular desired meaning of the word largely looms upon the intent of the speaker and the environment in which it is implied. (Hrodrigues 2008)

According to Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, Multiculturalism refers to a broad range of intellectual and political movements initiated by various ethnic and religious minorities, feminists and gays during the last two or three decades of the twentieth century. (Penguin Books, 2013) It is the co-existence of diverse cultures, where culture includes racial, religious, or cultural groups and is manifested in customary behaviors, cultural assumptions and values, patterns of thinking, and communicative styles.

In recent years, especially in rural and urban areas of India after the introduction of Android phones, people have started using social platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, WeChat, Hike, and Telegram and so on. These platforms have given momentum to the exchange of information and connectivity to the rest of the world. According to Mehta, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is very helpful in honing language skills Teaching of English as a Second Language (2012). Out of these Apps, WhatsApp has emerged as the most favorable app amidst the masses. Especially, the young generation is conversant with its multiple applications. It has gained popularity in no time by leaps and bounds as it is user-friendly and has got various features through which users can share all kinds of

information and messages in no time. It is observed that the previous studies were mostly having their focus on conceptual framework and based on language learning through IT enabled tools but only a few studies have been attempted on the application of WhatsApp in learning process so, in this context, the present research study may prove to be significant for the academic institutions, educators, trainers and for learners as well to explore new ways of learning through WhatsApp.

The use of WhatsApp is growing across the globe and according to the latest information available from different resources, approximately two billion people are using WhatsApp and it is the second largest social platform/social network after Facebook. Among students, it is quite popular as they are very familiar with the varied features of WhatsApp. The one of the most important aspects of this social media application is that it enables the users to have face to face communication/interaction through video calling which is earlier possible only in the physical presence of both the parties. The other important aspect of it is that it is accessible twenty-four into seven into three sixty-five days, irrespective of any geographical and cultural distances. It is also a boon for creating collaboration through different groups in a closed space to reach to a large number of users. Thus, it covers a large number of area and masses. In ELT (English Language Teaching) environment, the use of WhatsApp is growing its visibility and acceptance. WhatsApp clusters can be created in ELT Classrooms for working in collaborative manner and overcoming challenges of multicultural and multilingual environment. In India, around four hundred million people are using WhatsApp due to its user-friendly features. According to Patel, the ultimate goal of multimedia language teaching is to promote students' motivation and learning interest, which can be a practical way to get them involved in the language learning. The process of English communication learning will be more student-centered but less time-consuming. Therefore, the teaching quality will be improved and students' applied English communication can be effectively cultivated (2013).

Some key usages of WhatsApp for language learning in multicultural environment

Following are the main usages of WhatsApp for language learning in multicultural environment for the teachers and learners as well

For the teachers

- For creating a congenial learning environment;
- For developing a sense of belongingness for the culture of the self as well as respect and regard for others' culture;
- For making language learning challenging, live, interesting and convenient;
- For using IT and software based technology for making language learning effective and impressive;
- For sharpening all the basic four language learning skills;
- For organizing group and peer activities for increasing active participation of learners.

For the learners

- In understanding and sharing information in powerful, fast and effective manner;
- In reaching, sharing and understanding the socio-cultural environment of others;
- In improving relationship and developing a sense of better understanding;
- In providing positive and prompt feedback;
- In enhancing all the basic four language learning skills in a very challenging multicultural environment for personal and professional growth;
- In using technology for making process of language learning convenient, accessible and pragmatic.

Review of literature

Mehta (2012) discussed the ways in which mobile phone technology can be incorporated in learning English language. Patel (2013) analyzed the necessity of multimedia technology in communication skill

teaching and also brings out the problems faced by using these technologies. It also aims to make English teachers aware of the strategies to use it in an effective manner. Bansal and Joshi (2014) studied the attitude of the students towards WhatsApp learning.

Rathore and Mehta (2015) explored the sharpening communication skills of engineering students via multifaceted digital tools. Said (2015) determined the effectiveness of using a WhatsApp Messenger as one of mobile learning technique to develop students' writing skills. Maria (2016) identified whether the use of social networking sites or applications can help motivate undergraduate college level L2 learners of English to use their reading and writing skills thus enhancing their skills with reduced anxiety.

Srilakshminarayana (2016) examined the preference level of the students given to the app as compared to traditional means of communication and also among the social networks and studied the perception of students on the usage of the app in daily communication and for specific academic related activities and to identify the factors that motivate students prefer the usage of WhatsApp for communication.

Naveen and Sudhansh (2016) investigated the behavior of WhatsApp users and reflect the possible ways in which WhatsApp can be helpful in education, social services and governance. Mona (2017) discussed the factors in which WhatsApp is useful to enhance students learning and enthusiasm as it helped students to develop English skills, enriched their vocabulary and learn from their mates' mistakes. Mohammad (2017) found out the effect of using "WhatsApp messenger" in learning English language among university students.

Khaled (2018) highlighted the perceptions of WhatsApp among EFL Students, and its potential benefits in ELT practicum. Pratika (2018) studied the impact of using WhatsApp by exploring, describing and analyzing students' opinion in learning English through WhatsApp. Elias (2018) examined perception about using WhatsApp in learning vocabulary. Ali, Patintingan and Indahyanti (2018) revealed that the use of WhatsApp is highly supporting in learning outside the classroom as it provides varied progress. Jaroslav (2019) studied whether mobile applications used in the learning of English as a foreign language are beneficial and/or effective.

Research methodology and objectives

India is primarily known as the land of villages where more than seventy percent of its population lives in villages. India is a vast country and has various languages, cultures, and traditions and value norms. Learning any language in such a diverse multicultural background is quite challenging and interesting too. Madhya Pradesh is located in the heart of India and the most used language of this state is Hindi and its related varied forms of dialects. To cater to the growing demands of the professional world and keeping pace with the changing time, English is being taught from Nursery level in all the schools (Public and Private). The impact of Mother tongue is quite apparent in the use of language. There is no standard form of English in practice that can be followed and practice across the state.

The present study is conducted during September-October 2019 in a Graduate College of Bhopal, capital of Madhya Pradesh. A well-structured questionnaire was prepared on the basis of literature review with close-ended questions. After each stage, feedback was obtained and then questionnaire was modified. Majority of the feedback from the experts provided positive remarks and certified that the questionnaire was acceptable for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed among eighty students. Out of which, fifty-six questionnaires were returned and finally fifty fully filled questionnaire were taken for this study. Out of fifty respondents, twenty-nine are boys and twenty-one are girls. They belonged to the age group ranging from eighteen to twenty-one years. The Random Sampling method is used for conducting the present study. This method was used because it was not known previously as to whether a particular student will be asked to fill the questionnaire. Considering the constraints, it was decided to conduct the study based on sample size of 50 respondents. Also the basic aim of doing the research was academic; hence most convenient way was selected. The questionnaires were collected,

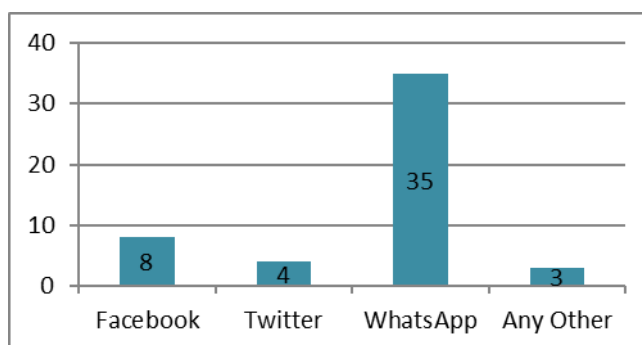
responses were recorded, tabulated, analyzed and on the basis of that conclusions were drawn and suggestions were provided.

In this research both primary and secondary data has been used. Primary data has been collected from students studying in ABC College of Bhopal. Primary data has been collected through survey method. The primary data is collected on the response received from the given questionnaires. The secondary information was collected through newspapers, journals, magazines and websites. The objectives of the present study are to discuss the features of WhatsApp for enhancing LSRW Skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing), to review the literature related to the use of multimedia technology in language learning and to study the impact of multicultural environment in language learning.

Data analysis

The respondents were given questionnaires to share their experience of using WhatsApp as a tool, for enhancing their language learning skills and collected questionnaires were thoroughly reviewed, recorded and analyzed.

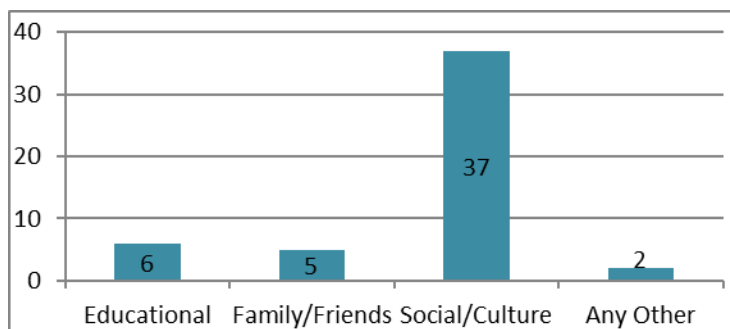
Figure 1: Which Social App do you use for your communication?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

The result clearly indicates that the number of WhatsApp users is higher than any other social media application. It is revealed that for communication WhatsApp is more user-friendly, easy, accessible and effective. Facebook and Twitter secured second and third place respectively.

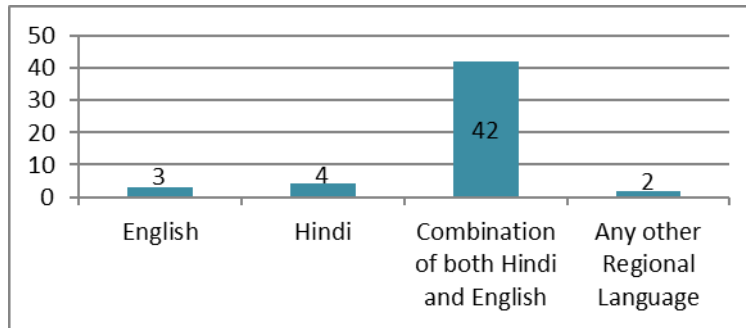
Figure 2: State to what type of WhatsApp Group are you associated with?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

More than seventy percent of respondents have responded that they are associated with socio-cultural group which is followed by Educational/Informative group on the second spot. Family/Friends group is also very popular among students and it secured third place.

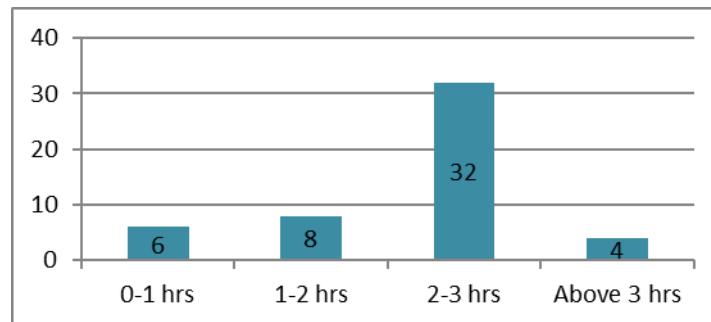
Figure 3: Which language do you prefer while transmitting information on WhatsApp?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

The result reveals that mostly students favored combination of both Hindi/English as their language for transmitting information through WhatsApp. Hindi and English language secured second and third spot respectively. The other regional languages are least preferred by the respondents.

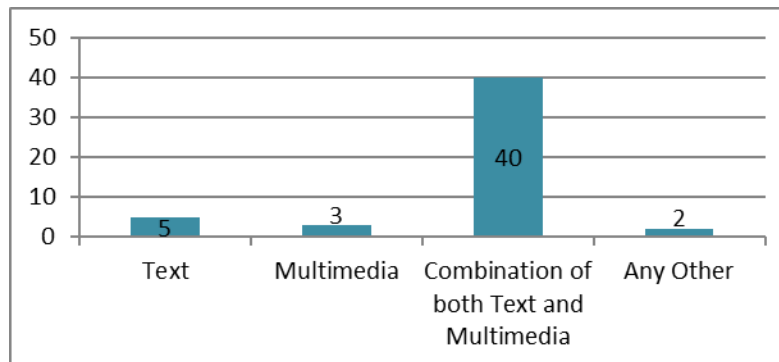
Figure 4: How many hours do you spend on WhatsApp?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

The results clearly indicate that mostly students spent at least two to three hours per day on WhatsApp. Though, very less percent of respondents spent more than three hours using WhatsApp.

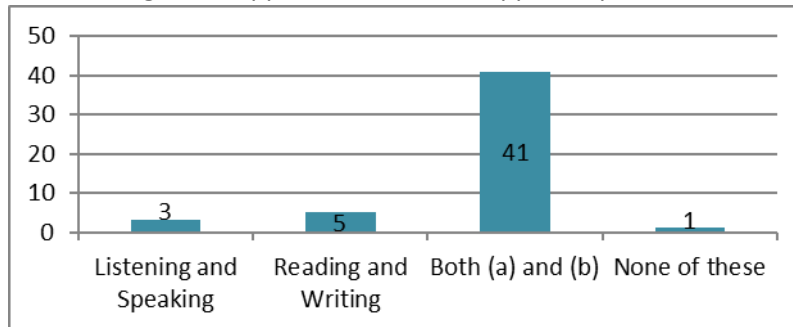
Figure 5: In which format do you transmit information on WhatsApp?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

The results reveal that eighty percent of the respondents have preferred combination of both text and multimedia for transmitting information on WhatsApp. After this, respondents preferred the medium of text, multimedia and other respectively.

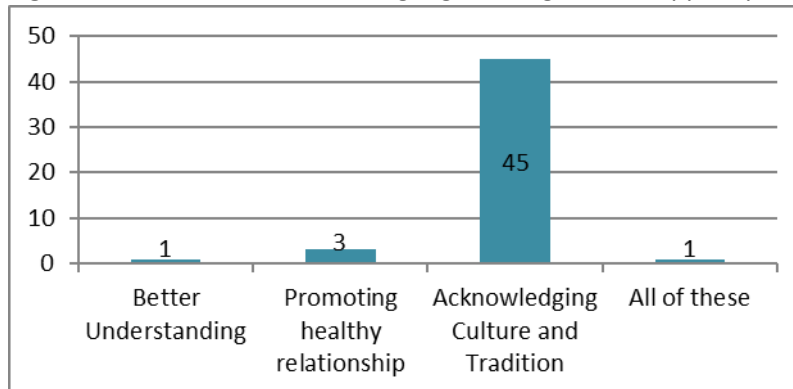
Figure 6: Application of WhatsApp is helpful for.



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

More than seventy-nine percent of respondents find that application of WhatsApp enables them to develop their latent skills.

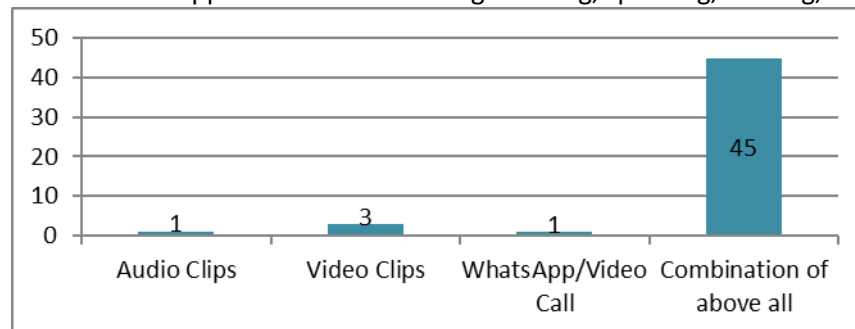
Figure 7: The effective use of language through WhatsApp helps in.



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

The result clearly indicates that the effective use of language through WhatsApp adds in acknowledging culture and tradition in a deeper way. Ninety percent of the respondents agree that WhatsApp helps in acknowledging culture and tradition.

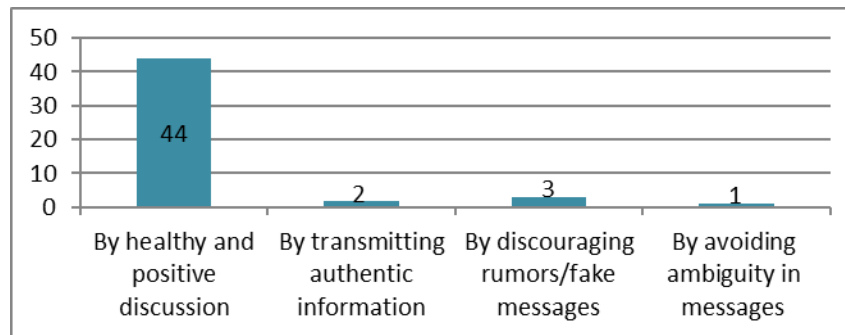
Figure 8: Application of WhatsApp is useful in enhancing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

Ninety percent of respondents feel that combination of audio and video clips as well as WhatsApp/Video call helps them to listen with more accuracy, to speak with more confidence, reading with deeper understanding and writing flawlessly and with less grammatical errors in language.

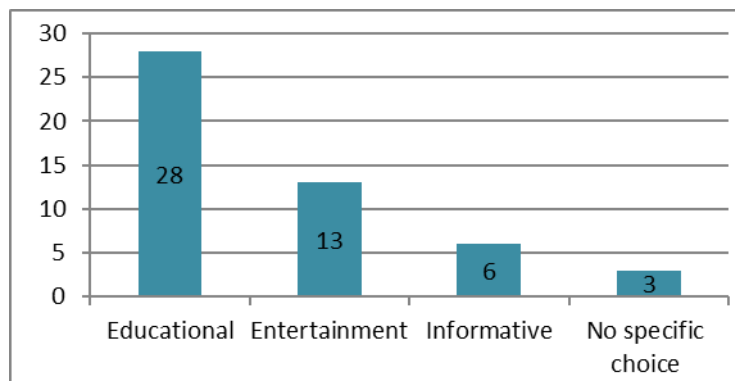
Figure 9: How do you understand and promote others culture while using WhatsApp?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

Eighty-Eight respondents believe that by healthy and positive discussion, one can understand and promote others culture and it is more psychological in nature as it is linked with understanding the behavior, nature and attitude of others.

Figure 10: What is the nature of WhatsApp messages that you transmit?



Source: Data collected through questionnaire

Fifty-Five percent of the respondents who are in fact college students through their different socio-cultural group share messages ingrained with educational/academic/professional background. The respondents also actively exchange messages related to entertainment as well.

SWOT analysis of WhatsApp in multicultural environment

SWOT analysis is a management technique which is used to determine strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which are involved in any operation or planning so that a concrete decision can be taken to accomplish the set objectives. In this study, SWOT of application of WhatsApp is done on account of interaction that has been made by the researchers with the students during the course of study and is also based on a close study of literature review and results of the study that indicate do's and don'ts of WhatsApp application in language learning process in multicultural environment.

Table 1: SWOT Analysis based on the result of the study.

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
User-friendly	Risk of excessive use	Open-mindedness	Cyber Security
Free and easily accessible	Health problems	Better understanding of multicultural diversity	Information Theft
Time Saving	Rumors	Sharpening LSRW Skills	Misuse of technology
Economical	Authenticity issues	Face to face interaction	Backup Issues
Feature of Group Chat	Reliance on data plan/wifi	Instant messaging	Awareness issues
Feature of various file formats	Not diversified	Active participation	Malware and Virus issues
Audio and Video Calls	Breach of data	Learner-Centric	Free availability of Similar applications
Available for all Platforms	Promotion of False news	Growing number of users	Misuse of data and pictures

Proposed classroom activities at the graduate level

The proposed classroom activities are based on the findings of the study so that a trainer/teacher can conduct them in his/her classroom so as to ensure viable and practical use of WhatsApp. These activities are model activities in which a teacher/trainer may bring variation as per the requirements of the class.

Activity-1

- The class has to be divided into two groups A and B. A should be forwarded video clips without any dialogues by group B and group A is to be asked to look at the video, prepare the script, read out the script and play the assign roles. The group B will be asked to monitor and evaluate the activity and provide feedback or remark.

Activity-2

- The whole class will form a WhatsApp group of the students and the group administrator will be the in-charge teacher and he/she will post a passage and student are asked to read and record the passage and write the passage on similar theme as per their understanding of the passage and its interwoven culture. In order to bring variation in the activity, the teacher can also ask the students to record their video in relation to recital of any poem, conversation from any literary article and compare it with the standard version available on social platform or Multimedia tools like YouTube.

Activity-3

- The whole class will form a WhatsApp group and the group administrator can organize group activities such as Role-play, Reading Paragraphs, and Poetry Recital, Writing messages or small piece of prose. The administrator can also forward quotes, capsule novels, small poems, short stories and the like.

Conclusions and suggestions

As already stated, very few studies have been attempted on application of using WhatsApp in enhancing language learning. So, only few aspects have been explored by previous studies like as using games for Language Learning, using audio-video tools, or making class interactive through video callings but nothing systematic/ practical aspects have been highlighted by the studies done earlier. In this

direction, the present research study may be very useful for pedagogical objectives. The results of the study indicate that the application of WhatsApp as a learning tool can prove to be highly beneficial in multicultural environment. It helps in the development of mutual respect for each other's culture. It reunites learners of different cultures, religions, origins and different ideologies. Its applications help in understanding cultural and linguistic diversity. It reduces stereotype thinking and develops creative, original and broad thinking. It helps the learners to work in collaboration so that they can understand and share their information in more natural and rational manner among their peer group and can seek guidance or clarification from their trainers as well. It provides them real life experiences on their fingertips. Respect for cultural values is the foundation stone for developing a perfect multicultural environment for making learning process smooth. Exchange of information takes place on language scale as well as cultural scale. By using applications like WhatsApp, it is reflected in this study that students become more aware about their mother tongue and target culture as well. Learning becomes more learner-centric if they learn in a diverse and dynamic learning environment. Learners show more empathy, become more concerned about their as well as others liking and disliking, temperament, attitude, psychology, interest, manners, socio-cultural norms and values and thus prepare themselves to face the ever-growing challenges of multilingual and multicultural environment.

The study also finds that a teacher/trainer can make his/her language class more interesting and happening by using WhatsApp application in promoting discussions and debates. WhatsApp may prove to be a boon for enhancing Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing Skills as it has ample scope and space for making information live, attractive, interesting and meaningful. The results show that a good number of students not using neither English nor Hindi but combination of both i.e. Hinglish. In such case, it is quite challenging for the teachers to shift their focus on using English but as they are already using certain terms, phrases and expressions in English and hence it requires only proper guidance, encouragement and motivation from the teachers' end to use English more than Hinglish which may not be useful for them in their personal and professional endeavors rather it may prove to be obstacle for their all-round growth in this globalized world. It helps the learners to improve their LSRW skills in group in collaboration. Teachers can enhance active participation of his/her learners by providing them assignments, tests and other elite tasks. Vocabulary of the students can also be increased and grammatical errors can be downsized. Lexical, morphological and syntactical activities can be multiplied in this multicultural environment. Obtaining feedback is convenient and proper monitoring of language learning activities can be made easy.

A teacher can also extend his/her availability by use of this application. Otherwise, in traditional classes, teaching hours are fixed. Irrelevant information can be monitored by the Group administrator and necessary instructions can be passed to the participants to discuss only relevant issues. WhatsApp has brought new features in which the Group Administrator can restrict the sending of messages and only administrators can be able to send the information. Moreover, administrator can block and report the participant for posting irrational and irrelevant information which may cause impediment in the process of learning. Posted Information, if does not match the interest and liking of the participant can also be deleted. For online/distance-learning applications of WhatsApp, appears to be boon for both the teachers and learners as well. Student can also be benefitted by keeping certain restrictions in mind. It is well said that excess is bad if it is used beyond the limit and it may cause certain harms to the learners like restlessness, anxiety, less physical activities and issues leading to severe vision problems. Use of WhatsApp is increasing amidst students and along with various advantages it has limitations too. Despite of its limitations, students spared their time on WhatsApp rather in any other physical activity. So, they have to be very cautious while using this application for boosting their confidence and reducing their hesitation towards language learning in multicultural environment. Students should be encouraged to post their views, ask their questions, and clarify their doubts and to provide their feedback on the raised issues and during the exchange of any information. Involvement of good number of participants enables

them to develop inter-cultural understanding. It is also noted in the study that students also become interested in understanding reading comprehensions and become friendly towards their fellow participants.

The results of the study highlight that most of the respondents agree that WhatsApp helps in acknowledging culture and tradition. The application of WhatsApp also promotes certain qualities among learners such as tolerance, open-mindedness, and listening with patience. Similarly, a teacher can also inculcate an environment of collaborative learning by becoming attentive and active during his/her teaching process. By posting positive and constructive messages in relation to language learning, teachers and students can develop a holistic multicultural environment based on trust, honesty, integrity, reliability, transparency. Application of WhatsApp is found very handy in multicultural environment as it serves multifaceted purposes to share information and messages in diverse cultural background. This is also evident to note that combination of both text and multimedia is quite imperative for developing better understanding and bond of relationship among the participants in the backdrop of multicultural setting. The results of the study proved that WhatsApp can be used as a pedagogical tool for enhancing language learning skills in a multicultural environment. Thus, application of WhatsApp can be an ideal and perfect match in today's context if it is used judiciously and with utmost care; it will facilitate ample space for acceptance of multicultural and multilingual identities and it will cultivate a sense of better understanding for others culture, social norms and traditional values. Ethical and value based communication is the need of the hour as it will help people to connect with more trust, transparency and reliability.

Limitations

The study has been conducted with a small number of samples due to paucity of time and in order to make it more competent it is restricted to city of Bhopal.

Future scope of the study

Similar studies can be conducted by exploring cultural issues/ conflict/ variation through usage of other multimedia/social platform tool such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and so on. Empirical studies can be attempted to assess the performance of the learners before the induction of such technology/software enabled tools and to evaluate the performance after induction of the same. So, a comparative analysis can be obtained and their outcome may be very helpful for application and monitoring of such tools.

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Multicultural education policies in the Spanish region of Castilla La Mancha

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Abstract

Multiculturalism as the coexistence in the same society of persons from different cultures poses a challenge to our contemporary societies. The role of education is basic to face the opportunities and potential problems of multiculturalism. In Spain educational system is decentralized, therefore, the different autonomous regions can establish laws related to education within their territories. The model of multicultural education in Castilla La Mancha is directly related to social cohesion and has a commitment to inclusive education. This implies the transformation of teaching practices, as well as changes in the schools' culture and organization. Intercultural education pursues equity, intercultural competence, social transformation and the fight against discrimination. An inclusive school is characterized by a high commitment of teachers and a positive attitude towards heterogeneous groups, because they are the reflection of our society. This will result into an effort to offer human, material or technical, support in the ordinary classroom.

Keywords: multiculturalism, social change, education, educational inclusion

Introduction

In the last decades the Spanish educational system reflects a cultural diversity defined by the traditional Spanish cultural reality, currently organized in *autonomous regions*; the progressive integration of Spain in the European Union; the gypsy minority and recent immigration (Muñoz Sedano 1997). These fundamentals should orientate the design of multicultural education programs that could respond to the diversity of Spanish society. However, as Aguado Odina (2000) argues, educational systems, agents and institutions do not recognize the deeper need for change that goes beyond certain surface measures and that affects the culture itself experienced and transmitted by the school.

Together with the change experienced in the Spanish schools, the Castilla La Mancha region has experienced deep changes in the composition of its society and schooling system. The schools have students who are increasingly diverse in origin. Different nationalities, cultures and religions are mixed in the classrooms. As a result, the educational system must be adapted to the new reality. This situation has also been experienced in the rest of the world. Migratory phenomena have been producing multicultural societies, and in each of them assimilation is occurring with different types of traits.

The OCDE (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) elaborated the TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey 2018). The survey concluded that it is essential that governments and educational administrations are aware of the need of training teachers to educate in multicultural environments. This specific preparation is fundamental, in order to adequately address the differences presented by the students from different cultures, both in their previous knowledge and skills and in strategies. As explained in the TALIS report, multiculturalism is based on the premise that diversity can enrich schools as it fosters knowledge and respect for other cultures, strengthen intercultural skills and value diversity. Cultural diversity can be seized to create better citizens and, therefore, a better society. Taking into consideration the common culture policies promoted by the European Union to favor the coexistence of European citizens, with persons from other countries, there is a need for professionals dedicated to education in different teaching contexts, increasingly aware and able to apply strategies that contribute to these purposes.

In a broader context, intercultural education demands a series of actions that must be implemented for all the people in a society, and not only for members of one of the cultures. It involves active citizenship, so that the benefits can reach the whole society. This approach is known as the holistic

model, which is integrated by the intercultural and socio-critical approach (Banks 1986, 1989). It implies the involvement of the entire school in multicultural education. It also emphasizes the fact that its application must be carried out with all the students and not only with foreign or minority students.

In this model, the contribution of the school to social construction is underlined, involving students in a critical analysis of social reality and in action projects that suppose a fight against inequality. According to Banks (1986, 1989), it is important to create school environments where the members have and democratic, non-racist values and attitudes. The school must have norms and principles that reflect cultural and ethnic diversity. Likewise, the curriculum and teaching materials must contain diverse ethical and cultural perspectives.

Linguistic pluralism and diversity have also to be valued in school. It is important that effective ways and styles of motivation are used, not only with students of the host culture, but also with groups of students of different social classes, origins or ethnicity. It is crucial that teachers and students acquire the skills and perspectives necessary to recognize the various forms of racism and develop actions to remove them. Banks (1989) insisted on the critical dimension of the curriculum, which should help students to develop skills needed to examine critically the current political and economic structure.

Since in the year 2000 Castilla La Mancha took over the competences related to education, many changes regarding multiculturalism have been introduced in this region. A wide network of support has been created, intending that teachers work together, promoting professional cooperation, and that students provide help to other classmates.

Some of the first steps included the creation of the *Language Support Teams* for Immigrant or Refugee Students in 2002. The School Board of Castilla La Mancha approved them, initially as experimental teams.

Theoretical background

Firstly, it is important to clarify the terminology, as we can find the same meaning expressed with different words. The terms of multicultural and intercultural education have been discussed for some time. Multicultural education and intercultural education are often used as synonyms (Nieto, 2006; Hill, 2007). In the multicultural and intercultural literature it is often unclear what the concepts mean and whether they are referring to the same or different things.

If we revise the *UNESCO guidelines on intercultural education* (2005: 17), 'multicultural' would describe the culturally diverse nature of human society, and refers to ethnic or national culture, including linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity, without including aspects such as gender or race; whereas intercultural "presupposes multiculturalism and results from intercultural exchange and dialogue on the local, regional, national or international level". This perception can also be found in the Council of Europe and the European Union Commission, which are including in their policies the term intercultural education.

This theoretical distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism can show the term 'multicultural' as more static, describing just a situation with a diversity of cultures, while 'intercultural' is used to indicate the interaction and relationship between different cultural groups in a culturally diverse setting (Hill 2007: 250). The fact is that, in practice, both terms can be considered as synonyms. Therefore, in this paper we will focus on the term multiculturalism.

The concept of multicultural education started to be used at the end of 1960s and the beginning of 1970s. It started as a new insight towards education and related to the concepts of school normalization and integration. Its main proposal is that all the students must have the same opportunities in education, independently from their racial, ethnic, social class, or gender background (Banks 2001a, 2001b, Mwonga 2005 in Yilmaz 2016). This innovative perspective aims to achieve a wider change in schools, fostering equal opportunities. Reaching equal educational opportunities for all the students will result in

the improvement and sustainability of democracy, and therefore improve the existing social structure (Gorski 2009, Kim 2011).

As Day (2000) indicates, Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971 to achieve unit through diversity. This country was a pioneer, establishing, in 2002, the 27th of June as the Canadian Multiculturalism Day. This day celebrates the diversity of Canada highlighting values like democracy, equality and mutual respect. Multiculturalism recognizes Canada's diverse races, religions, languages and traditions enrich this shared national identity.

Also, in other countries the path of multiculturalism has been followed during the last third of the twentieth century and the first decades of this one. In Europe, different actions taken by the European Union had an effect in legislations of its countries. According to the definition given in the European Commission webpage, multiculturalism is:

A policy that endorses the principle of cultural diversity and supports the right of different cultural and ethnic groups to retain distinctive cultural identities ensuring their equitable access to society, encompassing constitutional principles and commonly shared values prevailing in the society. (European commission 2019)

We can find different actions at a European, national and regional level, concerning multilingual education. At a State level, it is important to mention the Spanish Education Act of 2006 (LOE), modified by the Spanish Quality of Education Act in 2013 (LOMCE). In both laws, several measures are included towards a multicultural view of teaching. Among the key competences established, the social and civic competence is a valuable tool to educate pupils in the awareness of social and multicultural values. Also, the stage objectives established for primary and secondary education focus on different aspects related to multicultural issues, such as knowing, understanding and respecting different cultures and the differences among people, equal rights and opportunities for men and women and non-discrimination of people with disabilities (Stage Objectives of the Curriculum Decree 126/2014, Article 7).

According to Rodríguez Navarro et al. (2010) there have been many initiatives about intercultural education in Spain and intercultural teaching practices have become a reality throughout the country in the last decades.

Attention to linguistic and cultural diversity is a key aspect for the integration of students from other countries, especially as a vehicle to access the curriculum. Schools usually have the linguistic measures included in their welcome plans. These actions are carried out not only as a learning of the new language but also as a transitory process of adaptation to the new environment and of knowledge to the cultural codes of the school (Rodríguez Navarro & García Monge 2006, 2009).

This is included in welcome plans to host the new students, as recommended by the current legislation (Spanish Education laws LOE 2006 and LOMCE 2013). They are elaborated considering the entire new population as well as immigrant groups. That is, the difference between generalized measures or specialized ones related to immigrants. Some regions have their own plans at a regional level to carry out this reception of new students. In the case of Castilla La Mancha, the reception is developed within the *plans of attention to diversity*. There are also specific socio-linguistic and personal reception classrooms to support this aspect, such as the teachers of the linguistic teams.

There is not a specific legal corpus regarding multicultural education in Castilla La Mancha, unlike other regions, as the Andalusia Law 9/1999, on Solidarity in Education, which reflects the coexistence with the gypsy community and points out the increase of students belonging to other cultures. This law aims to attend this source of diversity and cultural plurality by promoting specific mechanisms and strategies that enhance in the schools the value of interculturality and to develop in the community educational attitudes of respect and communication among cultures.

Another relevant issue is teacher training, as it is directly linked to the success of educational actions regarding multiculturalism. The regional educational administrations have adopted some measures

preparing teachers for newcomer students with different backgrounds to their schools. Although it is not a priority in university teacher training, different formats have been provided to ensure that this training is available for career teachers and specifically on issues related to interculturality. There is a training offer for teachers, advisors and education authorities, even with immigrant associations that carry out different workshops, seminars, postgraduate courses, and training in schools. There are also courses on this subject, specifically intended for management teams, to work on the different forms of organization of the centers and actions that their governing body can carry out. It is important to generate networks and find common spaces to collaborate with the Universities, more specifically, the faculties of education.

Methodology

In order to analyze the evolution of the multicultural policies related to education in CLM, a bibliographic research has been conducted, focusing on more general aspects related to multiculturalism and on more specific issues related to the region. The outcome was that there has been no previous study investigating the multicultural education at the regional level.

In different search engines, we intended to find relevant laws, documents, reports, articles or any other kind of material which could be helpful in order to contextualize multiculturalism in the reality and recent history of Castilla La Mancha.

Searching the concept multiculturalism in the bibliographic platform Dialnet (28th November 2019) we find 1446 documents according with this topic. In the same way, when we use the same term in Spanish, “multiculturalismo”, the results that we get are 8054. Continuing with this research, in the webpage of the Spanish Government based in PhD, there are 19 doctoral theses about multiculturalism. The last “scanner” of the term made in Google Scholar, we find 595 articles in English and 48300 in Spanish. So, we can assert that the topic interests a lot of people, considering the raw data.

A selection was done on the basis of their relevance, focusing on the topic of multicultural education in Castilla La Mancha. Surprisingly, no articles analyzing the evolution of these policies in the region were found. In this way, this article offers the first brief compendium of the related legal framework and actions developed in the region regarding multiculturalism.

Results and discussion

In this section, the findings, in terms of sources obtained through desk-research methodology are going to be analyzed. The main legal framework at a Spanish and Regional level, including multicultural education regulations and the actions taken in Castilla La Mancha, will be presented.

Until the approval of the 1990 Spanish Education Law (LOGSE), there was no effective development of multicultural topics in the schools curricula. With the 1990 Law, the objectives and contents of the different areas in Primary and Secondary Education (Social and Natural Sciences, Spanish Language, or Foreign Languages) included various references to interculturality.

The LOE Law (2006) and the current Education Law LOMCE (2013), which modified the previous Law, present a differentiated spirit, regarding the multicultural character of schools and the society (Peñalva & Sotés 2009). Multicultural Education is included since the 2006 Spanish Law of Education as a cross-curricular topic, in Primary and Secondary education. This legal framework at a national level is the basis to develop regional laws and instructions for each Autonomous community and school.

In Castilla La Mancha, the Order of July 8, 2002 regulated experimentally the structure, and intervention model of the *Language Support Teams* for immigrant or refugee students. The target group was the one of foreign pupils without knowledge of the Spanish language and newcomers in the schools of the region. Teachers from non-university levels supported by public funds would teach them. Since this law was approved, these teams are responsible for facilitating the development of basic linguistic and communicative skills to immigrant students, whose mother tongue is not Spanish, so that they can

take part in the teaching process normally. These teams are made up of teachers whose teaching hours are adjusted to what is established for the rest of the teaching staff. Their timetable includes, the work with the students, as well as the coordination sessions with the management team, tutors, families and the educational counselling services. They also have to coordinate with the rest of teams participating in the program. The target ages of the linguistic support teachers, prioritizes the Primary Education and Mandatory Secondary Education stages (from six to sixteen years) and must conform to the following criteria:

- The period of attention to students consists of several sessions, some days a week. The rest of the school hours, students remain in their class;
- The intervention can be done both individually and in groups that may consist of students from different schools, taking into account certain criteria of homogenization, age and linguistic competence;
- The schedule for teachers among schools is done taking into account times and avoiding trips between educational centers in the same morning or afternoon. The headmasters of schools with immigrant students with no knowledge of Spanish must apply for the intervention of the *linguistic support team*. This can be done at any time during the course.

The basis for developing the multicultural education in Castilla La Mancha is the document proposed by the Department of Education of the region, approved in 2006, The *Multicultural Education Document*. The proposal highlights everyone's right to education in conditions of equality and assumes the commitment to compensate social differences and promote the practice of intercultural and democratic education.

The response to student diversity is ruled, in the region, by the principles of standardization, integration and educational inclusion, compensation of inequalities, empowerment and interculturality.

Thus, priority is given to normalization and general measures. This determines that the response must be organized in each school and must have as a reference the educational project of each school. The educational response to diversity must be part of the integrated responses addressed to all students. This can be possible in the framework of a school that provides also diverse, flexible and appropriate answers to achieve the maximum development of pupils.

Certain schools have a high number of students with specific educational needs, with greater problems of coexistence, absenteeism or with lower rates of school success. This means that some schools must develop their educational action in complex socio-economical environments, characterized by exclusion, inequality, social and school marginalization. These parameters constitute different starting conditions to respond to the needs of their students and of the educational community. This must be considered in terms of additional support by the educational authorities.

According to the *Multicultural Education Document*, the Castilla-La Mancha Education Department assumes the commitment to support, by providing human and budget resources and the necessary measures of academic organization and curricular changes in the schools. This especially in the ones that have greater starting difficulties and that are committed to actions that guarantee educational responses in conditions of equality and quality.

The Castilla-La Mancha proposal on multiculturalism aims to promote educational projects in the schools that can transform the reality by implementing inclusive educational practices with the collaboration of all agents and sectors of the educational communities.

The proposed document for intercultural education and social cohesion implies a model of commitment to inclusive schools, aiming to transform teaching practices and the organization of schools. A series of schools took part in the first phase of the application of the model.

Another relevant element is the Education Law of Castilla La Mancha (2010), which adapts the State Education Law LOE to the region. In the preamble, it mentions that it is necessary to develop educational models based on *interculturality* and educate in diversity with equity and social cohesion. The term is

also mentioned among the guiding principles of the education system (Article 4), and among the objectives (Article 6), as well as in the response to diversity of students (Article 120). Especially relevant are the principles of equity of opportunities, universal access, standardization, school inclusion, social integration, flexibility and interculturality.

The 54/2014 Curriculum Decree in Castilla La Mancha mentioned multiculturalism in relation to social and civic values. It assumes some fundamentals: the teaching of emotional intelligence, the notions of good, freedom and responsibility, are formed in the first years of life. Therefore, if students develop social and civic skills, as well as interpersonal and intercultural ones, their learning will be filled with sense. Hence, it is very important to promote their development from childhood through the behavior stimulation and acceptance of the rules of coexistence that strengthen their identity in a plural society. Guiding students towards decision-making based on moral judgments, problem solving and collaborative conflicts will be a step forwards their multicultural competences.

Multiculturalism is also mentioned in the subject of Physical Education, within the frame of cooperative learning, linking the need to live and interact in society, allowing increased interaction between students, improving communication and the developing interdependence, interculturality, motivation and positive attitudes towards the teaching and learning process.

In February 2018, the Official Gazette of Castilla-La Mancha published a resolution that converted into law previous approaches and protocols used by school counselors to provide individualized and extraordinary measures for the educational inclusion of students in the regions' schools. These measures were included in the so-called school guides. After this change, since the 2020-2021 course the new regulation will be mandatory.

The adaptation of these school guides, giving them a legal format is done with the Decree 85/2018, which regulates the educational inclusion of students in Castilla-La Mancha and rules how schooling should take place. The resolution is a regulation that develops the decree of inclusion and makes clear the actions for students who need extraordinary measures.

The *Reception guide for immigrants with intellectual disabilities in Castilla-La Mancha* is another document offering attention to diversity in a multicultural dimension. It considers the needs of those students who have any kind of learning impairments, addressing additionally a new target group that had not been specified before, the one of immigrant children with special needs.

Another relevant initiative was the creation in 2014 of the *Network of Multicultural Schools*, an online platform to exchange experiences and support related to multicultural education among schools in the region. It was a result of the Sensitization Campaign *Stop Racism: educate to find us, educate without exclusion*. It aimed at teachers and students within the sensitization program for equal opportunities and intercultural living in education. It fostered education without exclusion, created by some trade unions with funding from the Department of Employment and Social Security of Castilla La Mancha. The initiative was co-financed by the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

The purpose of this campaign was to move towards an intercultural and inclusive school model, providing guidelines to prevent situations of racism, xenophobia and other practices of discrimination in the classroom. Several workshops were carried out, including the participation and expression of emotions and thoughts. Students were trained in attitudes and values of respect, equality, autonomy and mutual recognition. Regarding the collaborating schools, it intended to establish a means of communication of this classroom program with the schools, to be able to stimulate the exchange and participation of the schools. To this end, a blog was created, as an exchange and support platform among schools.

The *Network of Multicultural Schools* includes the following activities or contents:

- Information and access to materials, documentation, teaching tools, etc.;
- Dissemination of articles, positive experiences or good practices, reports, etc.;
- Dynamization and mediation between centers to share information;

- Training information aimed at teachers. Online training;
- Participation in studies and research on interculturality and school.

In addition to this, during the last years, different support programs for intercultural education and social cohesion have been approved in Castilla La Mancha. These are the most relevant ones:

- Hispanic-Moroccan program of teaching Arabic language and Moroccan culture.

- Romanian Language, Culture and Civilization Program. This program is developed in accordance with Article 1 of the Agreement on Cultural and Educational Cooperation between Spain and Romania, signed in Bucharest on January 25, 1995 (BOE 03/15/1996). It is preferably aimed at Romanian students of Primary and Secondary Education, enrolled in schools maintained with public funds of Castilla-La Mancha, who wish to take the optional subject of Romanian Language, Culture and Civilization. It is open to the participation of students, families and Spanish teachers.

- *Colour Tales* (Cuentos de colores) consists of intercultural workshops and storytelling for the promotion of tolerance and coexistence between the different peoples that live in Castilla-La Mancha. It is developed, with the collaboration of the Department of Education by the "Llere" socio-educational association;
- The NGO *SOLMAN* (Solidarity in La Mancha) develops some artistic workshops to transmit general knowledge about the African continent, approach its culture through music and dance and reflect on interculturality and cooperation;
- The NGO *SOS Children's Villages* (Aldeas Infantiles-SOS) is a private international organization to aid children, non-profit and independent of any political orientation, organizes the contest "Values from SOS Children's Villages";
- The NGO *ACCEM* Collaborates with schools, mainly in the province of Guadalajara, in mediation and intercultural activities;
- The foundation *IPADE* develops actions, like the sensitization of children towards the United Nations millennium goals. It conducts workshops on the Millennium Development Goals;
- The association *Cooperation Assembly for Peace* develops a program of activities called "School without Racism", mainly in the province of Albacete;
- The association *Maná-Ayuda al Desarrollo* is an NGO that finances and supports cooperation projects in developing countries. In addition, it also has the fundamental objective of raising awareness of the problems suffered by Third World countries.

As we have seen, there are several actions and regulations that are being developed in Castilla La Mancha, promoting multiculturalism in schools and in different fields of society.

The Order of July 8, 2002 implied a very important first step towards multiculturalism, though specifically applied to the linguistic integration of immigrant children in the regional education system.

The 2006 Multicultural Education Document set the basis, as we have seen, for the development of multicultural strategies and organization, in the case of schools.

The 2010 Education Law of Castilla La Mancha included references to intercultural (but with the meaning of multicultural) values to be implemented in the school system of the region.

On its side, the 2014 Curriculum Decree for Castilla La Mancha included some references to multicultural education but without developing them more in depth.

Finally, the 2018 Inclusive Education Decree includes multiculturalism within the regulations though not properly linked to the Curriculum Decree of Castilla La Mancha that was itself not enough developed in terms of including methodological strategies to foster multicultural education.

As it has been reflected in this paper, we can see an evolution of the multiculturalism policies in the Castilla La Mancha region. We must highlight that there are no specific laws regulating multicultural education, although we can find it as part of educational acts in the region and other legal regulations in other departments. As a result, many different actions have been developed in the last decades but not under the same legal regulations.

Considering that the actions affect different Departments in the region (Education, Social Affairs, Health Department), the regulation of those actions in one unified act would help to enhance the coordination, implementation and funding. In other regions, specific acts regarding multiculturalism have been passed, like the 1999 Andalusian law. Therefore, a regional law regulating multicultural education in different fields, could be useful in this sense.

Conclusion

The attention to diversity was a fundamental principle of the educational model proposed by the Spanish State Law LOGSE in 1990. This legal evolution is the result of some essential principles, considering the different learning needs from a functional model, based on an interactive conception of development. In this sense, the capacities of the students are developed according the educational intervention, valuing the difference as a resource to improve education. Hence, having immigrants of foreign origin in the society and in schools will increase our ethnic and cultural plurality. These differences provided by immigrants must be addressed and seized in the schools.

In spite of the fact that the legal development has not encompassed the reality of social and school changes, notably teachers of the school system in the region have done an important effort to adapt their teachings to the new and changing social reality.

Together with the actions developed in the schools, we can affirm that all these actions conducted by different departments, associations, NGO's and other institutions have constructed a policy stepping towards multicultural education.

According to Martínez Lozano (2015), the inclusion of interculturality in school counselling programs should not be considered as a mere intervention with immigrants. As society is progressively multicultural, we are facing a reality in which coexistence and work with people of different cultures becomes increasingly common. This implies that all citizens need such intercultural skills. Real inclusion will only be achieved if people have such competencies, so that they can preserve their own cultural identity but have, themselves, the capacity to act properly in another culture and learn to coexist with other cultures.

When reflecting on multicultural education, teachers should assume a clear position, in order to be able to organize and guide the pedagogical actions aimed at dealing in an integrative way with the contents belonging to different cultures. Though it is a challenge to reduce the difficulties that may arise, the knowledge that teachers can acquire may be determining to overcome them. This can be helpful to begin a new educational insight regarding diversity.

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Theoretical presumptions of learning a foreign language through global citizenship development at pre-primary school

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Abstract

The paper aims to demonstrate a new efficient and relevant trend closely related to the language learning where the main emphasis is on the development of global citizenship. Furthermore, revealing the theoretical presumptions of learning a foreign language, it will be purposefully targeted at crystallization of a notion global citizenship. After having reviewed the documents regulating education policy, it was identified that global citizenship is described as democratic and sustainable education that specifically is focused on the development of a global citizen who is able to understand the social issues, activities and processes of the contemporary society, to demonstrate a tolerant and positive approach and to adapt to the global environment. It is emphasized that global citizenship is a core of the growth of a global citizen and his/her proactive performance in the global context, which indisputably comprises various countries, cultures, values, beliefs, etc. The analysis of the documents, studies and reports revealed the theoretical presumptions that learning a foreign language is tightly related to global citizenship education that is recommended to be initiated at pre-primary school because the pre-primary school aged children are capable to form/construct new global skills (including language/communication skills). Thus, the initiation of global citizenship education and its combination with learning a foreign language might be considered as a must due to the beneficial aspects for education of the pre-primary school aged learners.

Keywords: language learning, foreign language, global citizenship education, global citizen, pre-primary education, pre-primary school aged children

Introduction

Currently, it is obviously seen that the process of globalization makes an impact on the personal and professional life of people. Due to constant changes in the global society, the citizens have to be aware of global innovations, to understand the existing and newly arising social concerns and to guarantee wealthy personal existence. Technological and scientific advancement, global relationships with various countries, cultures and people changed and expanded the notion of national identity, and that expansion could be acknowledged as an obstacle for the sufficient performance in the global community (Tarozzi 2016, Sy 2017). A process of integration of innovations into personal life is apparent when observing life of the youth who may be called the Internet addicts. They prefer a virtual lifestyle, an active surfing the Internet, a virtual interaction with peers on the social networks, and they are engaged into great variety of virtual activities (Thorne & Black 2007, Blattner & Fiori 2011, Twigg, Pendergast & Twigg 2015).

Many educators, scholars and practitioners (Osler & Starkey 2005, Thorne & Black 2007, Ortega 2009, Blattner & Fiori 2011, Žegunienė, Parisauskiene & Jankauskiene 2012, Tuomaitė 2014) discuss how to develop learners' foreign language skills and competences needed for their further personal and professional life. It is not enough to master languages; it is important to combine traditional skills with the modern ones. Therefore, the global community and its members have to acquire the skills of a foreign language, to deepen intercultural awareness and to develop a capability to be flexible, shifting among various forms and conditions of the communication process. (Richards & Renandya 2002). That leads to a new conception of the process of learning a foreign language that nowadays is more closely related to global citizenship education.

The paper targets on a familiarization with the theoretical presumptions of learning a foreign language through global citizenship development and the definition of the notion of global citizenship. Global citizenship is mentioned in various documents, study reports related to the regulatory principles of educational policy (the Council of Europe 2008, The Parliament of Europe 2012, Tarozzi 2016, UNESCO

2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2017, OECD 2018). The meaning of this phenomenon is clarified as a strand of global education focused on education of a global citizen who is capable: ‘...to become aware of activities taking place in the contemporary global environment; to act in a positive manner under the cross-cultural circumstances; to be flexible and adaptable to the fast-changing global perspectives.’ (*Global citizenship education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the 21st century* 2014b: 17).

In today’s world influenced by diverse innovations and multinational companies, the relationship among countries, cultures and languages (as an integral part of every culture) and their impact on the peoples’ life cannot be denied (Block & Cameron 2002). As a global citizen, every learner has to be familiar with a convergence of cultures and languages (a mother tongue and a foreign language). So, this approach allows learners to understand that a (foreign) language is a tool for communication, and following this strand, it is a tool for understanding cultures, countries and people (Vereshagin & Kastamarov 1990, Porto 2013).

Considering the global changes in the society, the educational needs and demands of a young generation need to be satisfied taking into consideration global education. Those learners who obviously demonstrate addiction to technology and virtual activities insist on new teachers’ competences to be developed. That leads to the fact that the teachers have to be seriously focused on the development of new competences and possibilities to integrate innovations into the process of teaching and to acknowledge that education of the young learners is a constitutive part of the international context (Augustiniene & Pociene 2016, Ortega 2009, Osler & Starkey 2005).

The underlying theoretical presumptions, presented in the paper, declare that development of the foreign language skills as well as knowledge about the local, national and international contexts have to be initiated at early childhood. The Lithuanian and international scholars (Jorgenson 2010, Augustinienė & Pocienė 2016, Tarozzi 2016, Hainsworth 2017, Sy 2017) accentuate that the pre-primary school aged learners have the specific abilities and demonstrate willingness to broaden one’s horizons, to construct practical and theoretical understanding of a surrounding environment and to construe information to form the skills of a new foreign language through the relations with peers and other people.

The paper aims to crystallize theoretically how learning a foreign language might be initiated integrating global citizenship into the curriculum of pre-primary school education. The object: learning a foreign language through global citizenship development educating the pre-school aged children. Tasks: 1) to clarify the concept ‘a global citizen’; 2) to investigate the theoretical opportunities for initiation of global citizenship at pre-primary school; 3) to reveal the theoretical presumptions of learning a foreign language through global citizenship development.

Methods. The content analysis, synthesis and generalization of the documents discussing the current and future educational decisions and actions to be taken in Europe and Lithuania (IBE-UNESCO 2018, OECD 2018, the United Nations 2012, 2018, UNESCO, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2017, OXFAM 2015, Conception of Global Education 2015, European Parliament 2012, The Council of Europe 2008, the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Lithuania 2018, etc.) where the concept of *global citizenship education* is revealed in various perspectives as well as its significance for a *global citizen*. The multilingualism policy is reviewed in the mentioned documents, and in addition, the aspect how to learn a foreign language through the development of global citizenship at pre-primary school.

Theoretical analysis of the concept global citizenship

In the Maastricht Global Education Declaration (2002), global education is explained as a very complex notion comprising the fields as: development education, human rights education, education for sustainability, education for peace and conflict prevention and intercultural education. Furthermore, global education comprises the global element of education for citizenship. The Declaration explains that global education is ‘education that opens people’s eyes and awakens them to bring greater justice, equality and human rights for all.’ (Maastricht Global Education Declaration 2002: 13)

The greater part of sources stated that the newly occurred circumstances of the contemporary society demonstrate an essential requirement to promote a multicultural dialogue, respect and understanding (Carvalho de Silva 2019, Jorgenson 2010, Mundy 2007). The former approaches are not sufficient any more due to the growing cross-cultural awareness and the expansion of a worldview (identity). Identity building and its supplementation with the global elements are emphasized by the *White Paper* (the Council of Europe, 2008). 'Person's national identification combines the features and components of the national historical heritage, family background, cultural heritage, social background, 'freedom to choose and act responsibly' and 'a central aspect of human rights.' (The White Paper 2008: 18).

In the era of constant globalization and internationalization, modernized humanity has been raising questions and expressing concerns regarding global education. That leads to the belief that empowering learners to become the active global citizens is a key issue of many international institutions and organizations that take the measures concerning implementation of global citizenship education throughout the whole world (UNESCO 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2017). Global citizenship education supplies young children, teenagers and other learners with necessary knowledge, values, attitudes and skills to understand, create and sustain people's lives locally, nationally and globally. (UNESCO 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2017)

In the twenty-first century the education institutions and organizations must cope with new questions related to internationalization of curriculum, to meet new demands of the young learners and to revisit their thinking and action frameworks (The United Nations Secretary-General 2012, Oxfam 2015, OECD 2018). As the documents of the European Union and the United Nations organizations emphasize global citizenship education is a new world model; it functions as a constituent system that influences how citizenship operates. A global frame does not replace attention to the national and local issues. Rather this frame re-orientates citizenship education so that learners become aware of the issues and the factors at many levels that shape the world around them (UNESCO 2013, 2014a, 2014b, IBE-UNESCO 2018, OECD 2018, CONCORD 2018).

Attempting to provide the readers with a more precise explanation of global citizenship, OXFAM (2015) has formulated an explanation of a global citizen taking into account the elements such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed and to be developed while educating the young learners within the global context. A global citizen:

- is familiar with the global setting and knows the exact personal place and role;
- feels deep admiration for the existing diversity;
- knows how the world is structured and how the particular fields (culture, technologies, environment) are organized and managed;
- demonstrates a strong reaction to the social issues (injustice, poverty, inequality, etc.);
- demonstrates deep inner motivation to create and retain the world as a better and safer place;
- participates in civic activity, demonstrates positive behavior, promotes own contribution creating better local, regional, national and global community. (OXFAM 2015: 5).

Analysis of the documents revealed a fact that the pre-primary schools, the schools of basic education, the youth clubs, etc. are the main places to learn interculturally. (Council of Europe 2008: 33). Sullivan (2018), vice president of the European umbrella organization CONCORD, presented the international study „*Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do We Care?*“ where it was noted that it is significantly important to integrate the topics of global education into the curriculum of pre-primary and basic education and to apply innovative teaching/learning methods such as '... workshops/seminars, specialized training, summer schools, discussions, art workshops, theatre, films, excursions, voluntary activities in the closest community' (Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do We Care? 2018: 17).

The review of the documents revealed that global citizenship education is closely interconnected with the modern society and appearing technological and educational innovations. The field of global

education effects awareness of the modern society and existing issues, and it plays a vital role in knowledge construction and other educational processes at pre-primary school. The pre-primary school desires to assist children while acquiring/constructing knowledge, skills and behavior patterns which will form a basis for further education at basic and secondary school. Pre-schoolers have to be able to demonstrate appropriate behavior patterns and motivation to act like the citizens of own country, but this citizenship has to be extended with the global aspects.

Learning a foreign language and global citizenship at pre-primary school

Language(s) are invented and used to satisfy the basic needs of human beings: to communicate, to socialize, to acquire and exchange knowledge, to reflect the gained experience, to form new skills and patterns of behavior (Bakhtin 1986, Driscoll 2000). Consequently, this directs to understanding that a true meaning and value of language is educational with a purpose to educate a global citizen. Using the concept of a global citizen it is understood that a person is open to a multicultural dialogue and has a right to get familiar with the surrounding world. More languages a person speaks more opportunities (s)he has to demonstrate globality of own personality. Learning a foreign language is a treasure and it may influence the growth of children identity. (Vereshagin & Kastamarov 1990).

Considering a multicultural dialogue and the international perspectives the young learners have to be encouraged to investigate own identity and culture, to expand own worldview and interpretation of the common notions, to think critically and creatively about one's role in the world, to establish rapport with the peers and people from different cultures and to be tolerant. Thus, observing the educational context through the international prism, global citizenship propagates learning and usage of a foreign language (for instance, the most popular internationally – English). Every foreign language helps a young learner to develop the senses of empathy, tolerance, respect and a capability to recognize/identify own characteristics, and particularly, a position in the local, national and global communities. Moreover, the usage of a foreign language enlarges learners' mentality and horizons, and it develops thinking and creativity skills. Global citizenship makes wider contexts available for the young learners and provide them with more educational chances to analyze cultural factors (for instance, literature, history, art, etc.). That leads to the formation/construction of the personal 'global' values, assumptions and a sense of global identity (Zalavinab & Kisel 2016). It is recommended to begin the process of familiarization with the closest environment and native country and move to the global surroundings. The young learners have to be familiarized with fairy tales, legends or myths which can help them to identify themselves and to determine own place in the community. Then moving towards the global context, the learners will be acculturated easier (Osler & Starkey 2005, Gimenez & Sheehan 2008, Twigg, Pendergast & Twigg 2015).

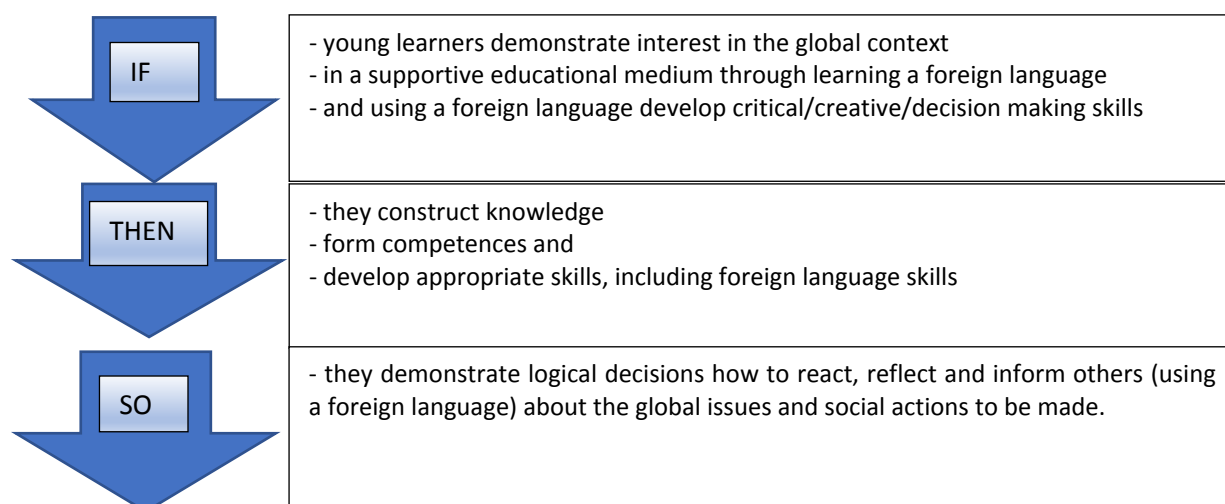
Nowadays working with the young learners, teachers have to consider possibility to relate the process of teaching/learning a foreign language to the global citizenship development. As Osler & Starkey (2005) note the benefit for the young learners is as follows:

- development of the skills effecting ability to communicate, to think critically and creatively;
- motivation to deepen cultural awareness and to construct own values and beliefs;
- development of foreign language literacy that may indicate a level of cosmopolitanism and its impact on learning other languages;
- enabling the learners to practice a foreign language in a native country and outside its borders;
- to be engaged in 'real-life' learning (learning-on-the-spot) where four skills of a foreign language usage (reading, speaking, listening and writing) are employed and combined. Thus, learning is more attractive and meets demands of the young generation to interconnect reality and the theoretical aspects;
- motivation to deepen learners' understanding of the local and global issues through the process of learning a foreign language;

- challenging the learners' current perspectives and values, stimulating the learners to reflect and share own perspectives and to construct new knowledge and worldview;
- encouragement to see and value diversity of the world and to demonstrate a positive approach to the opinion of others;
- giving the learners confidence to share/reflect their acquired knowledge, formed values, developed skills, and enhanced motivation. (Osler & Starkey 2005).

A foreign language is a primary medium of the social interaction (Vereshagin & Kastamarov 1990, Block & Cameron 2002, Osler & Starkey 2005). That interaction is constructed and maintained through the social relations during the everyday situations. The young learners have to elaborate on the expansion of foreign language skills, to form and develop new skills and competences that are important for being a global citizen. According to Bakhtin (1986), a link between language and life is undisputable. From Bakhtin's point of view, language constitutes and is constitutive of life itself, studying utterances in particular contexts it is possible to understand their meanings (Bakhtin 1986: 63). As Figure 1 illustrates, people are connected with the global environment which creates the proper conditions for global knowledge acquisition and development of new skills and competences. This process cannot be implemented without a language and a foreign language due to globalization, merging of cultures and different lifestyles. Moreover, the learners have to perceive new global conditions appropriately because misunderstandings might lead to the social issues. Global citizenship education aims to reduce a scope of the existing social issues, but that is impossible without proper communication, and that results in necessity to know foreign language.

Figure 1: Connection between a foreign language and global citizenship education.



Source: Block & Cameron (2002). Globalization and language teaching

In general sense, a (foreign) language reflects reality and helps learners to admit the existence of the social context. This idea illustrates strong links between learning a foreign language and comprehension of slight changes in the notions of identity, culture and communication. Dimensions of global citizenship comprise the foreign language skills, and communication is seen as a constituent element of an identification of a global citizen.

Table 1: Integrity of the communicative competences (foreign language skills) and dimensions of global citizenship

Dimensions	Rights and positive behavior patterns	Mutual rapport and peace	Social responsibility	National characteristics and dissimilarity
Communicative competences (foreign language skills)	Openly express personal attitude communicating with others. Positively treat the other person.	Establish mutual trust while communicating with others and demonstrate active listening skills. Make, repair and maintain positive attitude, positively reflect and demonstrate possibility to continue the dialogue in future.	Express his/her opinion and use friendly arguments persuading or insisting on others. Proactively participate in civic activity of the local, national, global community.	Express and assume own identity while acknowledging the identity of others. Acclaim human rights and diminish abuse or violation.

Source: Gimenez & Sheehan (2008). Global citizenship in the English language classrooms, pp. 30

The close association between a foreign language and development of global citizenship witnesses increasing significance of a foreign language in the global context and its need to be initiated at pre-primary school. Internationalism, globalization and wide opportunities create favorable conditions for the young learners to expand a field of communication, to contact a greater variety of the peers from the entire world. A foreign language (especially the English language) is involved into a creation of the wider global community and development of global citizenship.

Conceptual framework of global citizenship education

Constructivism is a theoretical conceptual framework applicable to the process of teaching/learning with a condition that the process of cognition (knowledge acquiring) is the output of ‘mental construction’. Differently speaking, learning is a matching of newly acquired facts with the obtained experience during the process of self-reflection. This approach might be supported by the studies of scholars representing Constructivism Theory as C. Bereiter (1994), D. H. Jonassen (1994), S. Olusegun (2015), and M. Driscoll (2000). The Theory of Constructivism states that during the process of learning children bring various moments of their personal perception combined with acquired knowledge through own experience (Bereiter 1994). The representatives of this Theory note that the context plays an essential role when the learners act and construct individual beliefs, attitudes, meanings and relations with the peers, but the social context is of the primary importance. Knowledge is acquired, the skills and behavior patterns are shaped in the social context interacting with the surrounding people (teachers, peers and parents) (Olusegun 2015). According to M. Driscoll (2000), Constructivism is a fundamental factor for learning process and a philosophy that stimulates learners’ mental and conceptual development.

D. H. Jonassen (1994) formulated the exact characteristics which might be applied to the constructionists propagated learning environments concentrating on the aspects of development of global citizenship and pre-primary education. Features of Constructivists’ learning environment:

- provides the real-life situations;
- reflects a complexity and structures of the surrounding environment;

- emphasizes a construction and reproduction of knowledge;
- emphasizes the reality-based tasks;
- prefers case-based learning;
- encourages the learners' feedback;
- knowledge acquisition is made available through the interaction with a context;
- accentuates knowledge construction while learners are in the social interaction (communication process, exchange of ideas, feedback and reflection).

The essential theoretical presumption on global citizenship education initiation at pre-primary school may be based on the Constructionism Learning Theory, as it states that this process should be initiated at pre-primary school in 'formal and informal educational setting' (UNESCO 2017). As K. Mundy (2007) notes young children are enculturated into their local culture, but nowadays this process might be combined with the opposite process of acculturation. Children's thinking, worldview, norms, values beliefs, etc. are shaped in a different way due to globalization. This process directs young learners to a global living style and children tend to be more open for the global society (Mundy, 2007). Great thinkers, such as Vygotsky (1978) and Dewey (2011), specify that the children's social experiences may be easily influenced by external factors. Precisely speaking, the result of becoming a global citizen may be achieved just through a social interaction. Thus, communicating (interacting) to each other and making influence on knowledge acquisition (construction), interpretation and combination with previous experience enable a pre-primary aged child to become a proactive citizen of the world (Dewey 2011).

Global citizenship education initiation at pre-primary school

A modern society demonstrates slightly different understanding of a child due to a changing position of the societal roles. The review of literature sources gave a substance to a new approach to the young learners who are capable to perform more duties and responsibilities in the local, national and global context. Pre-primary aged children demonstrate a potential to acquire/construct more precise and in-depth knowledge learning a foreign language which may contribute to the wider interpretation of a child as a global citizen. The pre-schoolers in a classroom (highly advanced and innovative learning environment) are engaged in learning focused on the civic responsibility, environment protection, human rights, norms and values, willingness to help and participate in various social activities (Twigg, Pendergast, Twigg 2015: 79).

The pre-primary school aged children being the citizens of a native country need an opportunity to develop the skills required for global citizenship beginning at the age of early childhood. Necessity to make young children to think critically and to develop their own beliefs towards the social relationships, social structures of environment (local, national and global) and social behavior – is a beneficial aspect of early childhood when the learners, in their early school years, are able to explore their own environment, to interact with peers, to reflect own experience and to construct new abilities and behavior patterns. (Jorgenson 2010, Tarozzi 2016, Sy 2017). Developing the multicultural skills required for a global citizen will prepare them for the interconnected world that the learners proactively investigate; the learners will begin to understand themselves as a part of their country, and respectively, as a part of the global world (Jorgenson 2010, Tarozzi 2016).

The period of early childhood is a period when the development of a personal identity is rapid, and its effect on personality is felt the most intensively (Driscoll 2000, Hainsworth 2017, Sy 2017). The quality of experience gained during this period is very important in the terms of quantity as well. Favorable conditions for formation of new experience are vitally important for an individual who is structuring his/her own personality. That leads to the development of a learner's cognitive processes and help to shape his/her perspective on the life and to stimulate inner motivation to be engaged into civic activity of the close and further community (Vygotsky 1978, Twigg, Penderfast & Twigg 2015). For a child, it may be hard to break a daily educational routine that (s)he trusts and try new places and new things. For instance, starting school by leaving familiar home environment, going into some

places with unknown people, can be terrifying and hard to adapt. However, experiencing new contexts would also enable children to adapt his/her behaviors according to the requirements of the setting. It can allow them to generalize their existing knowledge and to develop critical thinking skills and to exchange information with others (Vygotsky 1978).

Herein the recommendations prepared for the teachers focusing on global citizenship education at pre-primary school provide an evidence that global citizenship has to be initiated at the early age. (see Table 2)

Table 2: Global citizenship education at pre-primary school.

Domain	Learning outcomes	Topics	Themes
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowledge and complete perception of existing problems; Interconnectedness and interdependency of the global context; - creative thinking, analytical and decision-making skills for active performance in the global arena. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systems and structures of the world; Issues existing in different levels; 	The self, family, school, close circle of friends and relatives, native country, citizens, population; Relationships; Communication and interpretation;
Socio-emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being a member of society; - system of personal principals and globally acknowledged standards of behavior; - development of the system of values and beliefs, moral norms and standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personal identity; - belonging to communities; - diversity. 	Self-identity and others; Racial, gender, ethnical and cultural diversity; Self-esteem; Positive relations.
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - socially responsive behavior creating and maintaining safe and clean environment; - motivation to be an active global citizen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual and collective actions; - ethics; - motivation and engagement. 	Human values; Interpretation of the concepts revealing social status; Personal actions and choices; Non-formal educational settings.

Source: UNESCO (2015). Global citizenship education. Topics and learning objectives.

Reviewing the main domains of global citizenship education, the learning outcomes and topic/themes, it should be noted that the initiation of global citizenship education is like *a must* aspect of pre-primary education. A global citizen has to be educated in formal or non-formal setting and this process has to be started from the closest environment and to be extended with the global elements.

The identity of a learner (personal values, approaches and attitudes, sense of being a member of the closest group of people, country, global society) and behavioral patterns (including perception of concepts and roles/responsibilities as well as personal choices and actions) might be formed in the real-context situations (OXFAM 2015, IBE-UNESCO 2018). For instance, being silent can be learnt in a cinema; observation without touching can be learned in a museum; gathering all the garbage while leaving can also be taught in a natural setting, etc. That allows children to apply their knowledge on a new setting, they will be encouraged to share gained experience with others, the sessions of self-reflection can help to consolidate the things learned (Hainsworth 2017). Besides that, these actions include an educational aspect of values construction and/or development of new approaches, for instance, care, respect, attention and tolerance (empathy). The young children have to gain experience in the existing and new settings, that might be a basis for new abilities (UNESCO

2015, CONCORD 2004, Driscoll 2000). In order to achieve such an aim, children should be allowed to participate in the field and forest trips, museum visits, and to see movies in a cinema. Before realizing such activities, the pre-primary school aged children should be informed how to behave. In their first attempts there may be failures; however, talking and discussing the things that were missed can make their performance better on their next trip.

To sum up, the period of pre-primary school is characterized as vitally important time during which a personality is being shaped and universal morality is being structured. The young individuals have to understand freedom and responsibilities existing in the local, national, and global communities. It would be possible to achieve such an aim via the integration of global citizenship with early childhood education. Global citizenship aims to structure the world for living in peace through love, respect, understanding and justice. In the world in which inequality is on the stage, creating awareness and sensitivity in terms of an individual's part in the whole world from their early years can be a key.

Conclusion

The studies and recommendations of the organizations of the European Union, the United Nations, the Parliament of Europe and Lithuania emphasize that global citizenship ensures appropriate development of a young global citizen who is able to function proactively in the world. A global citizen has to be developed taking into consideration the main elements of global citizenship: cognitive, socio-emotional and behavior patterns.

The review disclosed a presumption that global citizenship is advised to be initiated at pre-primary school. The pre-school aged children are characterized as a demanding and curious audience capable to form/construct the universal skills and merge them with already obtained knowledge, skills and competences. It is highlighted that a global citizen of pre-school age requires to familiarize with the global perspectives, such as knowledge, abilities, values, which are important for secure and liberal being in the contemporary world. The fact is that a period of pre-primary school is the like a solid foundation for educational evolution/growth of the young learners. Thus, a foreign language, the relationships with friends, pro-active functioning, usage of computers, appropriately formed motivation and self-reflection make a constructive impact on child's primary socialization as a global citizen.

Learning a foreign language has to be initiated through the development of global citizenship because such interconnectedness ensures the constant development of skills and capabilities, which are vitally important for a global citizen. Learning a foreign language is a beneficial aspect of global citizenship leading a learner towards cognition of the local and global environment. The young learners are motivated and encouraged to get familiar with the peculiarities of own country and to extend the process of cognition with the global aspects. If these learners are able to use a foreign language, they might understand the global issues, to deal with them, to motivate others to engage into civic activity, to reflect own experience and to construct a new approach to the global community.

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An analysis on university preparatory class students' views about role of English as a foreign language on world knowledge, education and professional career¹²

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Abstract

People all around the world learn different foreign languages for various reasons. As a result of globalization, need for knowing a language other than one's native language became a necessity more than a need. Although there are thousands of languages used by millions of people in different geographies, some languages are more commonly used and preferred. English, which is used as a lingua franca in many fields including science, education and numerous branches of business, is one of these languages. Turkey, as a country that serves as a bridge between Asia and Europe, has gone through many reforms concerning foreign language teaching and today foreign languages are taught in every phase of education starting from early years of primary school and continues until students graduate from university. Although people have different reasons to learn a foreign language, it is very common among university students that most of them learn a foreign language for a better future as well as increasing their world knowledge in a fast-globalized world. In this study, it is aimed to analyze university prep class students' views about role of English as a foreign language for enhancing their world knowledge and success in education and professional career. The results of the study reveal that students accept English as lingua franca and they are enthusiastic to learn it. Another finding underlines the need for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses expressed by prep students.

Keywords: foreign languages, English, world knowledge, education, professional career

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that today's globalized world demands more competitiveness, entrepreneurship and productivity from people more than it did in the past. Therefore, people are looking for opportunities that will contribute to their personal development, education and social skills. Although there are many ways to do so, especially in Turkey, learning a foreign language is regarded as one of the most important tools for success in many fields. As a result, Turkey has been implementing some policies regarding foreign language teaching for years and encouraging people to learn at least one foreign language. This point of view has also been reflected in national education policy and being updated according to political, economic, scientific and technological developments in a global scale as well as country's needs. In order to fully understand Turkish people's point of views about learning a foreign language and to comment this study's results, it is useful to take a glance at the processes that Turkish education system has been going through in terms of foreign language teaching.

First attempts for teaching a foreign language began with the Tanzimat Period and many scientists and teachers were invited from different countries including France and Germany. As a result, westernization process began especially with the great influence of French culture. Therefore, French was the dominant foreign language taught at schools until the second half of 19th century. Second World War was one of the breaking points in many ways all around the world. Turkey was also deeply affected by the results of the war in many ways. Both British and American dominance on trade, science and technology was so apparent that English became the most common language used all around the world. As a result of growing political and military relationships between Turkey and USA, English became the most preferred foreign language.

Policies and regulations in order to meet the need for learning English as a foreign language were developed and basic law of Foreign Language Teaching regulating the issues regarding teaching foreign languages was enacted in 1983. The aim of this law was to regulate implementation of principles

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regarding teaching a foreign language at schools (Mevzuat 2018). After the second half of 1980s, foreign language education went through various changes. For example, until 1988, English, French and German were taught and students were supposed to choose one of them as a compulsory lesson. However, in 1989 foreign languages lessons were not taught as compulsory lessons, but electives. The reason behind this decision was establishing some special schools under the name of “Anatolian High Schools” in which some courses (Math, Biology, Chemistry, etc.) were taught in English.

Since these schools were important for increasing students’ English level, a great number of Anatolian High Schools were established all around the country leading some problems such as hiring enough number of qualified English teachers who can teach a lesson in English. In 1992, the idea of Anatolian High Schools was evolved and a new type of school called “Super High School” were established and students were given 24 hours of English in preparatory class for a year. After preparatory class, intensive English teaching continued until students graduate from high school. As a graduate of “Super High School”, I believe that the idea of preparatory class before 9th grade was very successfully implemented and students, including me, benefited from the curriculum implemented in Super High Schools.

One of the most important steps taken to improve the effectiveness of English language teaching was including English courses into primary school curriculum. Starting from 1997-1998 Academic Year, 4th graders were taught English 2 hours a week. In 2014, the idea of raising awareness for learning a foreign language during early years of education was taken one step further and 2 hours of English course were included into 2nd graders curriculum. As it can be inferred from the information given so far, foreign language awareness and especially the importance of learning English as a lingua franca today has increased year by year and students are exposed to significant amount of English before they graduate from high school and begin their higher education.

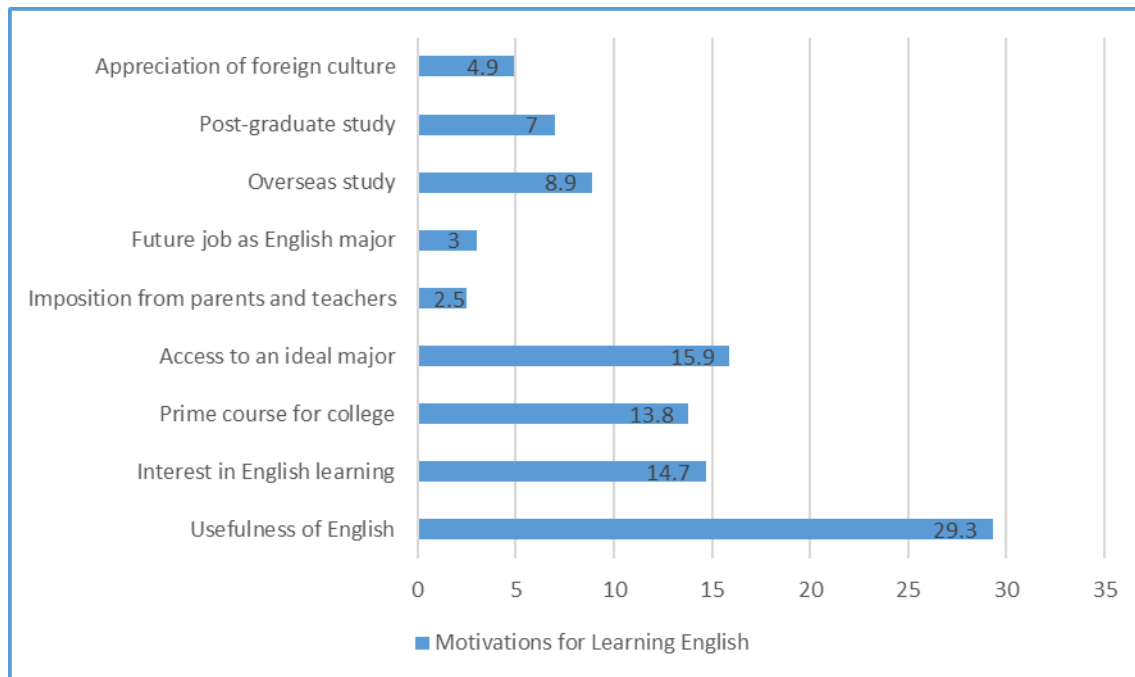
English has an important role in higher education and factors such as students’ backgrounds, levels, perceptions and interests in terms of English as a foreign language influence the success of learning English at universities. Therefore, in the direction of decision taken by Turkish Council of Higher Education (YOK), no matter what students’ English level is, English is taught as a compulsory course in the 1st academic year (Yaman 2015). However, according to Turkish Council of Higher Education (YOK 2018) there are 206 public and private universities in Turkey and these universities may implement different policies regarding English language teaching. In most of the public universities medium of instruction is mostly Turkish but there are some public and private universities that use English as the medium instruction. For these universities, preparatory classes are very important and students are given at least 1 year of intensive English courses so that they can follow their faculty courses easily.

The brief explanation given so far about students’ English journey in their formal education shows that Turkish students are exposed to a great amount of English language teaching and they have enough background to express ideas on their perceptions, thoughts and feelings about learning English as a foreign language. In this regard, many studies were carried by different researchers in order to find out different dimensions of students’ views about learning English from different levels ranging from primary school to university. In one of the studies conducted in order to reveal university students’ attitudes towards learning English, Gokyer and Bakcak (2014) mostly focused on affective factors such as interest and confidence by taking different variables such as students’ ages, previous school types and faculties into consideration.

In another study, Pan and Akay (2015) aimed to examine students’ attitudes and classroom anxiety levels towards foreign language courses at faculty of education and they found out that participants have positive attitudes towards learning English while no significant correlation between students’ attitudes and their previous school types was found. Another finding which may also be related to the topic of this study shows that following English publishing and broadcasts affect students’ cognitive and affective manners and students who like following these sources tend to have positive attitudes towards learning English.

Motivation also plays an important role on prep students' English learning journey. The motivations of learning English are incentives for preparatory students to achieve targets. These targets may vary from advancing into the college study to choosing an ideal major. As a matter of fact, the motivations for them to learn English are diverse. The graph below presents some motivational factors for learning English from prep students' points of view (Li, Ma & Wang 2013).

Figure 1: Motivations for learning English.



In another study, Yurtseven, Altun and Aydin (2015) found another affective factor which influences prep students' attitudes towards learning English. They found out that creating a nonthreatening atmosphere while teaching English have a positive effect on prep class students' learning process. In his study, Abdulhafidh (2015) focuses on the importance of learning English in present day higher education. He underlines the fact that regardless of the country, the medium of instruction and subjects studied, English is always in the center of the studies or education. For internationalization of higher education, English is not only locally but globally required as an important source of accessing students' major knowledge in all field as well as communicating with the most reputed universities worldwide English is also a medium in pursuing a variety of degree programs and finding high-quality jobs and positions in educational institutions and foreign companies elsewhere.

As it was mentioned before, there are so many studies both in Turkey and all around the world about students' attitudes towards learning English. However, it is also a need to reveal some other dimensions regarding particularly university students' views and perceptions about the role of English as a medium to increase their world knowledge and success in both education and professional career. Therefore, this study aims to provide an insight on university students' views regarding English's role for enhancing their world knowledge and success in education and professional career.

Methodology

In this study, qualitative research method was used. Corbin and Strauss (2015: 5) define qualitative research as "a form of research in which the researchers or a designated co-researcher collects and interprets data, making the researcher as much as part of the research process as the participants and

data they provide". According to definition given by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013: 45), qualitative researches are the ones that include methods such as observations, interviews and document analysis aiming to collect data about perceptions and events that happen in their natural environment in a natural sequence. In this regard, interviews are one of the most commonly used data collection methods used by researchers designing a qualitative research.

During data collecting process, semi-structured interviews were used in this study. Semi-structured interviews save a great amount of time since they allow researchers for coding and analyzing the data in a fast way and they are helpful for comparing the similarities and differences between data collected by different interviewees participating in the research (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). In this study, twelve questions asked during interviews were grouped into three categories as following:

1. What are preparatory students' views about the role of English in terms of contributing to their world knowledge?
2. What are preparatory students' views about the role of English in their current and future education?
3. What are preparatory students' views about the role of English in professional career?

Questions were checked by two different researchers in terms of questions' comprehensibility and relevance with the topic and they were rephrased by taking researchers' feedbacks into consideration. Participants of this study are 10 preparatory class students from different faculties studying at Abdullah Gul University School of Foreign Languages as given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic information about participants.

Participant	Age	Gender	Faculty
Student-1	19	Male	Engineering
Student-2	20	Male	Architecture
Student-3	20	Male	Engineering
Student-4	19	Female	Management
Student-5	19	Female	Engineering
Student-6	21	Male	Management
Student-7	20	Female	Engineering
Student-8	19	Female	Architecture
Student-9	19	Male	Management
Student-10	20	Female	Architecture

A simple random sampling technique was used for selecting the participants since this technique provides equal chances to be selected for all the individuals in the population (Karasar 2006: 113). Questions were asked in an order and answers were recorded by a voice recorder. After recording procedure, answers were transformed into word format word by word by giving each student a code starting with abbreviation of student (S) and a number from 1 to 10. After scripts were created, descriptive method was used in order to analyze the collected data. In descriptive analysis, collected data is summarized and commented according to categories and themes identified in advance. Students' answers were analyzed by using the themes that are embedded in the research topic. These themes are; world knowledge, current and future education and professional career. After that, the findings are defined and commented by the researcher. In order to emphasize participants' views on a given question, researchers may use direct citations from their answers by explaining cause and effect relations as well as comparing the answers given by different participants (Yıldırım & Şimşek 2013: 256). Therefore, direct citations are frequently used during this study.

Findings

In this section, participants' views gathered by twelve questions asked under three main categories will be presented.

Students' views about relationship between English and world knowledge

The questions asked in the first category focused on students' views about the role of English in contributing to their world knowledge and 4 questions were addressed to the participants in order to get their detailed comments. First question in this category was *"How does English contribute to enhancing your world knowledge?"*. While answering this question, most of the participants underlined the **universality** of English and they indicated that English is the most useful tool to learn more about not only American or British culture, but also about other cultures whose native language is not English. For example, S2 says: *"Although Spanish is a language used by millions of people all around the world, we can see that many Spanish websites use English as the first language since they know that they can reach more people this way. It shows that even if we don't know a specific country's language, we can still learn about their lifestyles, folklores, and cultures thanks to English"*.

Another important theme underlined by the participants was **"reliability of the cultural sources"** provided by using English while searching about a country's culture instead of referring to secondary or translated sources. S5's answer can be given as an example for this theme. He says: *"Language is a vital part of a culture. If we learn language of a country we can also learn about its culture. Of course, it is impossible to learn every language spoken by different cultures but here English's universality comes into play. If we learn English we can learn about any culture at first hand without needing translation or interpretation by a second party and this increases the reliability of knowledge we access about a specific culture"*.

The second question in this category was *"What is your opinion about including cultural elements into curriculums and classroom activities?"* While answering this question, most of the students underlined the **"necessity"** of including cultural items into all types of teaching activities mentioning the fact that learning a culture facilitates learning a foreign language. S3 clarifies this opinion by saying *"This situation is not limited with only English language. In order to learn English, we should also learn the cultures of other countries whose native language is English. I want to give an example from my own experience. Last term, I chose 2 elective courses about Canadian and English cultures. My interest in these two cultures increased my interest in languages spoken by people living in these countries. In addition to this, I never felt bored while studying English since learning about a different culture made language learning process more enjoyable"*.

On the other hand, S10 draws the attention to the importance of two important linguistic elements which are **idioms and proverbs** that also carries cultural components. She says: *"I have been learning English for a while and idioms and proverbs are important component in a language since they have cultural connotations. Even if I understand a given idiom or proverb lexically, most of the times I have difficulties in interpreting them in a cultural context. Therefore, lexical and linguistic elements should also be clarified by cultural inputs and this makes including cultural elements into teaching activities necessary"*. Although all of the participants are positive about learning cultural components while learning English, two of them mentioned some concerns about the risk of **undervaluing their national culture**. For example, S1 says: *"Learning something about a different culture can be appealing for many people and doing this by using English facilitates learning both English and English culture. However, my concern is that being exposed to a different culture too often may cause especially young learners undervalue their own culture. Therefore, while learning a different culture, we should also make sure that students are learning about their own culture as much as possible"*.

The third question belonging to the first category of the interview was *"What is your opinion about the role of English in being informed about the current events happening worldwide?"* Answers given by

the participants for this question are centered upon two themes. The first theme is about **“diversity of sources”** provided by universality of English language. To clarify this theme, S9 says: *“When we surf in the internet, we can see that there are millions of global news portals and these portals are primarily using English to present the verbal or written news. Therefore, knowing English provides us a great diversity of sources to be informed about the current events happening worldwide. Instead of reading or listening to the translated versions of the original news which is limited only with our native language, we can access different sources in English providing us opportunity to comment the news from different point of views”*.

The second important theme pointed by the participants is **“reliability of secondary or translated sources”**. This concern is shared by almost all the participants and S10 put his concerns into words by saying *“Although I can access the news and comments about a current event in another country, I cannot completely rely on translated versions of an originally English source. Besides, I don’t think that the same feeling and message can be translated 100% percent even if a perfect translation is provided lexically and grammatically. Therefore, being informed from the original source by using English is very important for me”*.

The last question asked in this category was *“What is your opinion about associating current events happening worldwide with English courses?”* When we analyze the answers given by the participants, we can see that 9 of them are positive about this idea while only S6 doesn’t support the idea of associating current events happening worldwide with English courses. Positive opinions are grouped into two themes that are **“increasing world knowledge”** and **“students’ interests”** while negative opinion’s theme is **“need for specialization”**. To give an example for the first theme, S7 says: *“Nowadays, students from all levels are not interested in following the current events happening either in their countries or all around the world. They spend too much time in the internet but they aren’t interested in current events. Therefore, if we associate current events with English courses, we can provide the students inputs useful both for learning English and increasing their world knowledge”*.

As for the second theme, S1 focuses on the importance of students’ interests with these words: *“Current events from different topics can be interesting for students and every student can find an appealing topic for himself of herself. Therefore, while implementing the idea of associating current events with English courses, students’ interests should be taken into consideration. Current topics that may appeal students’ interests should be given priority while planning English courses”*. As the only participant who object to the idea of shaping English courses around current events S6 says: *“I am not in favor of associating current events with English since understanding and commenting current topics require specialization. I mean, in order for a student to write and speak a current topic in English, he or she should have enough knowledge about the topic. If a student doesn’t have enough information about that topic, he or she will hesitate to participate in English courses which will end up with frustration and anxiety”*.

Students’ views about relationship between English and their current and future education

In this category, 4 questions were addressed to the participants in order to get detailed comments on their views about the relationship between English and students’ current and future education. First question in this category was *“What is your opinion about the role of English in education?”* Although all of the participants have a consensus on the great importance of English on their current and future education, they mainly emphasized two themes. First theme taken from participants’ answers is English’s being **“scientific language”** used all around the world. Under this theme, they also mentioned the fact that English provides both students and researchers with a great diversity of sources while studying or conducting a research. This view also matches with the views about the role of English for enhancing their world knowledge mentioned in the previous section. As an answer for this question, S1 says: *“In our country, medium of instruction of some universities, including mine, is 100% English. Although it creates some troubles for the students, I am totally in favor of this implementation since English is the global*

scientific language. Besides, it is sometimes really difficult to reach good sources in my native language, Turkish. Therefore, having good skills of English facilitates accessing a great diversity of scientific sources contributing to my current and future education”.

While answering this question, most of the participants mentioned that learning English is a problem for Turkish students from primary school to university. This leads us to the second theme which is **“importance of background language education”**. Some participants stated that they are having difficulties in following English courses given during the preparatory class since their background English education was not sufficient and they believe that it affects their current and future success in terms of English education and university education as a whole. For example, S10 draws attention to this point by saying *“Although I began learning English when I was a 4th grader and have been learning English for nearly 10 years, I still feel insufficient to follow my English courses which demotivates me and creates a negative feeling for my current and future education”.*

The second question asked in this category was *“What kind of a relationship is there between your English level and success?”* Participants’ answers were centered upon two themes which are **“direct proportion”** and **“effects on motivation”**. According to the participants, there is a direct proportion between their English level and being successful in education. To exemplify this ideas S6 says: *“Before I came to preparatory class, my English level was low and I had some problems with following skill-based courses. However, as the time passed, my English level has improved and it became easier for me to follow the courses and participate in classroom activities. I think this situation will gain more importance when I start my faculty courses since all my courses will be taught 100% English. Therefore, the more I understand the content presented in English, the more successful I will be”.*

Another important point made by the participants for this question is the effects of having a high or low level of English on their motivation. They also mentioned that when they feel weak in terms of their English skills, they also feel a high level of anxiety which effects their success. Answer given by S3 explains the positive and negative effects of English level on success at the same time. S3’s answer is as following: *“First of all, I want to give a personal example for this question. Our university’s medium of instruction is English. While we were chatting with my friends before the beginning of the academic year, some of them were very nervous about their English level and they were pessimist about being successful in both preparatory class and their faculties. On the other hand, my English level has always been good enough so I was more optimistic and motivated than my friends. What I mean with this example is that our English level has an either positive or negative psychological effect on our success in education”.*

The third question in this category was *“To what extend do you think you will benefit from English while studying for a specific course in your faculty?”* Answers given by the participants can be categorized under the theme of **“using in a global scale”**. In this regard, S6 says: *“What I observe from my friends and instructors from my faculty is that they refer to different sources all around the world while they are preparing a project or presenting a topic. Therefore, it seems that I will have to read English sources too often. Besides, I already have enough information about my field and I can always access Turkish sources, so what makes difference is being able to gain more information about what is going on in my field in a global scale”.*

Another participant evaluates this situation from a different point of view by pointing the same theme. S2 explains his point of view with these words: *“When I pass to my faculty courses, I know that we will prepare a lot of projects and presentations in English. I also want to study for master and doctorate after my graduation. All of these studies and researches require me access various sources from different countries. Today, there are hundreds of libraries and databases all around the world and the language to access them is English. Therefore, during my future studies, I believe that I will benefit from English more than I benefit from my native language, Turkish”.*

The last question of this category was *“What is your opinion about English’s being 100% medium of instruction in your university?”* Participants’ views about this issue has gained more importance recently

due to increasing number of universities that prefer English as the medium of instruction. There are different views among the participants about this topic. Some participants are in favor of using English as the medium of instruction while some of them express specific concerns about it. Participants who support this idea find it **challenging but beneficial**. They emphasize that after being exposed to an intensive English program, it is important to continue receiving input in English within a meaningful context which is their faculty courses. S9 says: *“Although it sounds very challenging for me to follow my faculty courses in English, in the long term I believe that it will help me to keep my English skills fresh and alive throughout my university education. In addition to this, receiving a diploma on which the fact that all the courses are given in English is written will provide me more chances in terms of finding a job in the future”*.

Participants who are critical about this idea mentioned the importance of preserving **cultural identity** while teaching English or using it for various purposes including as the instructional language. S1 puts his ideas into words by saying *“I think using English as the medium of instruction is not a good idea since it causes degeneration of Turkish language. On the other hand, I admit the fact that it is almost impossible to access some useful resources without English. That’s to say, I am totally in favor of learning English but I don’t approve its being the language of instruction. Instead, useful resources can be translated into Turkish successfully and courses are given by using our native language”*. Another participant who shares the same opinion with S1 is S4. She says: *“Although using English as the instructional language is beneficial in many ways, I believe that it causes us to move away from using our native language as properly as it should be. Therefore, we should first discuss the efficiency of Turkish courses and make students be able to use their native language efficiently. Otherwise it will be very difficult to follow instructions in English without being able to acquire our native language”*.

Students’ views about relationship between English and professional career

The last category of the questionnaire aimed to get the participants’ opinions about the role of English on their professional career. Similar to the previous categories, 4 questions were addressed in this category as well. First question of this category was “What is your opinion about the role of English on your professional career?” When we analyze the answers given by all the participants, the first theme which is emphasized most is English’s being **“prerequisite”** to find a good job. For example, S10 says: *“The world is becoming more globalized and English is the common language used in almost all the fields including commerce and so on. Therefore, not only international companies but also Turkish companies state knowing English at a level as a prerequisite to apply for the job”*.

The second theme taken from the answers given by some participants is **“qualification”**. Although they agreed upon the fact that knowing English is a criterion to be qualified for a good job, they questioned and criticized this fact from a different point of view. In order to illustrate this point of view S1 says: *“Today, almost every candidate for a qualified job has to know English since most of the companies regardless of their size require English as a prerequisite. I can understand why international companies require an employee to know English but local companies also ask a candidate to know English and sometimes they give more priority to English than a candidate’s abilities and appropriateness for the job. I think this is not fair and risky since it is probable to hire an employee just because he or she knows English without having necessary qualifications for the job other than English”*.

S2 also points out the same concern mentioned by S1 by saying *“Since the number of people who have a good level of English is low in our country, companies are lionizing these people. Normally, in most of the developed countries English is not attributed that much importance since citizens of these countries are given a good English language education. However, in our country although students are given a huge amount of English education, the number of qualified people in terms of English skills is still below the desired level. Therefore, knowing English becomes a great advantage to get a job. Nevertheless, I believe that there are so many employees in big companies of Turkey whose only qualification is knowing*

English and professional abilities are unsatisfactory. I mean, English shouldn't be the most important criterion to employ someone".

The second question of this category was *"What kind of a relationship is there between a person's English level and job opportunities?"* While answering this question, all of the participants mentioned that having a good level of English provides a great advantage to get the applied job. Therefore, **"advantage"** is the most frequently mentioned theme taken from this question. In addition to advantages of knowing English well, some of the participants emphasized the importance of having a certificate that proves a person's English level. They believe that certification increases the chance of getting a job that require English as a prerequisite condition. S2 says: *"Big companies in Turkey require TOEFL or IELTS results and they don't accept any applications without a certificate that shows your English level even if you are competent at using English"*. S4 also supports this view by saying *"Knowing English may not be enough for some companies. They attach importance to your projects, trainings and certificates that show your both professional and English language skills"*.

"What kind of steps should be taken in English language teaching in order to prepare you for your professional career?" was the third question of this category and one of the most important theme to be taken from this category is **need for English for Specific Purposes (ESP)** courses before students pass from preparatory class to faculty courses. Without an exception, all the participants underlined the importance of learning Vocational English as well as general English. For example, S2 says: *"I believe that we should focus on Vocational English since it is more important and difficult than learning general English. Being able to use terms and concepts related to my profession and understanding special terms used in my field is very important for my education and future career. Even if we are good at general English, having a grasp of Vocational English will help us to be one step ahead"*. Another participant referred as S7 in this study says: *"Terms regarding to sales and marketing, commercial negotiation techniques, preparing a commercial presentation, getting a price quote from a company, exchanging letters between companies and preparing reports and contracts are very important in professional career and they require knowing special language specific to business and economy in this case. Therefore, English for Vocational Purposes should be taught to students without losing time"*.

The last question in this category was *"What is the influence of feeling yourself obliged to learn English as a prerequisite to find a good job on you?"* Some participants indicate that there are **motivational effects** of this situation. S8 says: *"At first, I was not happy to feel obliged to learn English to be successful in education and my future career. However, as I learn English and see the benefits of using English skills, I started to feel more motivated and enthusiastic to learn"*. S3 also states similar views by saying *"Even if we don't know English, we may have a job whether good or bad. However, if our employers put English as a criterion to be promoted we shouldn't feel stressed or anxious since this criterion can provide us a chance to improve our personal skills as well as contributing to our company"*. Apart from positive views about this issue, some participants indicate that imposing English as a criterion for success in professional career is **unfair** and creates **inequality** among candidates and employees. For example, S6 says: *"I don't find imposing English as a criterion to be employed or promoted fair since it is probable for a person whose English good to be good at his or her profession. Besides, its vice versa is also possible and a person who is good at English doesn't mean that he or she is a qualified person in his profession. Therefore, in order not to create unfairness and inequality, employers should be careful while hiring a person by judging him or her only with his English level"*.

Discussion and conclusion

The results of this study reveal that participants attribute great importance to the universality of English as a foreign language and they mention that this feature makes English the most important and reliable tool to access sources in order to enhance one's world knowledge and to improve their educational and professional opportunities. Although they expressed some concerns regarding

associating cultural elements with language learning, they don't have irreparable prejudice towards a foreign culture and they find it necessary to marry language learning with cultural components. Relationship between language and culture and role of learning a foreign language on enhancing a person's cultural and world knowledge have been emphasized by different studies. In this regard, Choudhury (2013) emphasized the inextricable and interdependent relationship between language and culture. He also recommends teachers to equip students with high level of intercultural communicative competence. Purba (2011) discusses following reasons for the necessity of integrating culture into foreign language teaching process: 1) language and culture are inseparable; (2) teaching cultural elements facilitates language learning for learners; (3) having background knowledge about the culture of the target language is necessary for anyone to communicate successfully with the speakers of the target language.

Every language includes a new lifestyle and way of thinking. Learning a foreign language has a close relationship with learners' personality, social life and his culture shaped by their environments in which they were grown up. Therefore, learning a language is a way of cultural transmission as well. In this regard, feelings and thoughts that we want to express in a target language requires teaching culture apart from teaching that language's linguistic elements. If we can understand cultural concepts, we can also understand how people from a different culture perceives the world. In addition to this, a well-planned foreign language teaching process will provide students a global world perspective and world knowledge with the facilitator role of language. (Alpar 2013: 104). Çiftçınar and Tanır (2013) express similar concern that some of the participants mentioned in this study which is about preserving cultural identity of learners' native language by indicating that learning a foreign language is indispensable in today's world. However, in order to facilitate Turkish students' foreign language learning process, educators should teach Turkish culture and language sufficiently since mastering in native language will be one of the elements that expedite learning a foreign language.

In terms of the role of English in education, participants appreciate English's being lingua franca in science and education and they express enthusiasm to learn it. Therefore, they support the idea of using English as 100% medium of instruction despite its being challenging due to inefficacy of their background language education. In a similar study, Hu (2019) focused on English-medium instruction in higher education of China. He summarized 4 studies focusing on; 1) English medium instruction (EMI) stakeholders' language ideologies, practices and management efforts; 2) Effects of EMI on Chinese students' ability to use English; 3) Classroom use of English in an established EMI Calculus course at a leading Chinese university and 4) Teacher-student interactions in Chinese EMI classrooms. The results of those studies reveal that EMI needs to be grounded in solid empirical studies. In addition to this, it is necessary for instructors and students to have adequate level of English. It also underlined that instructors should also be competent with language teaching as well as communicative strategies. Other two important topics related to each other revealed by this study are the need for carrying out needs analysis before planning language education and implementing English for Specific Purpose (ESP) courses before students move to their faculty courses so that they have prior linguistic knowledge about their fields. Needs analysis can help institutions to match the needs of their target audience with courses and programs they want to run. Any institution planning to run a new course should conduct a needs assessment survey to find out its students' needs and enthusiasm about that course. Needs analysis will help institutions analyze the short-term and long term needs of their students and in turn will be instrumental in developing their course planning strategies (Azimi & Rahmani 2013). In a study conducted by Alsamadani (2017), it is found that receptive skills (i.e., reading and listening) were mostly focused on in ESP classes. It has been also reported that writing and reading along with speaking skills were needed more than others. The data analysis helped to determine the most important language tasks in the context of engineering studies. These results are found valuable for both ESP and subject matter teachers to enhance the quality of the ESP course taught to engineering students.

ESP courses, on the other hand, are very useful and important for university students studying at different faculties. In the field of English Language Teaching, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) focuses on specific English language needs of the target learners and has been an important and innovative field since its first appearance in 1960s. This term refers to teaching a specific genre of English for students with specific goals. It has gained popularity over the years and more studies have been conducted focusing on different fields. ESP is target specific and focuses English teaching and learning, designed for the specific learners according to their academic and professional needs. Elements of teaching-learning process such as environment, methods, materials and contents used in ESP are not the same as in General English (Rahman 2013).

Another conclusion that can be inferred from participants' answers is the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that have great influence on the success of learning a foreign language. Participants' answers reveal that first category of the interview which is about the role of English on world knowledge is mainly about intrinsic motivation while the last two categories that are related to education and professional life are influenced by extrinsic motivation. The reason for this situation is the fact that increasing one's world knowledge and need for learning new cultures are driven by a person's own will while elements that motivate a person in education and profession may be derived from both internal and external factors. Some of the participants of this study expressed that being obliged to learn English to find a good motivates them to improve their English skills while some others find it a source of anxiety since it creates stress over them. Therefore, educators should be conscious about the impacts of motivation and anxiety on foreign language learning process. Another feeling that participants emphasize is unfairness or inequality resulting from attributing too much importance to English which results in underestimating a person's professional skills.

Recommendations

After a long period of education, university students have enough experience and background knowledge to assess their language learning journey and preparatory class is the last phase of the formal education where students are exposed to an intensive English program. Therefore, educators should take students views and concerns into consideration while planning language education. In this regard, it is recommended to conduct periodical need analysis starting from early years of education until students graduate from university since they provide valuable information about students' needs, interests and levels. As the study reveals, participants are in favor of associating current events with language learning on condition that they match with students' interests and needs. Conducting a need analysis will also help curriculum planners to decide which current topics are addressing students' interests and how to adapt them to teaching activities and materials.

The results of the study show that motivation as one of the most important affective factors plays an important role while learning English. Therefore, program designers and instructors should take necessary steps in order to create a classroom environment where students are intrinsically motivated. Extracurricular activities that focus improving students' foreign language skills should also be planned and so that the students can practice their skills in an authentic environment in which less stress is felt.

Another important issue that need analysis will lead is the idea of implementing English for Specific Purpose (ESP) courses during preparatory class so that students are provided with the chance to have prior cultural and linguistic knowledge about their field. Planning an ESP course require expertise on both English language and the field for which an ESP program is being planned to be run. Therefore, a close cooperation should be established between students, faculty members and English language instructors starting from the need analysis phase until the evaluation of the designed course.

This study also reveals that although students are positive about learning a foreign language as well as learning a foreign culture, they still have concerns about preserving their national and cultural identity. This may cause some students have prejudice against learning a foreign language and have

negative effects on their success. Therefore, educators should be aware of this risk and emphasize the fact that learning a foreign language and its culture doesn't mean giving up one's own national identity. On the other hand, since this issue isn't one of the main topics of this study, a more detailed research focusing only on this concern is recommended so that the underlying reasons for students' concerns can be detected properly.

Apart from above mentioned recommendations that mainly address teachers and education planners, it is recommended for companies and employers to be fair and equal while evaluating the candidates that apply for a job. In other words, they shouldn't put a person's English level as the only criterion to be hired but their professional skills and abilities other than knowing a foreign language should be given equal weight.

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Multilingual-sensitive professional action competence and pre-service teachers' beliefs – a happy marriage?

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Abstract

The present study addresses a major concern in current German pre-service EFL teacher education: The development of prospective teachers' multilingual-sensitive professional action competence that is their ability to make use of their future pupils' multilingual resources to enhance EFL teaching and learning processes with a lexical focus. To this end, two identical teacher training classes held at Goethe University Frankfurt/Main, Germany are presented, the primary aims of which were to raise students' awareness of multilingual-sensitive teaching approaches on the one, and to enable them to design multilingual-sensitive EFL lessons with a lexical focus on the other hand. Given insights from earlier research, namely that teachers' beliefs and (prior) experiences "interact differently with the theoretical knowledge they gain in lectures" (Ellis 2006: 7), and to gain holistic insights into the development of participants' competence, their beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning processes with a lexical focus as well as the sources of these beliefs were addressed in classes. Not surprisingly, results show that students' beliefs at the onset of classes were firmly rooted in their personal Language Learning Biographies and heavily shaped by mono-, rather than multilingual teaching and learning approaches. However, it could also be shown that students' beliefs changed throughout the training, a finding which bears important implications for future teacher training classes.

Keywords: multilingualism, teacher beliefs, Language Learning Biography

Introduction

In the course of the "Multilingual Turn" (May 2014), widely accepted assumptions about language teaching and learning have been challenged, amongst them the overarching conviction that language teaching and learning should be strictly monolingual endeavors (Cenoz & Gorter 2011). As such, the respective target language is to be used "exclusively" (Cummins 2007) in the language classroom for languages should be kept rigidly separate (Cook 2009), especially since it is widely believed that the inclusion of languages other than the target language hinders rather than supports the language learning process and will ultimately prevent language learners from achieving near-native speaker competence (Ortega 2014). Numerous calls to reject these notions in favor of an understanding of language learning and teaching as a process which should account for the linguistic heterogeneity language learners represent in language classrooms around the globe have been made (Conteh & Meier 2014, García & Wei 2014, Otwinowska & De Angelis 2014, Vetter & Jessner 2019). These calls are grounded on research findings which show that multilingual language learners possess language learning potentials monolingual learners tend to have less command of (Franceschini 2011). These potentials, or "funds of knowledge" (González, Moll & Amanti 2005) include a heightened level of metalinguistic ability (Bialystok 2001), language awareness (Jessner 2006), and language learning strategies (Otwinowska 2016), to name but a few.

Interestingly, the teaching and learning of the *English* language has been ascribed an important role in unfolding these potentials, despite the fact that English is still connected to "linguistic imperialism" and even seen as a "killer language" which spreads at the expense of other languages (House 2003: 556, 574). Contrary to this view, the function of English as a "bridge language" which lends itself well to language transfer (Reissner 2019), an important tenet of multilingual approaches to language teaching and learning, is increasingly gaining acceptance, especially (though not exclusively) in German educational contexts, where linguistic heterogeneity in language teaching and learning classes has become the norm rather than the exception. Hence, the question as to how pupils' linguistic resources

may be used to enhance EFL learning has gained momentum. Pupils' linguistic resources in this context are manifold: Some bring first languages other than the target language English and the official language German to class, often on various levels of competence (Elsner 2015). These pupils, who often share a migration background, are frequently still in the process of learning German as their second language on a BICS and CALP level (Cummins 2008) when entering the EFL classroom. It is not uncommon for them to use home languages such as Turkish or Arabic, and to employ German or a mix of languages when talking to their peers. As a result, it is common for them to switch between languages to adjust to specific communicative needs (Hu 2003). Pupils who have been raised rather monolingually (here: German), extend their multilingualism in more formal ways, that is during their school career, within which languages such as French, Spanish or Italian are learned besides English. Thus, pupils' linguistics resources are heterogeneous in themselves since they are shaped by the context within which pupils have learned or are learning languages, the respective age when learning started as well as the competence levels they have in these languages, which is subject to continuous change rather than stable (Butler 2013, Herdina & Jessner 2002). Given this, it is obvious that the assumption that all pupils in an EFL learning group share the same monolingual (German) linguistic background is clearly outdated. However, this assumption, also known as the "monolingual habitus" (Gogolin 2008) is still prevalent in many German EFL classes and leads teachers to stick to teaching approaches which emerge from this habitus: Pupils' linguistic resources are excluded from the classroom rather than included, teaching and learning processes are characterized by a target-language-only-approach.

This approach is persistent despite numerous calls for more multilingual-sensitive language teaching and learning, both from an educational policy (Council of Europe 2001) as well as from a research stance. As for the latter, findings show that the inclusion of learners' language resources such as their first languages can enhance their target language competence (Göbel et al. 2010, Bündgens-Kosten et al. 2016). In language classrooms, however, multilingual-sensitive foreign language teaching in the above sense is still rarely found, a circumstance that is understandable from teachers' perspectives for many feel ill-prepared to engage in multilingual-sensitive ways of teaching (Bredthauer & Engfer 2016). Hence, it seems reasonable to strongly argue for multilingual-sensitive EFL teaching to be an integral part of pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher professional development (Göbel et al. 2010), a demand which is, however, not sufficiently responded to (De Angelis 2011).

The following contribution attempts to address this gap: Two identical pre-service EFL teacher classes held in the winter term of 2017/18 at Goethe University Frankfurt/Main, Germany are presented, the primary aims of which were to raise students' awareness of multilingual-sensitive teaching approaches and to enable them to design multilingual-sensitive EFL lessons with a lexical focus. Both classes were part of the project LEVEL ("Linking Pedagogic Expertise through Video-Enhanced Learning Scenarios") which is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in the course of the "Campaign for the Quality of Teacher Education" program of the German federal and state governments.

The *relevance* of these classes' results from the meaningfulness multilingual-sensitive teaching approaches have for future EFL teachers (for the reasons outlined above). The didactic *conception* of the classes owes to the nature of multilingual-sensitivity: Although it mirrors current linguistic changes in German EFL classrooms in terms of pupils' linguistic heterogeneity, as well as the didactic demands which go along with these changes, it has not established itself in EFL classes yet (Cutrim Schmid & Schmidt 2017, Jakisch 2014). It is still more of a didactic innovation which are, in turn, known for rarely being implemented into practical teaching processes as long as they do not correspond to teachers' subjective theories (beliefs) about teaching and learning (Reusser & Pauli 2014). Hence, pre-service teachers' beliefs were explicitly addressed in the two classes portrayed here. In what follows, a theoretical rationale on multilingual-sensitive professional action as well as on teachers' beliefs is offered. Next, the methodological approach of the study at hand is elaborated on, followed by its results which illuminate the following research questions: Which beliefs concerning quality criteria of EFL

teaching and learning with a lexical focus do students express at the beginning of the classes? Where do these beliefs stem from? Do students' beliefs change throughout the classes?

A section on how findings may inform future teacher training classes to develop prospective EFL teachers' multilingual-sensitive professional action competence rounds off the contribution.

Theoretical background I: multilingual-sensitive professional action competence

The concept of *multilingual-sensitive professional action competence* (henceforth, multilingual action competence) has been theoretically derived from Shulman's "subject matter knowledge for teaching" (Shulman 1986), Weinert's "action competence" (Weinert 2001) and Baumert and Kunter's notion of "knowledge-in-action" (Baumert & Kunter 2006) in a prior investigation on the development of pre-service teachers' multilingual action competence (Niesen 2018b). I have already argued in this prior study for the necessity to elaborate on what multilingual action competence entails, especially because existing models and conceptions of teachers' action competence are largely rooted in general pedagogical aspects, whereas domain-specific conceptions of teachers' action competence are still rare, not to speak of conceptions which address even further specifications such as, in this case, *multilingual action competence* (Niesen forthcoming). The working definition of teachers' multilingual action competence which has been suggested reads as follows: It is "the didactic ability to examine various *options for action* with regard to learners' *language learning prerequisites* and to relate these options to *intended learning objectives*" (Niesen 2018b: 123; trans.). In this definition, *language learning prerequisites* cover linguistic resources pupils bring to the EFL classroom such as (first) languages they already know, the strategies they have applied when consciously learning further languages in different contexts (before English), as well as the way they employ their languages to meet various communicative needs in and outside the classroom.

For it has become widely acknowledged that pupils' linguistic resources do not unfold their potential for further language learning automatically, it is up to teachers to make pupils aware of the linguistic resources they have at their command, and to create learning scenarios which enable pupils to actively draw on these resources. A number of suggestions of what these scenarios might look like have been put forward. They include creating a language-friendly environment within which pupils' languages other than English are valued (Elsner 2015), initiating explicit language comparisons on morphological, lexical and syntactic levels to have pupils uncover similarities and differences between languages and, ultimately, to strengthen the cognitive dimension of their language awareness (Schnuch 2015), engaging in inter- as well as intralingual prospective and retrospective language transfer, and transfer of language learning strategies (Meißner 2004), and encouraging pupils to employ their first language(s) as a "base of reference" when learning English (Butzkamm 2003). Further options include providing pupils opportunities to negotiate language meaning, form and subject content in "multilingual discourse" (Cenoz & Gorter 2015), especially to avoid simplifications (Gibbons 2006) which might occur due to the fact that pupils' linguistic abilities in the target language often have not (yet) developed to such an extent as to allow for discussions about complex topics and phenomena, as well as more practical things such as having pupils' who share similar language backgrounds but are heterogeneous in terms of their target language competence (Schmelter 2005) work together in groups. Needless to say that teaching and learning scenarios like this put high demands on both, teachers and learners alike, especially since they are frequently accompanied by teacher and learner roles which differ to a considerable extent from their traditional conception: If a multilingual approach to EFL teaching and learning is taken seriously, it is the pupils, not the teachers who act as "language experts" (at least in those phases where their L1s are explicitly included). It is the teachers' responsibility to bundle multilingual contributions in a way as to make them fruitful springboards for the enhancement of pupils' target language competence that is the *intended learning objectives* in the definition of multilingual action competence above. I have termed the attempt to foster learners' target language competence through multilingual teaching as the

“multilingualism-as-tool” approach (Niesen 2019: 139) to stress the functional purpose of multilingual teaching.

The final component in the above definition of multilingual action competence which demands for clarification is pre-service EFL teachers’ ability to *examine various options for action* in terms of their multilingual-sensitivity. These options refer to teachers’ decisions as to how to structure a lesson, his or her didactic approaches as well as choice of methods to be used in a lesson. Whereas in previous studies on pre-service EFL teachers’ professional development, these options were either elicited from case vignettes provided by the teacher educator (myself), or as ready-made descriptions of teaching scenarios to choose from, in the present study the options for action had to be developed by pre-service teachers themselves by designing lesson plans. At this point, it might be argued that the mere design of a lesson plan cannot be equated with actually acting out this plan in real classrooms. However, the design of a lesson plan certainly is a part of professional action competence when perceived as “reflection-for-action”, the purpose of which is to “guide future [teacher] action” and is therefore “proactive in nature” (Farrell 2007: 6). Further, pre-service teachers were also engaged in “reflection-on-action” which is “retroactive” for it “involves thinking back on what was done” (Farrell 2007: 5, see also Tsui 2012).

It has already been mentioned in the introductory section that didactic innovations such as multilingual sensitivity in EFL classrooms need to take into account teachers’ beliefs about language teaching and learning if they are to be implemented in schools and unfold their potential to enhance pupils’ language learning. Kubanyiova and Feryok have made this connection even more explicit, stating that “the relevance of the field [language teacher cognition] needs to happen through linking teacher cognition to meaningful teacher development and students’ learning, and that it needs to occur in response to changing linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic realities of language classrooms around the world” (ibid. 2015: 437). Promising research findings which show that teachers’ cognitions cannot only be linked to “changing linguistic realities”, but that these beliefs can be shaped so as to include positive attitudes towards multilingual teaching and learning (Dooley 2005) encourage the study at hand.

Theoretical background II: teacher cognition

When in the early 1970s educational researchers began to change research perspectives from teacher behavior to the underlying cognitions which drive this behavior, scientific interest increasingly focused on teacher beliefs about teaching and learning (Borg 2006). As early as in the 1960s behavioristic-oriented educational research was criticized for not taking into account teachers’ mental structures and their influence on both, teacher professional behavior and student learning (Ashton 2015). In the decades to follow, research into teachers’ cognitions gained importance and went through several developments which cluster around four perspectives which have become known as the “individualist ontology”, the “social ontology”, the “sociohistorical ontology” as well as the “chaotic systems ontology” (Burns, Freeman & Edwards 2015). A brief account of these phases shall be presented here.

Conceptual and empirical approaches to illuminate teachers’ cognitions which were (and are) shaped by an “individualist ontology” view teachers’ cognitions as “reified mental constructs, that is, static and discrete entities that are typically dissociated from action and context, as well as other dimensions of teachers’ inner lives (e.g., emotions, motivations, values). Teachers’ cognitions are assumed to be acquired as a result of their professional and personal experiences, readily accessed and articulated in self-reports, and applied (or not) in teaching practices. It is also assumed that a match between stated beliefs and practices is desirable” (Kubanyiova & Feryok 2015: 437).

As Burns et al. (2015) show, research from this cognitive perspective has put forward important insights, amongst them the finding that cognitions involve “complex conceptual processes”, that “the interrelationships between cognition and practice were not necessarily consistent or convergent”, and that the view of cognitions as stable entities which could be “mediated over time through professional development and educational experiences” is to be challenged (ibid.: 589f). Given this, the pave was

grounded for a more social perspective on the perception of and research on teacher cognition, in the course of which contextual factors, “both internal to the person and external in the social setting” (Burns et al. 2015: 591) which shape teacher cognitions became of interest. To illuminate the complex interplay of contexts, teacher learning and teacher cognition, teachers themselves were to elaborate on their beliefs about teaching, often through diary studies (Burns et al. 2015). In this vein, teachers also “reflected on their own language learning experiences and either accepted or rejected techniques they had been exposed to” (Burns et al. 2015: 592). Research conducted primarily from a “sociohistorical ontology” brought to light teacher cognitions which operated amongst a group of teachers as “shared principles” (Burns et al. 2015: 593), as agreed-upon norms about teaching and learning which have been mentioned in later contexts as “shared beliefs” (Oser & Blömeke 2012: 417), or as established norms embedded in a specific societal context which determines beliefs about functions of and behavior within a specific school system (Tschannen-Moran et al. 2017).

One of the most recent developments in teacher cognition research adopts a perspective which offers “fresh lenses through which to view the interrelationships among beliefs, knowledge and practice” (Burns et al. 2015: 593). A prominent study conducted from this stance has revealed important insights into how teacher learning in a professional development course unfolded (Kiss 2012). The author argues for an understanding of teacher learning as being a “complex system” characterized by “sensitivity to initial condition, unpredictability, having a nested structure showing a non-hierarchic network system and feedback loops” (Kiss 2012: 30). Further, teachers’ cognitions clustered around four identities, namely “self as a learner, self as a teacher, self as an administrator, and personal self” (Kiss 2012: 22), all of which tend to be linked to teachers’ past, present and future experiences and conceptions. Kiss found that what teachers learned in the course and how they learned it was to a considerable extent influenced by the fact that they jumped back and forth between their identities and that learning, as a result, appears to be “non-linear” and “highly unpredictable” (Kiss 2012: 17). The author concludes that “participants used an elaborate network of links to events, people or places in their past, present, and future in order to create a personal understanding and meaning of the topics discussed during the course. The findings clearly indicate that participants were selective in what they considered important to mention in their reflective journals, although they were exposed to the same educational experience” (Kiss 2012: 17).

This is not to say that teacher education does not have an impact on teacher thinking, which it clearly does, it rather implies that teacher education should be sensitive to the nature of teachers’ different learning processes and especially their pre-existing conceptions of teaching when entering teacher training courses. The role teachers’ pre-existing beliefs about language teaching and learning, the roots of which go back to Lorties’ (1975) concept of “apprenticeship of observation”, has been acknowledged by numerous researchers such as Johnson (2015) who emphasizes that “[t]eacher learning neither begins nor ends within a teacher education program. In fact, the duration of the typical teacher education program, whether pre-service or in-service, pales in comparison to teachers’ schooling histories, life experiences, and the accumulation of teaching experience” (ibid.: 525), or Freeman (2002) who argues that “[f]rom a teacher-education standpoint therefore, the teacher learners’ contexts of mind provide a meeting point between prior knowledge, as life history, background, social position, experience and so on, and the present experience and interaction of the teacher education activity or course” (ibid.: 10). As for the lack of time in teacher professional development programs mentioned by Johnson (2015), it has been shown that especially formats within which teachers reflect on their beliefs while, at the same time, generate new knowledge about teaching and learning have proven to be effective (Parkinson & Maggioni 2017). In the same line, Reusser and Pauli (2014) emphasize that a lack of “subject knowledge” may seriously hinder the development and change of beliefs, which is why they argue for “situated, problem- and action-oriented professional development formats which include the implementation of teaching videos” (ibid.: 655; trans.). This way, they say, teachers can be offered alternative ways of

classroom action which, in turn, enables their altered beliefs to enter the level of classroom behavior which would otherwise remain on a purely cognitive level (ibid.: 645; trans.).

The influential power pre-existing teachers' beliefs exercise on teacher learning has also been stressed by Kubanyiova (2012) who suggests an "integrative model of Language Teacher Conceptual Change" which covers "some of the 'prototypical reactions that teachers have when they are introduced to new ideas or reform initiatives" (ibid.: 61): Whether teachers' beliefs change or not throughout educational programs is subject not only to the input provided in these programs, but also to various steps teachers undertake when confronted with new input, that is they "evaluate it quickly through the filter of their existing cognitions", they check whether the input "propels the teacher to experience a discrepancy between her perceived actual and ideal or ought-to self", followed by several "threat appraisal[s]" during which teachers estimate, for example, whether the respective input is practicable in their specific teaching contexts (ibid.: 60f.). The "discrepancy" the author refers to is mirrored by the notion of a "disequilibrium" (Parkinson & Maggioni 2017: 228) which incorporates challenges which create an imbalance of teachers' existing competencies, beliefs and (new) tasks to be performed and which triggers teachers to leave their "epistemological comfort zone" (Schraw et al. 2017a: 16). In sum, Kubanyiova (2012) underlines that "teacher developmental programs or processes do not *cause* change, but that we need to talk instead of multiple reasons for change or lack thereof and, equally, multiple routes of development" because "[t]eacher conceptual development does not follow a predictable trajectory" (ibid.: 191). The complex interplay of teachers' beliefs and teachers' professional development is also highlighted by Fives & Buehl (2017) who state that teachers' beliefs serve a three-fold function, namely as "filters", "frames" and "guides": As "filters" beliefs can influence the intake and interpretation of new information. As "frames" they may influence the approach chosen to perform specific tasks. This is where specific beliefs are consciously activated: "Although we consider framing to be an active process that the individual is aware of, the degree of awareness may vary from a highly intentional activation of particular beliefs to a more habitual or automatic activation of beliefs for framing a task" (ibid.: 38). Beliefs which function as "guides" not only leave their imprint on teachers' observable decisions, but also on perceptions about future professional behavior (Fives & Buehl 2017).

A useful theoretical conception of teacher cognition development has been put forward by Parkinson & Maggioni (2017) and their "epistemic developmental path" (ibid.: 218). The developmental continuum inherent in this "path" ranges from naïve and rather dualistic to highly complex, more sophisticated beliefs (Schraw et al. 2017b). The specific levels of development are accompanied by teachers' preferences as to how teaching and learning processes should be designed: "The realist worldview assumes that there is an objective body of knowledge that is best acquired through experts via transmission [...]. Teachers with a realist worldview teach actively to students who are viewed as passive recipients of a pre-established knowledge base, downplaying the role of peers. [...]. The contextualist worldview assumes that learners construct shared understanding in contexts in which teachers serve as facilitators. The relativist worldview assumes that each learner constructs a unique knowledge base that is different but equal to that of other learners. [...]. Their main goal is to promote student self-regulation, which enables students to learn autonomously in the future" (ibid.: 332).

It is obvious that multilingual teaching, and the development of multilingual action competence among (pre-service) EFL teachers demands for a "contextualist worldview", given that pupils are to play an active role in sharing their knowledge of languages learned before English as well as accompanying learning strategies. The goal to enable pupils to "learn autonomously in the future" as represented in the "relativist worldview" is also inherent in multilingual teaching for it aims (at least in the long run) at putting pupils in the position to make informed decisions about when and how to activate their linguistic resources to enhance further (foreign) language learning.

Methodology

Against the backdrop of the theoretical aspects and research findings outlined in the previous sections, the investigation addresses the following research questions:

1. Which beliefs concerning quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning (with a lexical focus) do students express at the beginning of the classes?
2. Where do these beliefs stem from?
3. Do students' beliefs change throughout the classes?

In what follows, the design and implementation of the classes investigated is elaborated on, followed by the exemplification of the methodological approach chosen.

Both classes (N=23, 18f, 5m) were held at Goethe University Frankfurt/Main, Germany, in the winter term of 2017/2018. Classes were open to advanced pre-service EFL teachers, all of whom had gained prior teaching experience either through a practical teaching semester at a local school or due to school internships accompanied by university classes. A total of nineteen students had additional experiences as substitute or assistant teachers. Participants studied to become teachers in various secondary school forms. As for participants' cultural and linguistic background, which has been elaborated on in detail in an earlier study (Niesen 2018c), it can be said that the entire group was heterogeneous for it included various first languages such as German, Korean, Russian, English, Urdu, Turkish, and Dutch besides numerous other languages which had been acquired or learned in and outside formal contexts. Classes ran for 15 weeks with one 90-minute session per week. Both classes covered the module "Innovations in language teaching" of the official study regulations at Goethe University.

Students' multilingual action competence was trained in a threefold manner: First, theoretical texts about multilingualism in EFL teaching and learning were discussed to raise students' awareness of the topic and to make them familiar with multilingual-sensitive teaching approaches. Second, EFL teaching videos were analyzed in terms of their multilingual-sensitivity. In this context, students were to elaborate on to what extent the videotaped teachers engaged in multilingual-sensitive teaching and whether the approach served to achieve target language learning objectives. Students were also suggested to design alternative teaching designs if they found the perceived one not appropriate. Two types of EFL teaching videos were used, namely simulated and authentic ones. The former were videotaped microteachings within which pre-service teachers who had participated in prior university classes conducted by the author of this article were given role cards and acted out as "teachers" and "pupils". In contrast, authentic videos were generated in real school contexts. Since both types of videos have their specific strengths and weaknesses when it comes to the development of pre-service teachers' professional competence (Niesen 2018a), a combination of both was chosen in the classes investigated here.

The entire training phase took 11 sessions and was framed by two sessions at the beginning and at the very ending of the classes to collect data to gain insights into the research questions. To answer the first and second research question, students filled out a questionnaire termed "My Language Learning Biography". Not only did it include information on the number of languages participants have command of, on their levels of competence in these languages as well as the age and context of learning, it also included an item which asked students to explicitly elaborate on their beliefs. More specifically, they were to write a short text on what they believe are essential quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning in general and with a lexical focus in particular. Students were free to exemplify their beliefs on EFL teaching and learning with beginner, intermediate, and more advanced pupils. They were further asked to indicate where they think their beliefs stem from. Students' texts were subject to qualitative content analyses (Kuckartz 2016), resulting in a category system which illustrates their beliefs at the beginning of classes. To gain further insights into students' beliefs at the beginning of the classes they were asked to design a lesson plan with a lexical focus. The plan clustered around the text "Visit Dartmoor National Park" taken from a textbook frequently used in German secondary school EFL classes (Biederstädt 2013). The text was chosen for it is frequently employed in real secondary EFL classrooms in numerous German

federal states and therefore poses a challenge to be expected by future teachers. Instructions read as follows:

Instruction on “Visit Dartmoor” (VD I)

Pupils are introduced to the following new vocabulary: hang-gliding, mud running, climbing, fox, owl, badger, pony, river, tent, map, (...).

Imagine you were the EFL teacher of a 6th grade with about 30 pupils. With the help of the “Visit Dartmoor” introductory pages from the textbook design a mini lesson: Explain carefully and in detail which steps you take to achieve the lesson goals (pupils grasp the meaning of the new words and are able to use them in meaningful contexts). Give reasons for your decisions.

Background information about the EFL learning group included pupils’ linguistic resources as well as their target language competence. Students prepared their lesson plans as a table (phase, content, learning goals, social form, media) and elaborated on it in a coherent written text. In a next step, participants were asked to write a short reflection on the question whether (and to what extent) their lesson plans mirror their beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching in general and with a lexical focus in particular. Hence, the instruments used to illuminate participants’ beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning (with a lexical focus) falls into three parts:

- a) The questionnaire “My Language Learning Biography”
- b) The design of “Visit Dartmoor” lessons (VD I)
- c) The reflections on possible connections between a) and b)

The fact that students’ were asked to express their beliefs in the questionnaire suggests that the study at hand falls under the individualist-cognitive ontology of research on teachers’ cognitions as exemplified in the previous section. This is exactly why this instrument was accompanied by the lesson design instrument which allowed students to put their beliefs into practice, and, in turn, to enable the researcher to gain more implicit, that is, activity-based insights into students’ beliefs. As Freeman (2002) put it quite convincingly: “We need to understand that articulation and reflection are reciprocal processes. One needs the words to talk about what one does, and in using those words one can see it more clearly. Articulation is not about words alone, however. Skills and activity likewise provide ways through which new teachers can articulate and enact their images of teaching” (ibid.: 11). It was assumed here that some of the beliefs mentioned in the questionnaires would find their precipitation in the lesson plans for it has been shown that “[c]onclusions about teacher beliefs can [...] be drawn from the analysis of teachers’ lesson plans (Fives & Buehl 2017). To find out whether and to what extent students’ beliefs could be detected in the lesson plans, the category systems which represent students’ beliefs were applied to the lesson plans in a deductive manner to identify beliefs therein. Before categories were applied, two cooperating experts were trained to do so (1.5 hours). Throughout the training, ambiguous categories were redesigned to avoid double coding. Subsequently, nearly 20% of the lesson plans were coded by the experts. The resulting percent agreement was 78%, interrater reliability turned out to be substantial, $\kappa=0.76$.

The reflections were subject to discussion in class, taking account of the insight that “[w]hen teachers describe their [...] beliefs, they do not simply put words into pre-existing mental mechanisms that reside, fully developed and ready to be coherently articulated, in their heads. When they tell, they tell with a particular purpose, to a particular audience. What and how they tell is shaped by the context of the telling which influences what can, should, or even must be told about their selves” (Kubanyiova & Feryok 2015: 438f.). The reflection process itself included what has become known as “reflexivity” (Brownlee & Schraw 2017): “Whereas reflection involves the self (subject) thinking about some object, reflexivity involves critical thinking that goes beyond such reflection to evaluate teaching practice in the light of personal epistemologies” (ibid.: 412). Referring to Archer (2007), the authors continue: “The

distinguishing feature of reflexivity is that it has the self-referential characteristics of ‘bending-back’ some thought upon self, such that it takes the form of subject-object-subject. This is likely to lead to reasoned action and epistemic growth for the individual” (ibid.: 412). Of course, there was no guarantee that participants actually engaged in these processes, which is another reason why the written reflections were discussed with peers and the supervisor, the latter of whom shaped the discussion so as to make “reflexivity” to occur more likely.

To answer the third research question, students were told to redesign their lesson plans on “Visit Dartmoor National Park” (VD I) in multilingual-sensitive ways (VD II). It was assumed that this task served as an “equilibrium” which provided a challenge for students for none of them had attended a course on multilingual teaching and learning with a specific focus on EFL lexis before (information gained in informal discourse with participants). Put differently, their “pre-understandings” were assumed to be “inadequate” to perform the task (Johnson 2015: 525f.). To promote the inclusion of the entirety of knowledge and skills gained throughout classes in the lesson plans, students were advised to revise their redesigned lesson plans in the last session and hand them in after classes had ended. Again, there was a reflection task which asked students to elaborate on possible connections between their redesigned lesson plans and their beliefs initially expressed in their Language Learning Biographies. Both classes were rounded off by a questionnaire within which students were to exemplify whether they think their initial beliefs had changed in the course of the classes and if so, to what extent and in what ways.

A word of caution is necessary at this point: Given insights from research on teachers’ cognitions from a social and complex systems ontology, especially the finding that teachers’ learning follows non-predictable and winding paths, neither the redesigned “Visit Dartmoor” lessons (VD II) nor the accompanying reflection and final questionnaire can serve to “prove” that participants’ beliefs had changed (or not), and that this change is due to the knowledge they gained throughout classes, first and foremost because it was found that “changes in trainees’ behavior” are not necessarily “accompanied by changes in their belief system” (Kubanyiova 2012: 18). However, the combination of questionnaires and lesson plans corresponds to Kubanyiova’s conviction that “our understanding of teacher change is limited if self-reported cognitions are examined in isolation of behaviors because behavioral change does not imply cognitive change and vice versa” (ibid.: 18).

Results and discussion

Table 1 illustrates students’ initial beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning in general. As can be seen from the number of sub-categories, beliefs belonging to the category “learner-orientation” (category 1) were quite differentiated. The importance students ascribe to this category is also reflected in the absolute numbers in the left column which show how many students opted for the relevant sub-category.

Almost half of the students are convinced that the target language English should be used in the EFL classroom (category 2), followed by skill-orientation (category 3) and a clear lesson structure (category 4).

Table 1: Category system “beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning in general”.

Category	Definition	Example
1. Student-orientation 6 (26.09%)*	Statements which refer to a pupil-oriented choice of contents and methods (not teacher-centered)	“Inclusion of pupils”
1.1 Variety of methods 14 (60.87%)	... the use of a variety of media (texts, films, etc.) and social forms (SW, PW, GW, plenum)** to address various senses and to adapt teaching to different	“Teaching should include many different methods”

	learner types	
1.2 Oral contributions 9 (39.13%)	... the promotion of <i>all</i> pupils' oral contributions	"Pupils should talk a lot"
1.3 Differentiation 8 (34.78%)	... supporting "weak" and challenging "strong" pupils. Here, individuals' target language competencies are decisive	"Consider pupils' different levels of achievement"
1.4 Dealing with mistakes 6 (26.09%)	... the way pupils' mistakes are dealt with. Mistakes should be considered as a part of the learning process. Anxiety among pupils is to be avoided.	"Constructive learning atmosphere, pupils should not be afraid of making mistakes"
1.5 Level and development of learning achievements 5 (21.74%)	... the level and development of pupils' target language learning achievements. These are to be checked on a regular basis by the teacher (via tests, discussion of pupils' task results, etc.). Feedback about their personal level of competence is to be provided to pupils	"Continuous learning progress", "Frequent tests"
1.6 Pupils' living conditions 4 (17.39%)	... the inclusion of pupils' living environments and everyday routine outside school. This also means the inclusion of pupils' personal interests	"Teaching should refer to pupils' living conditions"
2. Use of the target language (and German if necessary) 10 (43.48%)	... the exclusive, at least predominant use of the target language in the classroom (by teachers and pupils). German may be referred to if necessary	"No other language than English should be used"
3. Competence/skill-orientation 5 (21.74%)	... the promotion of as many skills as possible (reading, writing, listening, speaking) as well as of mediation. There can, but does not have to, be a focus on more than one skill simultaneously	"A focus should be to combine the 4 skills"
4. Structure 3 (13.04%)	... clear planning and structure of teaching. This covers dividing a lesson into identifiable phases and transparent learning goals	"...clear introduction: Transparent presentation of lesson procedure"

*Mentions in Language Learning Biographies (absolute numbers and percent); **Single-, partner-, groupwork

The following major quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning could be derived from students' remarks:

EFL teaching and learning should be characterized by a **variety in methods** in terms of social forms (plenum, single-, partner- and groupwork), media (texts, films, illustrations) and task types. The **target language** is to be used, if not exclusively, to the highest extent possible by teachers and learners. Teaching and learning is learner-oriented in such a way as teachers take pupils' pre-knowledge into account and adopt their teaching to learners' heterogeneous competence levels and learning types via **differentiation**. Further criteria cover the perception of **mistakes** as parts of the learning process as well as regular documentation and assessment of the **learning progress** including informative feedback, especially with regard to the "**5 skills**". Contents of teaching include **pupils' personal interests**, the structure of teaching and learning scenarios falls into **clearly identifiable phases** (introduction, working phase, conclusion).

Students' beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching *with a lexical focus* are presented in Table 2 (as an extension of Table 1 categories are continuously numbered). Utmost importance was attached to teaching strategies which put vocabulary introduction and use into meaningful contexts, as well as to training the correct pronunciation of new words. Only three students explained that multilingual-sensitive elements should play a role in EFL teaching *with a lexical focus* (category 9).

Table 2: Category system "beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning with a lexical focus".

Category	Definition	Example
5.Contextualisation 5 (21.74%)	New words are learned in context, not as single, isolated units	"Pupils should learn new words in context"
5.1 ... to present new vocabulary 8 (34.78%)	New words are presented <u>by the teacher</u> in complex meaningful contexts (coherent texts, videos etc.). This can serve both, the explanation of word meanings by the teacher as well as decoding word meanings by pupils	"The meanings of words needs to be explained, e.g. by telling pupils a story which contains the words"
5.2 ... to apply/use new vocabulary 11 (47.83%)	New words are put into a meaningful context by pupils (they write coherent texts which contain these words) to consolidate pupils' word knowledge	"To strengthen pupils' word knowledge they should put words in a meaningful context by formulating their own sentences"
6. Pronunciation 13 (56.52%)	The correct pronunciation of new words is presented by a model (teacher, CDs). Pronunciation is practiced through continuously repeating new words (either a single pupil or the entire class in choir)	"Teacher should serve as a model for correct pronunciation, difficult words are repeated by pupils"
7. Consideration/diagnos is or activation of prior knowledge 8 (34.78%)	Pupils' pre-knowledge may cover linguistic knowledge (words they already know) and real-world knowledge (general knowledge). The inclusion of this knowledge serves to reduce the cognitive load pupils' face when learning new words. New knowledge is to be integrated into knowledge which already exists	"Teachers should show pupils the contrast between what they already know and what they do not yet know (in terms of word knowledge)"
8. Game-based strategies 8 (34.78%)	The implementation of games (role plays, riddles etc.) serves to enhance both, pupils' motivation and their ability to memorize new words. Further, it helps to train pronunciation and can be used for diagnostic purposes	"Test pupils' word knowledge in a playful manner"
9. Multilingualism 3 (13.04%)	Pupils' knowledge of languages other than the target language English and the official language German is actively used in teaching and learning vocabulary	"Inclusion of pupils' first and second languages"

As for the first research question, it is safe to say that students' beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning (with a lexical focus) at the onset of the classes clustered around the principles of learner-oriented, communicative EFL teaching and learning scenarios, the structure and implementation of which lies almost exclusively in the teacher's hands. Multilingual-sensitive aspects play a subordinate role, although students' Language Learning Biographies uncovered their own rich multilingual resources, which, however, seem to be dominated by more monolingually shaped beliefs. From an epistemological perspective, students' beliefs at this point predominantly mirrored a "realist worldview": although

learners are not explicitly perceived as passive recipients of knowledge, students' statements which opt for co-constructive ways of creating knowledge in the classroom are rare. Rather, activities initiated by the teacher to explicitly learn and practice target language competence are favored.

The category-based analyses of students' "Visit Dartmoor National Park" lesson plans (VD I) revealed that all the categories, that is, all the beliefs explicitly expressed by students at the onset of the classes in the questionnaires "My Language Learning Biography" could be detected in the lesson plans. Interestingly, however, some of the beliefs specific students had mentioned in their Language Learning Biographies did not appear in their lesson plans. This turned out to be true for "student orientation" (table 1, category 1), "differentiation" (table 1, category 1.3), "dealing with mistakes" (table 1, category 1.4), "contextualization" (table 2, category 5) and "consideration/diagnosis or activation of prior knowledge" (table 2, category 7). This suggests that the level of importance students ascribed to specific quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning is not necessarily reflected in their lesson plans. It might be assumed here that students either lacked the strategies to transform these beliefs into activities described in the lesson plans or that they mentioned these beliefs in their Language Learning Biographies for they perceived them as being socially desirable. The opposite phenomenon could be detected as well: For instance, "variety of methods" (table 1, category 1.1) was mentioned by a total of fourteen students in their Language Learning Biographies, however, the entirety of twenty-three students included features in their lesson plans which reflect this category. Further, these features were incorporated in the lesson plans in a very sophisticated and differentiated manner. This phenomenon might be explained in two ways: Students may have consciously decided not to mention beliefs clustering around this category in their Language Learning Biographies, or specific beliefs were only subconsciously present at the beginning of the classes but, in spite of this, made their way into the lesson plans.

Students' written reflections may help to clarify the case. Here, they elaborated on a possible connection between their Language Learning Biographies and their lesson plans. All the students (N=23) confirmed such a connection, as illustrated by the statement put forward by p17:

"In my lesson plan, I tried to include elements of a vocabulary introductory lesson I personally find important. As mentioned in my Language Learning Biography, this includes giving a context to the vocabulary (gap text about Dartmoor), visual support (icons) and securing the vocabulary through a creative writing task (partner quiz and homework). Therefore, I can confirm that my Language Learning Biography is closely related to the way I conducted the lesson plan" (p17)

The following excerpt (p2) the content of which was repeated in nearly all students' reflections helps to shed light on the phenomena portrayed above. It shows that teaching and learning experiences made by students as former pupils influence lesson planning while at the same time guiding students' decisions in an unconscious way:

"The beginning of the lesson seems to have come to my mind automatically because so many new units in my own school time were introduced using the book. While I was conscious to the fact that such a beginning could be boring, it was hard for me to think of other possible ways to start a lesson that would be both interesting and feasible" (p2)

Interestingly, p2 refers to her identity as a former pupil, or "self-as learner" (Kiss 2012: 22) while simultaneously drawing on her identity as a teacher, or "self-as teacher" (Kiss 2012: 22), the latter of which obviously cannot yet be enacted due to a lack of strategies ("possible ways to start a lesson"). Additionally, a lack of strategies to develop belief-based lesson activities seems to have prevented students to transform these beliefs into lesson planning ("such a beginning could be boring"). More practical considerations seem to have influenced the guiding function of existing beliefs as well:

"While I first thought about some kind of puzzle or memory, I was not sure about the practicality of those ideas. I was not sure if such tasks would be too easy for the pupils, which is why I stuck to the boring, but at least reliable method of using the introductory pages of the book" (p7)

As for the second research question, the sources of students' beliefs at the beginning of the classes clustered around three major categories:

- 1) Personal experiences as former pupils in EFL teaching (N=23, 100%)
- 2) Students' practical EFL teaching experiences (N=16, 69.57%)
- 3) Teacher education classes at a university level and their accompanying activities such as paper writing, exam preparations, or self-study (N=15, 62.22%)

As the numbers in brackets indicate, it seems to be the case that personal language learning experiences as former school pupils have shaped present-day beliefs to a considerable extent, as compared to former teacher education classes. Students' practical teaching experiences seem to be a rich source of beliefs as well. Whenever students' elaborations on the sources of their beliefs allowed for it, for example when expressions such as "predominantly", "the most" or "little" had been used, the degree of emphasis students ascribed to specific sources was determined (3=to a high extent, 2=to a medium extent, 1=to a lesser extent). In terms of the influence students' former experiences as pupils had on their present-day beliefs an average degree of emphasis of 2.9 was calculated, followed by students' teaching experiences (2.4) and university classes (2.2). Quite unsurprisingly, and in line with previous research, students' past experiences (category 1) seem to have a much more significant impact on their beliefs than more present (category 2) or future-oriented (category 3) ones. The implications which go along with this finding in terms of teacher professional trainings are presented in the last section of this paper.

In a next step, subcategories of the three overarching categories were developed. As for the first category, a total of four subcategories was derived from students' data, the definitions of which are accompanied by examples from students' texts for clarification purposes:

1.1) Negatively connotated experiences as former pupils in EFL teaching (*"The beliefs about how not to teach are predominantly rooted in my experiences as a former learner"* p11)

1.1.1) Negatively connotated experiences as former pupils in EFL teaching which result in pre-service teachers' attempts to design and implement teaching and learning scenarios different from the ones of their former teachers (*"Negative experiences which encourage me not to make the same mistakes"* p10)

1.2) Positively connotated experiences as former pupils in EFL teaching (*"From a pupil perspective you can easily tell whether a specific method works or not"* p20)

1.2.1) Positively connotated experiences as former pupils in EFL teaching which result in pre-service teachers' attempts to create and implement teaching and learning scenarios similar to the ones of their former teachers (*"I was surprised to see how much I had adopted from my former teachers"* p1)

As for the second category, students' practical teaching experiences, three subcategories emerged from students' data:

2.1) Practical teaching experiences led to the development of new perspectives/views (*"My own experiences as a teacher primarily led to beliefs about how teachers should act when teaching"* p13)

2.2) Practical teaching experiences as a touchstone for the practicality of theoretical knowledge gained at university (*"I put theories discussed at university in relation to more practical issues, thereby questioning the theories"* p3)

2.3) Practical teaching experiences serve to help students reflect on their professional development (*"I still make mistakes I would like to avoid in the future"* p18)

Finally, three subcategories could be derived from students' elaborations on university teacher education classes as sources of their beliefs:

3.1) University classes lead to an extension of existing beliefs by adding (theoretical) pedagogic content knowledge (*"My initial beliefs were extended by the classes I attended"* p22)

3.2) University classes confirm existing beliefs (*"The papers I have written so far strengthened my beliefs"* p19)

3.3) University classes enable students to explain existing beliefs and experiences retroactively/in a reconstructive manner (*"Through my studies, I was finally able to understand what had happened in the classroom"* p6)

The number of students who could be assigned to each (sub-)category shows that positively and negatively connotated experiences students had made as former pupils have a similar amount of influence on students' beliefs (N=14, N=15). In terms of the influence these experiences have, according to students, on their prospective teaching behavior, it is worth mentioning that while eight students underlined that they want to act differently than their former teachers, only one student seems to be willing to adopt former teachers' behavior. Further, it seems that students' own practical teaching experiences lead to the development of beliefs and convictions which, in turn, find their (theoretical) extension in university classes.

The "Visit Dartmoor" lesson plans handed in by students towards the ending of the classes (VD II) served as a touchstone for the development of students' multilingual action competence. All of the lesson plans showed numerous multilingual-sensitive elements. They involved the inclusion of pupils' first languages (L1s) in various forms and for different purposes: As a social form, L1-heterogeneous and L1-homogeneous groups of learners were formed, in the latter of which learners shared the same L1s. Pupils' first languages were also included in different phases of the lessons planned to introduce new vocabulary, to decode the meaning of new words as well as to memorize and use them in meaningful contexts. Further, pupils' L1s served to create multilingual-sensitive teaching and learning material such as worksheets. By considering pupils' L1s students intended to create a classroom atmosphere within which languages and pupils' linguistic resources are valued. What also changed from VD I to VD II lesson plans is the role teachers are to play in the EFL lessons designed. Whereas they were engaged in providing input to learners in a rather transmissive way in VD I, they played various roles in VD II, for instance as learners who made themselves familiar with pupils' languages to purposefully integrated them into teaching and learning processes, as moderators who initiated language comparisons and summarized and further elaborated on pupils' contributions in multilingual discourses and, finally, as language experts to enhance pupils' target language competence. This change in teacher roles was accompanied by an altered view on pupils who were now (in VD II) seen as language (learning) experts who could actively share their explicit and implicit L1 language knowledge and their prior language learning experiences, especially when they had already learned additional languages before English.

When elaborating on possible connections between their Language Learning Biographies and their VD II lesson plans, many students emphasized that a predominant part of this connection is the fact that they had never experienced multilingual-sensitive teaching and learning as former pupils:

"When I remember my own English lessons at school, there are no multilingual aspects which come to my mind. I think the multilingual approach was not part of my teachers' education" (p2)

The resulting lack of multilingual-sensitive elements in the VD I lesson plans is reflected in the next statement, as well as the relation between gaining new pedagogical content knowledge and lesson planning:

"I would not have created multilingual-sensitive lessons because the English-only-approach accompanied me in all stages of education. Being used to the prevalent 'monolingual habitus', I did not include any multilingual-sensitive elements in the first version of the 'Visit

Dartmoor' task. When revising it in order to make it multilingual-sensitive, I founded my plan on the knowledge and inspiration gained in class" (p7)

The first part of the above quote suggests that the lack of multilingual-sensitive elements in the first "Visit Dartmoor" lesson plan (VDI) is based on the student's conscious decision not to include them. However, the fact that the "knowledge" and "inspiration" developed throughout the class led this student to design the second "Visit Dartmoor" lesson plan (VDII) in more multilingual-sensitive ways supports the assumption that the task to design a multilingual-sensitive lesson plan posed a challenge, a "disequilibrium" for students at the beginning of the classes.

A number of students indicated that the beliefs they had expressed in their Language Learning Biographies at the beginning of classes had changed:

"It is interesting to see that I – without noticing it directly – tried to put the exact same things into my lesson plan which I wrote in my Language Learning Biography before. But now, after making my lesson plan multilingual-sensitive, I have the feeling that my Language Learning Biography changed [...]. I would now include aspects of [multilingualism] in my view of a good lesson" (p14)

In the questionnaires filled out by students towards the ending of the classes two items aimed to elicit insights about possible changes in students' beliefs: (1) Do you think your beliefs as exemplified in your Language Learning Biography at the onset of the class have changed? If so, in what way(s) and to what extent?", (2) "What do you think are the reasons for this change/these changes?"

The majority of students pointed out that, although their beliefs had not changed in a fundamental way, they were *extended* for beliefs about the necessity of multilingual-sensitive teaching and learning had been added to their belief system. This kind of change corresponds to the notion of "addition" in earlier research conducted by Cabaroğlu and Roberts (2000) who offer a "set of [belief] change process categories" (ibid.: 394). Those students who argued that their beliefs had actually *changed* stated that beliefs about the appropriateness of an "English-only-approach" had been *replaced* by beliefs about the meaningfulness of a multilingual-sensitive approach. Other students stressed that parts of their initial beliefs were *prioritized* and *differentiated*: Multilingual-sensitive teaching had gained importance, resulting in a more critical view on the exclusive use of the target language in the EFL classroom. These changes may well be classified into Cabaroğlu and Robert's categories of "disagreement" and "re-ordering", the former of which refers to a "rearrangement of beliefs regarding their importance", and the latter of which comprises the "rejection of existing beliefs" (ibid.: 393). A social desirability bias cannot be entirely ruled out here, that is, it may be the case that students indicated a change in beliefs for they might have thought that this is expected by the course instructor, thereby masking what has become known as superficial belief change (Kubanyiova 2012). To reduce the likelihood of such a bias participants were explicitly told that "no change" was a reasonable option to opt for in the final questionnaires as well.

Belief developments were first and foremost ascribed to the discussion of theoretical texts and to new knowledge gained this way, followed by the reflection tasks and the design of the VD lesson plans. This order of priority suggests that teacher education trainings the intention of which is to have an impact on teachers' beliefs should spend a vast amount of effort on the development of new pedagogical content knowledge among teachers and to embed this knowledge into teaching and learning scenarios through collective analyses of teaching videos. Only then teachers should be asked to design lessons for training purposes: This way new beliefs which are in the process of evolving and closely related to the development of new knowledge may not be covered or suppressed by a lack of strategies to implement these beliefs in lesson planning. The ways beliefs developed according to students (extension, change, prioritization and differentiation) mirror Borg's (2006) conceptions of

changes of the content and the structure of teachers' beliefs. Quite interestingly, students rather ascribed these changes to the development of new pedagogical content knowledge than to "reflection-for-action" (Farrell 2007), i.e. the design of their lesson plans. Following the epistemological classification of beliefs development exemplified by Schraw et al. (2017b), students' beliefs as reflected in the multilingual-sensitive lesson plans can be defined as being "contextualist". Some may even be perceived as belonging to the "relativist worldview", especially since students emphasized the role of the teacher as that of a "learning facilitator" and the partly autonomous control individual pupils should have of their own learning processes.

Conclusion

Two pre-service EFL teacher training classes were subject to analysis in the present investigation. The aims of the study were to uncover participants' pre-existing beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning (with a lexical focus), and to gain insights into the ways these beliefs developed (or not) throughout the classes within which participants' multilingual action competence was to be developed. It has been shown that participants' initial beliefs clustered around EFL teaching and learning principles which rather mirrored monolingual than multilingual perspectives, a finding which deserves attention given that participants brought rich multilingual resources to classes themselves (for insights into how these resources may support multilingual EFL teaching, see Otwinowska 2017 and Niesen 2017). However, their own first, second and foreign language acquisition and learning experiences did not seem to have entered their belief system about quality criteria of EFL teaching and learning. Another possibility is that they felt reluctant to explicitly refer to these experiences for they perceived them as irrelevant, or, even worse, not valued in the given context. Both assumptions are extensively supported by prior research, first and foremost by a comprehensive study conducted by Ellis (2016). Quite impressively, the author had called for an inclusion of teachers' language learning experiences that is their "experiential knowledge" into any attempt to illuminate their beliefs in an earlier study:

"If experiential knowledge is accepted as a powerful contributor to teachers' beliefs, and *if* experiential knowledge includes not only that derived from classroom teaching and learning but also from life experience, then language learning experience, formal or informal, must be worthy of investigation in terms of how it influences teachers' store of knowledge and beliefs" (Ellis 2006: 8).

Suggestions as to how teachers' "experiential knowledge" may enter formal professional development classes are outlined towards the ending of this section. Before that, the results of the study at hand shall be further summarized.

Monolingual approaches were also detected in participants "reflection-for-action" processes (Farrell 2007), that is in their "Visit Dartmoor" lesson plans at the beginning of classes (VDI). Throughout classes, students' multilingual action competence was developed so as to enable them to redesign their VDI lessons plans in multilingual-sensitive manners. This task, however, did not turn out to have influenced the development of their beliefs about quality criteria of EFL teaching (with a lexical focus) the most. This effect was rather ascribed to the development of new knowledge gained throughout the analysis and discussion of theoretical texts on multilingual-sensitive teaching, followed by reflections on possible connections between lesson planning and beliefs. It is safe to say at this point that the continuous inclusion of participants' beliefs while developing their multilingual action competence turned out to be a fruitful exchange and indeed seems to be a happy marriage. This finding has direct implications for the design and implementation of pre-service, but also in-service EFL teacher training classes which attempt to pave the way for multilingual-sensitive teaching and learning in real-world school surroundings: It is of vital importance that teachers' pre-existing beliefs about teaching and learning are taken seriously, a point which echoes Cabaroğlu and Robert's (2000) call to make these beliefs "as explicit as possible" (ibid.: 399). In the study at hand, these beliefs predominantly clustered around participants' school experiences as former pupils. However, to draw a more holistic picture of their convictions (and the

roots of these convictions), other surroundings have to be taken into consideration as well: For example, participants' own multilingual resources and the ways these resources have been and are actually used in and outside formal educational institutions should be addressed in any attempt to introduce students to multilingual-sensitive tenets of language teaching and learning, and to foster their multilingual-sensitive professional competence. What makes this a real challenge is the fact that existing beliefs are indeed firmly rooted in prior school experiences which were often shaped by monolingual understandings of teaching and learning. Only when multilingual-sensitive teaching becomes the norm rather the exception in EFL classrooms teacher educators can expect future teachers to bring beliefs which reflect multilingual-sensitive teaching approaches to university. Until this is the case, teacher educators face a two-fold challenge, namely to pave the way for multilingual principles to enter teachers' belief systems and to foster their multilingual action competence. The present study has shown that both is possible. However promising the results may be though, they are subject to limitations, at least from a "chaotic systems ontology" (Burns, Freeman & Edwards 2015) which shall be adopted here: If we accept that teacher learning is "non-linear", shaped by "feedback-loops" and that "the interactions in the sessions, comments, arguments, and input materials can trigger different thought processes" (Kiss 2012: 18, 30), it will be naïve to conclude from this study that all participants have learned the same things (here: multilingual action competence) in the course of the classes. Rather, it must be conceded that what students have actually learned in the classes portrayed here, and the beliefs about multilingual teaching which have entered their belief systems, will be filtered by their personal understanding of how they perceive themselves as (past) EFL learners, (present) EFL teacher trainees and (future) EFL teachers. Hence, it is questionable whether the participants of this study will be able and willing to use what they have learned in their future teaching, especially when taking into account Kiss's (2012) finding that "a linearly arranged educational experience causes student teachers reject 'theory' in the complex, chaotic, and non-linear reality of classroom teaching" (ibid.: 32). The author adds that "the tension between learning in one system and applying their knowledge in a completely different system prompts many (student) teachers to view their formal teacher education as irrelevant in their everyday practice. Unfortunately, a feasible solution is yet to be offered" (ibid.: 32). The design of university classes which offer pre-service teachers the "freedom and flexibility that does not curtail the natural emergence of teacher learning" (Kiss 2012: 33) is not an easy task, especially since it seems to run counter the diagnosis and assessment of participants' professional development. What aggravates the situation is the fact that although the participants of this study are free to choose from various pre-service EFL teacher training classes offered by the respective institute, a certain compulsion goes with attending a course unit, especially in terms of having to pass the course. Despite these constraints, it is my firm belief that university classes can and should be designed in such a way as to be sensitive to participants' multilingual-sensitive professional development from a "chaotic systems ontology" (Burns et al. 2015), and moreover, to make it more likely for multilingual teaching tenets to enter real-world EFL classrooms: A promising approach to do so is, to my view, the implementation of video-based digital learning platforms in "Enriched Virtual Formats" (Christensen et al. 2012, see also Niesen, forthcoming) which allow pre-and in-service teachers to (re-)visit the learning unit "Multilingual-sensitive action competence" whenever needed in (future) teaching and to engage in "self-regulated learning opportunities" (Cabaroğlu & Roberts 2000: 399). Such a digital format, which ideally includes explanatory as well as teaching videos allows teachers to work through the unit at their own pace and in whatever place that is most comfortable for them. Reflection tasks in this digital format could capture teachers' past, present, and evolving beliefs, and they could further allow teachers to connect these beliefs to past, present, and intended teaching and learning practices. Moreover, reflection tasks could make teachers' aware of their own formal and informal language learning experiences, their "experiential knowledge" to raise their awareness as to how this knowledge shapes their beliefs about teaching and learning. In the best case, the virtual learning format offers pre- and in-service teachers a forum within

which they can share and cooperatively develop these beliefs, their own multilingual resources as well as their experiences when employing multilingual teaching in their classrooms, to make, in the long run, the wedding of multilingual-sensitive action competence and teacher beliefs not only a happy, but a lasting marriage.

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Preschool and first grade teachers' perceptions on working together to enhance literacy

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the perceptions of kindergarten teachers and first-grade primary school teachers about their cooperation regarding literacy practices and their enhancement. The need for co-operation, the potential for co-operation, how to achieve it, as well as its benefits for enhancing literacy, are the key questions explored. The research is part of a broader study of the relationships between natural / early and conventional / school literacy, the teachers' perceptions of the possibility of integration of language curricula, as well as practices resulting from the study of curricula. The data were collected through a questionnaire sample of 632 teachers who were separated into two groups, 326 kindergarten teachers and 306 teachers teaching the year of the process in the first grade of Greek elementary schools. The results showed that kindergarten teachers were more positive about the need for co-operation on literacy practices, but first-grade primary school teachers believed more in their co-operation. Kindergarten teachers and first-grade primary school teachers agree on the need for joint actions, with teachers considering as significant constraints the co-location of school units, the lack of common time, and the pressure of "course material".

Keywords: literacy, kindergarten, primary school, teachers' perceptions, co-operation, literacy learning practices, early literacy, school literacy

Theoretical background

When attempting a theoretical and research approach to enhancing natural literacy and its teaching, one must first and foremost analyze the behavior of teachers in an attempt to visualize how they shape their teaching choices. According to Kalantzis et al. (2019), if we are to have 'new', 'modern' students we need nothing less than 'new', 'modern' teachers to work with students, with parents and with each other by expanding and promoting 'literacy' learning practices towards learning "literacies" to create learners capable of deriving, producing meaning and communicating.

Research conducted internationally (Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998, Strickland & Shanahan 2004, Powell et al. 2008, Heath 2009, Hindman & Wasik 2011, Scull, Nolan, & Raban 2013) but also in Greece (Tafa 2001, Giannikopoulou 2001, Papoulias-Tzelepi 2001, Porpodas 2002, Kondylis & Stellakis 2006, Aidinis & Grollios 2007, Kostoulis 2014, Xeferis 2017) demonstrates that early language stimulation have great importance for reading development and children's literacy learning occurs through actions that have a meaning for them and a clear purpose. These studies on literacy practices of kindergarten (4-6 years old in Greece) and first grade literacy practices (6-7 years old in Greece), categorize kindergarten teachers and first-grade primary school teachers in two categories¹³. The first one is those who have a tendency to adopt the principles and practices of the holistic approach and the second is those who adopt the systematic code teaching principles to enhance literacy. In their results they found a significant distribution of teachers' practices in the two aforementioned categories, which are directly related to their perceptions (Fang 1996, Pedersen & Liu 2003). In particular, researchers point out that perceptions, values, the social and ideological context, the theoretical underpinnings and the teaching approaches suggested by the curricula, experience (Burgess et al. 2001, LoCasale-Crouch et al. 2007), specialization¹⁴

¹³ In Greece, kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers received an equal education (University Education) and their wages are at the same level

¹⁴ Researchers have found that teachers-holders of a master's degree place greater emphasis on oral speech in their classrooms compared to teachers who hold a bachelor's degree, see: Burgess et. al. 2001

(Burgess et al. 2001) should always be taken into account in the study and record keeping of literacy enhancing practices adopted by teachers in their classrooms (Yero 2002).

In this context, a successful balanced approach to literacy requires the teacher on one hand to combine approaches, methods and techniques to become more effective for his students and on the other hand to stay informed, to train and collaborate (Hall, 2003). An important aspect of the effectiveness of the educational work for learners is their smooth transition from one grade to another, which can be greatly facilitated if teachers from one grade, such as the kindergarten, cooperate with those in the next grade, that is, elementary school and vice versa. Collaboration and continuity between school types are important factors that favor long-term learning and that need to be given attention in the transition between early childhood school institutions (Bredekamp & Copple 1997, Pianta et al. 1999, Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta 2000, Early 2004, Broström 2007, Dockett & Perry 2007, Fabian & Dunlop 2007, Ecclestone 2009, Ackesjö 2013, Ahtola et al. 2011, Alatalo, Meier, & Frank 2016, Alatalo, Meier & Frank 2017). Collaboration between pre-school, primary school and parents is considered the most important factor in confronting the difficulties of the transition (Alatalo et al. 2017). "The continuity" between the two educational institutions related directly with the development of normal transition (Dunlop & Fabian, 2002). The aims, the goals and the curriculum of the pre-school and the primary school must have been compatible to ensure this continuity (Vrinioti 2008). According to the Greek curricula (2003) children's language development is one of the prioritized target areas. An important part of the task of the preschool is to stimulate each child's language development and to encourage and protect the child's curiosity and interest in the written language. The teachers in preschool and primary school settings must exchange knowledge and experiences about children's learning as to support and encourage every child's long-term development and learning.

The key factor to this continuity is that kindergarten and primary school teachers should work together to continue the philosophy, pedagogical approaches, and teaching practices from one grade to another. In particular, in a context of collaboration and exchange of views, one expects the adaptation of teaching practices to a common practice and the alignment of teachers' expectations and requirements of their students. A strong and equal partnership between pre-school and primary school as an educational continuity and flexibility in early childhood education must be aimed by developing a common pre-school and primary school, communicative-teaching approach in early literacy and language practice within a participatory approach. Teachers in both pre-schools and primary schools need to encourage language acquisition and early literacy approaches. Only in such a framework of shared approaches, perceptions and practices can students work without continuity being interrupted.

And while one would expect that kindergarten and school teachers would have realized the benefits of working together both for the benefit of their pupils and their teaching practice, but also for themselves, the problem of collaboration, although quite old, seems to still exist, according to the researchers (Bredekamp & Copple 1997, Pianta, et al. 1999, Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta 2000, Broström 2002, Margetts 2002, Early 2004, Broström 2007, Dockett & Perry 2007, Fabian & Dunlop 2007, Niesel & Griebel 2007, Vrinioti 2008, Ecclestone 2009, Sivropoulou & Vrinioti 2009, Ackesjö 2013, Ahtola et al. 2011, Karydis 2014, Alatalo et al. 2016, Alatalo et al. 2017). In these studies has been proven that lack of communication and effective collaboration between preschool and primary school is an important barrier to continuity. For example, some studies (Hjelte 2005, Ackesjö 2013, Alatalo et al. 2016) report that kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers do not speak the same language and make different interpretations of the information and formulations that are presented. As Alatalo et al. referred (2017: 4) "in such circumstances, there is a risk that knowledge of the children's skills, abilities, and prior experiences are also given little or no attention. The interaction between those two institutions has been found to be almost nonexistent. The distance between the institutions is perceived as great and the collaboration between the two in many cases does not occur". Lacks of time and of natural

arenas for cooperation were the reasons for no interaction (Pianta et al. 1999, Hjelte 2005, Ackesjö 2012, Alatalo et al. 2016, Alatalo et al. 2017).

In the same context in Greece, according to Karydis (2014), cooperative practices between kindergarten and primary school teachers are rarely observed, perhaps demonstrating a lack of knowledge of the positive effects of such cooperation. The factors that make this cooperation difficult, accordingly to international researches, appear to be: a) time, b) space, and c) lack of initiative as to who should take the first step (Pantazis 1991: 57). According to Brostrom (2002), kindergarten teachers seem to have limited knowledge of what is going on in the school classroom and may believe that things haven't changed since they went to school. Similarly, teachers teaching in the first grade of primary school seem to treat preschools as childcare facilities rather than educational facilities. According to Alatalo et al. (2017) the kindergarten's teachers' wishes to know more about the children's literacy learning are too much on a general level to be able to provide a good enough basis for planning literacy activities that fit every individual child. In the same context, results of this research demonstrate that preschool tradition has viewed care as being core to its work and considered learning and achievement as domains associated with compulsory school.

Co-operation could possibly promote the modification of the perceptions of kindergarten and school teachers. According to Bredekamp and Copple's (1997) research, collaboration could be implemented through visits to the next grade, as they help children better adapt, through teachers' meetings and discussions of the differences and similarities in curricula for which they could prepare children, by informing each other about every individual pupil, as the kindergarten teacher's knowledge of each child could help the teacher better cope with their task. Getting to know the way previous or next level colleagues work will help teachers to draw useful conclusions, while understanding how each level works and its difficulties, will cause them to find solutions together. Perhaps, eventually, teacher-to-teacher collaboration will be a powerful link to smooth the transition of children to elementary school and continuity through a balanced literacy curriculum; the direction; provided that educators realize it and work towards that end.

This research gap, identified in international and Greek literature, which concerns the study of perceptions of first-grade primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers on the issue of cooperating with one another on literacy practices, is what this paper seeks to address.

Methodology

The lack of communication and effective collaboration between preschool and primary school is an important barrier to continuity of literacy teaching and learning was demonstrated from many researchers (Bredekamp & Copple 1997, Pianta et al. 1999, Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta 2000, Broström 2002, Margetts 2002, Early 2004, Broström 2007, Dockett & Perry 2007, Fabian & Dunlop 2007, Niesel & Griebel 2007, Vrinioti 2008, Ecclestone 2009, Ackesjö 2013, Ahtola et al. 2011, Karydis 2014, Alatalo et al. 2016, Alatalo et al. 2017). In this context the purpose of this research is to study the perceptions of Greek first-grade primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers about the need for and the existence of co-operation, ways to achieve it, as well as the benefits of collaboration on literacy, literacy practices and its reinforcement.

The research was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire (survey-monkey)¹⁵. A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 10 kindergarten teachers and 10 primary school teachers in order to identify any ambiguities in the content of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was organized into 8 study areas with closed and open-ended questions. For the purposes of the research, the 6th pillar of the questionnaire is presented, which examines the *perceptions* of kindergarten and school teachers about

¹⁵ The improvised questionnaire was developed based on the theoretical framework of the thesis. Only the axis and the questions we are interested in are presented here

the need for collaboration among them in enhancing literacy, its potential benefits and ways of achieving collaboration between them. It also explores the *practices* and *perspectives* adapted by kindergarten and school teachers in working together to enhance literacy and the potential benefits of such collaboration. In addition to assessing teachers' beliefs and practices, the questionnaire requests information about the teachers' educational background, teaching experience, and school/classroom characteristics (e.g., co-located schools, are of the school, number of students/teachers).

Specifically, closed-ended questions examined their agreement / disagreement (5-point Likert scale: not at all, a little, quite a lot, a lot, very much) to these research questions: a) "To what extent do you think that first grade teachers in elementary school should cooperate with kindergarten teachers on literacy enhancing ", b) "To what extent do you believe that first grade teachers of elementary school cooperate with kindergarten teachers for literacy enhance", and/or multiple choice/open-ended questions examined their perceptions to these research questions c) "Identify the ways in which you believe that first-grade primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers can work together regarding language enhancing", d) "Cooperation between kindergarten and first grade teachers in elementary school on literacy can be more beneficial for *the student, the teacher or the curriculum*"?

The data processing techniques utilized *quantitative research* on closed-ended questions and *qualitative research* on open-ended question, in order to investigate and understand in depth the stated agreement/disagreement and their proposals. We analyzed quantitative research data with the *statistical package SPSS 25* (t test, F, χ^2) in relation to the major questions, providing a descriptive analysis of teacher's perceptions and practices self-reported practices in terms of percentages, means, and standard deviations. To assess common features of kindergarten and primary school teachers' beliefs and practices, we performed separate factor analyses (using principal axis methods with varimax rotations). Additionally, we compared selected teacher characteristics and the derived belief and practice factors using analysis of variance or correlations with alpha set at $p < .05$. For qualitative research data from open-ended question we used the *content analysis method* having the content of the sentence/phrase as a unit of analysis (Creswell 2016).

The study involved 632 educators, serving Greek public schools of a particular geographical area (two regions), in two groups as the sample of this research. The first one was 326 kindergarten teachers, and the second was 306 school teachers teaching the year of the process in the first grade of Greek primary schools. The sample was selected by simple random sampling, which is one of the probability sampling types (Cohen & Manion 2008, Creswell 2016). However, the sample size and the geographical limitation of the survey did not allow us to generalize the results. There may be differences in their perceptions and practices from region to region. Nevertheless, we believe that the findings should not lose their relevance but should serve as a basis for further relevant investigations.

In terms of school teachers gender, the 243 (79.4%) teachers teaching in the first grade of Greek primary schools are women and 63 (20.6%) are men, while the 325 kindergarten teachers (99.7%) are women. 85% of teachers and 88.3% of kindergarten teachers have basic studies, while 15% of teachers and 11.7% of kindergarten teachers have additional studies. Teachers (88.2%) and kindergarten teachers (84%) are employed as permanent educators. 43.1% of teachers have served from 0-10 years, 30.4% from 11-20 years, and 26.5% over 20 years. Of kindergarten teachers, respectively, 50.6% have served from 0-10 years, 31.8% from 11-20 years and 17.6% more than 20 years. 181 (59.2%) first grade primary school teachers and 182 (55.8%) kindergarten teachers serve in urban schools, while 20% of primary school teachers and kindergartener teachers serve in semi-urban or rural schools (rural areas).

In designing and conducting the research we have taken into account ethical issues and ethics (Miles & Huberman 1994, Fontana & Frey 1998, Cohen et al. 2008, Bryman 2017). The questionnaires were accompanied by a letter stating the purpose of the research, the value of participation, the anonymity of participants and that the results of the research will be informed.

Results

1. Perceptions about the need for collaboration between kindergarten and school teachers on literacy enhance.

Regarding the question *"To what extent do you think that first grade teachers in elementary school should cooperate with kindergarten teachers on literacy enhance"*, 113 kindergarten teachers (34.7%) and 64 teachers teaching in the first grade of primary school (20.9%) reply *"very much"*, 98 (30.1%) kindergarten teachers and 116 teachers teaching in the first grade of primary school (37.9%) reply *"a lot"*. In fact, this difference between kindergarten and primary school teachers is statistically significant (Cramer's $V = 0.162$, $\chi^2 = 16.485$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.05$). There are many more kindergarten teachers who support the need for literacy collaboration with primary school teachers (table 1).

Table 1: Perceptions about the need of cooperation.

To what extent do you think that first grade teachers in elementary school should cooperate with kindergarten teachers on literacy enhance

	Kindergarten teachers	School teachers
Not at all	5 (1.5)	10 (3.3)
A little	22 (6.7)	26 (8.5)
Quite a lot	88 (27.0)	90 (29.4)
A lot	98 (30.1)	116 (37.9)
Very much	113 (34.7)	64 (20.9)

To examine how teacher's characteristics were related to their perceptions and practices, we compared the derived perceptions and practices factors and the following characteristics: years of teaching experience, level of teacher education, co-location and area of school. Using analysis of variance (ANOVA), a comparison between the years of teaching experience and co-location of schools their beliefs factors yielded significant differences among the groups on their beliefs about the need of cooperation. Specifically, the kindergarten teachers with the most years of service were much more positive (43.1%) about the need for cooperation, while among teachers teaching in the first grade of primary school, those whose school was co-located with a kindergarten seemed to agree more with the need for cooperation. (Cramer's $V=0.181$, $\chi^2=10.035$, $df=4$, $p<0.05$).

2. Perceptions about the existence of collaboration between kindergarten and school teachers on literacy enhance

In the question *"To what extent do you believe that first grade teachers of elementary school cooperate with kindergarten teachers for literacy enhance"*, 201 kindergarten teachers (61.7%) said 'not at all', that is, no cooperation whatsoever, 101 (31%) responded 'a little', that is, a little cooperation, while only 18 (5.5%) answered 'quite a lot'. Primary school teachers showed a relative modesty with 140 (45.8%) responding 'a little', 107 (35%) saying 'quite a lot', and 36 (11.8%) responding 'a lot' (table 2). This difference between kindergarten and school teachers is statistically significant (Cramer's $V = 0.648$, $\chi^2 = 265.273$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.001$). In other words, kindergarten teachers, when asked about their perception of the need to work with teachers to enhance literacy, appeared to be positive and supportive of such a perspective; when asked however about their awareness of the existence of such co-operation they were very negative. On the contrary, while teachers were more restrained about the need to work with kindergarten teachers to enhance literacy, they seemed to believe more strongly that they do work together.

Table 2: Perceptions about cooperation.

To what extent do you believe that first grade teachers of elementary school cooperate with kindergarten teachers for literacy enhance

	Kindergarten teachers	School teachers
Not at all	201 (61.7)	13 (4.2)
A little	101 (31.0)	140 (45.8)
Quite a lot	18 (5.5)	107 (35.0)
A lot	5 (1.5)	36 (11.8)
Very much	1 (.3)	10 (3.3)

The correlation of the responses of kindergarten and school teachers to this question with the variable "school unit co-location" showed that the kindergarten teachers whose unit is co-located with a primary school stated that they agreed a little (34.4%) or quite a lot (8.6%) with the existence of collaboration; compared to the teachers who, when their school is co-located with a kindergarten, say that they agree quite a lot (40.3%) and a lot (14.8%) with the existence of collaboration. Specifically, kindergarten teachers whose school is co-located with a primary school express a disappointment as they find that co-operation is non-existent, unlike teachers who believe co-operation significantly thrives through co-location.

3. Perceptions about ways to achieve collaboration

In the question "*Identify the ways in which you believe that first-grade primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers can work together regarding literacy enhance*", kindergarten and primary school teachers were asked to respond positively or negatively to each of the proposed ways, while they were given the opportunity to submit further proposals, that is, ways of achieving cooperation between kindergarten and primary school teachers (table 3).

Table 3: Cooperation practices - Kindergarten teachers.

Kindergarten teachers	Analysis of objectives and teaching practices for teaching language at each level	Submission of individual learners portfolios by kindergarten teachers to school teachers and comprehensive examination of them	Organization of classroom space by teachers of both levels in the light of a common perspective for enhancing functional reading
Yes	198 (60.7)	171 (52.5)	224 (68.7)
No	128 (39.3)	155 (47.5)	102 (31.3)

In the '*Analysis of objectives and teaching practices for literacy enhance at every level*', 198 kindergartens (60.7) responded positively, while 128 (39.3) stated no. 171 kindergartens (52.5%) responded positively to '*Submission of individual learners' portfolios by kindergarten teachers to school teachers and comprehensive examination of them*', while 155 (47.5%) responded negatively. In the proposed way '*Organization of classroom space by teachers of both levels in the light of a common perspective for enhancing functional reading*', 224 teachers (68.7%) agreed, while 102 (31, 3%) of them do not consider it as a sufficient way to achieve cooperation.

What was also noteworthy was the kindergarten teacher's eagerness to suggest ways in which kindergarten teachers and school teachers could work together for language education. Here are some answers:

- Mutual visits - joint activities and games
- Ongoing briefing and feedback
- Meetings with parents and teachers of both levels;

- Develop and implement joint activities focusing on linguistic objectives;
- A joint project with many common language activities and co-teaching at least once a month with visits exchange;
- Consideration by teachers of kindergarten work (most do not know that our classroom is divided into "corners");
- It could be more clearly stated in the curricula what preschoolers should acquire on a linguistic level;
- There must be a redefinition of cognitive goals at 2 levels;
- There may be cooperation if schools are co-located or in a close distance.

Kindergarten teachers seem to find it important to implement joint actions, the constant interaction between them, the teachers' greater interest in the kindergarten and the work being done to enhance natural literacy. They pose co-location and distance as an important variable that affects and determines the degree of co-operation. At the same time, they seek to redefine cognitive goals in the two school levels in order to achieve the required cooperation, and to clarify the required level of language acquisition of infants upon completion of kindergarten.

The answers of primary school teachers are quite different (table 4). 174 primary school teachers (56.9%) responded positively to '*Analysis of objectives and teaching practices for teaching language at each level*', while 132 (43.1%) responded negatively, with primary school teachers who stated that their school is co-located with a kindergarten more (64.45) in agreement with this proposal. 196 (64.1%) responded positively to the '*Submission of individual learners' portfolios by kindergarten teachers to primary school teachers and comprehensive examination of them*' and 110 (35.9%) indicated a negative attitude. With the proposed way to achieve collaboration '*Organization of classroom space by teachers of both levels in the light of a common perspective for enhancing functional reading*', 139 teachers (45.4) showed agreement, while 167 (54.6) do not consider it as a sufficient way to achieve cooperation, with teachers with additional university studies (60.9%) responding more positively.

Table 4: Cooperation practices – primary school teachers.

Primary School teachers	Analysis of objectives and teaching practices for teaching language at each level	Submission of individual learners portfolios by kindergarten teachers to school teachers and comprehensive examination of them	Organization of classroom space by teachers of both levels in the light of a common perspective for enhancing functional reading
Yes	174 (56.9)	196 (64.1)	139 (45.4)
No	132 (43.1)	110 (35.9)	167 (54.6)

Kindergarten and school teachers exhibited the same moderation in *analysis of objectives and teaching practices for teaching language at each level*, since their responses did not appear to differ significantly ($\chi^2 = 0.978$, $df = 1$, $p > 0.05$). However, they were statistically significantly (Cramer's $V = 0.117$, $\chi^2 = 8.720$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) more positive about the *submission of individual learners' portfolios by kindergarten teachers to school teachers and comprehensive examination of them*. Statistically significant (Cramer's $V = 0.235$, $\chi^2 = 35.012$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$) was teachers' more negative attitude, compared to kindergarten teachers, in *organization of classroom space by teachers of both levels in the light of a common perspective for enhancing functional reading* as a proposed way of achieving cooperation.

The eagerness of the interviewed primary school teachers to propose ways of achieving collaboration on literacy enhance was not as positive as that of the kindergarten teachers.

However, their few answers are typical:

- Exchange visits, joint actions mainly at the beginning of the school year, although we are limited in time by course material;

- Meetings between first grade teachers – kindergarten teachers, although there is no common time;
- A joint project could be implemented involving both pupils of the first grade and kindergarten;
- Kindergarten teachers' oral briefing on the performance of each learner;
- Specific and defined teaching objectives at each level and collaboration at each level to define these objectives;
- The book of the 1st grade is demanding. It is therefore necessary that they have practiced on pre-writing exercises. This will especially help students with learning disabilities.

School teachers want common actions and meetings with the kindergarten teachers to be verbally informed about the performance of each preschooler, also clear identification of the kindergarten and first grade teaching objectives, so that the desired cooperation can be achieved. They refer to the lack of time and pressure they feel themselves from the curriculum, an important variable not highlighted by kindergarten teachers, whose schedule is by definition more flexible.

An important finding of this research is a teacher's suggestion *to teach children in kindergarten with pre-writing exercises, as the first grade language book is quite demanding*. On the one hand, it exhibits a lack of knowledge of the abolition of pre-writing exercises in kindergarten and on the other hand it seems to be misinterpreting the perception of kindergarten work as preparatory to the entry of children into primary school.

3. Perceptions about the advantages of collaboration

Then this question was posed: *"Cooperation between kindergarten and first grade teachers in elementary school on literacy can be beneficial."* Kindergarten and primary school teachers had to choose from the following options:

- For the educational process;
- For the first grade teacher of the elementary school;
- For the kindergarten teacher;
- For first grade students;
- For Kindergarten students;
- To achieve the curriculum linguistic goals (a cross thematic curriculum framework for Kindergarten) in the kindergarten;
- To achieve the linguistic goals in the first class of primary school.

To study the variations of their responses we coded them in three new variables "the curriculum", "the teacher" and "the student". Based on the new categories, average and standard deviation of responses for kindergarten and primary school teachers were stated separately.

For kindergarten teachers (table 5) "the student" (Average = 2.76, Standard Deviation = 1.20) was declared as the most important, followed by "the curriculum" (Average = 4.12, Standard Deviation = 1.19) and "the teacher" (Average = 4.63; Standard Deviation = 1.76).

Table 5: Perceptions about the advantages of collaboration – kindergarten teachers.

Kindergarten teachers	Curriculum	Teacher	Student
Mean	4.1248	4.6301	2.7632
Median	4.0000	4.5000	2.5000
Std. Deviation	1.19963	1.76477	1.20484
Range	4.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum	2.00	1.50	1.50
Maximum	6.00	6.50	6.50

For school teachers (table 6) "the student" (Average = 2.81, Standard Deviation = 1.23) was declared as the most important, while in order of importance "the curriculum" (Average = 4.39, Standard Deviation = 1.06) and "the teacher" (Average = 4.34, Standard Deviation = 1.42) followed.

Table 6: Perceptions about the advantages of collaboration – primary school teachers.

Primary school teachers	Curriculum	Teacher	Student
Mean	4.3997	4.3442	2.8107
Median	4.6667	4.5000	2.5000
Std. Deviation	1.06482	1.42857	1.23615
Range	4.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum	2.00	1.50	1.50
Maximum	6.00	6.50	6.50

However, their responses differed significantly for both "the teacher" ($t = 3.153$, $df = 229$, $p < 0.05$) and "the student" ($t = 2.562$, $df = 241$, $p < 0.05$), depending on whether the primary school teachers stated that the school they serve is co-located with a kindergarten. The correlations of the variables showed that school teachers who stated that their school was co-located with a kindergarten placed less emphasis on "the teacher" (Average = 4.63, Standard Deviation = 1.41) and greater emphasis on "the student" (Average = 2.61, Standard Deviation = 1.17).

Discussion

The research is aimed at investigating the perceptions of first-grade Greek primary school and kindergarten teachers on the issue of working together to enhance literacy.

The problem of collaboration, stated by a number of researchers (Bredenkamp & Copple 1997, Pianta et al. 1999, Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta 2000, Broström 2002, Margetts 2002, Early 2004, Broström 2007, Dockett & Perry 2007, Fabian & Dunlop 2007, Niesel & Griebel 2007, Vrinioti 2008, Ecclestone 2009, Sivropoulou & Vrinioti 2009, Ahtola et al. 2011, Karydis 2014, Alatalo et al. 2017) demonstrated clearly by our research findings. Accordingly to international studies (Hjelte 2005, Ackesjö 2013, Karydis 2014, Alatalo et al. 2016) our findings stated that kindergarten and school teachers don't seem to have realized the benefits of working together. Although kindergarten teachers seem more favorably disposed towards the need for first-grade primary school teachers and kindergarten teachers to collaborate on literacy and its approach in the classroom, with the more experienced kindergarten teachers and the school teachers whose school is co-located with a kindergarten to be more positive towards cooperation.

Lacks of time and of natural arenas for cooperation were the reasons for no interaction (Pantazis 1991, Pianta et al. 1999, Hjelte 2005, Ackesjö 2012, Alatalo et al. 2016, Alatalo et al. 2017) were absolutely confirmed by our findings. Perceptions of first grade teacher's for preschools as childcare facilities rather than educational facilities (Brostrom 2002) were also confirmed by our findings.

In terms of depicting the reality of kindergarten and primary school teacher collaboration to enhance literacy, kindergarten teachers responded very negatively while school teachers were more unassuming about it. Kindergarten teachers, even when their school is co-located with a primary school, express a strong disappointment, as they claim that despite co-location, co-operation is non-existent, unlike teachers who believe co-operation significantly thrives through co-location.

These responses show the willingness and flexible attitude of kindergarten teachers to modify their practices, their space, but also their philosophy for the benefit of the educational practice and enhancing literacy, while teachers seem to consider sufficient to simply to be updated by kindergarten teachers and the given the students' portfolios in order to formulate their expectations and requirements of young

students. This finding is also confirmed by the answers given by kindergarten and school teachers to the open question that enabled them to propose ways of working together to enhance literacy. Specifically, kindergarten teachers respond and propose more cooperative practices, while teachers insist on emphasizing limiting factors in their cooperation, such as lack of time and the pressure they feel from the course material they need to cover.

In the question about those who benefit from a potential collaboration, kindergarten teachers and school teachers agreed in their responses, believing that students benefit more, then the educational process, and less they themselves. According to Bredekamp and Copple's (1997) research, collaboration could be implemented through a context of student-centered teaching and learning, kindergarten and school teachers go hand in hand, at least on a theoretical level, on the pursuit of practices of enhancing natural literacy for the benefit of students and facilitating the learning process.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while there are convergence points in the perceptions of kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers about their co-operation on enhancing literacy, they also appear to have different views which are reflected in their adopted practices. While there seems to be some willingness to change and create a framework for collaboration by kindergarten teachers, however, school teachers appear to be more satisfied with the situation as it is now, expressing their doubts about a possible broader collaboration due to lack of time and course material pressure. At this point, a strong need for continuous and systematic training of teachers on contemporary teaching issues is demonstrated, which would highlight the need for a cooperative kindergarten and elementary school framework.

It is within this framework that the need for a combination of the two Greek curricula (2003) emerges, in order to demonstrate their relevance as well as the continuity that should exist in the practices proposed to be adopted by teachers at both levels. Organizing an institutional framework for interaction between the two educational levels, creating learning communities and adopting methodological approaches based on action-research, would create a framework that could function as a bridge between kindergarten and elementary school with obvious positive outcomes for young students, teachers and the school community at large.

The research findings highlight the convergence and divergence of views and practices of Greek kindergarten and primary school teachers on their collaboration to enhance literacy development. The geographical limitation of research, which took place in a specific geographical area of Greece and a limited number of the survey population, does not allow us to generalize the results. However this research must be considered a first short-range investigation of the opinion that mixed groups of preschoolers and first graders improve students' literacy to some extent. It would be useful to repeat the research by drawing a larger representative sample of teachers and other areas without geographical limitations would be of particular interest in highlighting the intensity of the relationship between physical and school literacy, as reflected in perceptions, as well as the cooperative practices of kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers.

The results could constitute the pillars for institutionalizing a more co the goal is to have continuity through a balanced literacy curriculum and smooth transition of children to elementary school. The results could be the pillars for establishing a framework for teacher collaboration to continue the learning of literacy through a balanced literacy program and smooth transition of children to elementary school.

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Communication dimension of a Facebook group: first-hand experience from an EAP class

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Abstract

The paper analyses student-teacher and student-student interactions in a Facebook group that was created as an alternative learning management system (LMS) for an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course. Our case study is based on students' perceptions and opinions reconstructed from interviews and diaries and uses traceable objective data from the Facebook group as a complement. The research sample includes thirty-four undergraduates. Our results indicate that Facebook group is perceived as an effective communication channel due to various reasons such as immediacy of feedback or peer interactions outside the language class. Based on our findings, we formulate recommendations for practice.

Keywords: Facebook group, student-teacher/student-student communication, teaching/learning English as a foreign language, university student, case study

Introduction

Although Facebook is usually bound with personal life, leisure time, and informality, different authors researched the use of this tool in formal, academic settings. They studied its application in different higher education contexts and focused on various aspects such as motivation (Kabilan, Ahmad & Abidin 2010, Simpson 2012, Türkmen 2012, Hsu 2013), student involvement (Pascopella & Richardson 2009, Sun 2010, Yunus et al. 2012, Kao & Craigie 2014), e-learning (Stewart 2009, Türkmen 2012), social learning (Kabilan, Ahmad & Abidin 2010, Razak, Saeed & Zulkifli 2013), autonomous learning (Laire, Casteleyn & Mottart 2012, Türkmen 2012, Yunus et al. 2012, Datko 2018a), or communication (Al-Shehri 2011, Simpson 2012, Small 2014).

Communication (spoken and textual) is one of the pillars of both social networks and foreign language education (FLE). In other words, it is a tool for verbal interaction and developing foreign language competence. To use a Facebook group as an out-of-the-class communication channel and a learning tool in an English as a foreign language (EFL) educational setting was a choice based on social constructivism in which conversation and collaboration are seen as key concepts of learning (McLoughlin & Lee 2010). Since Z-Gen learners are highly connected and collective (Selwyn 2010), these notions become prominent in their approaches to learning and thus provide a solid foundation for the application of the discussed communication tool into the EFL learning process.

The purpose of this study is to map the communication dimension of a Facebook group in an EFL learning environment from the perspective of content-interchange among students and between students and their teacher. However, the focus is on how students used Facebook to connect with one another and the teacher, rather than how they used it to develop their communicative competences. In other words, the language learning potential of this communication channel is not discussed here (see Datko, 2018b for further reading on this topic).

Literature review

Speaking within the confines of higher education in general, social networking sites (SNSs) enhance student-student (S-S) interaction outside the classroom. In a study conducted by Brady, Holcomb and Smith (2010) at North Carolina State University, a survey was performed with students (N=50) in order to explore their perceptions of integrating Ning (a SNS) in the education process. They concluded that it facilitated communication beyond the boundaries of the classroom (82%) and provided more communication opportunities than contact classes (70%). Ophus and Abbitt (2009) found that peer-communication is seen as one of the major benefits of a Facebook group for 95.5% (N=100) university

students who experienced a multi-modal biology instruction that blended this “alternative” learning management system with traditional classroom. Similar findings were also proposed by Irwin, Ball and Desbrow (2012) and Jong et al. (2014), as majority of their participants (78% - N=135 and 59% - N=261 respectively) highlighted S-S interaction as one of the main advantages of using this platform in formal education. The above shows that S-S interaction (also outside the classroom) is perceived by students as an important asset of a blended-learning model based on SNSs.

FLE research highlights the potential of both peer interaction and student-teacher (S-T) interaction via social networks. Al-Shehri (2011) and Yunus et al. (2012) agreed that social networks’ independence from time and space enhances interaction between students and pedagogues outside the context of the English classroom. They can discuss assignments and study problems, share ideas, or give/get feedback. Razak, Saeed & Zulkifli (2013) suggest that this can lead to improvements in students’ English. Based on the perceptions of students (N=24) who participated in their study, they concluded that communication with classmates and the teacher via the Facebook group was one of the key players in enhancing students’ writing skills (ibid.).

However, if a (language) teacher decides to employ Facebook as a communication tool in an educational setting, a few aspects must be considered a priori. First, we have to accept the fact that this type of electronically-mediated communication has an uncontrollable and unpredictable nature; therefore, what is considered red-hot today may be irrelevant or deleted tomorrow (Laire, Casteleyn & Mottart 2012). Second, as Facebook denotes non-formality, we must expect that students communicate about academic matters rarely (Roblyer et al. 2010). Third, due to the relaxed atmosphere, tolerance for mistakes can develop, resulting in deviant uses of the language such as simplified syntax, informal contractions and abbreviations, or emojis (Averianova 2012). Furthermore, Facebook seems to lower students’ cautiousness of grammar and orthography and encourages them to use incorrect language forms (Andwaruddin, 2012). Fourth, the level of teachers’ self-disclosure in their Facebook profiles correlates with the level of credibility in the eyes of the students (Mazer, Murphy & Simonds 2007).

Research strategy

Research aims

It was stated in the theory that students benefit from out-of-class interactions via SNSs in various aspects (e.g. increase in communication opportunities when compared to traditional classes or positive impact on English writing skills), but a deeper context is missing. We therefore believe that studying how Facebook S-S and S-T interactions are perceived by students of English and what is the scope of these interactions will shed more light on this topic.

The primary aim of the paper is to identify how university students perceive S-T and S-S communication via the Facebook platform. The secondary aim is to quantify and categorize S-T and S-S interactions through the Facebook group and messages. In relation to the set aims, we strive to answer the following question: What do EFL students’ perceptions and opinions and objective data from the Facebook group reveal about S-T and S-S communication via Facebook?

Our research project is designed as a case study, since this approach is widely used for researching computer-assisted language learning contexts (Beatty 2010). It uses three types of data collection tools, namely diaries, semi-structured interviews, and screenshots.

Participants

Undergraduates from a mid-sized university (N=34) participated in this study. The research participants were teacher trainees (N₁=22) and “Occupational Safety and Health” students (N₂=12). They were labelled either with “a” (cohort 1 - summer 2016/2017) or with “b” (cohort 2 - winter 2017/2018). The students enrolled in the EAP optional course taught by the author. They all agreed to participate in

the Facebook group and gave permission for their information to be used for research purposes. Ethical approval was granted by the university.

Seventeen interviewees were selected randomly from the whole sample. The interviews lasted between 17'46" and 50'30" and were transcribed by the researcher. All research participants (N=34) kept diaries and submitted them physically on a weekly basis, producing 606 entries in total. Both the diaries and the Facebook screenshots cover an eight-week period of the course.

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews represent primary data. This research instrument was used for the reconstruction of students' perceptions and opinions related to S-T and S-S Facebook communication. We conducted pre-interviews (after students' first contact with the Facebook group) and post-interviews (after the study experience with the Facebook group) to increase reliability and validity of the data. We asked the students how they perceive this communication channel, what do they value about it, or what do they use it for.

Semi-structured student diaries serve as secondary, supporting data and are subordinated to the interviews. Their role was to further validate the pre-/post-interviews and illuminate hidden, unnoticed contexts of students' communication activities. The students were asked to record and describe in detail their interactions (both public - comments or statuses and private - direct messages) with other group members.

The third type of research data was extracted from the "English for Academic Purposes 1" Facebook group in the form of screenshots. We took screenshots of all the visible S-T and S-S communications. The data gathered from the Facebook group served as the objective complement to the subjective interview and diary data.

Data analysis

In the first stage of the analytic process, we opted for inductive coding, because the study is exploratory in nature. We identified items relevant to our research in the raw interview transcripts and categorized them with preliminary codes (e.g. S-T communication via Facebook is faster, S-T communication via Facebook is comfortable, Facebook as a tool for S-S communication about study material, etc.). These initial codes were further refined as we proceeded with the process, resulting in the final coding system (summarized in Table 1).

In the second stage, we switched to deductive coding, since student diaries complemented the interviews. In other words, the diaries were processed by seeking out entries related to the interview codebook. However, two of the identified codes remained interview-exclusive.

The third stage focused on content analysis of the objective Facebook data. The "history" of the Facebook group activity was stored in screenshot form. It provided supporting evidence for some of the code labels from the interviews and diaries.

Findings

S-T Communication

Twenty-seven participants (13 from cohort 1 and 14 from cohort 2) provided data related to this category. It is important to mention that the acronym S-T encompasses both the interactions initiated by the teacher and the interactions with student initiation.

Among other study activities in the Facebook group, eight students (5 from cohort 1 and 3 from cohort 2) recorded thirteen times in their diaries that they interacted with the teacher in some way. These S-T interactions included:

- (1) receiving feedback from the teacher via comments or messages (cohort 1: 4, cohort 2: 2);
- (2) sending completed assignments in messages (cohort 1: 3, cohort 2: 2);

(3) communication about unfamiliar concepts in the study material via comments (cohort 1: 1).

The analysis of the available Facebook group data enabled a deeper insight into the discussed topic. Twenty-four students (11 from cohort 1 and 13 from cohort 2) exchanged 237 messages with the teacher. Similar to the diaries mentioned above, students sent files with completed extra tasks (11 from cohort 1 and 11 from cohort 2), received feedback (11 from cohort 1 and 11 from cohort 2), and asked for course information (4 from cohort 1 and 1 from cohort 2). There was not a single example of S-T chat regarding study problems. Research participants communicated in English or Slovak, while both formal and informal language forms (including deviant uses) were noticed (see Figure 1).








Figure 1: Examples of S-T communication via private messages.



The teacher also communicated with the group members via comments and statuses (Figure 2). The comments enabled the researcher to give feedback for individuals (though it was also visible to the audience). From the fifty-seven teacher's comments in the study group, thirty-eight were related to feedback and in nineteen cases the teacher gave assignment instructions.

As for the status updates, they were used for explaining the given tasks and giving feedback or course information to the class as a whole. The teacher wrote thirty-eight statuses in total from which eighteen introduced tasks, seventeen contained course information, and three expressed feedback for the whole group.

Figure 2: Examples of S-T communication via comments and statuses.

 <p>Giorgio Datko Very good, but you have a mistake there. "Drinks" are 3rd person plural, so they do not belong to school. Check this link http://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/do-or-does for a detailed explanation.</p>  <p>Do or Does? Learn English Learn English. 1 FREE English lesson added every single day. Grammar, vocabulary, listening & reading ECENGLISH.COM</p> <p>Like · Reply · Remove Preview · October 10, 2015 at 1:34pm</p>	 <p>Giorgio Datko March 5, 2015</p> <p>The promised materials from the last seminar are posted below. Please don't forget to prepare for the vocabulary revision (Vocabulary lists 1 and 2). There might be an activity for extra points, so stay tuned. P.S. Have a safe and blessed weekend!</p>
 <p>Giorgio Datko These sentences are grammatically correct, but the word boxer means something else. A boxer can be: 1.) a person who fights with fists as a sport; 2.) a person who packs items in boxes; or 3.) a dog breed. English term for this weapon is "brass knuckles".</p> <p>Like · Reply · October 13, 2015 at 11:36am</p>	 <p>Giorgio Datko November 21, 2015</p> <p>What aspects would be the most important if you were looking for a new job today? What are your job priorities?</p>
 <p>Giorgio Datko Your sentences are grammatically correct, but there is a spelling error in one of the words. Can you/anyone find it?</p> <p>Like · Reply · October 12, 2015 at 7:11am</p> <p> You mean word knives?</p> <p>Like · Reply · October 12, 2015 at 7:37am</p> <p> Giorgio Datko Yes, exactly.</p> <p>Like · Reply · October 12, 2015 at 7:49am</p>	 <p>Giorgio Datko March 1, 2015</p> <p>Yoe are doing great so far. 🍀 However, I noticed two small mistakes in some of the posts. Can you find them?</p>

Let us now focus on the coding system for this category. Twenty-three students noticed improvements in S-T interaction. They referred to three different improvements fifty-three times (30x in the interviews and 23x in the diaries).

Facebook speeds up S-T communication

A group of twenty students (9 from cohort 1 and 11 from cohort 2) felt that Facebook speeds up S-T communication. Four different aspects of this improvement occurred forty-four times in the subjective data (twenty-four times in the interviews and twenty times in the diaries).

Facebook meant an improvement in S-T communication for student 8b, because "it was faster than e-mail". In the diary, he termed this way of communication as "immediate, simple, and non-problematic". Student 20b maintained a positive attitude towards Facebook communication with the teacher due to the promptness of response. Student 16b reported that "not every teacher has the university mail account connected to his smartphone. E-mail communication is thus not as fast as Facebook communication". Improved interaction with the teacher was also marked as one of the benefits in his diary. Student 10a messaged the teacher and received his answer "almost immediately, definitely faster than via e-mail", and thus it was "better for communication with teachers", as she explained in the post-interview. Six students (3 from cohort 1 and 3 from cohort 2) mentioned related data in their diaries. They valued Facebook for fast communication with the teacher and prompt teacher's feedback via comments or messages.

Students 13a, 17a, and 6b complained about some teachers' e-mail response routines and were therefore more inclined to Facebook. In the case of student 13a, it was uncovered in the post-interview that some teachers do not reply to e-mails, but "it was fast here". She concluded: "Communication via Facebook suits me best". According to the first interview with student 17a, "teachers not always reply to [her] e-mails", but on Facebook, the teacher can read [her] message immediately, "so it is faster". Student 6b noted in her diary: "Communication with you as the teacher was faster this way. It happened many times that a teacher did not respond to my e-mail".

Four students (cohort 1) added ease of access to the fast nature of Facebook. Students 2a and 7a claimed in the interviews that this form of communication suits them best, since they do not have to log in to their student mail accounts to contact the teacher. "I give Facebook ten points and e-mail gets maybe two" (student 7a, pre-interview). Another interviewee (student 4a) admitted to "access the student mail sporadically". She was more often on Facebook and could "see [teacher's] messages immediately". Student 18a valued Facebook in S-T communication, because she does not "have time to read every e-mail from teachers". She added in the post-instruction interview that "it can take some time until the teacher reads an e-mail".

Two students (cohort 2) viewed Facebook communication as fast due to lesser formality. In the pre-interview, student 14b mentioned that "it is simpler and more comfortable than writing an e-mail", since "e-mail communication is more formal". She added in the second interview that "promptness is a big advantage". Student 9b agreed with her opinion by saying that "communication via the Facebook group is immediate", and as "it is also less formal, it does not take so long to formulate a message". Furthermore, the teacher's authority "remained intact even though we did not communicate via e-mail" (post-interview).

Four students (from cohort 2) liked the prompt feedback from the teacher. In his diary, student 9b praised "the opportunity to correct mistakes in [his] posts prior to the seminar thanks to prompt feedback from the teacher". Similarly, student 5b reported in the initial interview that she "did not have to wait the whole week for [teacher's] feedback". She would even expect from the teacher to "respond in a shorter time than via e-mail". The fact that "the feedback was immediate" was a benefit also for interviewee 18b. Additionally, student 7b appreciated in the diary that the teacher responded to students' activities in a short time.

Facebook makes S-T communication more personal

Four research participants (1 from cohort 1 and 3 from cohort 2) preferred this communication channel to e-mail, because it enabled a more direct and personal contact with the teacher. This code was identified five times (three times in the interviews and twice in the diaries).

Student 17b considered the "more personal approach from the teacher to be a benefit of the Facebook group" (diary entry). In the initial interview, student 2a favored Facebook communication because "it is more personal". Similarly, student 20b "liked that it was more personal than e-mails" (post-interview). Student 8b replied in the first interview: "I think that contact via the group is more personal. When I think of e-mails, there is this superiority".

Facebook fosters S-T communication outside the classroom

Two students (from cohort 1) agreed on this. This code was recognized four times, namely three times in the interviews and once in the diary.

In her diary, student 16a viewed the availability of teacher's comments beyond the class as a likeable outcome of the group. Student 14a speculated in the interviews that if a teacher cannot come to the seminar or forgets to send study materials, he can still add a posting in the Facebook group. "It spreads among students almost immediately. However, if he sends an e-mail, only few people read it [...] and then misunderstandings occur".

Facebook does not improve S-T communication

Opposing to the rest, one participant (from cohort 1) did not notice any improvement in S-T communication. In particular, student 12a stated in the post-interview: "Communication via e-mail is the same as communication via Facebook. Both of them require the Internet. I do not see there any improvement".

S-S Communication

A group of twenty-five students (8 from cohort 1 and 17 from cohort 2) referred to communication among students. Twenty-three participants (seven from cohort 1 and 16 from cohort 2) mentioned S-S communication seventy times in the diaries. These students used private chat to discuss coursework, while they recorded the following scopes of their interactions:

(1) homework:

- discussing pair homework (cohort 1: 4, cohort 2: 8);
- seeking further explanation of teacher's instructions (cohort 2: 9);
- discussing how others completed a task (cohort 2: 6);
- giving/receiving feedback on completed assignments (cohort 1: 1, cohort 2: 4).

(2) course info:

- seeking information about missed contact classes (cohort 2: 3);
- seeking information about upcoming tests (cohort 1: 1, cohort 2: 1).

(3) study materials:

- discussing unfamiliar concepts (cohort 1: 3, cohort 2: 2).

As Facebook does not enable the user to monitor others' communication via messages, it is not possible to objectively validate students' diary entries related to S-S interaction via chat. However, since the number of recorded S-S interactions is significantly higher than the number of recorded S-T interactions, we can guess that the participants tended to communicate about educational matters with their peers rather than with the teacher. Furthermore, none of the students initiated a S-T chat about study difficulties, thus it seems that they seek assistance among other classmates.

In the Facebook data visible to the researcher, we identified nine examples of S-S communication. Student 9b commented on a posting from another student. Student 16a mentioned a classmate in her comment, because she wanted to remind her about homework. Student 19b explained a task to student 16b (who did not attend a seminar) in a series of comments. Student 4a informed the rest of the group about cancelled interviews in a status. Student 5b posted a photo of her poster in order to help other group members to prepare for a test. Three of these student interactions are depicted below (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Examples of S-S communication via comments and a status.



From the twenty-five participants discussed within this category, thirteen claimed that the Facebook group improved S-S communication. Evidence related to three different improvements appeared twenty-six times in the collected data. Particularly, we identified five examples in the interviews and twenty-one instances in the diaries.

Facebook speeds up and eases S-S communication

Nine students (3 from cohort 1 and 6 from cohort 2) agreed that the Facebook group speeds up and eases communication among students. For example, student 6b noted in the diary that “Thanks to the group we can easily contact our classmates from the seminar. It is the fastest way of communication between students”. In his diary, student 9b similarly labelled the group as “an easy and fast way of communication among students”. Student 12b reported in his diary that it is “a very good way of communication with other classmates” because he “can get information from others almost immediately”. Student 18b felt that communication with other students was easier, since they “could be easily found via the group”. In the first interview, she expressed the same opinion as in the diary record: “I don’t have to look for my classmates using the search option on Facebook, so communication is definitely easier”. Furthermore, “[...] I messaged other classmates, and they answered immediately. It was definitely faster” (post-interview). Adding to this, student 4a wrote in her diary that in case she did not understand something, “the group made contacting unknown people easier”.

Facebook allows S-S communication about coursework

Three participants (1 from cohort 1 and 2 from cohort 2) perceived positively that the Facebook group provides an opportunity to discuss classwork. Student 10a “once missed a seminar and wanted to get some information”. According to one of her post-interview responses, she “looked for a classmate among the group members and contacted her in chat”. Student 5b liked that students “can ask other group members for help or highlight mistakes in others’ comments”. In his diary, student 11b valued “students’ hints about what should be corrected in [his] comments”.

Facebook fosters S-S communication outside the classroom

Student 10b valued that the Facebook group allowed him to stay in contact with his classmates beyond contact lessons. He was “very happy about the improved student communication outside the classroom”, as he replied in the second interview.

Table 1: S-T and S-S communication via the EAP 1 Facebook group.

Categories	Codes	Sub-codes	Times occurred + source
S-T communication	I.) Facebook speeds up S-T communication	a.) Facebook communication is faster than e-mail communication	44x (I: 24x; D: 20x)
		b.) Facebook communication is faster than e-mail communication due to ease of access	
		c.) Facebook communication is faster than e-mail communication due to lesser formality	
		d.) Facebook enables prompt teacher’s feedback	
	II.) Facebook makes S-T communication more personal		5x (I: 3x; D: 2x)
	III.) Facebook fosters S-T communication outside the classroom		4x (I: 3x; D: 1x)

	IV.) Facebook does not improve S-T communication	1x (I: 1x)
S-S communication	I.) Facebook speeds up and eases S-S communication	21x (I: 2x; D: 19x)
	II.) Facebook allows S-S communication about coursework	4x (I: 2x; D: 2x)
	III.) Facebook fosters S-S communication outside the classroom	1x (I: 1x)

Legend: **S-T communication** - a wider category used to cover related data; **I.) Facebook speeds up S-T communication** - a more precise code used to cover similar data; **a.) Facebook communication is faster than e-mail communication** - a sub-code used to further differentiate data within a code; **44x** (I: 24x; D: 20x) - the code was recognized forty-four times in the data (24x in the interviews and 20x in the diaries)

Conclusion

According to the data from the study group, twenty-four students exchanged 237 messages with the teacher. They interacted in Slovak or English and used both formal and informal language. It could be connected not only with the relaxed nature of the Facebook study group, but also with the lack of strict communication rules.

The analyzed S-T communication via chat was connected with sending completed tasks, receiving feedback from the teacher, and asking for course information. No S-T chat regarding study problems was recognized among the analyzed messages, in spite of the unprecedented availability of the teacher. Due to unavailability of data, we can only speculate why students hesitated to contact him when seeking help with study activities. It seems that they rather messaged their peers, which might be caused by the traditional respect to the teacher authority, high power distance dimension of the Slovak culture, or they simply did not want to admit having study problems.

Comments and statuses also presented S-T communication channels. From the fifty-seven teacher's comments, thirty-eight reflected feedback and nineteen were used to give instructions. As for the thirty-eight statuses, eighteen introduced assignments, seventeen communicated course information, and three expressed teacher's feedback for the whole class.

Only a limited number of participants (N=8) recorded particular interactions with the teacher. The examples of S-T communication mentioned in the diaries included receiving teacher's feedback via comments and messages, submitting assignments via messages, and discussing study materials via comments.

One participant perceived S-T communication via Facebook and e-mail equally, as both of them are realized via the Internet. On the other hand, the majority of students (N=23) noticed improvements in S-T communication. Facebook made communication faster than e-mails, also due to ease of access, lesser formality, or prompt feedback from the teacher. Furthermore, it was perceived as more personal than e-mail communication and fostered S-T interaction outside the language classroom.

However, it is questionable whether there would have been such positive reactions as mentioned above if the teacher had waited for an extended period of time (e.g. a day or two) before responding. This aspect thus needs to be acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

Only nine examples of S-S communication occurred in the available objective data. The visible interaction between students was carried out through comments, a status, and a posted file. Students reacted to others' posts, further explained teacher's instructions, provided course information, and posted a file to help others to prepare for a test.

Twenty-five participants referred to S-S communication in their subjective data. The subjects of their interactions included homework, course information, and study materials. More than one third of the research sample (N=13) perceived the Facebook group as an improvement in S-S communication. Communication was faster and easier (as it was not necessary to seek for classmates using the Facebook

search bar). Peer communication outside the classroom and about coursework were also viewed positively.

Implications for language pedagogy practice

- *A Facebook group (and Facebook in general) presents an effective communication platform (also outside the English classroom)* - If language learners want to discuss coursework, unfamiliar concepts in notes, or study problems, they can easily message peers or their English teacher (though S-T communication seems less likely to happen).
- *Students can send completed homework and extra tasks via messages* - This way of submitting assignments can suppress taking too much inspiration from others' work. They can also join peer discussions (about coursework, notes, and study problems) or react to others' posts in the group via comments.
- *The English teacher can give instructions and course information or provide feedback through statuses, comments, or messages* - Write statuses and comments if you desire to reach the whole audience or write messages if you intend to reach a particular individual!
- *The English teacher should manage students' expectations in terms of the turnaround time for feedback* - Among other benefits of Facebook, students highly value teacher' immediate and extensively available feedback. They can receive teacher's reaction in a shorter time and do not have to wait for the next contact lesson to learn about the weak/strong spots of their foreign language output. However, the participants should agree on mutually acceptable response routines, so that students can benefit and the teacher is not limited.
- *The English teacher should create a set of communication rules a priori* - We identified both informal and deviant language in the Facebook group communication. To avoid undesired language, we recommend setting communication boundaries. Consider especially simplified language forms, informal contractions and acronyms, and emojis.

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Using English in presentation skills for personal and professional endeavors in the multicultural setting

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Abstract

Presentation skill is an art that can enable the professionals to scale new heights of excellence in their work stations. Presentation demands thorough understanding of the talk, strategic planning, awareness about the audience, good hold on voice modulation, and adequate knowledge about non-verbal cues, judicious use of multi-media, time management, and mastery over communication, active listening, and good reading habits. Language indubitably is a very instrumental in translation ideas into words. The methodology adopted for the entire elucidation is conceptual one in which research is conducted by observing and analyzing the problem. The paper is based on secondary information collected through personal interviews, research papers, related websites, journals and magazines. The secondary data here implies a close review of previously collected data in the area of present research study. The study presents a conceptual model so as to use English as a link language for effective presentation skills in exploring personal and professional opportunities. Only a few empirical research studies have been attempted in this context and highlighted that presentation skills are integrated part of employability skills and therefore transferable in nature, can be taught and could be a key factor for employment along with personal and professional growth in multicultural settings. Use of English as a lingua franca enables the users to develop presentation skills to work collaboratively with professionals from nation, cultural and linguistic background.

Keywords: presentation, professional, communication, language, education, management

Introduction

The professional skills are matter of fact a set of advance level of communication skills. In communication skills, presentation skills play a paramount role to transfer the information and knowledge in an effective and better manner. In the globalized context, the organizations prefer to have professionals who hold a good command over the art of presentation skills. The importance of presentation skills is growing immensely as it is required during conferences/workshops/lectures/seminars/meetings/negotiations etc. Presentation plays a pivotal role to convey the concepts in a comprehensive way. The presenters should make serious efforts to achieve the set personal and professional goals. The key to become successful presenter largely looms upon practice and then present it with confidence and clarity before audience.

The presentation cannot be put in isolation as audience's interest and role is quite broad to determine the objective of any presentation. Presentations have become essential attain success at personal and professional fronts. Thus, students' presentations is an important element in delivering positive learning experiences and are important part of professional environment, as professionals need to communicate with other professionals at meetings, seminars, conferences. So, designing effective oral presentations is the need of the hour. Improving the quality of presentation actually improves the quality of thought, and vice versa. Training and Learning of Presentation skills are directly or indirectly associated with employability skills. It is said that "practice makes perfect" and it appears true in the context of presentation skills. The modern day organizations know well that they can make profit out of the added value employees with excellent presentation skills who can actively and successfully contribute finalizing business deals, solving problems of customer and by strengthening customer relationship, by developing team and organizing efficient team meetings etc.

In this backdrop, at the global platform, English is not only an international language but essential language for interpersonal communication. It helps people of various ethnic linguistic groups to be

united. At the global platform, using English can make significant contribution towards shaping multicultural awareness. English language is important to communicate with people from other cultures. By applying multicultural perspective while using English language, the presenter will obtain knowledge, and skills needed to function within his/her own culture, mainstream cultural and the global community.

Research methodology and objective(s)

The paper is based on secondary information collected through personal interviews, research papers, related websites, journals and magazines. The secondary data here implies a close review of previously collected data in the area of present research study. The Paper offers a conceptual framework and a conceptual model so as to use English for effective presentation skills and thereby present paper focuses on using English for effective presentation skills in exploring personal and professional opportunities in multicultural business environment in order to develop a very congenial work station.

Literature review

There has not been much research on importance and impact of presentation skills for personal and professional growth. Some of the noteworthy contributions have been discussed here as:

King (2002) revealed that presentations offer an opportunity for developing communication as well as leadership skills. Carroll (2005) opined that the presentation should include elements that need to be assessed like as knowledge shown, logical appeal, fielding of objections, questions posed, improvisation shown, and conclusion.

Carroll (2006) advocated a holistic approach in assessing a student's performance based on the content and the delivery of their presentation. Kennedy (2007) found that through organization of debate, teachers can cultivate both critical thinking and oral communication skills. Bankowski (2010) found that training students in skills is very important for making oral presentations based on original research task for using English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course and after training students showed an increase in the successful use of research related skills and a great improvement in their ability to present their findings in English. Girard and Trapp (2011) expressed that presentation skills help in greater class interaction and participation, increased interest in learning, new perspectives not covered otherwise and improvement in communication and presentation skills.

Živković and Stojković (2013) viewed that the ultimate purpose of a well-balanced presentation is to better communicating professional knowledge to other professionals and to non-specialists as well.

Alwi and Sidhu (2013) studied students' self-perceived and actual performance in attempting oral presentations. The study employed a mixed method research design and involved an intact class of 40 Business Faculty undergraduates taking an ESL course in a local university in Malaysia. The results of the study indicated that there were discrepancies between the actual performance scores and students' self-evaluation marks for all the four skills hence it is necessary for educators to understand these discrepancies and work towards further understanding their students' learning needs.

Živković (2014) said that the effective oral presentations has primarily two goals, first enabling students to function successfully in the future professional surrounding, and preparing them for their possible further academic career. Kaltenbach and Soetikno (2016) opined that there are many factors that help to develop an effective presentation such as by becoming focused, clear and visual with the content, and by providing variance, relevance, and emotion in the delivery.

Imam and Alalyani (2017) showed that students perceived the significance of preparing and delivering oral presentations for successful communication in the future professional surrounding. The study also found that through collaboration with their colleagues, students develop skills that prepare them to deal with situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace. Dolan (2017) remarked that presentation skills are very essential in every aspect of academic/business life, from meetings, interviews and conferences to trade shows and job fairs and further he pointed out that there are three key

components of a good presentation as structure, introduction, content and conclusion, body language and movement and verbal delivery. Anita (2017) examined the issues, challenges, and opportunities in English language learning and identity transformation in the multicultural context of Indonesia.

Liang and Kelsen (2018) investigated the oral performance of EFL students engaged in delivering presentations required as part of inquiry-based group projects and found that Extraversion, Project Work and Social Pressure were significant correlates of oral presentation scores.

According to Busnesstopia (2019) developing presentation skills makes communication effective as it nurtures personality of individuals. Miskam, Aminabibi and Saidalvi (2019) explored the effectiveness of using Flipgrid, an online video-mediated communication tool, for teaching oral presentation skills to engineering students. By application of this tool, students can record and practice oral presentation skills and can have prompt feedback. The results indicated that Flipgrid helped the students to practice oral presentation skills.

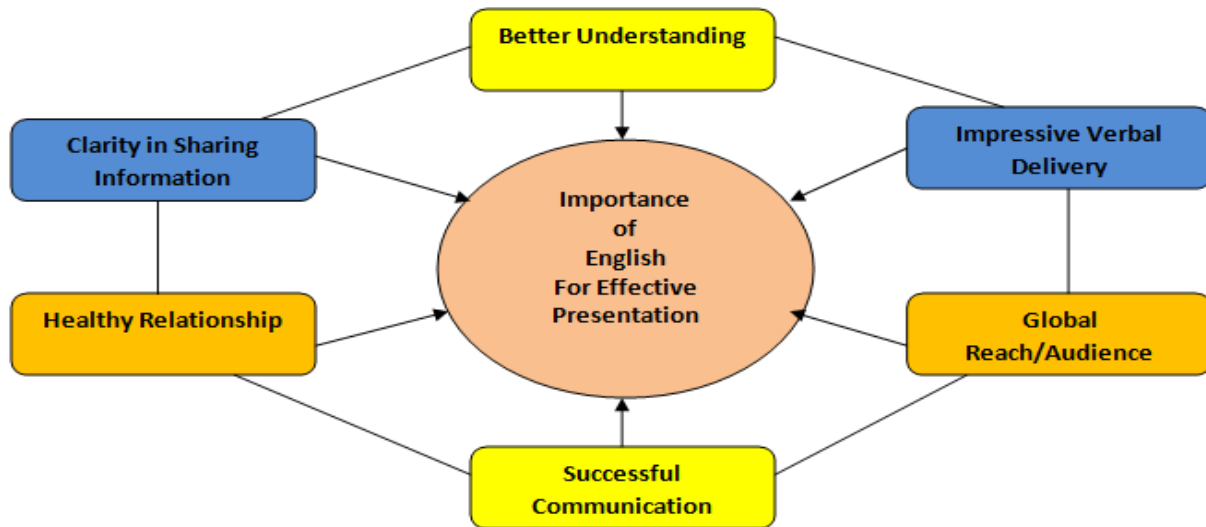
Using English for presentation skills

It is a matter of fact that the United Nations has recognized five languages as its official languages and of them English holds the first position due to its international acclaim of easy access to the masses. English is playing a pivotal role in all the branches of learning and knowledge. English has become the lingua franca of the world in the fields of business, science, aviation, computing, education, politics and entertainment. The importance of the ability to speak or write English has recently increased significantly because English has become the de facto standard. Good command over English language is the most important requirements in many professions. This is why one should learn English by using it in well-structured and thoroughly prepared presentation one can explore plethora of global opportunities. Knowing and using English will be a huge advantage as it enables one to communicate with people from many different parts of the world.

Speaking English fluently and with confidence will surely open plethora of job opportunities such as in call centers, meeting foreign delegates, presenting projects to international or multinational companies. Use of English as a language during oral presentation is inevitable as It is the language of international business and trade, it helps to understand other languages, it is the language of higher studies, research, medicine, science, technology, and library, it is flexible and has a very rich vocabulary, it is widely used, easy and very powerful tool of communication during cross cultural communication. But it is quite unfortunate to note that no serious attempts are being made by the academic institutions to sharpen the latent skills of the learners so as to make them employable to face the stiff competitive market. English has achieved the status of a second language for majority of people across the globe. It is a universally accepted language. About 380 million people regard English as their first language; two thirds of them prefer it as a second language. It is often predicted that by 2050, half the world's population will be trained in English. Hence, it is important to know how English language will unite people. English is also very necessary to the field of education. In many countries, children are taught and encouraged to learn English as a second language as almost 90% educational subjects are written in English.

This fact is also resulted in a study conducted by Sapp and Zhang (2000) in which a survey among 238 industry supervisors over a 5-year-period in the departments of English and communication at a private university in the Northeast was conducted and they revealed that rarely do university faculties have the chance to incorporate practical pieces of advice and guidance from business partners and industry insiders into their courses, aiming to facilitate students' transition into full-time employment. This study is an eye opener as it clearly indicates that there is big mismatch between what students learnt in the name of soft skills and what corporate world expects from them to deliver. Hence, it is high time for academicians, trainers, researchers and institutions to work upon the communication skills and especially on presentation skills of the learners so they can excel in their respective endeavors.

Figure 1: Importance of English for effective presentation skills.



Source: Developed by the authors on the basis of literature review

English is the easiest language of the world to learn as there are plenty of resources available. Role of English as a language is very crucial and therefore a presenter must be careful to use it flawlessly. It is strongly advisable that one should use spoken rather than written English. A good presenter will take care of following as:

- Use active rather than passive verbs;
- Avoidance of technical terms, if audience is familiar than think about usages;
- Always use simple and known words and phrases;
- Avoid jargon/slang words;
- Distinguish between denotative or connotative meanings;
- Change pace or volume, use a longer than normal pause between key points and change pitch or inflection;
- Avoid common mistakes of spellings, stress, intonation, pronunciations, and sentence constructions;
- Avoid speaking at fast speed as it hinders the audience comprehension;
- It is very necessary to avoid stress on unimportant words clouds meaning, poor phrasing, and putting pauses in the wrong places;
- Word choice must be simpler, more informal, and more repetitive as written language uses a larger vocabulary and is more formal;
- It is better to use short words and short sentences and talk about concrete facts rather than abstract ideas;
- It is advisable that one should rehearse a test run in front of a mirror, demonstrate presentation for a friend and use IT enabled technologies to record, listen/view and improve it;
- Use indirect narration to express and extend view points;
- Have clarity in listening questions from audience and avoid ambiguity in answering questions.

Table 1: Main usages of English as a language for conducting various activities @ presentation.

Activities	Usages of Language
Introducing the topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to begin by... • Let's begin by... • First of all, I'll... • Starting with... • I'll begin by.. • At the outset.....
For Giving an example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example,... • A good example of this is... • To give you an example,...
Dealing with questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'd like to deal with this question later, if I may... • I'll come back to this question later in my talk... • I won't comment on this now...
Summarizing and concluding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conclusion... • Right, let's sum up, shall we? • I'd like now to recap... • Let's summarize briefly what we've looked at... • Last but not the least.....

Source: Based on literature review

Proposed activities for effective presentation skills

On the basis of literature review, following classroom activities are proposed as:

Activity: 1

This activity is a group activity. Divide the class into small groups. Assign different sections to each member like as Introduction, Main Portion-Central Idea and Conclusion on the selected topics such as Importance of Communication Skills, Education and Civilization etc. Ask the other groups to provide feedback on account of Communication, Content, Delivery, Use of Verbal and Non Verbal Language etc. Time duration for each student will be 05 minutes. This activity can be conducted at the Junior College level.

Activity: 2

This activity is based on role play. Organize a Mock Seminar or Conference in the classroom. Assign students roles such as Chairperson, Keynote Speaker, Experts, Observers, Evaluators, Participants, Repertoire and as members of organizing committee. Some students will be given topics of presentation well in advance and will deliver their presentation before the class. Time duration for each student will be 10 minutes. This activity can be conducted at the University level.

Concluding remarks

Language allows us to recall the past, deal with the present, and plan for the future. Language helps us to know how a culture perceives reality. English language competence could be developed to be a tool for promoting intercultural communication in organizations. Harris and Sherblom (2011) remarked that diversity in language, culture, background, and values seem to affect small group communication in the working place. In an era of globalization and privatization, only English as a

global language can easily meet all the challenges of the growing demands. The success of an effective oral presentation lies in preparation, planning and organization. A presenter has to be very particular in selecting appropriate words and there should not be any ambiguity in usages. The tone should have a combination of rising and falling tone, pitch should be variable, accent should have accuracy, speed should be maintained, pronunciation should be refined, pauses should be used aptly, and top of all variation in voice modulation should be monitored closely.

Effective presentation skills are integral part of successful communication as it supports to communicate more effectively and professionally with audience, employer, team members, students, teachers and all others. It is very popular as it is meaningful, inspirational, creative, memorable and informational. Since presentation is executed in the global settings so English as a link language is the only and best medium of effective and successful communication. For a well-structured, planned and executed presentation, English will remain as the most popular language for many years to come as it has a wide access to a broader range of information, connections, and opportunities.

By using English as a global language, positive intergroup attitudes among the presenters from different racial, cultural, language, and social- class groups can be developed for personal and professional growth. "No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language." (Tirumalesh, 1999) Language diversity of English as a language can potentially provide presenters with competitive advantages over others. Effective presentation skills can translate better performance into grand success at multicultural and multilingual workplace. Therefore, undoubtedly, English as a language will remain as the most influential key to open the channel of effective communication in any sort of presentation.

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(Inter)cultural components in EFL teaching: evidence from pre-service teachers' projects

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Abstract

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) is an object of recent studies in the areas of applied linguistics, education and teacher training, those discussing theoretical underpinnings of the intercultural approach and those focusing on classroom implications. In Poland, fostering FL learners' ICC has become an ambitious goal of both FL education and FL teacher training. The paper discusses the results of the study which examined the empirical projects produced by pre-service FL teachers, participants of EFL training organized within a university setting. The topics of all the projects revolve around introducing intercultural elements in EFL teaching. The analysis examined the aims of the students' projects, the methodology applied and the theoretical perspectives that underlined the studies. The findings allowed the author of the paper to construct the profile of a FL teacher who would be prepared to promote the principles of the intercultural approach in FL teaching. The paper may be of interest to those involved in FL education, including FL teacher training.

Keywords: *intercultural communicative competence, teacher education, teaching English as a foreign language*

Introduction

Joining the European Union by Poland in 2004 involved introducing considerable changes, also in foreign language education. A new goal was set – fostering students' intercultural communicative competence (ICC), which entails preparing students to understand foreign cultures and teaching them how to draw on this new competence in communication with foreigners. In Poland, clear guidelines concerning this new approach in education are laid down in the *Core Curriculum for primary and secondary education* issued by the Ministry of National Education (MEN 2017, 2018), which is based on the internationally recognized document - *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001). It is worth emphasizing that this new situation has influenced the nature of FL teacher education, which aims to prepare trainees to face new challenges in their role as FL teachers.

Intercultural communicative competence has attracted the attention of numerous studies conducted in the area of FL learning and teaching, those discussing ICC from a theoretical perspective and those investigating the issue in a more practical manner. However, there seems to be lack of research that would explore pre-service teachers' interests in this important area of FL teaching. The present paper looks at a selection of MA projects developed by pre-service teachers, participants of the teacher training in one of the higher education institutions in Kraków, Poland. The analysis explored how the notion of ICC is perceived by the student teachers and what aspects of ICC are the foci of their projects. It was assumed that the results of this analysis can provide useful information concerning the student teachers' understanding of the role of ICC in FL teaching and their readiness to implement the principles of the new approach in their future professional activities.

Theoretical background

In this part of the paper, the role of ICC in FL teaching and FL research, particularly in the Polish context, will be discussed. Byram's model of ICC as a theoretical perspective inspiring both researchers and practitioners will be presented as well. Since the present study focusses on pre-service teachers being trained in Poland, more information about this system of FL teacher education will be given.

FL teacher education in Poland

In Poland, foreign language (FL) teachers can be trained in tertiary education institutions, such as universities and vocational schools. FL teacher training programs organized within higher education

institutions are informed by two documents: *the Decree of Minister of Science and Higher Education on teacher qualifications standards* (MNiSW 2019) and *National Qualifications Framework* (2011), in Polish *Krajowe Ramy Kwalifikacyjne (KRK)*. The first document specifies the main objectives of teacher education and provides clear guidelines for study programs. The latter one describes exit standards concerning academic competences within science disciplines (in the case of FL teachers – modern language philology) that university students are required to develop.

As regards general academic competences, students are expected to extend their knowledge about the discipline of English philology and its connection with other disciplines. In the area of academic skills, students should practice research skills, critical thinking skills and self-study skills. Along with developing the abovementioned competences, student teachers receive training in a set of teaching competences. Apart from developing proficiency in a FL, trainees acquire general pedagogical competences and skills necessary in EFL teaching, such as selecting teaching materials, evaluating students' learning, giving feedback. Trainees develop reflection skills in relation to their own teaching; they learn how to analyze and talk about their own teaching experiences. A vital goal of the teacher training concerns preparing student teachers to cope with the changing reality of contemporary education, which may involve teaching children who have a limited knowledge of the Polish language and come from culturally distant backgrounds. It is important that novice teachers develop efficient strategies of teaching children affected by migration, who may have difficulties to adjust to new school realities. Therefore, an essential objective of teacher training is to improve trainees' knowledge of FL cultures and to raise their intercultural awareness. To sum up, it is crucial that teacher training institutions offer programs that are comprehensive enough to cater for graduates' linguistic, didactic and intercultural competences.

The role of ICC in FL teaching in Poland

Recently, the relationship between FL teaching and culture has attracted interest among language educators. Globalization, migration and immigration (social phenomena that influence all the countries in the world, including Poland), have challenged the existing understanding that foreign language learning involves primarily developing knowledge and skills related to a given language (e.g. Chlopek 2008, Moeler & Osborn 2014). A call for a cultural component in FL education has been emphasized by e.g. Byram, Gribkova & Starkey (2002). This new approach, called in the present paper the intercultural approach, requires introducing changes in teaching techniques, which in turn involves adopting new roles by both the teacher and learners. Documents prepared by the Council of Europe (2001, 2018) promote developing ICC and provide teachers with useful guidelines that can enrich their understanding of the main concepts related to ICC and thereby inspire them to implement the new ideas in their language classrooms. A more recent document CEFR. *Companion volume with new descriptors* (Council of Europe 2018) seems particularly valuable for underlining the need for developing in FL learners' mediation abilities which can "facilitate a positive interactive environment for successful communication between participants of different cultural backgrounds, including in multicultural contexts" (Council of Europe 2018: 122).

Since English has become the language used in various countries for different purposes also by non-native speakers, it has become evident that Polish students need to develop language skills along with intercultural skills. Some general instructions on how to employ the principles of the intercultural approach in FL education in Poland are offered in *the Core Curriculum for primary and secondary education* (MEN 2017, MEN 2018), documents which provide guidelines for school syllabi and teaching materials, including coursebooks. *The Core Curriculum for primary education* (MEN 2017) recommends that school instruction promotes the attitudes of openness and curiosity towards foreign cultures, not only those related to foreign languages taught at school. *The Curriculum for teaching foreign language in secondary schools* (MEN 2018) advocates familiarizing learners with FL cultures and increasing their

awareness of the connection between foreign cultures and their own culture. Another important aim emphasized in this document is developing learners' intercultural sensitivity.

ICC in FL research in Poland

The place of ICC in FL teaching and learning has been explored by many studies conducted in Poland. An overview of selected studies carried out and published in Poland in 2007-2017 done by Kusiak-Pisowacka (2018) suggests that most of the studies reviewed by the researcher drew on Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence. A substantial part of the studies (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich 2009) focuses on practical applications of the intercultural approach, such as materials development and designing appropriate techniques. There are hardly any studies (Owczarek 2016) that explore an issue of evaluating ICC of FL learners. Similarly, a relatively small number of studies (Owczarek 2009) discuss the theoretical foundations of developing ICC.

Since ICC has been widely acknowledged as a crucial element of FL teaching, studies that explore FL teachers and their beliefs regarding this area of education seem to be of special interest. It is crucial to explain that in the intercultural approach, the teacher is expected to take a role of "an intercultural mediator" (Bandura 2007, Mihułka 2009). To perform this new role, the teacher needs to acquire sound knowledge of foreign cultures and his/her own culture, and develop intercultural sensitivity. Last but not least, the teacher should be willing to develop his/her skills as a participant of intercultural communication and promote this attitude among his/her students. A number of studies, e.g. Bandura (2007), Mihułka (2009), and Young and Sachdev (2011), imply that even experienced teachers do not feel comfortable in this new role. Although most of the FL teachers investigated in the aforementioned studies approved of the need to teach intercultural communicative competence, they admitted that it is not a direct goal of their English instruction. An interesting conclusion was drawn by Bandura (2007); Polish teachers of foreign languages, the subjects of her study, expressed the opinion that it is native speaker teachers of English who should undertake the role of an intercultural mediator for their students.

It is important to emphasize that in the numerous studies that focus on FL teachers, there seems to be a lack of research that would look at pre-service teachers and their readiness to incorporate intercultural components in FL teaching. The study presented in this paper aims to fill this gap.

Byram's model of ICC

Byram (1997) model of intercultural competence draws on Hymes's (1972) concept of communicative competence. It is an extension of communicative competence, i.e. linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, consisting of five integrated components: knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, attitudes as well as critical cultural awareness.

In a nutshell, the model aims to encourage FL teachers: "to prepare [their learners] for interaction with other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; and to help them to see that such interaction is an enriching experience" (Byram et al. 2002: 10).

In more specific terms, i.e. in relation to the components of the model, teaching ICC should involve the following:

- equipping FL learners with **knowledge** (information) about one's own and other cultures, their products and policies, such as daily life, history, art, institutions and non-verbal behavior;
- developing FL learners' **skills of interpreting** of documents or events from another culture and teaching students how to explain and **relate** them to documents or events from one's own culture;
- enhancing learners' **skills of discovering and interacting**, which means showing learners how to use the abovementioned knowledge and skills in real life situations as well developing their understanding of a new environment and an ability to interact with its representatives;

- developing FL learners' **attitudes**, such as openness, curiosity and sensitivity to cultural aspects of the interlocutor;
- developing learners' **critical cultural awareness** – an ability to critically evaluate perspectives, practices and products of one's own and other cultures, which would result in viewing cultures in a more objective way and being aware of potential areas of conflict.

Byram's (1997) model of ICC has been very influential both in compiling documents applied in FL education, such as CEFR (Council of Europe 2001) discussed above and in educational studies investigating FL teaching (as concluded by Kusiak-Pisowacka 2018). However, in the area of teaching, the model has been evaluated as difficult to implement by teachers, which was recognized by Byram himself (2013:12), partly due to the absence of transparent teaching objectives and not enough attention given to the dynamic character of becoming an intercultural speaker.

The study

This section presents a meta-analysis of eleven projects written by the MA graduate students of the Jagiellonian University in the years 2014- 2019. All the projects investigate issues connected with developing FL learners' ICC. Below detailed information concerning the context of the study, its participants, the aims of the research and the outcomes is given.

The context of the study and its participants

The subjects of the study described in the present paper were the students of MA seminars run at the Jagiellonian University. All the students participated in the EFL teacher training, which was organized according to the national standards explained in chapter 1.1. The main aim of the MA seminar was to assist students in designing and conducting their own research projects. For the purpose of the study, all the theses that aimed to explore the issues connected with ICC were selected. This group constitutes 10 % of all the theses written in 2014-2019 by the students who participated in the teacher training program. All the projects, apart from student K's project, were set in the context of secondary schools, where the teaching practice part of the students' training was organized, which provided the trainees with a valuable opportunity to cooperate with their mentors, experienced teachers who acted as the trainees' supervisors.

The purpose of the study

Two research questions informed the study:

- 1/ How is the notion of ICC investigated by the student teachers in their MA projects?
- 2/ On the basis of the trainees' MA projects, what conclusions can be drawn about the trainees' readiness to incorporate intercultural elements in FL teaching?

To answer question 1, the following more specific questions were put forward:

- 1a/ What aspects of FL teaching were the foci of the trainees' investigations?
- 1b/ What research methods were applied by the trainees to investigate ICC?
- 1c/ What theoretical models did the student teachers draw on as the background of their projects?
- 1d/ What were the outcomes of the trainees' projects?

Methodology

In the present study, a qualitative methodology was employed. The study was exploratory in nature and no hypotheses were set prior to the research. The "insider", close to the data perspective was applied; the author of the present paper (who was the student teachers' supervisor or reviewer) was also the one who conducted the analysis of the trainees' projects. Another feature of the present study was that it was process-oriented, i.e. one stage of the study informed another one.

The analysis of the trainees' projects took two stages, each corresponding to one research question. In order to answer research question 1, a meta-analysis of the MA projects was conducted. It entailed analyzing the texts against the criteria put forward in questions 1a/, 1b/, 1c/and 1d/ presented above. It seems crucial to note that all the MA projects were extensive essays that followed the IMRD macrostructure, i.e. Introduction-Method-Results-Discussion. This way of organizing the MA theses noticeably facilitated the process of reading and analyzing the texts. Stage 2 focused on research question 2. In the context of the study, the results obtained at stage 1 (the meta-analysis) served as the data for stage 2.

The results of the analysis – Stage 1

The main findings of Stage 1 analysis are summarized in Table 1. The table indicates the following information in reference to each student: the main focus of the study (question 1a), methods applied in the project (question 1b) and the theoretical perspective that the student drew on in his/her project (question 1c).

Table 1: The results of the analysis of the student teachers' projects.

Student	Focus of the study	Research method	Theories behind the project
Student A	Teachers' and students' attitudes towards intercultural competence as a goal of FL teaching	1/ Interviews with teachers 2/ Questionnaire for students	Byram's (1997) model of ICC; focus on the notion of "intercultural speaker" as an alternative way to look at a foreign language learner
Student B	Teachers' beliefs concerning their understanding of the Byram (1997) model	1/ A case study with 3 teachers (an interview, an observation, and a discussion) 2/ Questionnaire for 23 teachers	Byram's (1997) model of ICC
Student C	The effectiveness of "intercultural" lessons in developing secondary learners' attitudes towards foreign cultures and their cultural curiosity	Action research, i.e. "intercultural" lessons with interviews with students as feedback	Byram's (1997) model of ICC; Kramsch's (1993) advice concerning implementing the intercultural approach
Student D	Adaptation of online sources as supplementary coursebook materials to develop learners' ICC	Action research, i.e. "intercultural" lessons with the mentor's comments and the researcher's self-evaluation as feedback	Byram's (1997) model of ICC
Student E	The effectiveness of song-based lessons on students' knowledge about the target culture	1/ Action research, i.e. FL song-based lessons with feedback from interviews with students and FL culture tests 2/ Questionnaire for teachers	Not stated
Student F	Evaluation of cultural content in coursebooks for primary schools	Content analysis by means of a checklist	Byram's (1993) checklist of topics

Student G	Evaluation of secondary school coursebooks in terms of developing ICC	1/ Content analysis by means of a checklist 2/ Interviews with teachers who use the coursebooks	Byram's (1997) model of ICC
Student H	Evaluation of one secondary school coursebook in terms of developing ICC	Content analysis by means of a checklist	Byram's (1997) model of ICC
Student I	The evaluation of the cultural content of coursebooks for secondary schools	1/ Content analysis by means of a checklist 2/Interview with the teachers who use the coursebooks	Moran's (2001) criteria to evaluate culture-related knowledge in coursebooks
Student J	The evaluation of primary school coursebooks in terms of developing ICC	1/ Content analysis by means of a checklist 2/Interview with the teachers who use the coursebooks	Äijälä (2009) criteria, based on Byram's (1997) model
Student K	The impact of the Polish-Ukrainian exchange program on students' ICC, i.e. their perceptions of the other culture and their own culture	1/ An ethnographic analysis of emails, reflections and the data from observations 2/ Questionnaire for the participants of the exchange program	Byram's (1997) model of ICC

Below the main outcomes of each MA project are presented, as specified by its author, which corresponds to research question 1d/.

Student A: The study revealed that both the students and the teachers valued the ability to communicate successfully with the representatives of different cultures. This ability was considered to be crucial in education, professional career and everyday life. However, the results of the study showed that teachers lack preparation to teach intercultural competence.

Student B: The majority of the respondents are not familiar with the ideas promoted in the Byram model. The teachers view teaching culture as providing their students with information about foreign language countries and their people. It seems that they did not understand the advantages of fostering their students' intercultural skills.

Student C: The questionnaire administered before the ICC lessons showed a medium level of the students' interest in foreign cultures. The learners demonstrated "passive" knowledge and did not seem to be open to foreign cultures. The learners' attitudes seemed to change after a series of ICC lessons. The students began to appreciate cultural diversity, declaring their willingness to explore the topics discussed even further.

Student D: The online search indicates that although most of the Internet materials were not directed specifically for EFL students, it was possible to adapt them successfully to serve the intended purpose. In the process of adaptation and identifying appropriate sources, the familiarity with the model of ICC and the taxonomy of intercultural tasks proved very useful.

Student E: Both the students and the teachers were open to enriching their knowledge about FL culture and approved of the use of songs in FL teaching. It was interesting to find that both parties viewed song lyrics as an opportunity to practice listening skills or learn vocabulary rather than a source of cultural knowledge.

Student F: The analysis of the coursebooks showed the dominance of male characters and contemporary celebrities. The findings revealed that both texts and activities prioritize the countries in which English is used as a native language.

Student G: The coursebooks analyzed offer very few tasks that can be applied directly in developing students' ICC. As regards the analysis of target, source, and other cultures, topics connected with the target culture are the most common (both representing small c and big C culture). Students' own culture is present in the coursebooks, but it is mostly big C culture and no topics related to small c culture are presented. Additionally, the analysis showed that there are very few activities that aim to develop learners' attitudes. There is a limited number of activities that can enable learners to compare different cultures or different aspects of the same culture, which could facilitate learners' critical cultural awareness.

Student H: The coursebook contains a considerable number (21%) of tasks that can be used to develop intercultural communicative competence. The majority (61%) of the coursebook tasks develop "knowledge", 14% - "skills of discovery and interaction", 13% - "skills of interpreting and relating" and only 6 % of the tasks account for "attitudes and critical cultural awareness". The coursebook does not provide students with tasks that could enable them to assess their intercultural competence; thus, it fails to indicate areas for improvement in their development of this competence.

Student I: All the coursebooks analyzed contain references to Poland and its culture; however, the insight into Polish culture seems limited and not sufficient. None of the textbooks includes activities intended to assess students' cultural knowledge. None of the coursebooks encourages students to develop their knowledge; there are no additional sources that students could use to find additional information on cultural matters. There are very few activities that present the same issue from various perspectives and encourage students to look at one issue from different angles. No instances of encouragement for students to step outside their own culture were found in the coursebooks, although some tasks that ask students to reflect on certain aspects of their culture were identified; usually such activities follow the texts in which these issues are presented.

The questionnaire results showed that despite the fact that all the teachers used the same coursebook, their approaches to the coursebook materials differed noticeably. This suggests that the quality of the cultural content offered in the coursebook is as important as the way this material is used by teachers.

Student J: The evaluation looked at the following aspects of ICC: "Knowledge of cultures", "Interpreting and relating cultural elements", "Intercultural interaction" and "Attitudes towards cultures". The findings showed that there are no learning tasks that would develop the skill of intercultural interaction (defined in the analysis as "functioning as a mediator between cultures and dealing with conflict situations"). Most of the learning tasks focus on developing the knowledge of cultures (defined as "factual knowledge of cultures"); these are mainly reading and listening tasks.

Student K: The exchange program led the learners to the feelings of cultural shock. Their written reflections point to the students' new intercultural encounters connected with everyday life, such as meals, dress code, traffic rules, etc. The results of the ethnographic approach showed that at the beginning of the visit, the students were able to notice only differences between the two countries; later they began to notice similarities. It seems that thanks to the exchange visits the participants developed the ability to compare and contrast various aspects of culture, such as attitudes and customs.

Comparing and contrasting attitudes towards their own culture and the foreign culture brought the students to an interesting conclusion: Polish people have poor knowledge of their own culture and Polish teenagers are even ashamed of their own culture. It is what the Polish participants had not realized before the visits. The students suggested that school education is to blame since it does not cultivate national culture to a sufficient extent.

The interpretation of the results of the analysis – Stage 1

The analysis of the trainees' MA theses indicates that the student teachers were successful in designing and conducting their own projects. Since the students were free to choose the topic and goals of their MA projects, the fact that 10 percent of all the trainees decided to explore the issues connected with ICC seems to indicate that ICC attracted a moderate amount of student interest.

Let us have a closer look at the projects in the context of the first research question, i.e. How is the notion of ICC was investigated by the student teachers in their MA projects?

The student teachers explored ICC in the following aspects of FL teaching: teachers' and students' attitudes towards ICC as a goal of FL teaching (2 students), the effectiveness of ICC lessons and culture-based materials (3 students), evaluation of coursebooks (5 students) and the students' exchange (1 student). The research methods applied were questionnaires and interviews (as elicitation instruments), the action research procedure (which allowed the trainees to explore the effectiveness of ICC lessons) and coursebook evaluation. Student K's project was the most original and involved an ethnographic approach. (However, it seems useful to add that the student was not the author of the reported project, but one of the participants.). The projects allowed the young researchers to look at the issue of developing ICC from several perspectives. Coursebook evaluation studies gave the student teachers an opportunity to investigate teaching ICC from a distance; whereas action research studies engaged the students in a more personal manner and enabled them to experiment and examine their own classroom from the inside. In all the cases, the young researchers treated ICC as complex, multifaceted concept, which they explored with due attention.

Byram's model (1997) of ICC turned out to be the most popular theoretical perspective which directed the students in the design of their projects. The model provided the young researchers with theoretical background necessary to understand the nature of ICC and its development. Additionally, the students drew on the model – particularly on the five dimensions of ICC that Byram specifies – in constructing their research techniques, such as criteria for coursebook evaluation, questions in elicitation techniques (questionnaires and interviews) and objectives for ICC lessons. One student focused on the notion of "intercultural speaker" as defined by Byram (1997), as an alternative way to look at a foreign language learner. It seems that Byram provided the students with guidelines in which they managed to place their study.

The summary of the conclusions drawn by the trainees presented above indicates that the trainees were able to discuss the results of their studies in reference to the goals of their research. It is worth emphasizing that some of the projects investigated the key issue from a number of perspectives, e.g. by means of coursebook evaluation and interviews with teachers (e.g. Student I and Student J). This triangulation is reflected in the conclusions, e.g. Student I claims that the results obtained from the coursebook evaluation did not confirm the teachers' opinions about the coursebooks analyzed.

The results of the analysis and conclusion – Stage 2

The aim of Stage 2 was to estimate the trainees' readiness to incorporate intercultural elements in FL teaching on the basis of the trainees' MA projects. The analysis of students' MA projects offered some evidence that enabled the author of the present paper to identify certain characteristics and construct a **profile of the teacher** who would be ready to integrate FL teaching with developing ICC. Below there is a list of skills and attitudes demonstrated by the trainees in their texts that seem to be conducive to introducing intercultural components in FL teaching. Some of them are illustrated with the extracts taken from the trainees' texts (see Appendix 1).

- 1/ understanding the principles of implementing intercultural components in FL teaching; being familiar with theoretical models, such as the Byram (1997) model, can be helpful (as reported by one of the student teachers in the present study; see Appendix 1);

- 2/ awareness of the importance of introducing novelties, such as intercultural materials, in one's teaching;
- 3/ abilities to evaluate the existing teaching materials, e.g. coursebooks;
- 4/ abilities to reflect on one's practices (as suggested by one of the student teachers, see Appendix 1);
- 5/ abilities to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly developed materials and innovative techniques;
- 6/ eagerness to cooperate with other teachers (as suggested by one of the trainees, see Appendix);
- 7/ an ability to see the issue of developing ICC as a more general problem, i.e. within the school or the system of education (as reported by one of the trainees, see Appendix 1).

One of the implicit goals of the present paper was to emphasize the role of pre-service training in preparing student teachers for new challenges that they are likely to face in contemporary education, such as teaching multicultural classes. Developing learners' ICC will not refer only to teaching Polish learners, but may refer to students of other nations or children of Polish emigrants who returned to Poland and sent their children to Polish schools. The findings of the study seem to imply that when given appropriate support from the teacher training institution and the school in which the teaching practice is organized, the goal of sensitizing novice teachers to intercultural components in education can be successfully achieved.

Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research

An important question as to the trainees' readiness to incorporate intercultural elements in their future professional work was posed at the onset of the present study. However, on the basis of the data obtained, it is not possible to answer this question in an unequivocal way. Unfortunately, MA theses did not encourage the student teachers to reveal their personal reflections and explanations of their teaching and research decisions, which could have made this task easier. A helpful strategy would be to elicit the trainees' opinions in an interview or a questionnaire. In the process of constructing the questions in this kind of survey, the characteristics listed in the profile of the teacher discussed above could be useful. Another idea could be following the graduates in their careers' development to explore further their classroom practices and their opinions concerning the implementation of intercultural components in FL teaching.

The analysis of the MA projects indicated that it was Byram's (1997) model of ICC that proved to be the most often used by the student teachers as a theoretical perspective for their empirical projects. However, it is not clear why the trainees opted for this very model and what assumptions of this perspective they found the most appealing. Eliciting trainees' voices concerning their difficulty in implementing this model for didactic and research purposes can produce more informative results, particularly in the light of the criticism of Byram's theory in this respect (see chapter 1.4.).

The present study focused on the state (product) of student teachers' knowledge and abilities concerning teaching ICC in a FL classroom as demonstrated in their MA projects. It would be interesting to gain more insight into how novice teachers develop their perceptions, opinions and skills connected with this area of teaching.

More research is needed into this important goal of FL education and teacher training. It is the hope of the author of the present text that the outcomes of the study and its shortcomings will inspire both teacher trainers and researchers to embark on similar investigations.

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Appendix 1.

Extracts taken from the projects.

The language of the texts was slightly adjusted by the author of the paper.

For me, a novice teacher, the process of materials development was difficult and time-consuming because it coincided with the duty to perform the lessons. ...However, the action research I conducted contributed immensely to my professional development. Not only did I learn many good practices when selecting and developing educational materials but I also began to realize how useful educational theories such as the ICC model can be in the process of selecting teaching materials.

Several suggestions on how to introduce changes can be offered. First, a database of online sources developing ICC can be gradually created and arranged topically. What is more, other English language teachers, for example, within one school or through different social media groups can be encouraged to collaborate in the creation of such a database. The distribution of responsibilities can be suggested. For example, teachers who are more computer literate can take upon themselves the task of searching for the materials, whereas the more experienced teachers can check their effectiveness in the classroom context.

The curriculum change in teachers' education takes time. Therefore, those who would like to incorporate the development of ICC into their classroom practices initially have to rely on themselves instead of waiting for a change at the national level.

Part II
Facts and Opinions Concerning the Educational Role of Language
REVIEWS & REPORTS

Foreign language anxiety – an issue of (Czech) Slovak teachers - critical review

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The monograph, "Foreign Language Anxiety, Post – Communist Country Context" was edited by Zdena Kráľová and Jana Kamenická, Verbum Praha, 2019.

Anxiety and fear on one hand, unflagging inner responsibility to do one's best in the position of a role model, on the other... This is the challenge that countless non-native foreign language (FL) teachers experience every time they stand in front of their learners. Teachers, being of different personalities, having undergone various educational systems and being given different opportunities for practical foreign language use, are trying to do their best to fulfil their highest potential. That is why being a teacher automatically predestines representatives of this difficult profession to experience a life-long challenge - professional and personal.

Many non-native FL teachers experience feelings of anxiety and fear when it comes to their everyday teaching performance, however, their, often very difficult, situation does not belong to topics of wide discussions. This work provides a unique outlook on the issues that should definitely be more discussed by the experts of the field. Authors try to clarify the issue of anxiety in hope that if it is theoretically understood, it can be coped with it more efficiently. During close reading of this monograph, I, as a non-native English language teacher, have found many issues concerning anxiety not only interesting, but beneficial as well. The content of the work is logically organized which gives readers the opportunity to understand the problem systematically, from the most fundamental issues to more complex ones.

In the introductory chapter, the author provides readers with a compact historical, biological and psychological viewpoint on anxiety in general, which makes the issue more understandable and, therefore, beneficial for people engaged with the topic. Due to my own observation of in-service teachers on one hand and much research done to the topic, on the other, it is apparent that teachers are very often considered by the general public to be all-knowing title-holders who are obliged to not only educate, but raise their students as well. Therefore, many teachers are constantly under the pressure and may not realize that the feelings they experience are symptoms of an anxious teacher. The author (Morais) presents a minute description of components of anxiety (physical symptoms, thoughts, avoidance behavior, expression of aggression, etc.), which the reader can possibly identify with and realize that anxiety does not have to be just a theoretical issue of "a special category of teachers", but an urgent condition that needs to be dealt with, though.

Public awareness of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) gradually rises which is very important for both, teachers and learners. Kráľová in the second chapter summarizes the most relevant information concerning FLA - definitions, classification, causes, factors and subtypes, and presents the overview of research findings on FLA from the very beginning of its study in the 1970s up to the present day. She introduces FLA to a general audience because it may have a significant impact on the FL mastering. Despite the fact there is an undeniable connection between anxiety and foreign language mastering, the author argues that it cannot be definitely concluded whether self-perceived unsatisfactory level of foreign language competence leads to FLA or FLA affects the level of mastering a foreign language.

An equal significance is given to strategies designed to alleviate anxiety – to coping strategies. Kráľová introduces three strategies that can be applied when dealing with FLA: teaching, learning, and intervention strategies. These are based on individual approaches (cognitive, affective and behavioral) that can help individuals to get rid of anxiety or, at least, to make it more bearable. Theoretical information is completed with the research overview verifying individual strategies and approaches. In different conditions, different approaches can be used, however, "the combination of cognitive,

behavioral and affective approaches in foreign language learning and teaching appeared to be the recipe for success” (Král'ová, p. 56).

When overcoming any difficulty or a problem in our life, the first step to improve the situation is to understand the problem or principles of its creation, in other words, get to the root of things. Having FLA in the center of attention, the cognitive-behavioral approach is understood to be one of the keys. As authors (Morais, Petrová) state, the approach has two basic principles:

1. our cognition has a controlled impact on our emotions and behavior,
2. our acting and behavior can strongly influence our thoughts and emotions.

Providing given approaches seems, from my personal point of view, to be extremely helpful due to the fact that any anxious teacher can try to understand what is “behind” their anxiety, what might all these feelings stem from or, at least, that their unenviable situation is solvable. Reading such a text can give anxious learners or teachers hope whose meaning is beyond description. Theoretical explanation is followed by the summary of techniques and methods used for coping with anxiety, including relaxation procedures, breathe exercises or work with thoughts. I consider given exercises to be really helpful, but many anxious teachers might not have known about them before, and due to the lack of information and discussions, they often choose an escape strategy of any kind, which consequently has an unfavorable impact not only on themselves, but on their learners as well.

The importance of the issue is undeniably huge while FLA is a problem of non-native teachers of any nationality, however, prominence of this work is given to Slovak non-native English language teachers. Authors (Král'ová, Malá) provide readers with a historical overview of educational systems within the Slovak republic, where long-lasting historical and political changes have directly affected English language teachers’ performance and feelings of anxiety. The transformation from 40 years lasting communist regime to an independent democratic state was a difficult process bringing numerous educational changes, foreign language preferences, teacher education modifications as well as an unrestricted movement abroad. Significant findings within this context were detected by Král'ová and Malá (2018) who discovered that more practiced foreign language teachers often experience higher speaking anxiety due to previous socio-political factors and the lack of communication with native speakers. This issue has come into existence under the term “post-communist countries’ paradox” and serves as another important feature in the effort to comprehend anxiety in the case of non-native FL teachers.

Finally, the work outlines an overview of opportunities for the professional development of teachers in Slovakia, by which they can maintain life-long education. Kováčiková mentions continual education, credit system, EU programs, non-governmental teacher associations, international certificates for teaching English and private sector offering workshops and methodological instructions. All of the aforementioned opportunities are accessible to teachers and can significantly enhance their FL proficiency and self-confidence, which will subsequently reduce their anxiety as well.

The work provides readers with numerous beneficial information (cognitive-behavioral approach, nature of anxiety), introduces findings that address topics which need to be taken into consideration and definitely researched in the near future (teachers’ foreign language anxiety, post-communist countries’ paradox), provides different techniques and methods that can be used even at work to release anxiety and relax, or it points to changes that needs to be performed if pre-service teacher preparation was to be beneficial for themselves and for their future learners as well. Context of the work is organized in a logical order, individual issues connect to each other and, what is of the highest importance, information published in the work make readers think about the issues, which is the first step if progress in this field is to be enhanced.

I highly agree with the opinion of authors of this monograph who state that if we want the overlooked situation of non-native foreign language teachers to be improved, it would be efficient to deal with and introduce long-lasting preparation of pre-service teachers, not only in the educational

field, but in the mental training as well, so that teachers are prepared for their not easy, but extremely interesting profession.

The content of the work is not, however, beneficial only for pre-service and in-service non-native teachers of foreign languages. I would highly recommend it to the wide public who are connected to the teaching-learning process in any way, including learners and their parents as well. These days when the authentic form of any foreign language is easily accessible, learners are watching film and videos in the native language, they play computer games, chat with their friends all around the world or are able to travel abroad and experience the country in all its aspects, to teach the foreign language at schools has become a great challenge for language teachers.

Due all the aforementioned facts, it is important to concentrate not only on learners and their learning problems, but teachers in the first place. When enough attention is given to those who are considered to be knowledge bearers, the outcome will be mirrored in motivated, educated and balanced learners who can understand the significance of learning. What needs to be done, however, is to start from the very beginning and that is exactly what this work aims at.

English for fire science students – a book review

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English for specific purposes is the way of teaching language the students who may have special requirements and needs in various fields of their professional or possible future professional life. Such students need to focus on specific vocabulary, communication skills or types of expressions. Jaroslava Štefková's book, *English for Fire Science Students*. Zvolen: Technická univerzita vo Zvolene reflects the engineering level students' needs of university studies in the area of Fire Protection and Safety.

The book is divided into 8 units. Each unit deals with a different topic related to fire protection. The units are focused mostly on vocabulary, its use and development necessary in practice when dealing with specific text and in specific situations. The major part of the book is written in the form of a workbook with a great emphasis on practical exercises and not much as a students' book. The topics of each unit arise from real situations and the texts are from original sources dealing with fire protection.

Each unit consists of various types of study materials and exercises. Firstly, original texts deal with reading comprehension and text-related exercises, e. g. true/false, choosing the correct option, answering the questions, etc. Secondly, you can find there vocabulary and practical exercises such as matching, filling in words, completing sentences, creating questions, word formation, etc.; and translation exercises. Little attention is paid to grammar. Furthermore, a video exercise that uses a relevant terminology and a lot of practical exercises is included in every unit. Each video can be read by its QR code and that is why it is possible to watch it from any place that has the internet connection and at any time. Some video exercises have a glossary included and some provide information about other recommended videos together with a QR code. At the end of the book students find key to all exercises for each unit as well as for video exercises.

The structure of units is not the same. For instance, the first unit starts with a vocabulary exercise in which students have to match jobs with their descriptions followed by other vocabulary exercises. Another part of the unit is a video exercise without glossary, then reading, word formation tasks and a translation exercise. The last task is a free style writing exercise on what had been studied.

On the other hand, the second unit starts with a reading comprehension task, continues with grammar and vocabulary focused tasks and finishes with a video exercise including glossary. In this unit there is no translation exercise.

The book bears a huge amount of specific vocabulary that is presented and practiced in many types of exercises. Students can easily learn and practice the words. An inspirational part are few exercises in certain units that force students to open a web page and fulfil the task. These types of exercises seem to be interactive and can lead students to further studies.

Tasks that deal with translation are nowadays not very frequent or even never presented in students' books or workbooks. Such exercises in this book are a very pleasant change and help for students because through translation, especially very specific terminology, they can fully understand the meaning and see the shades of the meaning, e.g. when searching for the right Slovak equivalent and working with synonyms.

Grammatical tasks are presented without any previous explanation or revision of particular grammatical structures. A brief introduction to each grammatical structure presented within the units or adding an appendix by the end of the book dealing in short with the grammar would be very suitable. Otherwise, during planning his or her lesson, the teacher must have possible problems or questions about the grammar in mind and should be prepared to explain them.

In contrast to the number of vocabulary exercises, there are not many speaking activities such as roleplays, etc., to encourage students to use the terminology in an active way and practice it in real situations, which is a disadvantage.

Finally, there is no complete glossary of all the words and expressions used in the units. According to the author, it was not possible to translate certain words with an equivalent technical term English language to Slovak. This can be on one hand disappointing and frustrating for students but on the other hand it gives them a unique opportunity to work on their own, personal dictionary created by searching for the right Slovak translation and in this way to learn and remember terminology more effectively than just looking up the word in a list of vocabulary and mechanically getting the immediate direct translation.

To sum up, the aim of the review is to comment on the study book designed for ESP students, specially focused on Fire Science. The book is highly recommended to be used by the teachers teaching ESP in tertiary education and by the students whose study programs deal with Fire Science. Definitely, the book is not dedicated for the students whose level of English is lower than intermediate because it does not offer teaching basic vocabulary and grammatical structures. Due to the lack of the aforementioned issues, this book can be a great help and contribution in teaching ESP. In general, it meets requirements and needs in teaching Fire Protection and Safety and encourages students to develop their language knowledge.

Retraction

The Editor-in-Chief has been informed that the author of the paper 'The situational factors on the learners' language – the existence of different language styles in different mathematics classroom situations' Vol. 2019-1(1), pp. 7-15 had previously sent the article of publication in another journal which accepted it. The author failed to notify us, and owing to this academic misconduct the Editor-in-Chief has decided to withdraw this article from ERL Journal. Accordingly, we deem the paper in question absent from the previous volume, although its subpage has been retained for the sake of automatic verification systems which need a (DOI) reference to every paper submitted for registration in their databases.

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ERL Journal – Scope Major

Key premise. **The educational role of language, reaching far beyond school(ing), is determined by multiple aspects relating to culture, methodology and/or personality.** To be suitably comprehensive, studies blending educational with linguistic studies need to comprise all these aspects.



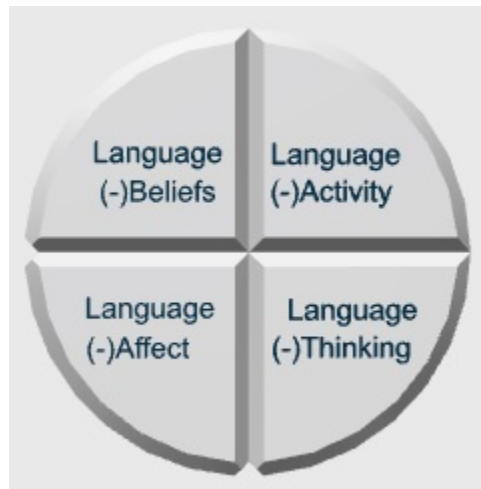
General rationale. Language lies at the heart of schooling, culture, (learning and teaching) methods, and personality – thus underlying education on the individual and on the social level. Its social existence determines its experiencing by an individual person and vice versa. Both these levels matter when it comes to learning and teaching methods as well as schooling as a whole. Socially determined and individually experienced, language shapes culture and education, and, from an individual perspective, it defines a person's place in the world and defines the world in which a person is placed.

Specific issues. Accordingly, ERL Journal welcomes papers addressing issues such as: language of schooling, bilingual education, language identity, intercultural competence, discourse analysis, children narratives, personal constructs, language in special education, transversal skills, language mediation, academic language, elicitation, plurilingual teaching, CLIL, functions of language, etc.

Expected outcome. Systematization of knowledge concerning the educational position of language; aggregation of empirical findings pertaining to social and cultural determinants of how language serves education; development of interdisciplinary educational and linguistic studies; recognition of problems calling for research and discussion of ways of putting language theories into practice.

ERL Journal – Scope Minor

Key premise. A person's education is determined by how language operates on four levels – beliefs, activity, affect and thinking. To be maximally educational, the experiencing of language by a person comprises these four dimensions, which implies a need for their comprehensive studies.



General rationale. How language affects a person's education depends on multiple axiological, psychomotor, affective, and cognitive factors. For instance, what a person thinks of language (e.g. on whether it is worth speaking or not) and how much a person speaks determines that person's mental faculties. Conversely, how a person understands a given issue (as well as how s/he feels about it) impacts on how interesting utterances s/he produces. Hence, there exist relationships between language and all the aforementioned educational domains.

Specific issues. Accordingly, ERL Journal welcomes papers concerning issues falling within one or more of the four domains, such as: status of language in school curricula, language of textbooks, language activity of children or grown-ups, stages of language fossilization, argumentative skills, language learning styles, verbalization of knowledge, approaches to oracy, personal experiencing of language skills, language image of the world, cognitive discourse functions, language reflectivity, etc.

Expected outcome. Collection of theoretical proposals and empirical data supporting learner-oriented educational practice; exploration of the relationship between language and four educational domains; detection of factors determining learners' language identity/personality; accumulation of data providing assistance in construction of language-grounded educational systems.

ERL Journal is designated for papers on cross-disciplinary, educational and linguistic issues. It is meant to address (I) the position of language and how it is put into practice across different schools, cultures, methods and personalities, and (II) the experiencing of language by learners in terms of their language beliefs, activity, affect and cognition. *ERL Journal* includes theoretical and empirical papers, presenting qualitative and quantitative approaches. Resting on the overarching premise of language shaping our reality and education (assignment of meanings to the world and subject matter learnt), it ultimately aims to unravel this process and to boost the position of language in education.

ERL Journal is international, interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed, and double-blinded.

It is open access and follows free-of-charge policy for authors.

<http://educationalroleoflanguage.org/erl-journal/>