Section 5: LS and FL – convergences and divergences

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CONVERGENCES BETWEEN FIRST LANGUAGE AND SECOND LANGUAGE? THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

First language and second language acquisition in school have joint purposes and aims in European schools: enhancing linguistic and cultural proficiency to enable learners to learn and develop within the school system, to be able to participate in society for democratic citizenship and to live a good life in interaction with others. There is a commonly shared understanding of how important language and text competences are for development in all these fields. Our tools for reaching the educational aims in second language acquisition seem so far, however, to be insufficient. Minority groups in most European countries have generally lower success within the educational system and thus within attractive professional careers than the indigenous learners and language seems to be a major hindrance. Convergences between L1 and L2 in education seem to be a solution for enhancing a better and more equal language education for minority groups. There are however problems, dilemmas and pitfalls in this approach that cannot be ignored. This paper will discuss some of the dilemmas connected to L2 education. The paper will contribute to a discussion on how we can understand language competences and if we can identify such competences through tools similar to the European Language Portfolio. Some of the examples and

materials come from a Norwegian context, but will hopefully also be interesting in other settings.

As a basis for the discussion it is necessary to clarify some concepts. Second language (L2) is a term for the language which minority learners use for learning and communication in the society they live in. L2 is in other words another language than their mother tongue(s) but differs from foreign language through function. For most learners the language used for learning in most subjects (LAC) and the language learned as a subject (LS: Norwegian in Norway, French in France, etc.) will be their first language (L1), often their mother tongue, but for minority learners learning in most subjects including LS will have to happen in L2.

1. Convergences vs. enhancing bilingualism?

Many European countries face the same changes as Norway has experienced in the last decades. The number of minority learners in schools has increased substantially in the last 30 years. In Norway the total number in 1974 was 1800, in 2005 it was 41 000. In the country as a whole this represents 7% of all learners. In Oslo the percentage is much higher: 35% in *grunnskolen* (age 6-15) and 29% in *videregående skole* (age 16-19). Although Norway never was a mono-cultural society but had minorities like the Sami people and a small group of Finnish decent, this change represented a new situation of a multicultural society and new challenges for the educational system.

From 1987 to the present day, general aims for L2 education in Norway have changed. Whereas functional bilingualism was the aim in 1987, today's school subject for L2 is defined as a transition subject, and bilingualism is no longer an objective (Øserk 1992b, Engen & Kulbrandstad 1998). The aim of bilingualism was based on the idea of enhancing L2 competence and LAC through mother tongue competence and building linguistic and social identity through two languages. The reforms of the 1990s put more emphasis on integration, which was seen as a means of obtaining equal opportunities for all learners. In this process mother tongue instruction was no longer a right for all minority learners, but was offered on a compensatory basis. This change may be understood as a turn towards the idea of convergence between L1 and L2. The question is however, if the idea of convergence can be maintained without losing the aim of bilingualism?

A number of studies emphasise the importance of mother tongue support and the use of mother tongue as language of instruction, especially in learning how to read and write. In a recent strategy document from the Ministry of Education in Norway (2004) it is assumed that parallel instruction of Norwegian and mother tongue might give the best learning situation for young minority learners. We may however point out that this statement is made without any discussion of the complexity of the very concept of mother tongue. Learners might not have just one mother tongue, or they might not have a very developed oral competence in the language that is supposedly their mother tongue etc (Kroon 2002). As Kroon points out, the assumption that mother tongue is the best medium for teaching a child is based on a human rights paradigm that we can easily sympathise with. However, this assumption is contested because we need to take into consideration the diversities of prestige and functionality of the mother tongues in question. And indeed we need to know how different languages are defined, and how we shall distinguish regional varieties of languages as language or dialect. In Zambia the government speaks of 73 different languages (Williams 2004), whereas different linguists operate with lists of 35 indigenous languages (Grimes 1992) and 20 more or less mutually intelligible languages and 80 dialects (Kashoki 1990). A study of eight-year- old learners in a multicultural Dutch classroom shows that the 'mother tongue' used for instruction to support Dutch (Moroccan Arabic), was in fact not the learner's mother tongue (Berber). Still, we may assume that mother tongue support or instruction in most cases have an impact on learning, as well as on identity building and self esteem (Engen & Kulbrandstad 1998).

2. What is language competence?

The main dilemmas of providing adequate and sufficient language education for minority learners are connected to our understanding of what language competences are, and of course our assumptions on how such competences are developed. We may indeed need to discuss whether we tend to overlook the complexity of language in the way we teach L2 to minority groups. A new awareness of the importance of context and of cultural perspectives in language acquisition in recent years might, however, have contributed to important changes. The use of authentic

texts, and especially literary texts, has emphasised the need for understanding language competences in a broad sense, including linguistic knowledge as well as cultural awareness, capacity for flexible thinking and openness to new perspectives of life.

Any language acquisition focused only on linguistic issues in a narrow sense is in danger of defining language as a mere instrument for communication. We may thus overlook that language itself is imbedded in history and culture and that thought and utterances are situated in contexts and connected to persons. Understanding and mastering language require this broad cultural scope. In practical classroom situations it is however understandable that the lack of elementary skills might be overwhelming for a teacher and that most efforts are therefore put into mastering language on a very basic skill level with little consideration to other aspects of literacy. Thus language acquisition is equated with vocabulary and grammar, pronouncing and spelling. A lot of effort is put into finding the most effective teaching method for mastering the language on this level of proficiency. Both in foreign language classrooms and in second language classrooms the cultural dimension of language acquisition is sometimes ignored, but will most certainly have more serious consequences in the latter.

L2 learners need to master language on many different levels and in a variety of situations, not only for every day communication, but for mastering a number of oral and written genres in school and society, both in interpretation and production of texts. The cultural competence needed is evident: not only must the learner master a vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structures sufficient for communication he must understand underlying values and ways of thinking not explicitly expressed in a text he meets to understand why it is written or told and what it really says. The challenge for the learner is often to be able to tune in to different ways of interpreting and value a text he can read on a technical level but still does not fully understand. He might have to learn how to navigate within text systems that might or might not be similar to text systems he already knows. And many L2 learners will have to accomplish this in a much shorter period of time than the regular L1 learner, who will have spent many years acquiring this as explicit as well as tacit knowledge in different arenas in school and in family.

One challenge L2 learners encounter is to acquire a sufficient language for learning in all subjects. Each school subject presents concepts and traditions of reasoning that are peculiar to the subject. Sometimes these concepts are taught specifically, sometimes they are taken for granted

because they are so commonly understood and used within the culture. For many minority learners, explicit subject-specific concept acquisition is crucial for learning a subject. Thus, language learning across the curriculum (LAC) becomes an important issue[1].

Another challenge for L2 learners is to be able to master the subject LS on a satisfactory level. LS in many countries is the school subject for mother tongue or national language. For the majority of learners, L1 is both content and tool in this subject. This is the subject for developing the highest proficiency of reading, writing and oral competences. A premise for LS is that children enter school with a fairly developed oral language. The variation of competence might be substantial within the L1 group, but all L1 children would be able to communicate orally. In other words, they are not expected to learn the language in school, but to develop it through reading and writing and talking and discussing over many years. This might not be so with 6-year-old L2 learners even if they are born in the country. Some young migrant learners who have been at home with their mothers who only speak their mother tongue, arrive in school without speaking or understanding the language of education, and the challenges of caching up is great. But even children who have a seemingly good oral proficiency in the language might have problems being able to reach the aims of LS in the same schedule as native speakers. This last problem is easy to overlook if we consider language proficiency to be a matter of vocabulary and grammar as stated above.

3. The challenge of identifying competence

Language competences in LS may be described as a complicated pattern of skills, ways of thinking, ways of understanding and abilities to act and navigate in the world of language and texts based on cultural traditions and values[2]. This implies the obvious competences of knowing and using the language adequately in different situations as well as more subtle cultural values as critical thinking, respect of others, flexibility of mind, reasoning and judgement, aesthetic sense etc. One challenge is to make tools for testing language competences that include these aspects,

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[1]   See Vollmer, this volume.
[2]   See also Fleming, this volume.

another challenge is to bear in mind the complexity of competences included in any speech act or writing task.

In Norway we have offered a special L2 curriculum for minority learners which can be chosen as substitute for the regular curriculum of Norwegian as LS. Learners who chose this curriculum may either be integrated in regular LS classrooms but have a different final exam or they may be gathered in separate classes and taught Norwegian exclusively according to the L2 curriculum. The system of two different curricula is being debated at the moment in Norway, and in all schools in Oslo there is an ongoing project based on only one curriculum for all followed by research and support. An evaluation report on how L2 for minority groups are practiced in Norwegian schools published in November 2006 (Rambøll Management 2006) does not give very positive conclusions: The education for L2 learners is not good enough. Most L2 learners are integrated in regular LS classes (the evaluation covers compulsory school only, so we do not have much documentation on the special needs for upper secondary school learners). There are weaknesses on all levels of leadership and competences within the school system. Too much depends on individual teachers. They lack formal education in the field, and often they do not know that there are a separate curriculum for L2 learners.

The present aim of the subject for L2 is, as pointed out earlier, to be a transition subject, the idea being that learners who are able to follow regular Norwegian in LS classes should be transferred over the school years. This means that some learners who are offered separate classes for Norwegian will be moved to regular LS Norwegian after a time, and others will remain in L2 classes and leave school with a competence based on the second language curricula and a final exam based on this curriculum. Both competences will give access to further education. The principle of transition requires similarities between the two curricula, and a valid system for evaluating learner's linguistic and cultural competence. Both represent challenges. Similarities among curricula are obtainable, especially in describing general aims and objectives, but the special needs for L2 learners will also have to be identified and dealt with. The most problematic issue is without doubt developing a tool for deciding when an L2 learner should be transferred to L1 curriculum. The pitfall of describing and understanding language competence in a narrow and technical way is certainly evident.

In a system such as the Norwegian one, where L2 learners are supposed to be transferred from L2 curriculum to L1 curriculum when

they have sufficient language and text competence, adequate tools for deciding such competence are crucial. One question is if the European Language Portfolio (ELP) can serve as model for such a tool. We shall have to consider that the ELP was designed for another purpose, and that it has its strong and weak points in identifying competences. It certainly has had an impact on foreign language acquisition all over Europe and, especially in the area of self assessment and learning to learn, it seems to have provided a powerful tool. Identifying complex language competences might however require more complex tools.

One objection might be the underlying assumption on how linguistic progression works from simple structures to more complicated ones. The ELP assumes, in other words, that a learner who masters a complicated task also would master simpler tasks in the same area. This assumption does not consider how language use is dependent on a number of variables in context and content and on the pre-conceptions of the language user. This means that a learner can master a complex task in one situation without being able to master similar tasks in other situations.

ELP is based on an assumption of what is complex and what is simple which is contestable. Levels of competences and progression are often identified through descriptors like 'short' and 'simple' in contrast to 'detailed' and 'complex'. As we may well know this dichotomy is problematic, especially if 'detailed' and 'complex' refer to technical characteristics only. A short text may well be difficult to read and the complexity may be due to circumstances in content and context more than in length or number of details. Advanced writers master a number of skills in textual form as well as in dealing with general and specific examples and descriptions adjusted to the theme or issue and to genre. But a high quality text may indeed have a simple structure and be short. Descriptors on advanced text competences in writing must relate to both form and content, the latter being not the least important mark. Research on 15-year-old writers in Norway show vast differences in the way they manage to give *perspectives* to content in their writing through a sense of *relief*, the balance between foreground and background, between general and specific statements etc. Mastering such strategies seems to be crucial for the quality of the text (Evensen 2005).

Another objection is that age can not be overlooked and that all tools for measuring language competences must be adjusted to age groups. We continue to face new problems because we do not have sufficient research to be able to establish levels of text competences according to

age groups. This seems to be a problem especially in writing.

Still, we may agree that the ELP is a satisfactory tool for identifying certain competences, especially linguistic competences. But the fact that it offers little support for identifying cultural competences is a crucial point. This does not mean that it is without cultural aspects: the ELP offers genres and situations for language use that are cultural dependant. The problem is that the ELP does not indicate differences in judging content, depth of thought, understanding relevance of arguments, valuing arguments, mastering differences between special and general statements, etc. And the perspectives of reading and understanding literature are weak. For an L2 learner who is following regular LS classes, the demands of investigating a text and being able to read between the lines and understand the text through different hypotheses of interpretation is one of the many obstacles. And not giving literature and the poetic language enough attention is also an indication of an understanding of language competences that is too narrow. A cultural understanding of language includes language in all aspects of functions and use, and literature as an art form is not the least important. Encounters with literature might in fact be a clue to understanding a culture[3].

4. The challenge of diversity

The group of learners that we generally call minority learners is an extremely heterogeneous group, and it is becoming more heterogenic. In the coming years the number of second and third generation immigrants will increase, and newcomers with little or no knowledge of language and culture will arrive. In other words, diversity will increase. We have immigrants with strong academic background and illiterate migrants, and the attitude and appreciation of education may differ a lot within different cultures. This means that children from immigrant parents have an even more diversified background than indigenous children in addition to being L2 learners. This makes it difficult to generalize on needs and challenges in L2 learning. And it makes it difficult to come up with solutions that are beneficial for all learners.

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[3]   On the use of the ELP in a multilingual classroom see also Broeder & Sorce, this volume.

The challenge of diversity also has to do with the fact that minority learners come into the school system in all ages and with a great diversity of language competences, both in their mother tongue(s) and in the target language. Some minority learners enter school at the year of 6 with a language ability equivalent to indigenous learners. In fact, they might have a far more advanced competence if they already speak more than one language. These learners would normally be in no need of special language support or an L2 curriculum. They would probably benefit from being integrated in regular LS classes throughout their schooling. Many minority learners, however, enter school at later stages. After basic language courses they are expected to follow regular courses in all subjects. The older they are the more advanced the demands for skills and knowledge. The 17-year-old learner who has lived in the country for 3 years and has succeeded in mastering most subjects in upper secondary school still will have problems in regular LS. Depending on previous schooling he might be able to use knowledge and skills from earlier LS education successfully, but for many minority learners the differences in content and school culture is too big to make such transference. As Anne Holmen has pointed out, many minority learners must develop their text competences solely on the proficiency they have on L2 because they lack such competences in their mother tongue. Her research on learners at the Danish gymnasium in Greenland and on Turkish-Danish speaking learners in Denmark shows that both these groups of learners have problems in LS because the content is not sufficiently focused on language itself and too much based on implied cultural understanding (Holmen 2001).

Diversity within the minority learner group calls for diversity in support systems and efforts. We are not always sure that learners get the right support or choose the right groups.

5. The challenges of teacher qualifications and classroom practices

There is great potential for improvement in schools concerning teacher competence in teaching second language and also concerning general multicultural competence. A survey of Oslo L2 teachers in 2003 showed that only 1 out of 15 teachers had any formal education in this subject

(56 teachers out of 868). And the 2006 evaluation report (Rambøll Management 2006) shows that there are still only few teachers involved in L2 who have formal education in Norwegian as a second language. The changes in ethnic diversity in Norway have not yet led to a fundamental revision of content and methods in teacher training. The need for strengthening teacher competences is evident. New projects are aiming to meet this problem, but still it seems obvious that teacher qualifications are not sufficient. New strategies for meeting the challenges of L2 learning and teaching requires knowledge of what is insufficient with our present strategies. But if our present strategies are not even understood or executed due to lack of teacher qualifications, it is hard to evaluate the present situation and difficult to prescribe new strategies.

It is also a problem that we have insufficient knowledge of the quality of L2 teaching. In some schools L2 learners will be integrated in regular LS classrooms but follow an individual syllabus and the NO2 curriculum. In other schools L2 learners will be more numerous and will form a separate class. Teaching methods in these two settings will, of course, have different conditions, but in both cases the quality will depend on teacher qualifications in this specific field. There has been some research on L2 in Norway, but we still need to know more. The report published in the autumn of 2006 confirmed the need of strengthening the teaching of L2 on all levels, from municipality level to teacher level.

New research in Norway indicates that minority learners are overrepresented in classes for learners with general learning problems (Pihl 2005). This may suggest that many minority learners who in fact need systematic language classes, are instead offered compensatory courses for learning difficulties. It is assumed that teachers and schools who lack competence in the situation of minority learners misplace such learners. If decisions are made through test results that do not include differences in culture or general language proficiency, the danger of misjudging learner needs and competences is great.

6. Alternative ways of enhancing convergences

There are two main principles of understanding convergences of L1 and L2 education. One is based on the assumption that the more equal, the better, the other on the idea of bearing in mind the distinctive features

of each while looking for common features. The view taken here favours the latter understanding, the assumption being that L2 learners and users will always have different conditions from L1 learners and users. Recent discussion in Norway on the issue of curricula might demonstrate how these different ways of thinking have practical implications. Should we continue the present system with the special curriculum for L2 learners, or could one curriculum for all enhance a more equal language education?

The arguments for one curriculum are based partly on principles of equality, partly on practicality. It is claimed that Norwegian as a second language is automatically defined as secondary, in the sense "of less worth" and enhance segregation. It is claimed that many minority parents choose L1 for their children to avoid this mark, whether the learner's linguistic skills are good enough or not. On the other hand it is claimed that minority learners with good enough skills to follow the regular L1 curriculum choose L2 curriculum to have an easier way to higher education. With one curriculum these problems could be avoided. On the other hand this would require a curriculum that could cope with greater diversity within the learner group in all levels. This means that LS should, in fact, have to be redefined to meet needs and requirements in a multi-cultural society.
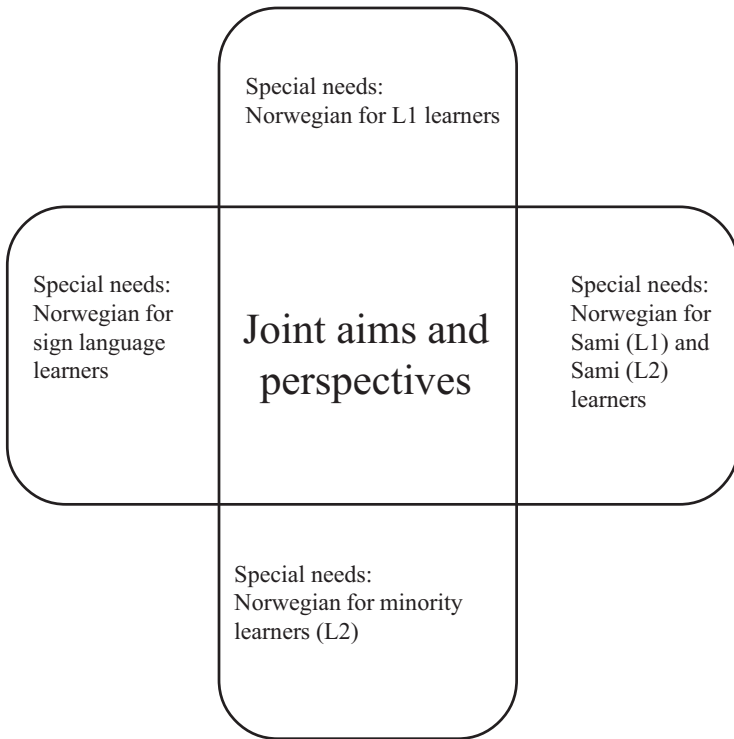
Arguments supporting one curriculum are based upon the assumption that curriculum plays an important role in developing cultural identity, and that two curricula with different aims might have a segregating function. One curriculum for all learners could be an arena for giving L2 learners a foothold in Norwegian culture and enhance identity development and literacy also for learners who are bilingual or have other mother tongue(s) than Norwegian. It is also assumed that one curriculum and integrated minority groups in the classroom, could support the ideas of plurilingualism as cultural capital and not as a problem.

Another argument presented by some participants in this discussion, is that two curricula, with different content and different exams, give the same formal qualifications, in effect access to higher education. Whether this should be seen as a problem or not is contested, but one curriculum would anyhow eliminate the problem. Since one of the basic principles for education in Norway is that learners are entitled to be taught according to their needs and abilities, it is claimed that one curriculum is not only preferable, but also perfectly feasible. It is a question of adaptation. Thus, teaching methods adapted to the individual will compensate for differences in learner competence. The

ongoing project in Oslo based on one curriculum for all might give some answers to these assumptions.

The arguments for keeping two different curricula (the current system) is based on three main points: the diversities and special needs within the learner group, the lack of teacher training in this specific field, the lack of research / knowledge on results on teaching and learning in the L2 classrooms. The strongest argument is perhaps arguments facing special needs within the learner group. L2 learners might need a more specific language learning approach, not only in beginner's lessons, but throughout their schooling. They might also need another timescale and tempo in the approach than the indigenous learners because subtle distinctions of meaning or contexts need to be explained and exemplified.

The pitfall of keeping up a system with two different curricula might be that we lose the principle of equality and convergence of L2 and L1. The pitfall in discarding a L2 curriculum might be that we overlook the special needs within the L2 learner group and the differences between acquiring L1 and L2 competences. Convergence does not mean complete equality, and a challenge is to enhance advanced competences as well as

Special needs:
Norwegian for L1 learners

Special needs:
Norwegian for sign language learners

Joint aims and perspectives

Special needs:
Norwegian for Sami (L1) and Sami (L2) learners

Special needs:
Norwegian for minority learners (L2)

attend to differences. The figure below published in a report from a committee set up by the Ministry of Education (Framtidas norskfag 2006) suggests a design for future curricula with a core of common competences and perspectives for all learners and different perspectives according to different needs in four groups of learners: L1 learners, L2 learners, learners using sign language and Sàmi learners who use Norwegian as L1 or L2.

Conclusion

Convergences between L1 and L2 may indeed be an important step towards better language competences for minority learners. But this must entail a complex understanding of what language competences are and adequate tools for determining such competences. The diversity within the learner group calls for variety of approaches to enhance competences keeping in mind special needs for different learner groups. More research is needed for better understanding of current systems and methods for L2 learning as well as research on how we can enhance a future L2 learning based on both linguistic and cultural aspects of language.

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DIVERSITY AND COHERENCE: BRIDGING THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN ENGLISH (L1) AND MODERN LANGUAGES IN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Introduction

This paper emphasises language education pedagogy as central to the consideration of coherence between the languages of school education. Any future discussion of the Council of Europe's goal to promote a global, coherent approach to language policy in education has to begin with an analysis of the conceptual framework of a coherent pedagogical approach. This paper offers a conceptual framework arising from a research process using empirical data provided by our practice as language teacher educators. This framework is structured around three components (diversity, dialogue and reflection) which we have identified as central to the development of a coherent pedagogical approach to language learning and teaching. The paper demonstrates how teachers' reconceptualisation of language education pedagogy results from engagement with the three components of the conceptual framework we have developed. The Council of Europe's commitment to developing the coherence of language education policy and practice will be dependent on such reconceptualisation by practitioners.

A focus on pedagogy provides a principled basis for discussion of policy in relation to the Council of Europe's commitment to the development of appropriate curriculum, assessment and teaching and

learning resources. Any future discussion of the Council of Europe's goal to promote a global, coherent approach to language policy in education has to begin with an analysis of the conceptual framework of a coherent pedagogical approach.

Over the last few years we have been involved in a research process asking questions about the possibility of developing a coherent framework for thinking about language and pedagogy within the subjects of English (L1) and Modern Languages. Previous attempts to theorise coherence in approaches to language education have been discussed by Brumfit (2001). Our research process uses empirical data provided by our practice as language teacher educators. This paper offers a conceptual framework structured around three components which we have identified as central to the development of a coherent pedagogical approach to language learning. These components are diversity, dialogue and reflection.

It is our view that any consideration of coherence between the languages of school education needs to have pedagogy as a central concern, providing a basis for discussion of policy in relation to the Council of Europe's commitment to the development of appropriate curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning resources. Any future discussion of the Council of Europe's goal to promote a global, coherent approach to language policy in education has to begin with an analysis of the conceptual framework of a coherent pedagogical approach.

Many previous national models of language and language education have constructed the two subjects of English (L1) and Modern Languages as discrete areas of knowledge. Even models which have attempted to provide a more holistic language across the curriculum approach e.g. Hawkins 1984 and Carter 1990, have focussed on subject knowledge content without addressing issues related to pedagogical process. The work we have undertaken at London Metropolitan University, within a language teacher education programme, has shifted the emphasis from content to process, focussing on pedagogical approaches within the different subject areas and collaboration between them. This collaboration has the potential to allow subject differences in content and pedagogical approach to complement each other through the use of dialogue, which can be seen as a powerful agent of change as recognised by Lantolf (2000). He identifies dialogue as a 'participation' metaphor (:175) which "allows for the opening of a new discursive space". It is in this discursive space that the construction of a more coherent approach to language and language teaching is made.

This approach brings together two subject (or discourse) communities which do not usually share discursive or curriculum space because of the ways in which their subjects are institutionalised. Evans (1988 and 1993) has explored the different understandings of these two subjects and the knowledge constructed within them. He identifies the possible ways in which knowledge is constructed by institutions as 'subject' as having an influential effect on the ways in which individuals come to perceive subject boundaries and their identities as subject specialists. It is our belief that this institutionalisation of a closed subject identity can be transferred into the teacher training context and this is the place to begin to challenge these assumptions.

Thus at London Metropolitan University we have created a new community of trainee English and Modern language teachers which has a focus on learning as 'a communal activity' (Bruner 1986: 127). At London Metropolitan University this community not only incorporates diversity of subject but also considerable linguistic and cultural diversity. This learning community exploits the use of dialogue and interaction which can be located within a social constructivist model of language teacher education. Roberts (1998) states 'The social constructivist perspective recognises dialogue, talk, to be central to teacher learning' (45). It also links with the Vygotskyian paradigm (1962) which emphasises the importance of the construction of co-knowledge in supporting a process of individual ownership and understanding of knowledge.

This process takes place within a language teacher education programme relating to broad areas of language and language learning content similar to those identified by previous models. In our programme there are three broad areas of content about language: linguistic and cultural diversity, language as system and language teaching pedagogy.

The aims of the programme are:

- To focus the trainee teachers' attention on the nature and features of language both within and across a range of languages
- To support the development of a more diverse language teacher identity through cross-subject dialogue
- To support the development of personal ideas and theories about language and language teaching

1. The development of a coherent framework: the role of diversity

Using the diversity of the trainee group is central to the whole pedagogical process of the programme. Two sessions take place at the beginning of the programme, which focus on linguistic diversity. The sessions encourage a shared analysis of the language experience, knowledge and understanding of the trainee teachers within a diverse learning community. They also include analysis of learning and communication strategies used to access an unfamiliar language and identify teaching strategies which are supportive of learners' access to meaning.

In the first session trainee teachers compare and analyse their experiences of:

- dialect or variety of language usage and links with identity
- the world status and the social uses of the languages or language varieties used
- patterns and principles underlying language variety and change.

The outcome of this discussion is the production of a language autobiography giving a critically reflective account of their own language development and use, which also includes comment on links with individual, social and cultural identity. Trainee teachers can present parts of this autobiography in first language or language varieties.

Personal voices from the language autobiographies reveal the extent of the diversity from both subject groups. One trainee teacher whom we had initially assumed to be monolingual, discusses the affect on her family of having a bilingual mother. She says: 'My older sister was spoken to in Dutch from the moment she was born and acquired Dutch and English fluently at the same time.' She is envious of her sister's bilingualism and describes it as a 'luxury which did not apply' to her. She further describes the range of communication strategies she developed when visiting family in Holland ' to devise a different way of communication, a way in which we could bond without the use of formal language'.

The powerful impact of first language experiences on personal identity, including in some cases the effects of language loss are very apparent in the autobiographies. When writing about the range of languages she has learned in different contexts and countries another

trainee discusses her relationship to her first language 'It would be wrong to think that these languages are pushing my Serbo-Croat away, but they are certainly weakening it as much as they are making it stronger...they confirm that emotionally I best function in Serbo-Croat. It also shows that I can be a completely different person by simply switching to another language.'

The trainee teachers' writing demonstrates an understanding of the parallels which exist between diversity within a language and diversity of languages. Their choice of which language or variety to use is much influenced by their own perception of language status at various levels within society including family, peer group, professional and academic circles. A trainee teacher writes about her use of 'Patois' (her term for Jamaican Creole) 'Patois has a lot to do with my roots and my heritage, but for a long while I shunned it and saw it as 'incorrect' speech. I think this all comes from wanting to be viewed as the same as your peers. Inadvertently I was also shunning my Jamaican background, which is something that I now embrace and am extremely proud of.'

In the second session trainee teachers are taught a lesson through a language unfamiliar to them e.g. Bengali, Hindi, Turkish in which they are asked to carry out a number of learning tasks. For example a primary Science lesson on sinking and floating in Hindi asks the trainee teachers to test hypotheses about materials which sink or float in a tank of water. They draw on this experience to reflect on learning, teaching and communication strategies as well as the importance of affective factors and social context in developing communication in a new language. The focus on linguistic diversity within the diverse learning community gives an enhanced awareness of the richness of their linguistic heritage and the powerful impact of first language experiences on identity. Additionally the trainee teachers begin to apply the understandings gained to their future roles as language teachers in secondary classrooms, which is developed further in the second session on learning in an unfamiliar language. In this session they identify with the experience of the early stage language learner and as a result of this understand a range of specific teaching and learning strategies, for example the importance of peer support, talk and the use of first language knowledge to facilitate the learning process. These strategies are recognised as being of value to both subject areas. However the collaborative analysis of these strategies also brings out differences of experience and understanding between English and Modern Languages. For example, Modern Languages trainee teachers tend to show more confidence in making explicit links between

known and unknown languages whereas English trainee teachers tend to have more understanding of the distinction between learning ability and language competence.

2. The development of a coherent framework: the role of dialogue

It is through the dialogue between the two subjects that individual linguistic, cultural and subject diversity is activated as a focus for learning. Such a dialogue, which is informed by the 'other' subject, must challenge and explore underlying beliefs, assumptions and principles which teachers hold in order to expand current subject boundaries and pedagogical approaches. This then affects the ways in which teachers perceive themselves as language teachers within their subject specialisms. It is not enough, however, to simply challenge views and beliefs about subject, language and pedagogy. To be effective, an initial teacher education course needs to provide opportunities for individuals to construct alternative perspectives to fuel their work with language in the classroom.

An important source for the construction of these alternative perspectives will be the dialogue between the trainee teachers in the two subject areas. This dialogue provides the opportunity for an exploration of a number of issues:

- The concepts arising from the programme
- The different models and principles underlying both subject areas
- The relationship between subject identity and teacher identity
- The construction of new approaches to language and language teaching which draw from both subject areas
- The construction of a language teacher identity which is broadened and diversified as a result of the dialogic process

The dialogic process of this pedagogical practice uses personal voice to articulate experience and knowledge through first person narration. Trainee teachers' reflections on the ways in which this narration impacts on the listener or listeners enables the process of reconstruction of identity to take place and thus affect changes in previously held beliefs.

The sessions which focus on language as system consider underlying patterns and structures within language systems and their relationship to communication and meaning. They include a number of tasks which encourage trainee teachers to share and explore language knowledge, experience and understanding in a range of languages and language varieties. In one example trainee teachers work in small groups with at least one person with knowledge of language in addition to English. They compare their implicit and explicit knowledge of sentence structure in English and other languages and consider the role of metalinguistic terminology in their discussion. The analysis and construction of nonsense sentences are used to exemplify implicit understanding of underlying systems in English and other languages. Trainee teachers explore their knowledge of prescriptive and descriptive grammar which is reinforced by theoretical input on different interpretations of grammar e.g. Halliday (1978), and Chomsky (1965). In another task trainee teachers analyse a series of adverts whose content ranges from image to image plus written text. This process supports discussion of the range of structural features which produce cohesion in a whole text and the relationship between these cohesive devices and meaning. The diverse range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds within the trainee teacher group enables them to explore the effects different linguistic and cultural experiences have on the processes of understanding and making meaning.

Our observations of and data on this process show that the differences in the articulation of implicit and explicit knowledge about language between English and Modern languages trainee teachers contributes to a fuller and broader discussion than would be possible in a single subject group. The group of Modern Languages and English trainee teachers is able to describe grammar in both functional and structural terms. However Modern Languages trainee teachers tend to use a more prescriptive discourse while English trainee teachers contribute greater recognition of change and fluidity in language structure. The inclusion in the discussion of many different languages and varieties challenges misconceptions about language as system, particularly the beliefs held by some that languages other than the English language have more rigid grammatical systems.

When analysing text level structures, the trainee teachers identified the effects of linguistic and cultural background on the process of reading a text. It became clear that trainee teachers were less confident about producing a meaning when they did not have access to the 'dominant culture' represented within the text. The process of making meaning at

text level appears to be approached differently by the English and Modern Languages trainee teachers. English trainee teachers are usually more able to take the given information within the text and together with prior knowledge construct a meaning or meanings which arise from this process. Before engaging with the session on text level grammar, Modern Languages trainee teachers appear to respond to text in a way which suggests that they believe the meaning of a text is located within the text itself and it is the job of the reader to understand this. The English trainee teachers' articulation of the process of making meaning from text allows a shift in understanding and perception for the Modern Languages trainee teachers.

The evidence suggests that in gaining further understanding about each other's curriculum, the English trainee teachers seem to move towards a greater understanding of formal structure in language while the Modern Languages specialists are able to consider in depth the place of context and meaning in the study of language. These processes show development in conceptualisation which is beneficial to the trainee teachers' developing pedagogical awareness and skill.

3. The development of a coherent framework: the role of reflection

Our work is underpinned by a broad definition of reflection as used by Hatton and Smith (1995) in summarizing the work of Dewey (1933), emphasising the importance of previous knowledge, belief and experience, "His basic ideas are seminal, and indicate that reflection may be seen as an active and deliberative cognitive process, involving sequences of interconnected ideas which take account of underlying beliefs and knowledge."

Throughout the programme trainee teachers are required to reflect on their developing understanding of professional identity as a language teacher. These reflections relate broadly to the three key aims of the programme and are designed to enable trainees to articulate links between their own knowledge and experience and wider issues related to language education. Our analysis of trainees' reflections indicates a clear progression in their transition from language user and learner to language teacher. This analysis also suggests that in this transition trainee teachers are able to use the pedagogical processes they have engaged with as

learners on the programme to experiment in their own practice as language teachers. The key data which provides evidence for trainees' internal reflections arise from language autobiographies and in-depth case study interviews conducted at different stages of the process. In using such qualitative evidence we are interpreting and selecting from data which are rich and complex. The use of first person narrative as a source of research data is advocated strongly by Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) in relation to their work on identity and language. 'In the human sciences first person accounts in the form of personal narratives provide a much richer source of data' (:157). Issues of interpreting data of this nature are also discussed by Kohler-Riessman (1993) who concludes 'All we have is talk and text that represent reality partially, selectively and imperfectly' (:15).

The language autobiography is the starting point of the reflective process. We have already shown examples of how the trainees draw on previous knowledge, experience and beliefs to reflect on their use of languages and language varieties. However these reflections also relate language histories to future roles as language teachers. A trainee who was born in Palestine and then went to school in the Lebanon describes his first experience of teaching in inner city Paris by saying 'the children there reminded me of my own childhood, they learn French at school but in their homes their parents speak to them in North African dialectical Arabic'. He concludes by saying the 'experience of learning three languages, Arabic, English and French is important for me as a teacher because they make me understand what youngsters go through when they learn a foreign language.'

Further information about how the reflective process continues can be found in case study interviews conducted at different stages during the programme; in the first term, before the first teaching placement, at the start of the second term following the first teaching placement and at the end of the course. A full discussion of two of the case studies is provided in Burley and Pomphrey (2004) but we include here two examples of trainee reflections, which show the results of making links, within the programme, between previous experience and the ongoing dialogue with the other subject. The first example is taken from an interview with an English trainee teacher describing a lesson she taught in her first school placement. It shows how her own knowledge, experience and use of languages are informing the development of her pedagogical approaches. She describes using her knowledge of Italian and Latin to inform her work on the English language:

"…the kids loved it…being taught …Italian and Latin in an English class…they were so focussed and engaged…at the end we did this big pop quiz…not one child in that room …was struggling with prefixes or the suffixes…I think it does help them if they learn a bit of Latin like a prefix…then (if) they get something like that in their Science test then they can work out the meaning of it by looking at it and picking it apart and that's what I taught them."

The second example shows how a Modern Languages trainee was able to broaden her view of her subject as a result of discussions with the English trainee placed in the same school. She says:

"We'd spend a lot of time talking in school and whilst we were compiling our portfolios we were talking a lot about what kind of information we had, what things that he thought maybe I could benefit from, I looked at his observation methods and the different way they planned. We talked a lot about the pros and cons of different ways of presenting the subject."

4. Pedagogical practice: the convergence of diversity, dialogue and reflection.

We can demonstrate a convergence of diversity, dialogue and reflection as part of the trainee teachers' own pedagogical practice by presenting data from a further teaching session delivered as part of the language education programme. Prior to this session trainee teachers analyse and compare the different language teaching approaches experienced in their subject areas. They are asked to identify and compare teaching approaches at word, sentence and text level and discuss approaches to learning about socio-cultural aspects of language. Areas of similar practice as well as a number of specific differences between the two subjects are identified. An understanding of these similarities and differences enables trainees to go on to select from across a range of pedagogical approaches according to learning purpose rather than adopting conventional subject pedagogical practices. This enhanced pedagogical understanding is realised in a session in which trainee teachers collaborate across the subjects of English and Modern Languages to develop teaching plans and approaches to working with poetry. In mixed subject pairs trainee teachers use poems in English and

another language to plan activities which would enable pupils to have some understanding of both the meanings in the poems and the way language has been used to convey them.

It is noticeable from trainee teacher evaluations of this session that they become very actively engaged with the collaborative task and find this approach to curriculum planning exciting and innovative. For example an English trainee teacher commented:

"It has been very valuable to work with someone from another subject area. MFL (Modern Languages) trainee teachers seem to comfortably access knowledge about language bringing new terminology into lesson planning. MFL seems to have a variety of exciting word level activities that English trainee teachers can use/adapt for (their) own lessons."

A Modern Languages trainee teacher commented on the different approaches taken by the two subject areas:

"While I started out with activities at word level the English teacher approached the poem by talking about the meaning. I think it is important for MFL teachers to focus more on meaning and not to get stuck at word level."

Another Modern languages trainee describes the mutual benefits of collaboration:

"I think we had the same amount of things to offer each other... a good idea that I heard was to use the title, which I hadn't really thought of,... to show them the title and maybe they could work out what the poem could mean from there. And... I was talking about patterns which repeat... in every sentence, that's maybe how I would approach it. I'd ask the students to look at the sort of words that they knew that were along the same lines... and the English student hadn't really thought of that, so... it was very interesting for both of us. Both our ideas could be used."

She goes on to say:

"Actually that session was one of my favourite sessions. I think we all came out of that session feeling we'd gained a lot from each other... I think through having worked with each other throughout the whole year... towards the end we started appreciating... the possibilities of what we could get out of working with each other."

In our view such comments provide evidence of the fusion, development and diversity of ideas generated by the dialogue between the two subject groups over the course of the programme.

Over the last few years we have set out to investigate the possibility of a coherent framework for language teacher education across two subject areas taught in secondary schools. We have now reached a view

of coherence which, through dialogue, recognises and builds on shared understandings of diversity without seeking to silence the differences which exist within constructions of subject and subject pedagogy. This dialogue has challenged and reframed the subject boundaries, subject pedagogy and subject teacher identities which commonly exist. As two trainee teachers reported: "I now see Modern Languages on a different level" and "I realise that I am teaching English as *a language*." Another Modern Languages trainee said: "It made me realise how English and MFL are in fact related and the fact that it is really important for the two departments to be involved".

Our work has produced a carefully structured, coherent process using diversity, dialogue and reflection to alter thinking about language and pedagogy in English and Modern Languages. Our research shows that shifts in conceptualisation have taken place over the course of the programme, producing teachers who are able to make new links, think flexibly and change and enrich language teaching practices. The Council of Europe's commitment to developing the coherence of language education policy and practice will be dependent on the development of teachers such as these.

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EXPLORING THE VARIABLE EFFECTS OF INTERACTIONAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN FIRST LANGUAGE (L1) AND SECOND/FOREIGN LANGUAGE (L2) LEARNING

Introduction

This paper explores the role of interactional corrective feedback in first and second language learning. Extensive theoretical investigations were carried out into corrective feedback and into language learning and teaching that spanned more than half of the 20th century up to the present days. Theoretical investigations into language acquisition divide themselves discretely into first language acquisition (LA) and second language acquisition (SLA). Theoretical findings suggest that L1 (first language) development is positively affected by implicit feedback in the form of recasts. Evidence in the SLA literature indicates that this type of implicit feedback may not lead to effective second language learning. The author's empirical findings presented in this paper support this position. The findings are pertinent to the Language of School Education Framework working group as it seeks to advise on language teaching policies with a cohesive approach that encompasses inclusion, clear progression in language learning, language awareness and knowledge about language, whether language is taught as a discrete subject (LS), or language across the curriculum (LAC) or as language of school education (LE).

1. Theoretical positions on feedback

Controversy surrounds the issue of corrective feedback, in the L1 and L2 literature, and much of it stems from the notion that errors are indications that language learning is taking place and they should not be corrected. It is often posited that learners will spontaneously self-repair, and error correction can be harmful to L2 development as well as counterproductive in the young child's L1 acquisition. However, self-repair depends on the types of errors that have been produced (Corder 1967), on learners' implicit and explicit linguistic knowledge (Krashen 1987) and on shared metalanguage between learners and teachers. If learners do not succeed in spontaneous repairs, teachers need to decide how to proceed once an error has been detected (Allwright and Bailey 1991). Corrective feedback should lead to learners' modification of their internalised grammar developed via the process of hypothesis testing (Allwright and Bailey 1991; Corder 1967). It is this language learning process which, especially in L2, could be in danger of fossilisation if corrective feedback is not provided (Doughty and Long 2003).

Corder (1967) distinguished between two types of errors made by both L1 and L2 speakers. He classified as "performance" mistakes 'unsystematic' (Corder 1967: 166) slips of the tongue, resulting from poor concentration, distraction and tiredness. Errors, on the other hand, are 'systematic' (Corder 1967: 166) in the sense that they result from inadequate knowledge of the system of language. They represent the '*transitional competence*' (Corder 1967: 166 – italics in original) which is being acquired by learners, in L1 and L2, on the basis of hypothesis testing. It is also possible that L2 errors can result from structural transference from the learners' L1 system. Errors produced by L2 learners during transitional competence may result in fossilization.

Fossilization is an interlanguage phenomenon and can occur when learners receive no information as to the correctness or incorrectness of their production and applies to both inappropriate and appropriate constructions. L2 children of primary school age have been observed to display fossilisation errors previously associated only with adult L2 learners (Doughty and Long 2003). This suggests that corrective feedback should focus on Corder's systematic errors which may fossilise thus affecting adversely the development of a correct interlanguage.

How to correct errors adds to the controversy in the literature. Corrective feedback should be varied. It should facilitate monitor use,

and be appropriately pitched with effective support. It should emphasise content and communication of meaning. These maxims from the L2 literature suggest four dimensions to corrective feedback:

1. **Types and features** of corrective feedback include recasts (repetitions and expansions), clarification requests, confirmation checks.
2. **Cognitive orientation**: focusing on linguistic devices that allow learners to develop their explicit grammatical knowledge necessary to self-monitoring.
3. **Psychologica**l: corrective feedback can be negative, positive and neutral. Each must address the affective as well as the cognitive nature of learning. The most effective in encouraging appropriate grammatical modifications in learners is the positive-affective and negative-cognitive combination, when corrective feedback is accompanied by positive and encouraging tones of voice, gestures and facial expressions.
4. One super-dimension that encompasses all these aspects is the implicit–explicit dichotomy. ***Explicit feedback*** is any feedback that overtly states that a learner's output is not correct, with clear information about the state of the learner's utterance. ***Implicit feedback*** consists of devices such as confirmation checks and requests for clarification, from which learners should infer that the form of their utterance is responsible for the teacher's comprehension problems (Caroll and Swain 1993).

The advantage of explicit feedback can be outweighed by the demands on learners' language processing abilities, like interpretation of the feedback, which requires accurate metalinguistic knowledge. On the other hand, implicit feedback may not be very useful in so far as it may fail to indicate the source of the error.

2. Interactional feedback and Language (LA) acquisition theories

The controversy surrounding interactional feedback and its role in language learning is firmly placed within the nativism theory of language acquisition. Which posits that language is a genetically inherited "innate

capacity" with which we are born (Pinker 1994), with linguistic structures of a core universal grammar pre-programmed in the brain (Chomsky 1957, 1965), which allows us to generate countless new sentences according to the rules of specific languages (Chomsky 1981).

Nativism became a dominant force in L1 as evidence was sought to support Chomsky's proposition that children learn their "mother" tongue, without being taught (Pinker 1984), extremely efficiently, very rapidly and in precise order. Chomsky inspired hundreds of studies that supported his thesis, the first of which is considered by Pinker (1998) to have been Brown's (1973) seminal work on the acquisitional order of morphology.

The 1990s saw an insurgence of studies and reviews of studies (Braine 1992, 1994; Howe 1993; Sampson 1997) that questioned nativism in the light of emerging propositions that language is the result of *interaction* on the cognitive, social and neural levels, and *connectionism*, which posits that language learning reflects general learning.

Connectionism (Plunkett 1995; Plunkett 1998) proposed that language learning, like all learning, is the result of competitive synaptic connections in the brain (Deacon 1997; Hebb 1961; Hebb *et al.* 1971) and their interaction with external activity such as incremental training by multiple exposures (Elman 1990, 1993). To test this theory connectionist models are constructed to mimic maturational learning, children's readiness for learning and the brain's U-shaped general learning (Elman *et al.* 1998; Plunkett and Marchman 1991), characterised by initial improvement, followed by a decline before it reaches mastery.

Cognitive interactionism is an eclectic approach, positioning itself between the nature/nurture polarities of language acquisition (Bohannon III and Bonvillian 1997). It sees physiological predisposition to language, maturation and the environment as playing integrating roles in the emergence of language. A phenomenon of interactionism is imitation, which is both developmental before age five and declines from then on (Nelson *et al.* 1989). One type of imitative behaviour, suggested by Nelson *et al.* (1989), that leads to language development, is one that incorporates 'growth recasts', which allow children to compare their own utterances with adult imitations of their own responses. "Growth recast are replies that keep the basic meaning and reference of a child's prior utterance, but that build in a growth opportunity because there is a more complex language structure in the reply than in the child's prior utterance" (Nelson *et al.* 1989: 316).

Cognitive interactionism and connectionism have been gaining grounds as theories of language acquisition and even Chomsky has

reviewed his position on nativism. He seems to accept that languages are learnable and language ability "may be embedded within the broader architecture of the mind/brain" (Chomsky 2000: 9), that linguistic structures have been "misdescribed" (p.10) and he has suggested that "we subject conventional assumptions to careful scrutiny" (p. 9).

These changing positions on language acquisition theories suggest an investigation of the L1 and L2 literatures for evidence pro and/or against the role of corrective feedback on L1 and 2 language development.

3. Language acquisition and corrective feedback in the L1 natural environment and in L1 classrooms

The L1 literature does not provide evidence of any focus on explicit metalinguistic corrective feedback in L1 classrooms. The assessment literature considers feedback to be part of an evaluative process of learners' performance central to formative assessment for learning. Tunstall and Gipps (1996a) developed a model of "evaluative" and "descriptive" (p. 394) feedback after observing two teachers' feedback and their 6-7 year-old pupils' responses to it. Evaluative feedback attends to affective (emotional attitudes) and conative (social behaviour) aspects of learning, while descriptive feedback attends to cognition, locates errors and strategies for improvement are negotiated. But Burrell and Bubb (2000), after using this model to analyse the feedback of teachers and their 5-6 year-old pupils' responses, called for a model of feedback which "enhances teaching and learning" (p. 63) in the literacy hour in English clasrooms. They suggested that for teachers' feedback to be effective it should be "diagnostic […] to identify the strategies the children are using" (p. 62) and it should differentiate between learners' developmental stages. It should also "serve a wider range of functions" (p. 63), including assessment of children's understanding and focus "on whole class components – asking for responses from all children and monitoring this" (p. 63).

Burrell's and Bubb's observations suggest that primary age children may benefit from appropriate corrective feedback, as very young children have been observed to do as their language merges through social interaction (Nelson *et al.* 1989). There is substantial evidence in the L1 literature on feedback to pre-school children that suggests that young

children are capable of learning from feedback that contains recasts (Fletcher and MacWhinney 1995), which can be simple or complex reformulations of children's utterances. Of particular interest have been "growth recasts" (see section 4 of this paper for definition). These findings have been recently supported in studies by Saxton *et al.* (2005) and Saxton *et al.* (2006). The former study found that corrective input in the form of recasts had a long-term effect on young infants' grammatical development, while the 2006 study indicated that recasts in the form of clarification questions enable enabled 4 year-olds to cue recall previously learned grammatical forms.

As a result of overwhelming evidence that recasts have a positive effect on the language acquisition of L1 children, they have been investigated in L2 learning to see whether this type of interactional feedback leads to L2 acquisition.

4. Theoretical findings on corrective feedback to children in L2

Investigative studies in second language classrooms suggest that implicit corrective feedback in communicative language teaching classrooms can have a direct effect on learners' output accuracy. Characterised by meaning negotiation and meaning exchange leading to mutual understanding, they provide a great deal of rough tuning in the form of model-feedback, when teachers extend, expand, reformulate – recast – learners' responses, they simultaneously provide corrections and modelling to learners' linguistic errors. However, Chaudron (1977) analysed teachers' feedback in six of this type of classroom talk (learners aged 13–15) and discovered that the most effective corrective feedback first located errors and immediately rejected them, in the form of repetition of the error with emphatic tone. Then metalinguistic explanation for errors was provided to encourage learners to self-correct. In the absence of self-correction, the original question was rephrased, and, if necessary, other learners were asked to help. Teachers' least successful responses to learners' errors were exact repetitions of grammatical errors and expansions because they did not lead to correct responses by students.

These findings by Chaudron suggested that teachers need to be aware of the effect of their responses on their learners' ability to understand

teachers' feedback. Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster (1998) identified types of feedback leading to learner uptake and concluded that recasts did not lead to L2 learning by 9-11 year olds. Lyster found them ambiguous and ineffective in 'communicative classrooms' (Lyster 1998: 74) where the line between content and form is rather blurred. Though recasts were the most used type of teachers' feedback, they led only to 18% of uptake by learners. Lyster and Ranta (1997) defined learner uptake as: "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (pp. 49-50). If learners interpreted the feedback correctly the repair included the correct form. "A repair in which the student simply repeats what the teacher has said does not necessarily imply that the feedback has been understood as such." (Lyster and Ranta 1997: 54). The most successful type of feedback, according to Lyster and Ranta (1997), was meta-linguistic.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) also found that teachers' feedback was highly idiosyncratic and ambiguous. For example, though elicitation was the second most used after recasts by a group of 4 teachers, it constituted 5% of one teachers' total corrective feedback and 18% of another teacher. Closer analysis by Lyster (1998) of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) data revealed that the intonation of teachers' recasts rendered them ambiguous: 67% of teachers' recasts were uttered with falling intonation, and 12% with rising intonation. This 79% total led only to 23% of repair by learners and 13% needs-repair, i.e. learner responses that still contained errors following teacher feedback. Ambiguity increased when recasts were accompanied by "signs of approval (in 103 instances) [with which] teachers responded affirmatively to the substantive content of students' ill-formed utterances" (Lyster 1998: 70). This confusing feedback was used both before recasting (i.e. responding affirmatively to content and then recasting linguistic errors) and after recasting (i.e. recasting errors and then responding affirmatively to content). Lyster's (2006) more recent study provides further support to the theory that recasts can result in ambiguity and have less effects than prompts in learner's acquisition of grammatical forms and consequently in the learners' proceduralization of grammatical forms (Lyster 2006).

5. Main findings – empirical investigation

On the basis of these theoretical indications, the author (Drever 2001) investigated corrective feedback in 65 English primary schools classrooms in 33 education authorities. In each authority, in one school one teacher completed a questionnaire and a second teacher in a second school was interviewed. The questionnaire and interview were cross-validated to get a picture of how class-teachers in thirty-three authorities taught English and corrected errors in multilingual classrooms in the mid 1990s. A sample of eight teachers was selected from the questionnaire respondents for the observation study which informed the enquiry as to whether teachers did in reality what they said they did in the questionnaire.

The results from the questionnaire and interview indicated that all 65 teachers in thirty-three authorities intervened in the acquisition of their EL1 and EL2 children's language competence. Sixty-nine per cent of them did so with a communicative approach to language teaching. With this approach the teacher provides feedback in the form of rough tuning when necessary, as a sort of "guided acquisition", as one interview teacher put it. *Covert feedback* emerged as the *overall feedback type* (table 1). Although the results revealed differences between interview and questionnaire teachers, which were attributed to method design, covert feedback was mentioned many more times, suggesting that covert feedback was likely to be selected by more teachers than overt or mixed feedback. The latter contained covert and overt feedback, making it a recipe for confusion and ambiguity, as already found in the literature.

Feedback to speaking and writing	Questionnaire mentions	Interview mentions	Total mentions	%
Covert	34	21	55	42.3
Overt	11	22	33	25.4
Mixed	21	19	40	30.8
none		2	2	1.5
			130	100

Table 1. Feedback by 65 teachers

Covert correction to speaking was mentioned by an almost equal number of questionnaire (19) and interview (16) teachers (table 2). The predominant mention of covert over overt feedback to speaking by both sets of teachers was confirmed by the highly significant results of two Wilcoxon two-tailed signed ranks tests. Among the questionnaire teachers, covert feedback to speaking was mentioned by six times more teachers than those who gave overt feedback. And more than three times the number of interview teachers said to give covert feedback to speaking over those who did so overtly.

	Covert to Speaking	Overt to speaking	Wilcoxon 2-tailed test
Questionnaire teachers	19	3	Z = - 3.411; p = .001 < .01
Interview teachers	16	5	Z = -2.400; p = .016 < .05

Table 2. Feedback to speaking

Eight video-recorded observation lessons (table 3) were analysed to see if teachers taught and corrected in reality as they claimed in the questionnaire. In-depth analysis of teacher responses to errors provided further insights into teacher feedback. The first thing to be said about the feedback given by the eight observation teachers is that, overall, they corrected covertly with 76% of all corrective feedback being covert. Secondly these 8 teachers corrected 71% of children's linguistic errors covertly (table 4).

Total Utterances	Total Feedback Utterances + % of TU	Total Corrective Feedback + % of TFU	Total Overt Corrective Feedback + % of TCF	Total Covert Corrective Feedback + % of TCF
7463	3883 (52%)	2185 (56.3%)	519 (23.8%)	1666 (76.2%)

Table 3. Cross-validated findings: 8 questionnaire teachers' observed feedback in video-recorded lesson

Total linguistic errors	Errors treated CVF	%	Errors treated OVF	%	Errors ignored	%
337	240	71.2	35	10.4	62	18.4

Table 4. Learner errors corrected covertly

Interesting results from a finer analysis of teachers' observed feedback revealed that corrective feedback was often *confusing* (tables 5 and 6), in the sense that sometimes utterances in teachers' corrective responses wavered between overt and covert negative. An example of this interactionally confusing feedback is given below in Table 6. This confusing feedback was categorised as covert/overt/negative feedback.

Total CVF teacher utterances	CVN	%	CON	%	CNP	%
1666	1104	66.3	120	07.2	442	26.5

Table 5. Confusing Feedback. CVN = covert negative, CON = covert overt negative, CNP = covert negative positive

At other times it wavered between covert negative, implying rejection of pupils' productions, and covert positive, as if teachers could not make up their mind about the appropriateness of pupils' contributions. This feedback was categorised as covert/positive/negative. Lyster (1998) also found ambiguity in the way teachers used recasts, often accompanied by signs of approval when they responded simultaneously to content and language errors. This is a problem specific to communicative classrooms, suggested Lyster:

This reveals what must be a source of ambiguity for young L2 learners as well as a dilemma for teachers whose mandate is to teach both language and content: namely, how to reinforce the substantive content of student messages while giving them clear messages about language form (1998:71).

An example of a covert/negative/positive/feedback is this teacher's sequence of responses (table 6):

1	Ppl	It comes every year.
2	Tch	It comes every year. [rcr][cvp][tn3]
3	Tch	Right. [ovp][tn5]
4	Tch	Very good. [ovp][tn1]
5	Tch	Well done. [ovp][tn5]
6	Tch	What else? [cnp][tn1][rfl]
7	Tch	It comes every year. [rcr][cnp][tn3]
8	Tch	That doesn't explain a lot. [cnp][tn1]

Table 6. Covert negative positive: example of 8 utterances on the topic Christmas

A group of pupils and teacher were discussing the meaning of words with *ch* (pronounced as *k*) in them. At this point in the lesson it was the word *Christmas*. The teacher had asked for a sentence with this word in it. First she covertly approved (cvp) of it by repeating (rcr) a pupil's correct response (line 2). She overtly accepted it (ovp) in the next three utterances (lines 3, 4, 5). Then she changed her mind and she wanted more information (line 6) and asked a referential (rfl) question. At this point the feedback reverted to covert, with no obvious indication as to whether it was covert/negative or covert/positive and was therefore categorised as covert/negative/positive (cnp). When the teacher said 'that doesn't explain a lot' (line 8) she implied that the explanation given in line 1, which had already been accepted as correct in lines 3, 4, 5, was now only partially correct. This confusion is compounded by the use of tones 1 which denotes certainty in line 4 (very good) and line 8 (that doesn't explain a lot); also tone 3 is neutral and could denote certainty or uncertainty (lines 2 and 7, exact repetition of child's utterance). Intonation contributed highly to all eight teachers' *idiosyncratic* feedback. For example one teacher gave exact repetitions in tone 5, which can express positive and joyful surprise, as well as negative surprise expressing doubts. Another teacher prompted mostly in tone 3, a very neutral tone with no indication to pupils as to why the teacher was prompting, whether pupils had made an error or not.

An additional variable to the question of whether feedback is desirable or not, based on the evidence of language acquisition theories, is the question of what the learners want. As part of the author's doctoral research, six bilingual children, over a period of 10 weeks of a teaching programme, were asked to say how they felt about being corrected. They

were almost unanimous (table 7) in saying that they did not mind how they were corrected so long as teachers stuck to their method of doing so. Over a period of 10 the children were asked on three occasions if they wanted to be corrected, how and why. Except for one occasion, when one child said that she did not like written errors being corrected, there was a 94% consistency to wanting to be corrected, in any way the teachers chose, so that they could learn.

	Do you like being corrected? - 18 occasions	Yes / No	How?	Why?
6 children	Lesson 2 Lesson 4 End interview	Yes 17 - 94%	Any way	To learn
		No - 1	Did not want to be told correct version	Liked to learn from own mistakes

Table 7. Error correction – 6 children's attitudes to error correction at 3 different times over a period of 10 lessons in one term

Conclusion

In conclusion, second language acquisition literature findings on corrective feedback indicate that:
- metalinguistic corrective feedback is the most effective in promoting uptake and self-correction in communicative lessons
- recasts are the most used features of implicit corrective feedback **BUT**
- recasts do <u>not</u> lead to learner uptake and self-correction
- corrective feedback can be idiosyncratic <u>AND</u> confusing

Empirical investigations confirmed these literature findings: the great majority of participant teachers gave implicit corrective feedback to linguistic errors in their multilingual classrooms. Much of their feedback was confusing and idiosyncratic. This, according to the literature, does not lead to learners modifying their internal grammar. And if erroneous productions are left uncorrected in the process of grammatical

internalisation, fossilisation will become engrained and learners will never know when they are making wrong inferences. Combining content and language teaching in language across the curriculum and in language as subject, as the European Language Framework aims to do, must include serious considerations to these issues. There has been a momentum gathering in the field of language acquisition in the last 15 years that is indicating very strongly that the position on a natural phenomenon of language learning is swinging towards assisted learning in L1 as well as L2. In the light of neurological findings on how the brain works, the innate nature of language acquisition has been seriously and vigorously challenged (Elman *et al.* 1998). And the 20th century guru of language acquisition, Chomsky (2000), has himself advised that earlier positions on innateness should be reconsidered in the light of these new insights.

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THE CULTURAL, SOCIOCULTURAL AND THE LINGUACULTURAL LAYERS OF POLISH AS A NATIVE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE AS REVEALED IN THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION

Introduction

The main goal of this study is to search for ways of approaching Polish as native (L1) and foreign language (L2) education in the field of content and teaching methods. In particular, we want to discover the similarities and differences between Polish as L1 and L2 curricula and the content of handbooks with regard to a number of factors are concerned: cultural, sociocultural and linguacultural knowledge, developing intercultural abilities and competences and the application of dialogic pedagogy. Also, we want to find out if teaching Polish as a mother tongue (TPasL1) and teaching Polish as a foreign language (TPasL2) really are, as has been maintained so far, two separate domains. However, if they are not, we wish to point out the common denominators and the directions of the ongoing process of content infiltration.

The theoretical basis of this study is important literature devoted to teaching foreign languages with regard to communicative, intercultural and dialogic methods. Our interest is research on linguaculture and "socioculture" within the process of teaching and learning L2. This work is, to a certain degree, the continuation of the research we have been conducting and, to a certain degree, a new path in our research. It is the first time we have applied a comparative approach, with the intention of

confronting a few aspects of teaching Polish as a native and foreign language.

In our opinion, a learner who studies any foreign language should be able to understand some elements of the target language culture in order to participate (as a recipient or in a more active way) in the cultural and sociocultural life of the target language society. This participation is possible in the case of any shared knowledge between L2 learner and native speakers (especially if they belong to the same age group). Therefore, we also want to determine if, during the Polish language class, native speakers of the Polish language, i.e. young Poles), are well prepared for contacts and exchanging ideas with 'others', viz. foreigners, newcomers, people of different beliefs. Yet another query is whether foreigners learning Polish are well prepared for the contact with Poles. To elucidate these issues, an analysis of teaching materials focused on their "intercultural layers" will be carried out.

In conclusion, we will try to show that the linguacultural approach, as well as the dialogical and intercultural, can bring Polish taught as a native language and Polish taught as a foreign language together.

1. Teaching materials analysed

The materials chosen for teaching Polish as a native language (L1cur/hand) were designed and published by two leading pedagogical publishing houses in Poland – WSP and PWN[1]:
1. lower secondary school (pol. *gimnazjum*) curriculum (LSScur) and handbooks (LSShand) for cultural and literary education (LSShand.lit.I/II/II) as well as for language education (LSShand.lang.I/II/III) for classes I to III;
2. upper secondary school (pol. *szkoły ponadgimnazjalne*) curriculum (USScur) and handbooks (USShand) designed for learning at school and home (USShand.school/home) for classes I to III[2].

Curricula and handbooks for teaching Polish as L1 were compared with several handbooks for teaching Polish as L2 (L2hand)[3] most of

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[1]   See: Literature II.1.: Materials for teaching Polish as a native language (L1).
[2]   Unlike LSS handbooks, USS ones are designed both for literary and language education.
[3]   See: Literature II.2.: Materials for teaching Polish as a foreign language (L2).

which were published in the 1990s or later and are used nowadays in different language centres teaching Polish to foreigners in beginners', intermediate and advanced language classes.

2. Directions of the content study

We accept culture definition in its broad sociological sense as *the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from generation to generation* (Webster 1992: 353) and we have to agree that this notion comprises values, achievements, peculiarities, traditions etc. created by the members of national cultures in the course of the history. This point of view, together with the author's strong conviction that teaching languages can, and should be, a life-improving event[4], available to us to distinguish specific layers in the teaching materials listed in point 2.

Therefore, in our comparative study of PasL1 and PasL2 teaching materials, we will try to find similarities and differences in the **directions taken for cultural exploratio**n. Therefore, we are interested in obtaining answers to such questions as: discovering what culture, *de facto*, culture layers, have been accepted by an author as a priority: national or world culture, high culture or popular culture; the mainstream culture or a minority culture, etc. To judge this, the subject-matter analysis of cultural education, as presented in handbooks, together with the study of educational goals, will be performed.

The next step will be to discover **sociocultural layers** of teaching materials. We gather that "socioculture" is revealed when knowledge of the world is revealed[5]. Revealing socioculture to learners is, in practice, a process of explaining the meaningful aspects of reality as well as interpretative rules helpful in encoding important values, society's rituals all over the year and everyday social conventions, e.g. rules of politeness, expressing social distances and status etc.[6]

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[4] Let us recall here an accurate Martyniuk's (2001:46) statement that *language development* [is] *a development of opportunities to be in the world* (*rozwój językowy* [to] *rozwój możliwości bycia w świecie*).

[5] See the definition and list of components of the sociocultural competence in the CEFR (Council of Europe 2001: 102-103).

[6] Syllabuses for teaching culture, reality and sociocultural aspects in Polish as L2 have been presented in: Miodunka (ed.) 2004.

We also attempt to examine the layers of **linguaculture**[7] in teaching materials, which, as we understand it, is the linguistic image of values, symbols and senses specific to a certain community. It is made up of *nomina propria* referring to people (e.g. names of significant people), traditions (e.g. names of holidays and other rituals) and significant elements of tradition (e.g. names of typical national meals, symbols); places (real, as names of cities, or imaginary, as places recorded in literary texts) which are a part of national or world heritage; e.g. *Soplicowo* from Adam Mickiewicz's 19th cent. masterpiece *Pan Tadeusz* or *Itaka* from Homer's epic). Linguaculture is also made up of conventionalized pieces of discourse, which play the role of "culture interpreters" and are widely known by the members of a certain speech community, such as: phrases, sayings, proverbs, or quotations[8]. In our opinion, linguacultural approach can be applied consciously (when cultural facts are interpreted by reference to the linguistic ones) or unconsciously (during language classes) as long as the process of encoding the culture meaningful lexemes (e.g. *nomina propria*) and fragments of discourses is in progress.

The author of this article believes in the power of cultural and dialogical language teaching and learning (further: **dialogical approach**) which enables language learners to gain new experience of not only a linguistic nature. This approach has been particularly well discussed in the works by Kramsch (1993) and Byram (1989) and willingly adopted by other researchers in L2 teaching for the elaboration of cultural language teaching syllabuses (see for example: Steele, Suozzo 1994; Martyniuk 2001; Zarzycka 1998, 2004). This kind of pedagogy views L2 teaching as a cultural study and stresses the inseparability of language and culture, for which the term 'linguaculture' has been applied. The dialogic teaching of linguaculture stresses: the importance of content of the educational materials, the necessity of teaching language as context, the role of authentic materials and challenges and the need to overcome old dichotomies such as: language versus literature or culture, grammar versus communication, teacher talk versus student talk (Kramsch 1993: 2-11). Also, it offers a new perspective on language teaching as the learners' group or individual discourse with the meanings hidden in cultural context, which can result in the creation of a *culture of the third kind in which they can express their own meanings without being hostage*

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7 I discussed the notion of linguaculture in: Zarzycka 2004.
8 The 'language and culture' relation problem in TPasL2 has been discussed in: Burzyńska 2002, Burzyńska, Dobesz 2004, Zarzycka 2005.

to the meanings of either their own or the target speech communities (Kramsch 1993: 14).

According to Kramsch (1993) dialogic tasks include, for example: expanding the context tasks (activities based on variation of elements of Hymes' acronym of SPEAKING (setting, participants, ends etc.), changing the point of view while storytelling, discussions, script writing, poetry writing, reader's theatre, celebrating poetry and critical understanding of authentic texts. Martyniuk (2001), in his report on learners' and meaning-creation-centered lessons in Polish as L2, discusses techniques of changing perspectives and supplement (i.e. adding individually created fragments of discourse, or new pieces of information, to the basic reading material).

In the last part of our study we will direct our attention to the presence of an **intercultural approach** to Polish in L1 and L2 teaching materials. As Byram pointed out, the intercultural approach stresses *the key role of empathy in language teaching, the need to reach out to the social sciences to improve our cultural presentations and mediating the role the student must play to be a true learner of culture* (description of Byram's concept after: Steel, Suozzo 1998:15) and results in broadening learners' understanding of values and ways of reasoning different from their own and in improving their practical abilities while communicating with "others"[9]. In our opinion this approach is manifested by teaching activities such as: comparing elements of different cultural communities or tasks and projects which encourage the learners to overstep the limits of their own culture.

3. The comparative content study of teaching materials for Polish as a mother tongue (L1) and a foreign language (L2)

3.1. Similarities

3.1.1. The observation of **directions in cultural exploration** proves that in both educational variants of Polish:

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[9] The problem of increasing intercultural competence during L2 classes was discussed for example in the CEFR, chapter 5.1.1.3. and 5.1.2.2.; Zarzycka 2000; Miodunka (ed.) 2004.

a) there is a focus on integrating knowledge from all culture levels such as high culture, popular culture and 'multimedia culture';

b) approaching the mainstream culture has been considered a priority;

c) there is a tendency to actualise cultural contexts.

3.1.2. Revealing **socioculture** in teaching PasL1 and L2:

a) refers to exploring the specific layers of social life in Poland;

b) learning linguistic appropriateness has been considered a priority in sociocultural approach;

c) proceeds through specific text selection based on the sociocultural criteria; e.g. in LSShand.lit. and USShand there is a focus on presentation Polish national traditions (such as: collecting mushrooms pictured in a piece of A. Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*; Saint John's celebrations in J. Kochanowski's poem *Pieśń Świętojańska o Sobótce"* (L1 handboks) as well as Christmas/Easter traditions or scenarios of everyday situations (in L2 handbooks);

d) is based on actuality and age criteria; topics of texts and class discussions are selected in such a way that they would arouse young people's interests; i.e. frequent topics are: school/university (in L2 handbooks) life, relationships between people of the same age, the generation gap, young people's language and views / young people's role models etc.;

e) proceeds by a selection of visual elements (pictures, film shots etc.) which refer to real-life facts; although their selections differ in L1 and L2 handbooks.

3.1.3. Revealing the **linguacultural** resources in both educational variants proceeds by:

a) showing connections between specific *nomina propria* and their meaning in culture and focusing on applying by the learners chosen sets of meaningful culture-specific names [culture embodied in single lexical units];

b) focusing on learning culture-specific phrases (e.g. literary quotations; *bonmots*; popular advertisement slogans;) [culture embodied in longer pieces of discourse];

c) showing specific features of the Polish language system which make it exceptional (e.g. role of diminutives, honorific expressions; sexism presented in the Polish gender system: *oni* (they: personal masc. plural, a pronoun reserved only for men); *one* (they: non-masculine plural, a pronoun applied for women, animal and things) [culture embodied in a language system];

d) acquainting learners with social variants of the Polish language (as student language, computer users' jargon, regional dialects, examples of 'EuroPolish' or Americanisms [social segmentation and globalization of Polish language as its contemporary signs]; In TPasL2 these problems are presented only at the advanced level.

3.1.4. Our analysis shows that a **dialogical approach** in the L1 and L2 handbooks:

a) is revealed by forms of tasks and orders and strategies of discourse arrangement;

b) is a universal method (i.e. can be applied in various educational contexts) of releasing learners' emotions and creativity, although not every author is aware of this.

3.1.5. Our analysis shows that the **intercultural approach**:

a) has been applied too rarely and in none of the handbooks has it been considered a priority; there is a limited selection of texts with a power of increasing students' intercultural competence; usually the authors of handbooks offer J. Kapuściński's reports from Africa, literary texts written by emigrant writers (e.g. S. Barańczak's or E. Hoffman's American works referring to the problem of living in two cultures);

b) corresponds to universal approach in teaching languages; emerges more often in handbooks written with intention to discuss the ideas important for every human; and is in conflict with ethnocentric approach (focused on revealing one nation's specific values).

3.2. Differences

Polish as L1 teaching materials	**Polish as L2 teaching materials**

3.2.1. (directions of cultural explorations)

a) focus on approaching universal values; referring mainly to European culture; cultural education aimed at building Polish learners' European identity [universal and eurocentric, approach];

b) acquainting learners with the names and works (more often, fragments) of most significant European and American writers (from Dante to Orwell and Eco);

c) overstepping the literature--centered approach by connecting knowledge from the different fields of study and school subjects [intersubject approach];

d) spiral content arrangement which allows learners to return to the key problems and thematic series settled in the curriculum base (the official document of the Polish Ministry of Education);

e) priority topics further discussed from class I of LSS up to class III of USS and strongly connected with the educational role of school; they are: faith as a motivation of human activity, tradition and

3.2.1.

a) Polish culture-centered (polono-centric) approach; universal approach appears in handbooks aimed at preparing candidates for faculties of Arts (Bajor, Madej 1998) and, to some extent, in advanced-level handbooks (Lipińska, Dąmbska 1997);

b) only a few authors (Lechowicz, Podsiadły 2001, Miodunka 1998) diversified the Polish cultural context with the pieces of information about artists recognized world-wide;

c) overstepping the grammatical approach by the acceptance of communicative teaching aims and methodology;

d) content arrangement not imposed by any official documents; dependent on individual handbooks and their authors' aims.

e) priority topics are in accordance with communicative syllabus and the linguistic level of Polish as L2 learners; at a lower level, handbooks tend to describe everyday situations and behaviours; at higher levels

patriotism, attitudes; problems of adolescence; developing learners' social maturity;

f) promoting Christian outlooks on life (*the Bible* is the most widely discussed school text) and recognizing it as a specific trait of Polish patriotism (many fragments of literary texts have been chosen to prove this);

g) Polish culture showed panoramically (a learner is familiarized with the most acknowledged names, works, etc., of the past and present) and in detail (focus on particular work or a piece of a work);

h) Portrait of Polish culture in LSS /USS.handbooks comprises works of the most acknowledged Polish writers and artists, patriotic works and songs, lyrics written by Polish poets and contemporary singers), selection of essays and critical works;

i) authentic literary texts selected according to historic and contemporary, universal and national, as well as key topics criteria.

j) all L1 handbooks very well illustrated (correspondence with multimedia education aim);

they are more culture-specific (see: point g.)

f) religious neutrality; although religion sometimes serves as a natural context for great Poles' biographies (cf. John Paul II; see: Miodunka 1998), texts on Polish traditions or essays on world religious systems or works of Polish artists such as K. Kieślowski's *Decalog* (Bajor, Madej 1999);

g) mosaic, multidimensional presentation of Polish culture; in a limited but nice "canonic" version; [Polish culture as *salade varieteé:* fast light dish composed of many well chosen elements];

h) Portrait of Polish culture comprises mainly: names and, much more rarely, texts on: historic Polish cities and traditions, Polish Nobel Prize winners, "icons" of Polish science and the arts (as: M. Kopernik, F. Chopin, W. Szymborska, Kieślowski);

i) authentic literary texts selected according to contemporary and linguistic level criterion;

j) L2 handbooks not so well illustrated (result of lower budget, compared to L1 handbooks,);

3.2.2. [socioculture]
a) Polish traditions presented in literary / film context, with the

3.2.2.
a) Polish traditions presented in the form of narratives or popularized

application of an interdiscourse approach;

b) the actualization of content rule linked with historical approach (learners' knowledge about socioculture of the past is a result of their contacts with literary works of the past or their contemporary film adaptations;
c) frequent sociocultural contexts in L2 handbooks are: Polish schools in different eras, the lifestyles of various social classes describing Poles' life before and after the partition, in WWII period, in Poland under the communist regime [sociocultural approach connected with historic, patriotic and intersubject approaches];

d) visual elements aimed at approaching the elements of socioculture of past times [e.g. pictures of manor-houses or XIXth century tenement-houses; of people's clothing);

3.2.3. [linguaculture]
a) a wide, multidimensional presentation of 'language and culture' relations linked with spiral arrangement of content;
b) many approaches applied: historical and contemporary, universal and polocentric, intersubject, interdiscourse etc.

scientific articles; sometimes with an intercultural approach;

b) presenting contemporary culture to foreigners is the most important aim; Poles' styles of life presented in a contemporary context; literary texts, even contemporary ones, not used very often;
c) frequent sociocultural contexts in L2 handbooks are: "social landscapes of Poland:" (student dormitory, shopping, restaurant etc., Polish house, everyday customs, favourite dishes, Polish character, family relations, school, emigration), portraits of important places [sociocultural approach linked with communicative and, in some handbooks, intercultural approach];

d) visual elements aimed at increasing foreign learners' knowledge of contemporary Poland and the Poles (maps, street signs, timetables and culture (film posters, pictures of cities, and great Poles);

3.2.3.
a) a more limited presentation of 'language and culture' connections; dependent on learners' language level;
b) contemporary, polocentric approaches applied; linguacultural approach tightly linked with explaining Polish socioculture and system of Polish language system;

c) all layers of linguaculture considered (from a lexical unit to longer pieces of discourse)

Examples:

Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet; Don Quixote and Sancho Panza; The Promised Land (world linguaculture); *Telimena; Zosia; Soplicowo* (model literary representations of: 1. middle-aged coquette; 2. modest, naïve, virtous and blonde young Polish woman; 3. a Polish patriotic manor house and a symbol of Polishness (Polish linguaculture; all examples from Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*); *Za czym kolejka ta stoi?*, an expression reflecting shopping difficulties and Polish language peculiarities during socialist times;

c) focus on presentation of *nomina propria* and useful Polish culture-specific expressions;

Examples:

Pan Kowalski, Pani Kowalska, Państwo Kowalscy; Jan, Halina, Adam, Adaś, Zosia (typical Polish personal names); *Kraków, Warszawa, Wawel, Syrenka Warszawska* (names of significant places); *żurek, flaki, bigos* (names of typical Polish dishes); *Sto lat! Na zdrowie!; Smacznego jajka!* (conventional expressions); *W Szczebrzeszynie chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie, mamusia, babunia, tatuś* (expressions and lexemes reflecting important traits of Polish phonetics and word formation);

3.2.4. [dialogical approach]

a) very often and through different types of tasks, orders, strategies of content arrangement applied in LSS handbooks;

b) is correlated with the task and intersubject approaches and aimed at educating multimedia literate people and conscious culture interpreters;

c) is linked with universal approach; aimed at comparing the world and Polish artistic works and at drawing individual interpretations of them from the learners;

d) USS handbooks focused on intertextuality; learners take the roles of detectives following im-

3.2.4.

a) in L2 handbooks applied much more rarely and in a more classical way (see the examples);

b) linked with communicative approach (e.g. the technique of gap filling) and incompatible with purely grammatical approach;

c) aimed at revealing to foreigners authentic layers of Polish culture and allowing them to express themselves in a new social reality;

d) in L2 handbooks intertextuality is achieved through comparing the press, literary and other texts ref-

portant themes, toposes, allusions, and other intertextual connections; e.g. exploring Kain and Abel's motive in literature and film;
Examples:
all techniques described in point 3; frequently suggested forms of tasks are: texts generic / stylistic transformations; creating new texts based on the model ones (e.g. scenarios, poems, narratives); change of perspectives linked with new stories writing, discussions; group / voice interpretation of artistic works;

erring to the same problem and, in the beginners' level handbooks, through the arrangement of verbal and visual elements.
Examples:
Only some L2 handbooks (see: Martyniuk 1984; Janowska, Pastuchowa 1999) offer a rich repertoire of dialogic techniques (comparable to the methods presented in LSS handbooks); in the majority of L2 handbooks more classical methods are offered such as: tasks aimed at collecting learners' opinions, discussions, group work and texts' creation;

3.2.5. [intercultural approach]

a) intercultural dialogue proceeds through the learners' contacts with world literature or texts of Polish authors settled in not native contexts (although this understanding of literature and culture reading is not stressed by the L1 handbook authors);
b) intercultural competence (ICC) acquired in the process of education is of limited nature (because of limited choice of texts prompting the intercultural dialogue and the absence of texts written by non-Europeans / Americans);
c) the problem of "cultural dialogue" is connected with the problem of maintaining Polish identity in time of emigration (e.g. W.Gombrowicz's *Transatlantyk*).

3.2.5.

a) the whole and complex process of the acquisition of the Polish language and knowledge about Poland by foreigners is, in fact, an intercultural dialogue (although this understanding of teaching L2 is usually not stressed by the authors of handbooks);
b) acquiring ICC proceeds in many directions and communicative schemes and situations (e.g. foreigner-foreigner; foreigner-native speaker; at home; on the street; while reading texts created by foreigners and Poles);
c) increasing learners' ICC through essays and discussions on stereotypes, superstitions, styles of life and culture-specific models of families, religions and conceptual systems (in advanced level handbooks).

Conclusions

It may be true that the Polish authors of L1 and L2 handbooks discussed above have limited knowledge of the proceedings of the writers preoccupied with the other field, i.e. L2 teaching and L1 teaching, respectively. Nonetheless, the analysis has proved that teaching the Polish language as L1 and teaching the Polish language as L2 are not at all distinct or alien domains. And this is not strange or starling as the subject of education is the same language code and the learners, although they represent different target groups, belong to the same generation.

Therefore, PasL1 and PasL2 authors of curricula and handbooks tend to apply an interdisciplinary approach; focusing on a variety of texts, they aim to reveal Polish mainstream culture, socioculture and linguaculture and take into consideration young peoples' needs and interests. Also, learning language appropriateness and meaningful culture-specific lexical units and expressions seems to be a priority in both educational areas. The author of this article is a proponent of the dialogic approach in teaching languages (and generally, in every sphere of human life) and observes with pleasure that this approach is widely applied in LSS Polish language handbooks and that it is starting to gain popularity in PasL2 handbooks too. The situation looks quite different with the application of an intercultural approach's, which, until now, has not been popular, even in PasL2 handbooks.

The content of *salade variéteé* served to foreign students during PasL2 classes is dependent on practical aims appointed in communicative approach teaching while the content of PasL1 handbooks is much more dependent on educational goals (as bringing up responsible members of society within a Christian set of views). It is risky to state that the authors of PasL2 handbooks use PasL1 curricula or handbooks while designing the contents of their works (they do not state it in the introductions to their books!), although some L2 works repeat patterns of L1 handbooks in a sphere of content and methodology[10]. However, we may state without

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[10] See for example a practical Polish grammar handbook (Kita 1998) addressed to advanced PasL2 learners, where almost the same literary texts as in LSS and USS handbooks have been used or a handbook of PasL2 for beginners (Janowska, Pastuchowa 1999) which, in a sphere of methodology (presence of dialogic approach), is very similar to LSS handbooks. The content and methodology transfers of this kind, which result in popularizing Polish linguaculture and dialogic methods to foreign students, we regard as very interesting and successful.

any hesitation that two investigated teaching areas have been gradually merging. Teaching Polish as L2 and L2 is becoming more communicative (rather than grammar oriented as in the past), multimedia oriented to and wary of linguacultural, sociocultural and dialogic approaches (although the scope of their application is different).

The focus on developing learners' communicative competence is quite a new phenomenon in PasL1 teaching and we may assume that authors of handbooks addressed to native speakers could have drawn their concepts from the handbooks designed for teaching other foreign languages[11]. Additionally, it can also be the case of authors of L2 handbooks as the communicative approach is not at all a Polish invention. Also, our analysis proves the existence of opposite tendencies in both educational domains; for example teaching Polish as L1 is much less literature-centered than in the past while teaching Polish as L2 is becoming much more "literature friendly" than in the past. This tendency, born during the past few years is, in our opinion, tightly linked with the linguacultural approach and focus on including the pieces of authentic discourse in L2 teaching (which is in agreement with communicative methodology and dialogic pedagogy).

Our comparative content study proved that handbooks addressed to native speakers of Polish are much less polocentric and more dialogue-centered than PasL2 books; and we regarded it as the most interesting, but unexpected, result of our research. In our opinion authors of PasL1 and PasL2 teaching materials should be more sensitive to the problem of increasing learners' ICC through including texts settled in international context and designing tasks aimed at widening learners' knowledge on multidimensional culture system which they are part of. Also, while planning new PasL2 handbooks, learners' knowledge and competences acquired in the process of home/native education should be considered, as the important role of challenges in a process of education. These aims will be easy to achieve when authors consider the advantages of cultural and dialogic language teaching and learning promoted by Claire Kramsch and other L2 researchers (see: point 2) and if they reflect on the notion of 'plurilingualism' discussed in *The Common European Framework of Reference for languages* (CEFR, chapter 1.3.)[12].

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[11] And they had many opportunities to do this because teaching foreign languages, in modern and attractive way, has been a flourishing business in Poland since 1989.

[12] In the CEFR 'plurilingualism' is viewed as the basis of every language education and – at the same time – as a result of many educational language experiences ever performed by a

To sum up, our analysis showed that there is a great need for cooperation between researchers and authors in both educational fields. The author of this study would be content if an intended team-work concentrated on the problem of widening the scope of the application of an intercultural approach. The list of themes, problems, works, authors and tasks aimed at increasing learners' ICC and cultural empathy should be discussed and elaborated[13].

Also, the authors-to-be of PasL2 handbooks together with PasL2 researches, should reflect on necessary linguacultural[14] and sociocultural repertoire which would enable foreigners to understand cultural and social phenomena better and to make their communication with native speakers and their world more effective. In order to find the best ways of L2 curricula and handbooks "cultural anchoring", researchers and handbook designers should be more open to the content of Polish as L1 handbooks[15], at least to the same degree as they are inspired by the concepts flowing from the methodologies and textbooks on teaching European languages.

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learner. The plurilingual approach can be considered a dialogic approach because it emphasizes the fact that all cultural, social and linguistic experiences and competences of an individual person are in a state of a mutual, and, very often, of dialectic nature, dialogue / process of negotiation.

[13] Let us mention here some educational experiments undertaken in Polish borderlands and recorded in books (e.g. Weigl, Maliszkiewicz 1998; Związani z miejscem 2004-2005). Although we regard these activities as innovative and interesting we think that intercultural education should be customary not accidental (I discuss this problem in: Zarzycka 2000).

[14] See the attempts of linguacultural repertoire's elaboration in: Zarzycka 2004; 2005.

[15] Particularly to the content of LSS handbooks, which are very well designed and based on the dialogic pedagogy so valued by us.

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II. Teaching materials analysed

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MOTHER TONGUE VERSUS FOREIGN LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE – A POLISH CASE

Introduction

It seems that among teachers of Polish as LS the final decade of the 20th century was reserved for a debate on how Polish language should be taught in the newly reformed education system. The subject of the debate came down to answering the question whether it was better to teach grammar – which basically meant teaching about the language – or to teach the use of the language itself.

The dispute took place in the pages of "Polonistyka", a monthly periodical issued by the Polish Ministry of Education. Its beginnings date back to 1992, but it was only after the publication of "Against grammar" by Kordian Bakuła in 1995 that it became more intense. An immediate response to the above article came from Tadeusz Zgółka in "A barbarian in the (school's) garden" and from Franciszek Nieckula in "To remove Polish from Polish" (both in Polonistyka, 4, 1995). One year later "Polonistyka" published a discussion forum "Grammar for ten voices" containing statements of various teachers and linguists – among which we can find such comments as: "Teaching Polish in high schools is considered as teaching (the history of) literature and not the language" (Tadeusz Zgółka) or "In high schools no one teaches the language – absolutely no one! Neither spoken nor written. Proof? It is

enough to listen to an average educated Pole speak, or to read an essay from the maturity exam" (Bożena Chrząstowska).

This dispute came to an end with the Directive No. 129 of the Polish Minister of Education of February 15, 1999 concerning the core programme of general education. This document published in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland on February 23, 1999 stated the expected outcomes in: speaking, listening, reading and writing (see Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, 1999, p. 589, 602, 621 – 622)

The new core programme has been in effect since September 1, 1999. In April and May 2005 over 309 000 final-year high-school students took the "new maturity exam" (standardized national secondary school achievement examination) which was to asses the students' achievements in accordance with the new programme. Students were examined in Polish language, a modern foreign language, and one subject of their choice. We will comment on the results of the maturity examination after presenting the results of our research first.

For an outside observer (eg. a teacher of Polish as a foreign language) it is very interesting to see that the debate on teaching Polish as school subject was carried out without any previous study of Polish students' language competence. The participants in the debate talked about language competence with reference to their own teaching experience. The first independent (objective?) data were provided first by the results of the 2005 new maturity exam.

The aim of our research was to make a comparison between language performance of two different groups of Polish language users: Polish final-year upper secondary school students and foreigners learning Polish as a second language who took the C2 Level Examination in Polish as a Foreign Language in 2005.

1. The target group and the test

As the certification system for Polish as a foreign language is based on the common European standards established by ALTE – the Association of Language Testers in Europe – and on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) the language performance of both Polish and foreign students was examined by means of the same test which enabled the researchers to assess their language

performance in the following four skill areas: reading and listening comprehension, writing, and grammatical accuracy.

The research was conducted on final-year high-school students from eight Polish cities: Katowice, Wrocław, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Sanok and Warszawa. While selecting the cities suitable for the purpose of the research the following factors were taken under consideration:

a) the exams were to be conducted in those cities where examiners of Polish as a Foreign Language work;
b) students participating in the research had to be representative of the South, North, East and West of Poland;
c) both small (Sanok) and large cities (i.e. Kraków, Warszawa) had to be included.

One of the tests used in the "Polish as a Foreign Language 2005" examination session was employed in order to examine the language performance of Polish upper secondary school students. The target group consisted of 145 Polish final-year upper secondary school students. The results of the examinations were then compared with those achieved by 65 foreign students who took the C2 Level Examination in Polish as a Foreign Language in 2005.

The aim of the analysis was to compare Polish native speakers' and foreign students' performance in the Polish language not only by means of the quantity (the points gained) but also by the quality of their performance.

CITY	Number of students	Male	Female
Katowice	16	6	10
Kraków	22	6	16
Lublin	15	2	13
Łódź	22	5	17
Poznań	12	2	10
Sanok	21	4	17
Warszawa	20	7	13
Wrocław	17	6	11
TOTAL	145	37	107

Table 1. Number of Polish students examined

2. The results

CITY	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfact- ory	Failed	Non-gra- ded
Katowice	1	9	3	-	-	3
Kraków	5	10	1	-	-	6
Lublin	8	7	-	-	-	-
Łódź	4	16	-	-	1	1
Poznań	1	6	-	-	4	1
Sanok	0	4	10	-	3	4
Warszawa	4	16	-	-	-	-
Wrocław	1	16	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	24	84	14	-	8	15
	16,5%	57,9%	9,6%	-	5,5%	10,3%

Table 2. Grades achieved by native speakers of Polish from a C2 level test in Polish as Foreign Language

1) 74,4% of the test takers obtained either excellent or very good grades. If we add up all the excellent, very good and good grades, we can see that they constitute 84% of all the grades received.
2) 5% of the examined students failed the exam as a consequence of failing the written part and 10,3% were not classified for grading due to the fact that they did not submit the written part.
3) The table clearly shows that the grades obtained by students in Sanok (5 very good, 10 good, 3 failed, and 4 non-graded) were considerably lower compared to the results in other cities. We will return to this matter while summarizing the complete results of the research.
4) None of the 145 test takers got the full score (160 points out of 160). However, one student from Lublin scored 156,5 points and two students (from Lublin and Łódź respectively) scored 155 points. We should also mention that four students (two from both Kraków and Warsaw) scored approximately 153 points. Within this group of 7 students, 5 were female and 2 male students.
5) A full score of 40 points out of 40 for individual tasks was achieved only by 6 test takers: 2 persons got the full score for listening comprehension (one from Łódź and Wrocław), 1 for grammatical

accuracy (Wrocław), 1 for reading comprehension (Lublin) and 2
for writing (Lublin and Wrocław).

City	Skill				TOTAL
	Listening comprehension	Grammatical accuracy	Reading comprehension	Writing	
Katowice	34, 0	34,5	35,9	30,7	135,1
Kraków	36,6	37,6	37,7	33,8	145,7
Lublin	37,0	37,0	36,9	37,8	148,7
Łódź	36,0	36,8	36,9	33,2	142,9
Poznań	38,3	37,2	37,5	25,5	138, 5
Sanok	30,5	34,4	33,7	27,4	126,0
Warszawa	33,2	36, 6	35,5	36,6	141,9
Wrocław	36,7	36,5	36,0	33, 4	142,6
POLAND	**35,3**	**36,3**	**36,2**	**32,3**	**140,1**

Table 3. Grade point average for particular skills

1) A close analysis of the content of table 3 shows that generally the
best graded skills were: grammatical accuracy and reading
comprehension while the best results were acquired in: Kraków,
Lublin, Łódź, Poznań and Wrocław.
2) Listening comprehension came out as third while writing was
definitely the lowest graded skill. Test takers from Katowice,
Kraków, Łódź, Poznań, Sanok and Wrocław achieved the lowest
scores precisely in writting.
3) In order to pass the exam in the four skills it was necessary to
obtain a minimum of 24 points in each. It is worth noticing that
the grade point average achieved in Poznań and Sanok was only
slightly above the minimum (25,5 and 27,4 points respectively).
4) We can see that students from Lublin and Warszawa stand out
when compared to the other students. In those two cities the highest
scores were achieved for writing and the lowest for listening
comprehension (33,2 points in Warsaw) and reading
comprehension (36,9 points in Lublin).
5) It can be assumed that people responsible for carrying out the
research in the particular cities chose rather good schools and

within them classes of good reputation. We believe that it is a justified assumption in the case of: Lublin, Kraków, Łódź, Wrocław and Warsaw, where the overall results were higher than the national average.

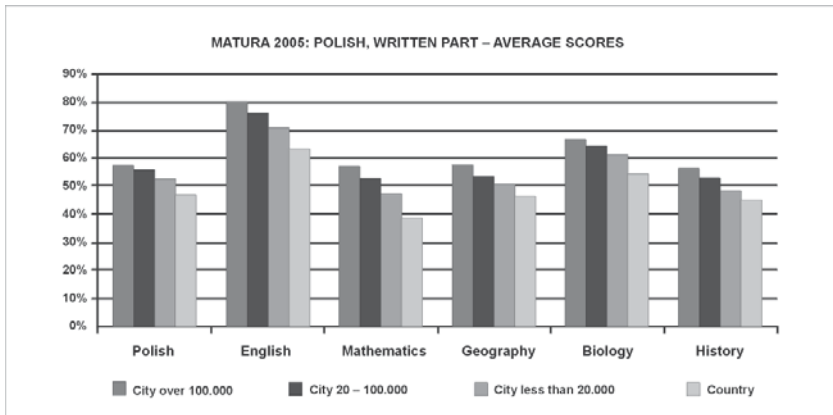| Target group	Year	Listening	Grammatical accuracy	Reading comprehension	Writing	TOTAL
Polish students	2005/6	35,3	36,6	36,2	32,3	140,1
Foreign students	2004	31,6	30,5	30,8	33,4	126,3
	2005	32,7	32,0	35,6	32,6	132,9
	2004-5	32,1	31,5	33,2	33,0	129,8

Table 4. Comparison of grade point average achieved by Polish native speakers and foreign users of Polish

1) Compared to foreign students, Polish students in general achieved higher scores in grammatical accuracy (+4,8 points), listening (+3,2 points) and reading comprehension (+3,0 points). In general, the Polish grammar proves to be difficult for foreigners. Polish students demonstrated only problems with the declension of Polish surnames, the syntax of numerals and with the syntactic transformations.
2) Surprisingly, foreign students were slightly better than Polish students as far as writing skills are concerned. This clearly shows that writing (text composition in particular) is the most neglected skill in Polish schools.
3) The differences between the scores achieved by Polish native speakers and foreign students are not very significant – approximately 3,6 points to the benefit of the Polish students. We notice that this difference is surprisingly small, especially bearing in mind that for the foreign students, Polish was a new or second language. For Polish students it is their mother tongue, which they have been using for about 20 years, language in which they express themselves, by means of which they should fulfill their goals and plan their career.

	Skill				TOTAL
	Listening comprehension	Grammatical accuracy	Reading comprehension	Writing	
Poland	35,3	36,3	36,2	32,3	140,1
Sanok	30,5	34,4	33,7	27,4	126,0

Table 5: Results achieved by the Polish students in Sanok compared to the national average

1) The city of Sanok counts 42 000 inhabitants (2003) and that is what makes it different from other cities participating in the project that count over a few hundred thousand inhabitants, and especially from Warsaw with its 1.7 million inhabitants (2004). We would like to emphasize this difference as it was mentioned in the summary of the 2005 final high school examination "Examination 2005. General report". A graph on page 16 of the latter illustrates the relationship between the city size and the result achieved by the exam takers in the written part of the examination: the smaller the city the worse the results.

2) The results of our research confirm this relationship and therefore we agree with the Polish Central Examination Board that "statistically higher grades are achieved by schools in large cities, however schools that obtain high results as well as those that obtain low results can be found both in large and small towns" We can see that in Sanok there

were 4 students who received very good grades and 3 who did not pass the test because of failing the written part (they scored 21.5; 19 and 18.5 with 24 points being the minimum passmark)

3) If we compare the average scores for each skill from Sanok with the national average we can see that the biggest difference (approximately 5 points) lies within the skills of writing and listening comprehension. The differences within the other two skills are less striking, nevertheless the total average score in Sanok (126.0 points) was as much as 14 points lower than the national average.

Conclusions

1) Comparing the language competence of the final-year high-school students, native users of Polish and the foreigners who took Polish as a Foreign Language Test at the C2 level, was an interesting and valuable experience as it showed that the linguistic phenomena tested at C2 level were difficult not only for foreigners but also for Poles and therefore it confirmed the quality of the tests mentioned above.

2) Polish students confirmed the considerable high level of the tests while describing them as difficult. Their comments: "speakers in the listening comprehension part talk too fast" or "360 words in the writing paper are too much even for a Polish student" were similar to those made by the foreign students.

3) Polish students expressed their recognition for the achievements of foreigners who "pass such a difficult test in Polish", "a test that is much more difficult than other foreign language tests".

4) In general, the competence in Polish language of native speakers proved to be higher than that of the foreign users, but in the researchers' opinion this difference turned out to be surprisingly small.

5) The Authors believe that a future "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of School Education" may be most useful to deal with problems observed in these educational environments where general language competence is lower than the national average.

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LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN POLISH SCHOOLS ABROAD – TEACHING POLISH AS A MOTHER TONGUE, A SECOND OR A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

Introduction

Each language may be acquired as a mother tongue, a foreign, first or second, a primary or a target language. The notions of *native language* and *first language* are very often regarded as synonymous and each of the terms is used for defining the other one. The term *primary* is used less frequently and refers to a language used by a person at the time when he/she begins to learn another one. They are parallel with such notions as *home*, *ethnic language* and of course *mother tongue.* All the above-mentioned terms have thus the same meaning, as they refer to "the first language experienced and acquired by man in an early childhood as a primary means of communication with the surrounding environment" (Lipińska 2003:15).

The terms *foreign* and *second language* are also very often perceived as synonymous, but in fact they are not as they are acquired in a different way and for a different reason. It has been agreed that the *second* language is acquired in a natural environment in the society for which it is a basic means of communication. In the case of a *foreign* language, the learning process takes place in an artificial environment, usually at school or at various language courses. It is a language which a person might want to

learn for a variety of purposes but it is never for them, during the learning process, a primary means of communication

In some cases however, the opposition *second – foreign language* is not so explicit. "For example emigrants' children rarely only acquire or only learn a language of the country of settlement. Usually the two processes complement each other." (Lipińska 2001: 27). The two processes also go together in the case of a mother language, starting from the moment when a child goes to school – earlier he or she has been a c q u i r i n i g the language at home (and the process continues throughout everybody's life), and is being t a u g h t it at school.

The notion of *second language* is thus a *fuzzy concept*, dualistic in nature, since it shares some features both with the *first* language and the *foreign* one. With the first language it shares, for example, the mode (the natural, audio-oral way) and the goal of acquisition (satisfying basic communicative needs of its user). It is also important that similarly to the *first* language, the *second* language is one of the main carriers of the group bond. The context in which the *second* language is used, as compared to the first one, is however definitely narrower and its functions are not so widespread. These features bring it closer to a *foreign* language which is usually used / applied in very specific situations, e.g. at work, during travelling, studies, etc. Sometimes in reference both to a *foreign* and a *second* language a term *target* language is being used. This term has "a broader meaning and the subject literature does not specify its mode of acquisition" (Lipińska 2003: 43). However, it is less popular in Polish applied linguistics and therefore less frequently used.

1. Teaching Polish as a mother tongue and as a foreign language

As it has been mentioned, both the *first* and *second/foreign* language can be languages of school education. In the case of Polish however, methods of teaching it as a mother tongue and those of teaching it as a foreign/second language have had little in common. To some extent this has resulted from the fact that didactic activities are targeted at two completely different groups: the addressees of teaching Polish as a foreign language are mainly foreigners, whereas Polish as a mother tongue is taught first of all to Poles (children and teenagers). Consequently, the

goals of teaching must have been formulated quite differently, which in turn implied the necessity of applying different methods and techniques of teaching and obviously different methods of assessment.

In the case of teaching Polish as a *foreign* language, the long-term goal is to develop students' language skills, their c o m m u n i c a t i v e c o m p e t e n c e. Efforts are also made to acquaint them with elements of Polish culture. In the communicative approach the language is considered to be a key to understanding culture, both low and high, of the country in which it is spoken.

In the case of Polish taught as a *mother* tongue, the goal of education is twofold: during the first years of education the focus is on developing linguistic competence, including some knowledge of the language as a system; in middle and grammar schools teaching concentrates mainly on developing pupils' historical and literary knowledge (they learn mostly about epochs, writers, literary genres, etc.) in other words on widening their d e c l a r a t i v e knowledge. At these stages of education the emphasis is rarely put on developing language skills as such; it is simply assumed that they will develop naturally as a by-product of the literary--historical training. In middle and grammar schools, therefore literary--historical training and the development of language skills are seen as two divergent goals and the literary-historical aspect is given the utmost priority.

2. Standardisation of the teaching process

The research projects carried out for some years in numerous countries around the world and aimed at improving the quality of teaching have led to a conclusion that an important factor which raises the level of education, facilitates the comparison, measurement and optimisation of education, is educational standards. A standard is a model, norm, a pattern established by experts, institutions, organisations or a society. Standardisation therefore is a process of unification, aimed at facilitation and directing activities towards specific, well-defined goals.

Educational standards are formulated in terms of requirements which have been based on universally developed teaching programs. They include descriptions of target achievements of learners at a given level of education and the ways in which they can be assessed. As a result

„the same requirements are presented to all students, irrespectively of the place in which they learn, and the same assessment procedures of their progress are implemented" (Seretny 2004: 65). Educational standards thus make easier both the planning and organisation of the teaching process and the implementation of identical assessment procedures.

In the teaching process it is possible to formulate standards at a class, school or regional level. According to Niemierko however "the broader the range of standardisation the better" (2002: 119). When it is nationwide, then the grades of pupils, which provide information about their knowledge, skills and competences, are objective. They are thus reliable and above all comparable. Standardisation in turns allows for the appropriate realisation of educational tasks at the higher level (the students with higher grades may be accepted by more demanding institution and a correct choice of employees (the more competent ones).

There have already been some attempts to standardise the effects of teaching Polish both as a mother and a foreign language. The process included the formulation of standard requirements and then introduction of standardised assessment procedures to measure the candidates' competences. In the case of teaching Polish as a mother tongue, the standardised assessment procedures are competence tests administered at the end of each stage of education; for Polish as a foreign language – the state proficiency language tests (so far at the level B1, B2 and C2) are being offered. Although the two types of tests differ structurally, they, however, have a common aim – to assess not so much the students' knowledge, but rather to determine their competences to act in the language.

We may thus assume that currently the goals of teaching Polish as a mother tongue and as a foreign language are much closer than they used to be in the past: in both cases the standards of requirements highlight language abilities of students and do not concentrate exclusively on their knowledge. Consequently, instructors' approach to teaching Polish as a mother tongue will have to change, and the development of language skills has to be given wider recognition than before. This will bring the model of teaching Polish as a mother tongue closer to the model of teaching Polish as a foreign language (or to teaching foreign languages in general). It may lead to a change of priorities in teaching Polish as a mother language and a balancing of the aspects of literary-historical training and the development of pupils' language skills.

3. Polish schools abroad – goals of teaching

There is however a domain in which the dichotomy *first* vs. *foreign* fades away, where the discrepancy between a mother tongue and a foreign language is no longer so clear, and the methods of teaching escape obvious differences: Polish schools abroad. These are schools located outside Poland which teach Polish language and culture to pupils of Polish descent. In our opinion these schools quite clearly lie in-between the two opposite poles of methodology of teaching Polish and may function as a connecting or a "missing" link between the two extremities.

For children in ethnic schools Polish is not always a *first* language, though it might have been their mother tongue. Most often it is their *second* language (sometimes only a *foreign* one), the language of their everyday communication restricted however to the family or the circle of acquaintances. It enables them to maintain their ethnic bonds (therefore it is sometimes called the *ethnic language*) and is an essential element of their identity[1]. As they use it in a very limited range of contexts, their language competence is very often underdeveloped. Their lexis is poor and the grammatical structures they use are simplified or inadequate (cf. Wierzbicka 1997).

Considering that Polish as an ethnic language has specific functions, it has to be taught in such a way as to allow its users exploit it fully. "Limiting the ethnic language to a private sphere means, in bilingual conditions, the beginning of its end" (Walczak 2000: 185) as the users' lack of proficiency deprives them of access to cultural texts and thus pushes the ethnic language into a corner. It seems therefore that on the one hand learners' communicative competence should be developed, as only in that way will they be able to engage in a wide range of language tasks and not only to those limited to the private sphere. On the other hand, however, the pupils in ethnic schools should get acquainted with Polish literature and Polish history, in order to strengthen their ethnic identity and their bonds with the group. The development of pupils' language skills and their identity should thus go parallel, as both processes influence and often condition each other.

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[1] Poles living in Poland think that one of the main criterion of Polishness is the knowledge of the Polish language (94% in 1998). The most important is the criterion of "feeling a Pole" (95%); then, with much lower numbers, comes Polish citizenship, Polish roots, knowledge of Polish history and culture, observing Polish traditions, Catholic religion (A. Sułek, *Niezmienne kryteria polskości*, Gazeta Wyborcza, 23.09.1998).

In ethnic schools then, Polish should be taught as a *second* language, i.e. both as a *foreign* language (because of the need to develop pupils' language skills), and as a *native* tongue (to fulfil a function of forming/ maintaining identity). Polish schools abroad are thus a special case, in which the goals of teaching Polish as a native tongue and as a foreign language are and should be convergent. In this instance, the *second* language becomes a link between a *native* and a *foreign* language, displaying characteristics of both. Therefore, it seems absolutely necessary to standardize the process of second-language teaching, in the same way that the teaching of Polish as *first* and *foreign* language have been standardised. The first indispensable step it is to devise programmes of teaching Polish as a second language which include elements of Polish history and literature, while developing learners' language proficiency. The formulation of requirements in second-language teaching would then open up opportunity of introducing standard assessment procedures.

4. The Jagiellonian University project

In order to combine these two didactic realities in one clearly understandable linguistic reality, it is indispensable to initiate concrete actions and implement certain procedures. This has been done by Centrum Języka i Kultury Polskiej w Świecie of the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, in cooperation with Szkoła Polska im. Jana III Sobieskiego in Chicago. The classroom observations, teacher training and mock competence tests carried out by the employees of the Centrum resulted in devising a long term project which aims to:

1. design curricula for Polish schools abroad which would both emphasise development of pupils' communicative competence and acquaint them with elements of literary-historical knowledge;
2. change the organisation of the teaching process in Polish schools abroad;
3. organise long-term professional teacher trainings.

4.1. Curriculum

Teaching is a planned and purposeful activity. It orders students' actions and directs them towards the assumed goals. Teaching should be based on a definite plan, which has to provide answers to the three questions: **why?, what?,** and **how to teach?**

The construction of a curriculum is thus a decision-making process, involving the determination of the:

- Goals of teaching: What should the student achieve in the education process of education?
- Content of teaching: What knowledge and skills should be taught? What is the content of the didactic process?
- Process of teaching: What should the teacher do? What should the pupils? How should teaching be scheduled in time? What didactic materials should be used?
- A s s e s s m e n t   p r o c e d u r e s: How can one check what students have already learnt and to what extents?
- Evaluation of the programme: How can one evaluate whether the program has been properly constructed?

Answers to all the above questions may be found in the new, experimental programme of teaching Polish as a second language in a grammar school prepared by Stanisław Wolsza (a language teacher of Szkoła Polska im. Jana III Sobieskiego in Chicago who took part in the intensive teacher training organised by the staff of Centrum Języka i Kultury Polskiej w Świecie). The programme has been inspired by the system of certification of Polish as a foreign language and this inspiration is reflected not only in the general conception and assumptions, but also in the goals, content, didactic procedures, and the proposed assessment of pupils' competences.

This very assumption is a turning point in teaching Polish in the Polish Diaspora environment. It is the first attempt to combine teaching Polish as a foreign language with teaching it as a mother tongue. However imperfect in some aspects, in many respects this document is undoubtedly innovative and far-reaching:

- It indicates the need to undertake actions to unify and standardise teaching of Polish as a second language.
- As has been highlighted by the author of the programme language teaching should focus on developing communicative competence

through language activities involving the perception and the production of texts.

- The programme is the first attempt to combine learning/teaching linguistic skills with historical and literary education. The author quotes a number of arguments supporting the need to combine these two aspects of language teaching in that particular environment.
- The programme of teaching literature – although very broad – has one advantage: it proposes to begin with an analysis of contemporary authors discussing problems familiar to the students in contemporary Polish. Only in the last grade does it go on to the old Polish literature of the Enlightenment, Romanticism and Positivism (which is written in a language difficult to understand even for native speakers of Polish).
- We should add a comment on the proper selection of textbooks: one textbook for learning Polish as a foreign language concentrates on developing pupils' language competences, namely *Kiedyś wrócisz tu...* vol. I by E. Lipińska i E. G. Dąmbska (Universitas, Kraków 2005), whereas the complementary textbook *Barwy epok. Kultura i literatura – podręcznik do III kasy liceum* (WSiP, Warszawa 2002)– has a double function: it contains historical-literary material and is a source of authentic literary documents serving for enriching students' knowledge about Polish literature and history; the complementary textbook for teaching elements of history and literature will be supplemented by an "emigration literature annex", which will discuss problems close and familiar to the pupils and their families.
- The author also undertakes actions aimed at developing motivation to learn Polish, which is very important in the foreign environment: „The programme allows for discussion on important local topics, directly related to the specific situation of persons studying in the USA"[2] . The programme is planned thus in such a way as to allow students to take Polish language proficiency tests at level B2 (comparable with the *First Certificate English*).

The programme was implemented for the first time in the school years 2003/2004, 2004/2005, 2005/2006 and in the spring of 2006 the

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[2] Quotation from the program of S. Wolsza.

pupils, beside the final school test in Polish (called as in Polish schools – a maturity exam) took the Polish language proficiency test at level B2.

4.2. Proposal for a reform of teaching in Polish schools abroad

It would be much easier to conduct the programme provided that the children studying in one grade are at the same level regarding their knowledge of Polish[3]. Only then may they be able to carry out required tasks. It is therefore necessary to reorganise the school system.

The fundamental criterion for dividing students into "grades" at schools is age. In language courses, on the other hand, language competence is the basis for putting students in various groups (this usually takes place after the specially prepared placement tests). In Polish schools abroad, which mirror the Polish school system[4], age criterion is also applied, whereas there are reasons to believe that division according to language competence would work much better. A reasonable division into age groups should however, be preserved, e.g. grades 1-3, 4-6 etc. as that is linked with the phases of intellectual and emotional development.

The simplest solution would be to divide classes, within the age groups, into three levels of advancement; for the time being, intuitive placement would have to be applied until uniform placement tests have been developed. This would be beneficial both for the teachers, who could work more effectively and for the students, who would have more appropriate tasks to perform and therefore obtain greater satisfaction.

The introduction of a new system would not be that difficult as far as the logistics are concerned as it would entail neither additional numbers of teachers nor additional classrooms. It also seems that pupils would accept the system without much fuss as they are familiar with it from their American schools, where different groups of learners attend different courses. It will be hard, however, to convince teachers and parents who are not used to such a system in Polish schools. The changes should therefore be introduced gradually, letting teachers and parents observe and discuss the positive outcomes before finally accepting the new solution.

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[3]   The experimental conduct of the programme was carried out without that kind of division.
[4]   Following the reform dividing the school system in Poland into three levels (primary, lower and upper secondary schools), schools abroad introduced the same divisions.

4.3. Proposal for teacher training

The process of teaching is designed and addressed to pupils but carried out by teachers. Polish language teachers at ethnic schools constitute a very specific group, being caught just like the teaching process itself between two systems. Teachers in Poland are well prepared for teaching Polish as a mother tongue. They know the basic didactics and psychology of learning. Foreign language teachers in Poland are also well prepared for their future job (Komorowska 1999). They attend lectures and take part in special training programmes. Polish language teachers in ethnic schools should, in fact, be skilled in both: they should know how to teach Polish as a mother tongue and how to teach it as a foreign language whereas they are sometimes inadequate in both.

Until the 1980, the persons teaching in Polish schools abroad were rarely professional instructors, since a belief prevailed that "it was sufficient to speak Polish to be able to teach Polish" (Lipińska 2005: 84). This situation has immensely improved in recent years as more and more often Polish schools hire emigrant teachers professionally prepared for teaching. (see: Seretny, Lipińska 2006). Many of these people are Polish philology graduates. On the one hand, this should be greeted with satisfaction, on the other hand, however, it weighs heavily on the didactic practice in Polish schools abroad, as the teachers subconsciously try to set the same teaching goals that are set in schools in Poland, tend to present the same material, use the same working techniques which they used to employ in their native country.

Most of the teachers are therefore "one-sidedly" prepared to their job. "Still quite commonly we face a lack of awareness that teaching of Polish in the Polish Diaspora is situated somewhere between teaching the native tongue and teaching the foreign language, although it is closer to the latter" (Lipińska 2005: 84). Thus, teachers' qualifications need to be supplemented by training on methods of teaching Polish as a foreign language.

Kowalikowa (1989: 131-132) proposes two forms of training teachers for Polish schools abroad: training during vacation courses in Poland and method-and-content instruction provided abroad by experts from Poland. The organisation of such training would depend on individual needs.

Part of the above-mentioned long-term project is to organize the special teachers training. The first sessions organised in Chicago and conducted by the employees of Centrum Języka i Kultury Polskiej

w Świecie were very popular among teachers. The training took the form of workshops, which allowed participants to "*experience theory*, i.e. immediately combine it with practice" (Potocka 1999: 41).

During the workshops all the participants became acquainted with techniques used in teaching foreign languages and aimed at developing linguistic competence and language skills. They concentrated in particular on reading and writing which are usually poorly developed in children who have acquired the language at home in a natural, audio-oral way. The teachers also became acquainted with methods of testing language competence, which significantly differ from the pattern of "testing knowledge" that has prevailed until now in Polish schools abroad. The workshops helped the participants realise that a different approach to teaching may allow the pupils acquire and develop important language competences which will enable them to express more than before in a more adequate way.

Conclusions

The popularisation of the above mentioned solutions (the first results are very promising; the majority of students who have taken part in the experiment obtained good and very good results when taking the proficiency tests at B2 level) requires close co-operation between all Polish language teachers: those who teach it as a first and as a foreign language, in Poland and abroad, between applied linguists and language educators. The development of a more general framework for teaching Polish as a second language is possible only through an exchange of experiences.

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