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Challenges of the 21st century: an in-service teacher training course for EFL teachers

SZAKTÁRNET

DEBRECENI EGYETEM
TANÁRKÉPZÉSI KÖZPONT

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General Introduction

This Handbook is meant as a supplementary reading package for primary and secondary school teachers of English who wish to upgrade their professional education in a variety of themes that range from issues of language acquisition to teaching and assessing language learners.

The Handbook is arranged in a way that complements the 28 units of the in-service teacher training course developed within the SZAKTÁRNET project. The chapters cover the following 6 main themes:

- Language Acquisition (Unit 1–3)
- Intercultural Communicative Competence (Unit 4–5 and Unit 12–14)
- Language and Gender (Unit 9–11)
- Individual Learner Differences (Unit 6–8 and Unit 15–21)
- Technology in Language Education (Unit 22–25)
- Language Assessment (Unit 26–28)

The main themes are further explored in the face-to-face training course over a number of teaching units, which are indicated in brackets above, and the relevant chapters under each main theme are intended to provide the background readings that introduce and highlight the issues that will be discussed and elaborated in the course itself. The chapters are self-standing and are recommended as pre-course reading materials.

In some chapters, readers will find not only a discussion of the relevant theoretical considerations and a review of some of the empirical findings in relation to the given topics, but there will be accompanying tasks to help them internalise and reflect on the issues raised.

The authors hope that this Handbook will provide a lot of food for thought that can prompt further action in the reader's own teaching context. Our main aim is to generate positive impact on current teaching practices by providing stimulating ideas for innovation and a better understanding of what makes the teaching and learning process more effective and enjoyable.

We wish you a happy reading.
The Authors

CHAPTER 1

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

By Éva Kardos

1. The English progressive and the perfect

Éva Kardos

1. Background

It is well known that temporal properties of situations are expressed by, for instance, tense and aspectual verbal forms in language. The former is a grammatical category responsible for expressing situation external time, while the latter is associated with the internal temporal structure of situations (Comrie 1976). As for tense, languages use various devices to differentiate between eventualities having past time, present time or future time reference. If we take tense to be a morphosyntactic grammatical category, we can say that English has two tenses: a past tense and a non-past tense. The former is marked with the morpheme *-ed*, as illustrated in (1a), whereas the latter is unmarked.

(1) a. We worked every day. (past time reference)
b. We work every day. (present time reference)
c. We will/are going to work every day. (future time reference)

The examples in (1) differ from each other in terms of the external time associated with the working eventualities. The sentence in (1a) describes a situation that occurs prior to utterance time on an imaginary timeline, (1b) expresses an eventuality whose time involves utterance time and (1c) can be interpreted in a way that its external time is located somewhere after utterance time. As was mentioned before, English has a specific tense marker only for eventualities that take place prior to utterance time. All other eventualities are left unmarked with regard to their (external) temporal property.

It is actually quite common for languages to use morphological marking to indicate a contrast between various temporal properties of eventualities. Hungarian is, for example, such a language, which is characterizable in terms of a two-way contrast between past and non-past forms. The former set of verbs are marked with the morpheme *–t*/*-tt*, while members of the latter set are unmarked. By way of illustration, I provide the examples in (2).

(2) a. Kati szépen énekel.
Kati nicely sings
'Kati sings nicely.'

b. Kati szépen énekelt.
Kati nicely sang.
'Kati sang nicely.'

As for aspect, there is a distinction between grammatical and lexical aspect. In the case of the former, it is common to distinguish between perfective and imperfective aspectual categories. It has been argued that this contrast reflects different perspectives that speakers can have of a given situation (Smith 1991). While perfective forms present situations as a whole, imperfective forms express situations as ongoing activities. Languages such as Modern Greek encode this contrast morphologically on verb stems, as in (3), while others use constructions for the same purpose, (as in the case of the progressive in English illustrated in (4b). It is also possible to rely on word order and intonation when it comes to expressing (grammatical) aspectual meanings. The latter strategies are observable in Hungarian, as shown in (5).

(3) a. *dhúlepsa*: I worked.
b. *dhúleva*: I worked/was working.
(taken from Filip 2012: 725, (6))

(4) a. Kate *ate* an apple.
b. Kate was eating an apple.

(5) a. János ′fel-mászott egy fá-ra.
János up-climbed a tree-onto
'János climbed a tree.'

b. János ′mászott ′fel egy ′fá-ra, (amikor eleredt az eső).
János climbed up a tree-onto, (when it started raining).
'János was climbing a tree when it started raining.'[1]

The (a) examples contrast with the (b) examples in that the former present various working, eating and climbing events, respectively, as com-

[1] The symbol ′ indicates stress in the sentence.

plete units, whereas the latter present the same type of situations as ongoing activities.

Another imperfective aspectual category is the habitual. In English it is unmarked, just like in many other languages.[2] In English it is verb forms in simple present tense that often express habituality, as is shown in (6).

(6) a. Kate has breakfast every morning.
b. I always arrive on time.

Although verbal forms like those in (6) are often used in reference to habitual situations, it would be inaccurate to characterise such forms as markers of habituality simply because they are also used to characterise a variety of non-habitual situations (Carlson 2012). This is what I illustrate in (7).

(7) If Bob arrives before I do, please ask him to wait.
(Carlson 2012: 833, (2a))

Habituality is generally contrasted with the progressive in most English textbooks in a way that it is suggested that the former is marked by forms like those in (6). I believe this can potentially mislead the learner, which may in turn give rise to ungrammaticality in the learner's interlanguage (see Section 3).

Another aspectual category, one that has proved quite puzzling for both theoretical linguists and language teachers (and learners), is the perfect. It is puzzling because (i) it is difficult to determine a core meaning to this category and (ii) it is encoded in different ways in different languages or, in some cases, it does not exist at all. English has the analytic perfect, which is what can be found in most European languages (Dahl 2000). This is illustrated in (8a), which contrasts with (8b). The former contains a perfect construction (i.e., the auxiliary verb *have* followed by a past participle) and the latter contains a preterite form.

(8) a. We have been there.
b. We were there.

It has long been an important goal to identify various meanings associated with the perfect. The examples in (9) illustrate those that are most commonly referred to in the literature.

[2] African American English Vernacular represents a language variety in which habituality is marked. For more on this, see Rickford and Rickford (2000).

(9) a. Matilda has lived in Sydney for two years.
b. Dean has been to Adelaide.
c. Dean has arrived.
d. The Reserve Bank has just announced an increase in interest rates.
(based on Ritz 2012: 883, (1)-(4))

The first example in (9a) shows a stative situation that holds throughout an interval, the example in (9b) illustrates the existential perfect, (9c) expresses a situation that has some consequence that holds at utterance time and (9d) exemplifies what is often referred to as the "hot news" perfect. A core meaning that has been identified in all these examples is that of current relevance. That is, all the situations above can be characterised in terms of being more relevant to the present than situations expressed by clauses containing a simple non-perfect past tense. Given the multifaceted nature of this category, it is expected to pose a challenge for language learners whose L1 does not have this category. For space reasons, I will not delve into how this challenge has been addressed in the literature. However, in the sections on how to approach the perfect in the classroom, I will suggest a few task types that might alleviate problems that arise in connection with the teaching/learning of the perfect.

Grammatical aspect contrasts with lexical aspect in that the latter concerns the internal temperal properties of eventualities, that is dynamicity, durativity and boundedness. Since at least Vendler (1957), researchers have often distinguished between four types of eventualities based on the former three properties: states, activities, accomplishments and achievements. I illustrate each aspectual class in (10).

(10) a. Mary loved John.
b. Mary danced a lot.
c. Mary ate an apple.
d. Mary broke a vase.

The example in (10a) illustrates a stative verbal predicate, which is specified negatively for dynamicity and boundedness and positively for durativity; (10b) refers to a dynamic, durative and unbounded situation; (10c) expresses a dynamic, durative and bounded situation; and (10d) is dynamic, non-durative and bounded. I summarise this in Table 1 below:

	dynamic	durative	bounded
states	-	+	-
activities	+	+	-
accomplishments	+	+	+
achievements	+	-	+

Table 1: Aspectual classes

The above classification is generally understood with verb phrases and not verbs in mind. That it is not only verbs but also various other components (e.g., arguments) that can contribute to the lexical aspectual properties of predicates is illustrated in (11) and (12).

(11) a. Mare ate apples for/??in 10 minutes.
b. Mary ate two apples in/*for 10 minutes.

(12) a. Mary will cross the border in a day. (after reading)
b. Mary will cross the desert in a day. (after/during reading)

The examples in (11) and (12) show that the referential properties of the arguments in direct object position determine the boundedness or durativity of the predicates. In (11a) the lack of specification of the quantity of the referent of the patient argument gives rise to an atelic (i.e., unbounded) interpretation, as evidenced by the compatibility of the temporal adverbial *for 10 minutes*, whereas (11b) is interpreted telically due to the fact that the predicate supplies information as to the exact quantity of the referent of the patient. Likewise, the interpretations of (12a) and (12b) are different due to the difference regarding the arguments in direct object position. In (12a), the simplex argument *the border* gives rise to a punctual reading; wheareas in (12b), the extended argument *the desert* yields a durative reading in addition to the punctual reading.

Apectual class membership has important reflexes in the grammar of languages. In the remainder of this section I illustrate only one of these. Specifically, I provide a brief discussion of how grammatical and lexical aspect interact with each other in English and Hungarian. I demonstrate that the progressive is generally incompatible with predicates expressing stative situations and achievements. Contrast the English example in (13) with those in (14) and (15), where (13) contains the activity predicate *eat*

apples whereas (14) and (15) contain a stative predicate and an achievement, respectively.

(13) John was eating apples.

(14) *John was loving Mary.

(15) *John was breaking a vase.

Whereas eating events can be viewed progressively, loving events of the type in (14) and breaking events of the type in (15) are incompatible with this perspective. Such restrictions are also observable in other languages, including Hungarian (Kiefer 2006). Consider the examples in (16), which illustrate incompatibility of the progressive with achievement predicates like *eltör egy vázát* 'break a vase' and *felrobbant egy házat* 'explode a house'.

(16) a. *Kati 'tört 'el egy 'vázá-t.
K.NOM broke PRT a vase-ACC
'lit. Kati was breaking a vase. '

b. *János 'robbantott 'fel egy 'ház-at.
J.NOM exploded PRT a house-ACC
'lit. János was exploding a house.'

The constraint above is one of many that the language learner has to notice and internalise in order to become a fluent speaker of English. In subsequent sections I focus on some important aspects of this learning process.

2. General objectives

After the brief theoretical background of Section 1, I now proceed with how tense-aspect forms are acquired and taught in a classroom setting. The objective of what comes next is three-fold: (i) to offer useful insights for practising teachers of English into how foreign languages are acquired mainly with Hungarian learners in a formal L2 learning environment in mind; (ii) to provide a critical discussion of some highly popular grammar tasks which are aimed at teaching tense-aspect forms by pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of such tasks; and (iii) to offer some ideas as to how the teaching of tense-aspect forms can be made more successful by examining various tasks based on different types of input.

3. Some findings of SLA research

It is generally assumed that what the learner acquires through the process of second language acquisition is, among many other things, a set of lexical items and a set of rules associated with the target language. This information is what allows native speakers to be fluent in that language. Some important questions that have arisen in research on second language acquisition are (i) why is it that first language acquisition is completely effortless, whereas second language acquisition generally requires a lot of effort on the part of the learner (i.e., how exactly is L1 learning different from L2 learning); (ii) how various properties of the L2 are acquired by the language learner; and (iii) why is it that some learners easily pick up a second language, while others have a hard time working their way through the learning process. In what follows, I will briefly discuss some answers that have been provided to these questions in the literature. First, in Section 3.1, I compare and contrast L1 learning and L2 learning by focusing on some characteristics of the different stages of the learning process. Next, in Section 3.2, I briefly address cross-linguistic transfer and ungrammaticality in second language acquisition. Then, in Section 3.3, I compare and contrast younger and adult learners and discuss in what respects they have a (dis)advantage over each other. I will mainly rely on Saville-Troike (2012), which is a useful source reporting on some important findings of the past decades of SLA research. In the final part of this section, I will also reflect on the role of the language teacher in second language acquisition.

3.1 Differences and similarities between L1 learning and L2 learning

As was mentioned at the outset of this section, L1 acquisition and L2 acquisition are similar in that they both involve the learning of a rule system characterising a given language. An important respect in which the two processes are different, however, is that the language learners begin the learning with different mindsets. Specifically, in the case of L1 learning, it is generally assumed that the learner has some innate capacity to rely on when acquiring the language. This type of knowledge, which is thought to correspond to a set of universal principles underlying language use, is what every human being possesses at the time of birth (Chomsky 1957, 1965). The assumption of this innate knowledge allows us to ex-

plain a variety of facts about language use, including the production of sentences never heard before and that learners learn their first language in the same way regardless of which language it is. By contrast, we cannot be certain that language learners can still utilise this innate knowledge when they begin learning a second language. Some researchers argue for learners' having full access to these universal principles, others claim that they only have partial access, and yet another group of scholars claim that L2 learners can no longer rely on the innate knowledge that they had access to when they were babies (White 2003).

Furthermore, there are differences and similarities between L1 and L2 learning at the intermediate stages of the learning process. The similarities lie in the fact that in the case of both processes the learner is a creative creature building a rule system while making generalisations about the target language as a result of being exposed to positive input (i.e., well-formed structures). Correct generalisations give rise to grammatical structures, whereas incorrect generalisations yield ungrammatical structures in both cases. As for the differences between L1 learning and L2 learning, it is clear that, in the case of the former, the learner basically acquires the majority of the rules of the target language by the age of 5 or 6. By contrast, L2 learners develop what is often referred to by the term *interlanguage* (Selinker 1972), which is a system borrowing forms from both the native language and the target language of the learner. It is best looked at as a third language that arises as a result of the transfer of various properties from the L1 and the acquisition of various properties of the L2. As for the final stages of the learning process, there is agreement that L1 learners generally attain full competence in the target language, whereas the majority of L2 learners can only gain near-native knowledge (i.e., they can at best get close to native competence in the L2).

Finally, it is also well known that whereas instruction and negative evidence (i.e., input about which word strings are ungrammatical) facilitate L2 learning given certain conditions, they do not affect L1 learning. The single most important prerequisite of the latter is positive input and interaction in the target language.

3.2 Language transfer and ungrammaticality

As was mentioned in the previous section, L2 learners like to transfer various properties of their L1 to their interlanguage. This process can be

either positive or negative. The former is observable when the L1 and the L2 are similar in terms of some facet of their grammar. This can be illustrated by the fact that Hungarian learners of English transfer the vocabulary item *film* to their interlanguage. Negative transfer, on the other hand, occurs when the learner transfers a property of their L1 with which the L2 is not associated. This happens when Hungarian learners of English produce ungrammatical forms like **boarded on the plane* or **swept the dust*. The Hungarian counterparts of *board* and *sweep* are *felszáll* and *seper*, respectively. The subcategorization properties of these words are different in that *felszáll* takes a case-marked nominal expression, which could be analysed as a prepositional expression, and *seper* can take as direct object the substance that is removed in the sweeping event and the surface can be left implicit. In contrast, English *board* occurs with nominal expressions in the direct object position, and *sweep* subcategorizes for both the substance that is removed and the surface from which the substance is removed (Levin & Sells 2009). The cross-linguistic transfer of these lexical properties gives rise to ungrammatical forms like those above until the learner is exposed to a sufficient amount of positive input that eventually allows them to expunge the incorrect forms from their interlanguage. Interestingly, such ungrammatical forms often occur in the interlanguage after the production of grammatical forms. This is a sign of reorganisation in second language acquisition whereby the learner notices some grammatical phenomenon in the L2 and therefore restructures various (unanalysed) chunks of their interlanguage. This leads us to an important observation in SLA research, namely that ungrammatical structures are often not signs of the learner's incompetence in understanding how the L2 works. On the contrary, inaccuracies are actually in many cases more likely to indicate progress along the interlanguage continuum.

3.3 Younger learners versus adults

It is widely accepted that learners of both first and second languages must be exposed to a lot of positive input so that they can make generalisations about the language they are acquiring (i.e., discover the rules of the target language). There seems to be agreement on the idea that instead of inundating the learner with explicit rules and instructions, teachers should provide students with ample opportunities to develop their interlanguage as they figure out how the L2 works through implicit learning

(Krashen 1981). This is especially important in the case of younger learners, who are less capable of working with explicit rules due to the fact that their analytical thinking is not well developed yet. Adults, on the other hand, have much better analytic abilities and hence they are more compatible with explicit instruction. Differences in age have further consequences. For example, younger learners are more successful in informal environments, whereas adults function better in a classroom setting. The reason for this might be that the latter type of scenario is more likely to provide conditions (e.g., explicit instruction) that are more amenable for learning in the case of adults. Furthermore, adults are also faster learners given their world knowledge and their L1. This clearly gives them an advantage over younger learners at least in the initial stages of the learning process, which in fact serves as a reminder that the idea *the younger the learner the better the learning* should not be taken at face value.

3.4. The role of the language teacher

Finally, before I move on to provide a more practical perspective of the teaching of tense-aspect forms, I would like to briefly reflect on the role of the language teacher in a classroom environment. It seems that there is now agreement in the literature that the teacher is best looked at as someone who is there to gently navigate the learner in their exploration of the rules of the target language. That is, the teacher is a facilitator (and accelerator), who helps the learner notice and then internalise various properties of the L2. Another important point is that it is becoming more common not to look at teachers as primary authorities on what can be considered to be (un)grammatical in the L2, particularly if they are not native speakers of the L2. Instead, the most reliable source of information on what structures constitute part of the L2 is now the native speaker, who has a subconscious knowledge of the rule system of the L2.

4. The current approach to the teaching of the progressive

Textbooks like to take a form-oriented approach to the teaching of tense-aspect forms. By way of illustration, I give some grammar tasks from highly popular textbooks targeting elementary-level and pre-intermediate level learners. I provide a sample question from each task cited and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the given task

type. The ultimate aim of this and the following sections is to offer insights into how function can be taught in addition to form when the progressive is addressed in the classroom.

Textbook: New Headway, 3rd edition, page 51, Task 4
Level: Elementary

Put the words in the correct order to make questions in the Present Continuous.

1. you/what/are/doing?

Strengths:
- The learner is assisted in noticing the progressive construction in questions.

Weaknesses:
- The learner is not provided with any contextual information which would enable him or her to make generalisations about the semantics underlying the construction *be V+ing*.

Textbook: New Headway, 3rd edition, page 19, Task 10
Level: Pre-Intermediate

Choose the correct form of the verbs.

1. She wore/was wearing a bright red coat.

Strengths:
- The learner notices that the preterite contrasts with the progressive form.

Weaknesses:
- This task is misleading as, in many cases, both are possible sentences in English.

What these tasks have in common is that they almost exclusively focus on form (i.e., how the progressive is encoded in English). They provide only a small amount of contextual information and thus the learner has limited opportunites to figure out what rules underly a given phenomenon.

Finally, before moving on to providing some sample tasks that may do a better job at catering for learners' needs, I now briefly address a misunderstanding that often arises when it comes to the teaching of the progressive in English. Specifically, in a number of textbooks it is made explicit that certain verbs are incompatible with the progressive aspect in English. To illustrate this, I cite Cunningham and Moor (1999) below:

> *„Some verbs are almost never found in continuous forms: there are verbs which describe states (which stay the same) rather than actions (things which can change). Some of the most common are:*
> *– verbs connected with emotions: like, love, hate, want, need*
> *– verbs connected with understanding: understand, know, prefer, agree, believe*
> *– verbs connected with possession and unchanging qualities: belong, cost, weigh*
> *– verbs connected with senses: taste, hear, smell, sound"*
>
> (Cunningham and Moor 1999: 141)

The above characterisation is clearly inaccurate. Native speakers of English often use verbs like *love*, *want* and *understand* in progressive constructions. To illustrate this, I provide some naturally occurring examples in (17).

(17) a. I have been wanting to try this chocolate chip cookie recipe for such a long time and I am so glad I did.
http://www.thesemisweetsisters.com/2014/04/12/new-york-times-chocolate-chip-cookies/

b. We're loving this soup in a major way.
http://splashofsomething.com/2011/02/15/project-nyt-garden-minestrone/

c. Am I understanding you right?
http://www.amazon.com/review/R16EZR8ZU623KN

An alternative take on the above is what I briefly referred to in the first part of this chapter. Specifically, it is stative *situations* that are generally incompatible with the progressive viewpoint. As was mentioned in Section 1, the lexical aspectual properties of stativity versus dynamicity, durativity versus punctuality, and boundedness versus unboundedness are

not a verb but verb phrase properties. That is, it is not verbs that are incompatible with the progressive construction but verb phrases describing stative and punctual situations.

5. A novel perspective on the teaching of the progressive

In this section I provide two sample tasks for the teaching of the English progressive in situations where the native language of the learner is Hungarian. These tasks have been constructed with the following in mind: (i) Language learners need a sufficient amount of positive input so that they can identify various rules underlying the target language, and (ii) The progressive is encoded in strikingly different ways in the learner's L1 and L2.

Level: Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate
This task is based on the Oxford Bookworms Library version of *Gulliver's Travels* (stage 4).

Read Section 7 and find the sentences paraphrased loosely below:

a. I was in the process of turning into a smaller creature.
I was becoming thinner and thinner.

b. My master tried to figure out how to make much money out of me when he was told to take me to the Queen.
While he was thinking how to do this, he was asked to bring me to the palace.

Strengths:
(i) This task provides learners with a multifaceted picture of the semantics of the progressive by virtue of providing illustration of this aspectual construction in a variety of environments.

(ii) This task encourages extensive reading, which improves a variety of language skills.

Weaknesses:
- It takes a lot of time to make such tasks, especially if the teacher would also like to create vocabulary building and/or reading comprehension exercises based on the text.

Level: Advanced
This task is based on the article "Baseball or Soccer?"
Date: July 10, 2014
Source: The New York Times

Read the following op-ed article by David Brooks from the New York Times. Identify the sentences that illustrate that the author *zooms in on the situation* expressed (i.e., views the situation as an *ongoing activity*).

… Most of us spend our days thinking we are playing baseball, but we are really playing soccer. We think we individually choose what career path to take, whom to socialize with, what views to hold. But, in fact, those decisions are shaped by the networks of people around us more than we dare recognize…

… Once we acknowledge that, in life, we are playing soccer, not baseball, a few things become clear. First, awareness of the landscape of reality is the highest form of wisdom. It's not raw computational power that matters most; it's having a sensitive attunement to the widest environment, feeling where the flow of events is going. Genius is in practice perceiving more than the conscious reasoning…

Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/11/opinion/david-brooks-baseball-or soccer.html?action=click&pgtype=Homepage&region=-CColumn&module=MostEmailed&version=Full&src=me&WT.nav=MostEmailed

Strengths:

(i) The learner is provided with a lot of context and multiple examples of the progressive, which help them to eventually make generalisations about the function of this aspectual construction.

(ii) The learner is given the opportunity to improve multiple language skills including comprehension and grammar skills and they may also pick up new vocabulary items in the L2 through incidental learning (Hatch and Brown 1995).

Weaknesses:

- This task requires a lot of research from the teacher as a variety of factors (e.g., level of learners, relevance of topic, amount of illustration of the structure to be taught, etc.) have to be taken into account to ensure acquisition.

6. The teaching of the perfect

In this section I again review some tasks from highly popular textbooks at the elementary and intermediate level. I discuss both the strengths and weaknesses of these tasks in an effort to lay the groundwork for newer and hopefully more successful ideas on the teaching of the perfect.

Textbook: New Snapshot, Language Booster, page 116, Task 1
Level: Elementary

Complete each sentence with the correct verb in the present perfect.
see, spend, meet, do, finish, go, lose, buy, find

He can't see the board.
He .....his glasses.

Strengths:
- The learner is introduced to the form of the English perfect.

Weaknesses:
- The learner is provided with very little contextual information and hence they may have difficulty in making generalisations about the semantics underlying the English perfect.

Textbook: Cutting Edge, page 39, Task 2
Level: Intermediate

Complete the following sentences using the Present Perfect or Past Simple.

a Arnold Schwarzenegger (just / make / a new film).

Strengths:
- The learner is assisted in noticing the construction *have* + *just* + *past participle*.

Weaknesses:
- This is a heavily form-oriented task.

The tasks above have at least one common property: They all focus on form and teach the present perfect in isolation. Given the very limited

amount of contextual information in these tasks, it is not clear whether the learner has the chance to understand the function of the perfect. In what follows, I show a few alternative tasks that can potentially make the teaching of the perfect more successful at the elementary and higher levels.

Level: Pre-intermediate/Intermediate
This task is based on the Oxford Bookworms Library version of *Washington Square* (stage 4).

Read Sections 6 and 7 from *Washington Square* (15 pages) and describe the contextual environment of the following sentences:

page 41: I have not seen him because my father has forbidden it.

page 48: I have chosen you.

page 51: Have you given him up?

Strengths:

- The learner is provided with a good amount of positive input, which in turn helps them make generalizations about the syntax and semantics of the perfect.

Level: Upper-Intermediate/Advanced
This task is based on the article "Oil prices dip to nine-month low".
Date: August 13, 2014
Source: BBC News

I. Find answers to the following questions in the article "Oil prices dip to nine-month low".

1. What consequences can we see of lower oil price in developed countries?
   The current dip in price has led to an increase in demand from wealthy states.
2. What can we learn about the effect of the Crimean crisis on oil export?

The Crimean crisis hasn't tempted [Russian President Vladimir] Putin to disrupt oil supply, and nor has the Donbas crisis, so most of the crisis premium from earlier in the year has unwound.

II. What verbal forms are used in the above answers to express that an action has current relevance?

has led
hasn't tempted
has unwound

Strengths:
(i) This task enables the teacher to contextualize the perfect without providing explicit rule instruction.
(ii) This task involves multiple skills. It is just as much a grammar awareness task as it is a reading comprehension task.

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2. Vocabulary acquisition

Éva Kardos

1. Background

Linguists and pedagogical experts like to distinguish between intentional learning and incidental learning when it comes to the acquisition of words. The former often occurs in a formal, classroom environment, where a given task is aimed at either introducing a specific set of vocabulary items or assisting the learner with consolidating the lexical items that have been introduced before. The latter is often a "side-effect" of various reading and listening activities (either in a formal or a naturalistic environment) whereby the learner is exposed to authentic input in the target language. As for the teaching of vocabulary items, it is common to make a distinction between two types of methods: (i) the word list-based method, where the learner is given a list of lexical items (often supplemented with glosses in the L1) that they have to learn, and (ii) the domain-based method, where words belonging to the same semantic field are introduced. In the case of the latter, teaching often involves comparing and contrasting of various lexical items associated with a semantic field (Hatch & Brown 1995). Although the domain-based method has become quite popular with the advent of communicative language teaching, word lists including those supplemented with glosses in the learners' L1 are still around in language classes. The latter method is common both in the teaching of vocabulary items and assessment. By way of illustration, I provide a sample task from a highly popular book used in elementary and secondary level education in Hungary.

Find the words for:

illat	_____	takaró	_____
rendes	_____	porszívózik	_____
hímzés	_____	befogad/felfog	_____
büszke vmire	_____	poros	_____
virágdísz	_____	kinagyít	_____
elrendez	_____	kimenti magát	_____

(Tímár 2004: 62)

Tasks like the one above might facilitate the acquisition of words in earlier stages of the learning, but they have mixed consequences in later stages. In this chapter, I explore briefly some of these consequences.

2. General objectives

In what follows I will have four goals: (i) to uncover various facets of word meaning (i.e., to explore what we know when we know a word); (ii) to provide insights into some recent findings as to the second language acquisiton of words; (iii) to show that perfect correspondences between the lexical items of two languages are rare and that providing the learner with bilingual word lists has more drawbacks than advantages, at least in later stages of the learning process; and (iv) to promote context-based vocabulary teaching and the domain-based method.

The structure of the subsequent discussion is as follows: Section 3 is a brief theoretical background to what we know when we know a word, with a special focus on how word meaning can be represented and on how languages can differ in terms of the type of information stored in corresponding lexical items. Section 4 provides a summary of some recent research findings into vocabulary acquisition by second language learners and, concomitantly, it discusses arguments against the popular method of providing L2 learners with bilingual word lists (where one of the languages is the learner's native language and the other language is the target language).

3. What is in the meaning of a word?

I devote this section to a brief description of what we know when we know a word. More specifically, I discuss what kind of information is stored in speakers' mind when it comes to words and I also address how this information can be best represented so that we can capture various facts of language.

In the literature there is agreement that words stored in the mental lexicon are associated with at least the following types of information:

- semantic information
- syntactic information: grammatical category, information about what other words can occur in the environment of the word (i.e., subcategorization information)
- pronunciation and spelling

The exploration of the multifaceted nature of word meaning has been a primary objective in various research programs over the past few decades. The reason for this is that it has become clear that a number of structural properties of a given language can be predicted based on various properties of the lexical items of that language. This is codified in the Projection Principle, which states that representations in syntax are projected from the lexicon in that they observe the subcategorization information associated with lexical items (Chomsky 1981: 29). In some theories, it is assumed that this subcategorization information corresponds, among other things, to semantic roles ordered in a thematic hierarchy. Given certain linking rules on these ordered semantic roles, it is ensured that nominal expressions bearing a certain role will end up in a specifically identifiable syntactic position in the sentence. For example, nominal expressions bearing an agent role, which is in the top position of thematic hierarchies, end up in a higher phrase structure position, whereas nominal expressions bearing a patient or theme role, which ranks below the agent role, appear in a lower phrase structure position. This is illustrated in (1a), where the nominal expression *John* is assigned an agent role by the verb *cut* and is linked to the subject position in the sentence, whereas *the salami* is assigned the patient role, a lower-ranking role, which is therefore linked to a lower position in the sentence. Failure to apply the linking rules correctly gives rise to ungrammaticality, as shown in (1b).

(1) a. John cut the salami.
    b. *The salami cut John.

Over the past few decades, there have been strong objections against theories advocating thematic hierarchies for their failing to capture important generalizations about language. (For more on this, see Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005, Chapter 6). As an alternative to how word meanings should be represented, decomposition analyses have been proposed. In these analyses it is assumed that words arise as a result of the conflation of smaller abstract meaning components such as ACT,

CAUSE, and BECOME. For instance, a possible decompositional representation of transitive *open* and intransitive *jog* are as follows:

(2) a. open: [[x ACT] CAUSE [y BECOME <OPEN>]]
(Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005:71, (8b))

b. jog: [x $ACT_{<JOG>}$]
(Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005:72, (11))

As is apparent, the verb *open* in (2a) has a complex internal structure such that it is associated with a CAUSE abstract component, which has two arguments, a causing subevent represented by [x ACT] and a caused subevent represented by [y BECOME <OPEN>], where the idiosyncratic component OPEN represents the state attained by the referent of the internal argument *y*. By contrast, the verb *jog* in (2b) has a simpler structure containing only an ACT basic predicate and the idiosyncratic component JOG. This structural difference between the two verbs has a number of consequences, including differences in interpretation and argument expression. (For more on this, see Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005).

In addition to this, there are also differences across languages when it comes to possible conflation patterns associated with lexical items that can be considered to be cross-linguistic counterparts. For example, Juffs (1996a) shows that English and Chinese differ in that the former allows the co-occurrence of ACT (CAUSE) and STATE in the lexical representation of words, whereas the latter is void of such patterns. This is formulated in the parameter below.

(3) Root morpheme 'STATE' conflation parameter
[ACT[GO[STATE]]] English *[ACT[GO[STATE]]] Chinese
(Juffs 1996a)

This parametric difference has crucial consequences for various argument realization phenomena in the two languages, including verb alternations. Specifically, Juffs (1996a) argues that the presence of a STATE component in the representation of a verb prevents this verb from displaying an alternating behavior. This is illustrated by verbs like *cover* in English, which do not show an alternating pattern, as shown in (4), unlike verbs like *load* and *spray*, which have a STATE component and hence show an alternating behavior, as shown in (5).

(4) a. John covered the bed with a sheet.
b. *John covered the sheet onto the bed.
(5) a. Mary loaded the hay onto the truck.
a'. Mary loaded the truck with hay.
b. Mary sprayed the wall with paint.
b'. Mary sprayed the paint onto the wall.

(Juffs 1996b:180, (6) and (7))

In Chinese, on the other hand, *cover*-type verbs contain a STATE component and hence exhibit an alternating behavior, as is apparent from (6).

(6) a. ?Zhang San yong tanzi gai le chuang.
Zhang San use blanket/cover ASP bed
'Zhang San covered the bed with a blanket.'
b. Zhang San wang chuang shang gai le tanzi.
Zhang San to bed on cover ASP blanket
'lit. Zhang San covered the blanket onto the bed.'

(Juffs 1996b: 186, (16iv,v))

The above characteristic of Chinese is also reflected in the fact that in this language there are no causative change-of-state verbs including verbs like English *disappoint*, which express a mental change. Consider (7).

(7) a. *Zhang San shiwang le Li Si.
Zhang San disappoint ASP Li Si.
b. Zhang San shi Li Si shiwang
Zhang San make Li Si disappoint
'Zhang San made Li Si disappointed.'

(Juffs 1996b: 181, (10))

In English situations expressed by verbs like *disappoint* can be referred to by either a verb stem or periphrastic constructions like *make someone disappointed*. Chinese contrasts with English in that in the case of the former it is only a periphrastic contruction that can be used to express what in English a verb stem like *disappoint* does.

Now, having illustrated how languages diverge when it comes to the lexical information encoded in words, we are now in the position to address how such differences are acquired by second language learners.

4. The acquisition of lexical items

An important finding of the past few decades in this area is that L2 learners can acquire various properties of vocabulary items in the L2 just in case they are exposed to authentic input in the target language, which "adds a representation to their grammar" (Juffs 1996b). According to researchers like Alan Juffs, this process involves the resetting of lexical parameters. Others claim that parameter resetting is not possible, instead what happens is that learners simply transfer lexical items from their L1, which they then replace with the corresponding lexical items in the L2, given a sufficient amount of positive input (Stringer 2007). Now, if transfer is a necessary component of the learning process in one way or another, what we achieve by virtue of providing correspondences like that in (8) is reinforce in the learner the "belief" that lexical items in the L1 and their L2 counterparts have identical lexically stored semantic and syntactic properties.

(8) board: felszáll

The example in (8) helps reinforce the belief that English *board* and Hungarian *felszáll* have identical subcategorization properties, which in turn facilitates the production of incorrect verbal expressions like **boarded on the plane/train/bus*, a quite common error in the interlanguage of Hungarian language learners.

Similar mismatches are actually very common across languages (Stringer 2007) and thus the above effects of bilingual word lists must be overwhelming. Therefore, even if glosses in the L1 are helpful in earlier stages of the learning process (Hatch & Brown 1995), their more limited use is warranted in later stages. As an alternative, it is perhaps best to expose the learner to authentic input only, thus helping them explore the multifaceted nature of word meaning through implicit learning.

5. A novel perspective on the teaching of lexical items

In what follows I provide some tasks that are aimed at vocabulary building in and outside of the classroom. What these tasks share is that they are strictly monolingual and they encourage the learner to figure out various lexically stored properties of words based on the contextual environment.

Input: the movie *Pride and Prejudice* by Joe Wright

Task 1
Movie clip: 19:17-22:30

How are the following expressed in this movie clip?
1. boring: *odious*
2. love someone very much, and show this by your actions: *dote on someone*

Task 2
Movie clip: 01:44:06-01:51:25

Try to find two expressions that are in some way related to the notion 'marriage'.
1. *elopement*
2. *make someone an offer of marriage*

Input: the movie *It's complicated* by Nancy Meyers

Task 1
Movie clip: 01:39:07-01:49:01

Find paraphrases of the following in this clip.
1. I didn't think you would pick up the phone.
   I didn't think you would take the call.
2. I think I know what's going on.
   I'm up to speed on that part.

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CHAPTER 2

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

By Adrienn Fekete

1. Shift in the main objectives of foreign language education and intercultural communicative competence development in education policy documents

Adrienn Fekete

1. Introduction

Due to the spread of multiculturalism, interculturalism and globalization, effective communication and interaction between people with different cultural backgrounds has become a crucial issue. Learning languages, especially the so-called "*global English*", is undoubtedly one of the most effective ways to keep up with the expectations of the changing world, and to become an "*intercultural speaker*" (Byram 1997) because English is the common language for people "*who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture*" (Firth 1996: 240). Responding to this phenomenon, multicultural and intercultural education emerged on the horizon of language teaching, leaning on the tenets of the communicative language teaching approach. This chapter aims to present the change of the main objectives of foreign language education as well as how this change appears in the most prominent education policy documents: the Common European Framework of Reference and the Hungarian National Core Curriculum.

2. From linguistic competence to intercultural competence

As the historical development of foreign language teaching methods reveals, more and more attention has been paid to the Hymesian notion that "*There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar are useless*" (1971: 278). The focus was shifted from formal rules to contextual ones. Moreover, it has been realized that language is confined by social and cultural factors, thus language learning is much more than memorizing grammatical rules and lexis.

Naturally, socio-cultural topics have always been integral part of language teaching approaches, but the selection, treatment and significance of these topics were prone to change. In the case of the grammar-translation-method, for example, besides correct grammatical structures

and appropriate translation, the emphasis was put on the presentation of socio-cultural achievements, on the so-called 'big C culture': arts, literature and historical events related to the target country (Neuner 2003: 19). Concerning the audio-lingual-method, it served more the pragmatic needs of the ordinary foreign language learner, namely, it concentrated more on the elements of the so-called 'little c culture' (everyday dialogues, social roles, behaviors, etc.) than 'big C culture." The goal of foreign language teaching was to prepare students for encounters with native speakers of the target language with the help of presenting typical situations and memorizing model dialogues (Neuner 2003: 20).

With the appearance of the communicative approach in the 1970s, the main aim of language education became to develop language learners' communicative language competence, referring to their ability to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate way (Council of Europe 2001). The elements of communicative competence are specified in the well-known three-pillar communicative competence model associated with the names of Canale and Swain (1980), in which the socio-cultural aspect of foreign language education is mainly highlighted in the sociolinguistic competence:

grammatical competence: knowledge of phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word and sentence formation

sociolinguistic competence: knowledge of socio-cultural rules and their appropriate use in different contexts

discourse competence: knowledge of text construction rules related to coherence and cohesion

strategic competence: the ability to use compensational strategies if communication breaks down.

3. ICC in the Common European Framework of Reference

More than thirty years have passed since the communicative competence model was created by Canale and Swain; therefore, it is evident that it has been refined several times. For instance, the most prominent foreign language teaching policy document in Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) determines the elements of communicative language competence as *linguistic competence*, s*ociolinguistic competence* and *pragmatic competence* (2001) omitting the strategic and

discourse competence as a distinctive component; more specifically, these two competences were integrated into a more complex component named *pragmatic competence,* which

> "*involves the functional uses of linguistic resources (carrying out language functions, speech acts) using scenarios or predetermined scripts of interactional exchanges. It also involves mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the recognition of text types and genres, using irony or parody. Even more than in the case of this factor than for linguistic competence, the development of pragmatic skills is strongly influenced by interactive experience and by the cultural environment*" (writer's emphasis) (CEFR 2001: 123).

Although in the description of pragmatic competence, as it is interpreted in the CEFR, the strong influence of "cultural environment" is mentioned, the key significance and certain aspects of the cultural dimension of language learning is more precisely formulated in the definition of sociolinguistic competence:

> "*Sociolinguistic competences refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use. Through its sensitivity to social conventions (rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community), the sociolinguistic component strictly affects all language communication between representatives of different cultures, even though participants may often be unaware of its influence (author's emphasis)*" (CEFR 2001: 122).

As a result, contrary to previous language learning approaches and methods underscoring the syntactic and semantic aspects of language, the CEFR equally emphasizes the pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspect and puts forward the socio-cultural dimensions of language, echoing Weir's concept that "*language cannot be meaningful if it is devoid of context*" (1990:11), more specifically, of the socio-cultural context.

In addition to the refinement of the elements of communicative competence, the CEFR also introduces the intercultural dimension into the main goals of language teaching. It calls attention to the necessity of 'intercultural awareness' and 'intercultural skills.' In terms of intercultural knowledge, it highlights not only factual, or "*objective knowledge*" related to cultures, but also the necessity to understand the relationships between one's own culture and the target-language culture(s).

"*Knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the 'world of origin' and the 'world of the target community' produce an intercultural awareness. It is, of course, important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. It is also enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner's L1and L2.This wider awareness helps to place both in context. In addition to objective knowledge, intercultural awareness covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes*" (CERF 2001: 103).

Besides, it states that 'intercultural skills' include:

- "*the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;*
- *cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;*
- *the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;*
- *the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships*" (ibid.: 104).

In addition, the most prominent education policy document, the Hungarian National Core Curriculum (HNCC) in our country also reflects on the importance of cultural knowledge and intercultural competence; for example, it states that students at Grade 10 are expected to "*be given a demonstration of the culture, civilisation and unique values of the target country (countries), and by comparing these to their own culture, develop a more complex notion of Hungarian culture*" as well as "*students be able to establish new personal relationships through the foreign language, and appreciate the people and the culture of other countries*" (Seténvi 1986: 69). Moreover, when defining "*Communication in Foreign Languages*," the HNCC underscores that apart from "the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both orally and in writing … in an appropriate range of societal and cultural contexts, "*[c]ommunication in a foreign language demands other skills, such as mediation and intercultural understanding*" (2009). Furthermore, among the "*Necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes,*" it emphasizes the significance of being "*familiar with societal traditions as well as the cultural aspects and diversity of languages and having a positive attitude*

that "entails respect for cultural diversity and interest in and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication" (ibid).

Hence, it is manifested in the CEFR and the HNCC that one of the general developmental objectives of foreign language education has become to educate individuals who are aware of the intercultural dimensions of language and able to use their awareness to successfully mediate between different cultures. Enyedi then rightfully notes that requirements of communication in a foreign language defined in the HNCC "*clearly focus on social and cultural awareness and personality development, which open the window to a much wider pedagogical issue than foreign language education itself*" (2000: 5).

As it is suggested by Bárdos (2004), besides the above mentioned four elements of communicative competence, there is a fifth one, the so-called intercultural competence, which includes and revolves around linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence. Thus, a conceptual change in foreign language education is transparent because the main aim of foreign language learning is not interpreted in terms of communicative competence acquisition any more, but in terms of intercultural competence (ICC), which is "*the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures*" (Meyer, 1991: 138). Consequently, Gu and his colleagues argue that "*EFL in the 21st century should turn from TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) into TEIL (teaching English as an international language), the fundamental goal of which is to train language learners to become an "intercultural speaker", who knows about the universal rules in intercultural communication and has the sufficient ICC*" (2012).

In conclusion, the modern objectives of foreign language education, in agreement with the internationalisation of contemporary life, are clearly set; however, even the most authoritative language education policy document, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, having a great impact on foreign language education from textbooks through syllabi and curricula to language testing and examinations fails to elaborate both on the definition of the levels of intercultural competence and the problem of assessment, making the exploitation of the (inter)cultural dimension of foreign language teaching more challenging. Byram thus proposes that there is a "*need to take forward the unfinished*

discussion of intercultural competence in the CEFR, for it is in the acquisition of intercultural understanding and the ability to act in linguistically and culturally complex situations that European citizens could benefit from a common framework of theory and practice not only for linguistic but also for cultural learning" (2003: 5).

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2. Intercultural communicative competence in language education – definition of key concepts

Adrienn Fekete

1. Introduction

In order to be able to successfully integrate culture learning into language education, it is essential to clearly define the key terms and concepts related to intercultural communicative competence development. Hence, the aim of this chapter is to provide definitions for these concepts as they are perceived in the context of modern language education: language in relation to culture, culture from the modernist and postmodernist prospective, and intercultural communicative competence.

2. Language and Culture

In the field of language teaching pedagogy, it is widely accepted that language and culture are inseparably bound. As Bannett (1993) rightfully claims one should be aware of the cultural dimension of language in order to avoid becoming a "*fluent fool*." By "*fluent fool*", Bannett means a language learner who speaks a foreign language well but fails to understand the social and philosophical content of language (1993: 16). Similarly, Thanasoulas notes that *"[e]ffective communication is more than a matter of language proficiency and that, apart from enhancing and enriching communicative competence, cultural competence can also lead to empathy and respect toward different cultures as well as promote objectivity and cultural perspicacity*" (2001: 1).

Furthermore, Larsen-Freeman (2001) views culture as a fifth skill besides reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, Kramsch (1993) states that culture is not only the fifth skill, it is much more:

> "*Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of*

their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them" (1).

Sercu also supports this by stating that "*language teaching has two sides: a language side and a culture side*" (2005: vii); then he adds that the integration of these two sides poses an enormous pedagogical challenge, especially when it comes to students getting a sense of the interconnectedness of the two sides (ibid). In spite of the fact that there is a considerable amount of research dedicated to defining culture and its role, place and significance in foreign language education (see e.g., Kramsch, 1993, 1997, 1998; Risager, 2006, 2007), there is still debate about the relationship between language and culture as well as about which culture should be taught. There are certain approaches endeavoring to describe language in its relation to culture by both compounds such as "*language-and-culture, language-culture, culture-and-language*" (Sercu, 2005: vii) and mottos, for example, "*language and culture are inseparable*," "*language and culture are intimately linked*," and "*language is culture and culture is language*" (Risager, 2006: 1). According to Kramsch, "*without language and other symbolic systems, the habits, beliefs, institutions and monuments that we call culture would be just observable realities, not cultural phenomena. To become culture, they have to have meaning*" (2013: 62). Furthermore, when referring to the culturality of language, Pennycook rather uses the term 'discourse' because she is convinced that culture is not solely constructed in verbal discourse: "*discourse ... refer[s] ... to ways of organizing meaning that are often, though not exclusively, realized through language*" (1994: 128). Additionally, Kramsch claims that there are basically two ways to perceive culture in language teaching: the modernist and post-modernist. Thus, it is legitimate to ask: what does culture mean in the context of language education? What are the possible approaches to interpret culture when it comes to language teaching and learning?

3. The definition of culture: the modernist way – 'big C' culture and 'little c' culture and langue teaching approaches

For the questions: what does culture mean? Most of the people involved in language education would come up with the list of school subjects such as history, literature, arts, etc. The answer would reflect the elements of the so-called 'big C' culture, which is "*synonymous with a general knowledge of literature and arts*;" moreover, "i*t is the hallmark of the cultivated middle-class*" (Kramsch, 2013: 65). Derived from the teaching of classical languages, Greek and Latin, the grammar-translation-method approached teaching culture as presenting predominantly the element of the 'big C' culture of the target language, that is, the achievement culture (literature, arts) and historical events related to the target language (Neuner, 2003). Consequently, culture was perceived as a static entity involving observable facts and figures.

'Big C' culture is also referred to as 'civilization' as opposed to 'little c' culture, which is less transparent and tangible (Halverson, 1985). 'Little c' culture, also called 'small culture' (Holliday, 1999) focuses on everyday life communication and interaction; according to Kramsch, it is a "*more pragmatic concept of culture as way of life*" (2013: 66), involving behavior, eating habits, talking habits, customs, beliefs and values of native speakers of the target language. Besides, the native speaker is perceived as the model of the way the target language should be used for communication, which strengthens the "*one language = one culture*" convention (ibid). Concerning language teaching methods, the audio-lingual method emphasized the integration of the elements of 'little c' culture into language teaching by focusing on typical situations and model dialogues considered to be useful for foreign language learners when encountering native speakers (Neuner, 2003).

Kramsch states that language teachers interpreting the integration of language and culture teaching in terms of presenting and practicing parts of "*little c*" culture tend to "*teach sociolinguistic use the same way they teach rules of grammar use (i.e., through modeling and role-playing)*" (2013: 66). Then, she continues with calling attention to a contradiction that "*[e]ven though everyday cultural practices are as varied as native speakers' use of the language in everyday life, the focus is on the typical, sometimes stereotypical, behaviors, foods, celebrations and costumes of*

the dominant group or of that group of native speakers that is most salient to foreign eyes" (ibid). It seems thus that this approach still does not recognize the variety and dynamic nature of culture.

4. The definition of culture – from the modernist to the postmodernist way

The following definitions of culture frame a transition between the modernist and postmodernist perspectives on culture. The culture definitions provided by Hofstede and Bowers rather observe culture from a perspective that cultures are bound to communities sharing common values, memories, interests and practices. According to Hofstede (1994), culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (5). He builds up a pyramid model, in which three different levels of culture are differentiated: universal, cultural and personal. As regards Bowers' (1992) point of view, he sees culture as an inherited wealth in which we share memories, metaphors, maxims and myths. In addition, Alptekin's and Kramsch definition concentrates more on individuals as autonomous social agents who see reality around them differently. Furthermore, Alptekin (1993) believes that our socially acquired knowledge is "*organized in culture-specific ways which normally frame our perception of reality such that we largely define the world through the filter of our world view*" (136). Correspondingly, Kramsch (1998) defines culture as a world view, that is, "*a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting*" (10). Fenner and Newby also reinforce the idea that:

> "*culture is more than artefacts that 'can be found out there', it is also the glasses through which we perceive the world around us and the language we use to express the culture of which we are an integral part. We are influenced by the culture(s) we are socialized into, and simultaneously we influence that culture. This is a dialectic process, and culture must be seen as a dynamic force in continuous flux, not a static entity. The process does not only take place within our own culture; a similar process constitutes the encounter with a foreign culture*" (2000: 147).

Then, they add that there is a dynamic interaction between the individual and the culture(s) they socialized into because culture(s) influence

the individuals as well as the individuals influence cultures. Evidently, the same process accounts for the encounter with a foreign culture (2000).

5. Defining culture - The postmodernist way

When referring to the culturality of language, Pennycook rather uses the term 'discourse' as she is convinced that culture is not solely constructed in verbal discourse: "*discourse ... refer[s] ... to ways of organizing meaning that are often, though not exclusively, realized through language*" (1994: 128). Similarly, Gee et. al. argue that *"[d]iscourse is composed of ways of talking, listening, reading, writing, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and using tools and objects, in particular settings and at specific times, so as to display or to recognize a particular social identity*" (1996: 10). From the postmodernist perspective, culture is perceived as a discourse, more specifically, it is understood as a "*social semiotic construction*" (Kramsch, 2013: 68). While native and non-native speakers are interacting and trying to understand each other, their cultural horizons are constantly changing and becoming displaced (ibid). In other words, new realities are forged in the course of meaning construction. Culture is no longer seen as static, but as a "*dynamic discursive process*" (ibid) which is not constrained to a country, nation, or a particular nation's history. Hence, culture is constantly "*constructed and reconstructed in various ways by individuals engaged in struggles for symbolic meaning and for the control of subjectivities and interpretations of history*" (Blommaert 2005, as cited in Kramsch 2013).

6. Intercultural (Communicative) Competence

No doubt that since language and culture have an intimate relationship, an interdependence, they form a single unity dominated by language. Fenner and Newby conceive their relationship as follows: "*Language is not only communication, but equally important, it is an expression of culture*" (2000: 144). Thus, it is clear that in addition to developing foreign language learners' language competence, we have to focus on their cultural competence development because the two cannot be separated from each other. However, the question may arise: does the foreign lan-

guage teachers' job end there? It we take the definition of cultural competence provided by Sercu (2005), the answer is definitely 'No.' Sercu claims that one possible way of understanding the concept is that "*cultural competence involves knowledge, skills, and attitudes concerning a specific cultural area such as that associate with (one of the) target language countries*" (2005: vii). This definition built upon the modernist perception of culture, namely that culture is retrained to the idiosyncrasy of a national community and its members who share a national language (Kramsh, 2013). Nevertheless, this perspective of culture is problematic in several respects. The most salient problem is that the validity of modernist view is being questioned by the unique status of, chiefly, English as 'the common language,' which "*knows no national boundaries*" (Kramsch, 2013: 70). It is used by a variety of people with diverse cultural backgrounds and world views who engage in international communication for different purposes. Consequently, the task of foreign language teachers, especially English language teachers, broadens to include developing their students' *inter*cultural competence (ICC), which consists of "*knowledge, skills and attitudes at the interface between several cultural areas including the students' own country and the target language country*" (Sercu, 2005: viii). Developing ICC thus equally involves the students' experiences and assumptions related to their own cultural backgrounds.

In addition, the emergence of the term 'intercultural' itself appeared as the 'spin-off" of the attempt to support effective communication and cooperation between different national cultures in the 1980s (Kramsch, 2001). In the field of foreign language education, the concept of intercultural competence derived from and then enlarged the concept of communicative competence. Communicative competence is the ability of a person to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, sociolinguistically and pragmatically appropriate way (Council of Europe, 2001). According to Byram, the building blocks of intercultural competence are knowledge, skills and attitude (1997: 47), which have been organized into a conceptual framework including five *savoirs* (ibid): *savoirs*: knowledge of self and other, of interaction, individual and societal; *savoir apprendre/faire*: skills to discover and/or interact; *savoir comprendre*: skills to interpret and relate; *savoir s'engager*: critical cultural awareness, political education; *savoir être*: attitudes – relativizing self, valuing others. Naturally,

these savoirs are interwoven with the dimensions of communicative competence; consequently, communicative competence can be referred to as the sixth savoir called *savoir communiquer* (Sercu, 2005). The components of intercultural competence are summarized in Table 1.1.

Knowledge	Skills/behavior	Attitudes/traits
• Culture specific and culture general knowledge • Knowledge of self and other • Knowledge of interaction: individual and societal • Insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language and communication *Savoirs*	• Ability to interpret and relate *Savoir-comprende* • Ability to discover and / or interact • Ability to acquire new knowledge and to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constrains od real-time communication and interaction • Metacognitive strategies to direct own learning *Savoir-apprendre / savoir-faire*	• Attitude to relativize self and value others • Positive disposition towards learning intercultural competence *Savoir-etre* • General disposition characterized by critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one's own *Savoir*

Table 1.1: Components of intercultural competence (Sercu, 2005: 3)

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3. Challenges of teaching culture and developing intercultural communicative competence in the foreign language classroom

Adrienn Fekete

1. Introduction

In spite of the fact that it is widely accepted that culture and language learning are strongly linked to each other, the teaching of culture in the foreign language classroom is still a hotly debated issue in the field of foreign language education. There are several questions that arise in connection with this topic: What is culture? What is the relationship between language and culture? Which culture and whose culture should be taught? Which aspect of culture? Native or non-native teachers are more creditable to teach culture? What is the role of language teachers? The main objective of this chapter is to give some possible answers to these questions in order to help teachers overcome the challenges of intercultural communicative competence development in the foreign language classroom.

2. What is culture?

Most of the challenges of incorporating culture and language teaching originate from the fact that culture is seldom defined, or if it is defined, it is still perceived as a static entity, a collection of directly teachable and learnable facts about the members of the target language country. There is a myriad of culture definitions in the literature from which only some are presented here. Lederach, for example, believes that "*culture is the shared knowledge and schemes created by set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to social realities around them*" (1995: 5). In Hofstede's words, "*Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another.*" (1984: 51). According to a third definition:

> "*Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essen-*

tial core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action" (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952: 46).

Moreover, the simplest way to define culture according to Useem, J. and Useem, R. is as follows: "*Culture has been defined in a number of ways, but most simply, as the learned and shared behavior of a community of interacting human beings*" (1963: 169). If we have a closer look at the culture definitions presented, it becomes evident that they fail to recognize the dynamic nature of culture; hence, it can be inferred that culture was rather perceived as the collection of facts which can be directly taught and learnt.

However, culture has come to be seen differently recently. The emphasis is put on its dynamic and variable nature, on the active participation of the individual in the creation of culture, and the interaction of language and culture in the process of making of meaning (Moore, 1991). Culture thus is not viewed as specific, but rather general, which makes it essential in intercultural communication. Furthermore, cultural stereotypes are perceived as cultural generalizations and cultural absolutes as cultural variations within and across cultures. In addition, language is seen as both a medium and shaper of culture. (Paige et. al., 2000). Based on these changes in perception, Paige and his colleagues came up with the following definition:

"*Culture learning is the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviorally, and affectively*" (2000: 4).

Closely related to their definition, Paige and his colleagues created a conceptual model of culture teaching (see Fig. 1). The new conceptual approach towards culture and culture learning, challenging the previous interpretations of culture as a fixed and homogeneous entity, provides a well-rounded basis for teaching language and culture as a unity. Owing to Paige and his colleagues, the recently valid meaning of culture is clearly defined and straightforwardly operationalized by their conceptual model; hence, it can ease the process of the integration of culture and language teaching in the foreign language classroom.

3. What is the relationship between language and culture?

It not a question any more that language and culture go hand in hand in language education. Enyedi writes that "*this relationship is obvious, since culture, or cultural identity, is partly expressed by language. At the same time, language is culturally loaded, very often more than we realize*" (2000: 6). Furthermore, Thanasoulas highlight the significance of developing cultural competence by saying that *"[e]ffective communication is more than a matter of language proficiency and that, apart from enhancing and enriching communicative competence, cultural competence can also lead to empathy and respect toward different cultures as well as promote objectivity and cultural perspicacity*" (2001: 1). Furthermore, Larsen-Freeman (2001) view culture as a fifth skill besides reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, Kramsch (1993) states that culture is not only the fifth skill, it is much more than that:

> "*Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them*" (1).

Sercu also supports this by stating that "*language teaching has two sides: a language side and culture side*" (2005: vii); then he adds that the integration of these two sides poses an enormous pedagogical challenge, especially when it comes to students getting a sense of the interconnectedness of the two sides (ibid).

4. What does intercultural competence exactly mean in language education?

The lack of a clear conceptualization of intercultural competence also causes a problem in case of developing intercultural competence. How can it be defined in the context of language education? Despite the great number of definitions characterizing intercultural competence, the three main domains of ability can be captured as follows:

> "*1) the ability to develop and maintain relationships, 2) the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion,*

and 3) the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others" Fantini (2000: 27).

According to Beneke:

"*intercultural communication in the wider sense of the word involves the use of significantly different linguistic codes and contact between people holding significantly different sets of values and models of the world ... Intercultural competence is to a large extent the ability to cope with one's own cultural background in interaction with others*" (2000: 108–109).

The best-developed model of intercultural competence is certainly associated with the name of Byram (1997). According to his model, intercultural communicative competence involves certain (1) knowledge, (2) skills, and (3) attitudes besides linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence. By (1) knowledge, he means knowledge "*of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction*" (1997: 51). (2) Skills include interpreting and relating, interaction, discovery and critical cultural awareness. The (3) attitudes involve curiosity, openness, readiness to see other cultures and the speaker's own without being judgmental.

5. Native or non-native language teachers have more credit to teach culture?

Multilingualism and multiculturalism have spread all over the world, which has had a great impact on foreign language education and on the role of the foreign language teacher. Recently, the status of the native speaker as the model for language use and of the notion of standard language has been questioned. Consequently, the typical situation when language learners have to use a foreign language, especially if it is English, is not an encounter and interaction with native speakers; the most likely scenario is that they have to talk with other non-native speakers of the language. Adapting to these changes, language teachers have to take up the mediator role: they have to be culturally sensitive and build bridges of understanding between different cultures. Bochner defines a cultural mediator as "*an individual who is multicultural, functions in a transnational role ... and has a social network spanning many cultures*" (1981: 7). Not only is the task of the language teacher to convey linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge, but also to mediate between different

(cultural) identities and world views. As Hans Lauge Hansen claims, foreign language teaching presents a two-fold challenge:

> "*On the one hand it will be necessary to make our present professional skills visible and relevant. It is no longer enough to teach language and literature to the students; it will be our responsibility to explain why foreign language acquisition is important, and how the study of literary and cultural issues is a part of an intercultural Bildung process of the individual students. On the other hand, the foreign language studies must reflect on the relation of language, culture, identity, history and the self-knowledge and imaginary world as represented in art and literature*" (2004: 115).

The role of the language teacher become more complex; according to Damen, "*in adopting a communicative approach to second language learning, we, as teachers, have embraced several assumptions [...] concerning our pedagogical roles and goals as cultural guides*" (1987: 212). However, the question may arise whether non-native speaking teachers have enough credit to undertake the role of the cultural guide? "*How can teachers be guides, mediators, or ambassadors of something that is not really part of themselves? Is it the case of the blind (or almost blind) leading the blind?*" (Enyedi, 2000: 7). Enyedi accepts that native speaking teachers have an advantage and are definitely considered to be more authentic and creditable when it comes to transmitting the traditionally perceived 'cultural knowledge'. However, she also adds that since non-native speaker teachers have taken the same steps while learning a foreign language as their learners have, they can be more prepared for the language difficulties and the "*culture bumps*" (2000: 8) the learners might come across. Moreover, Kramsh (2003) argues that if we accept the view that a language teacher is a "*cross-cultural mediator someone who has acquired the ability to interact with 'others', ... someone who has learned to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, and to be conscious of their evaluations of difference*" (44), it does not matter whether the language teacher is a native or a non-negative speaker.

6. What is the language teachers' attitude toward culture teaching and intercultural competence development?

It is not surprising that most foreign language teachers become uneasy and stressful (Enyedi 2000) when they face the new roles and responsi-

bilities waiting for them. On the one hand, they are afraid of not having an adequate cultural knowledge, a sufficiently-developed cultural awareness and attitudes to become creditable mediators between cultures. On the other hand, Byram and Kramsch (2008) claim that teachers teaching language and culture as a unity are also afraid of the stereotypes related to the target culture.

Furthermore, it is also very likely that they do not know how to assess intercultural competence and the results of the impact that culture teaching had on learners' attitudes (Gonnen 2012). The root of these problems is mainly found in the lack of systematic methodology and adequate training supporting teachers to get knowledge, develop cultural awareness or insights, and certain attitudes (Wright 1996). Without them, foreign language teachers cannot be expected to take up all the new roles and responsibilities assigned to them. They have to be trained how to teach culture and develop intercultural competence. It is essential for them to have explicit aims for building instructions around cultural themes.

Furthermore, syllabus design, textbook content, and the overcrowded curriculum also pose a great challenge to language teachers. Barletta Manjarrés notes that "*Textbooks adopted by institutions that teach foreign languages are rarely evaluated in terms of how they promote the development of intercultural competence*" (2009: 146). Then she continues that there is no extra time and space for the purpose of teaching culture; hence, "*for many it is rather difficult to include a new component and develop it within the same time limits*" (ibid). Similarly, Holló and Lázár note that a "*frequent and seemingly plausible excuse for omitting [the cultural] component is that the allotted time and the most immediate purpose of the class restrict the scope of English lessons*" (2000: 1). Moreover, it is also difficult to decide on the cultural information that the teacher includes in the curriculum. Enyedi (2000) rightfully asks the following questions: What aspect of the target culture is important and what is not? How can teachers avoid giving stereotypical images and outdated information? Then she goes as far as to ask "*whether it is worth even trying?*" Finally, she concludes, in agreement with the modern interpretation of culture teaching that the emphasis should not be put on transmitting facts and information about the target culture. Teachers should be aware of the stages of culture learning and help their learners through the struggles and difficulties they face in each stage by calling attention to the similarities

and differences between their home culture and foreign cultures as well as by encouraging them to avoid being judgmental and stereotypical toward other cultures.

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Appendix

Figure 1: A Conceptual Model of Culture Learning (Piage et. al., 2000)

A. Knowledge

1. Culture-General: Intercultural Phenomena

- cultural adjustment stages
- culture shock
- intercultural development
- culture learning
- cultural identity
- cultural marginality

2. Culture Specific

- "little c" target culture knowledge
- "Big C" target culture knowledge
- pragmatics
- sociolinguistic competence

B. Behavior

1. Culture General: Intercultural Skills

- culture learning strategies
- coping and stress management strategies
- intercultural communicative competence
- intercultural perspective-taking skills
- cultural adaptability
- transcultural competence

2. Culture Specific: Target Culture Skills

- little "c" culture—appropriate everyday behavior
- Big "C" culture—appropriate contextual behavior

C. Attitudes

1. Culture General

- positive attitude toward different cultures
- positive attitude toward culture learning
- ethnorelative attitude regarding cultural differences

2. Culture Specific

- positive attitude toward target culture
- positive attitude toward target culture persons

4. Asessing intercultural communicative competence

Adrienn Fekete

1. Introduction

Although considerable scholarly attention has been paid to the topic of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) development, interculturality has not fully found its way into foreign language education. One of the reasons for that can be that language teachers are not aware of the ways of developing and assessing ICC in the language classroom. The aim of this chapter thus is two-fold: (1) it presents a conceptual framework of the dimensions of ICC, ands (2) it discusses possible ways of assessment of ICC within the framework of these dimensions in order to provide a theoretical and practical guideline for language teachers.

2. Background

Undoubtedly, language learning and teaching are, by definition, intercultural (Sercu, 2005). The encounter with other cultures – different identities, beliefs, worldviews, etc. - is definitely a challenging experience because it confronts language learners' previous beliefs, values and behaviors (Skopinskaja, 2009). In order to able to cope with? intercultural experience, it is necessary for language learners to have certain intercultural competencies and characteristics. In Sercu's word, these are the following:

> "*the willingness to engage with the foreign culture, self-awareness and the ability to look upon oneself from the outside, the ability to see the world through the others' eyes, the ability to cope with uncertainty, the ability to act as a cultural mediator, the ability to evaluate others' points of view, the ability to consciously use culture learning skills and to read the cultural context, and the understanding that individuals cannot be reduced to their collective identities*" (2005: 2).

One of the main goals of language education, therefore, has become to educate language learners who are able to interact effectively across cul-

tures and to successfully mediate between at least two cultures. Effective intercultural interaction is characterized by Lussier et al. as "*accomplishing a negotiation between people based on both culture-specific and cultural-general features that are on the whole respectful and favourable to each*" (2007: 23). Furthermore, Guilherme claims that language encounters should be turned into intercultural encounters and intercultural relationships (2000).

Although educating students to become open-minded, tolerant and respectful towards other cultures is a clear goal of language education nowadays, most of the teachers do not incorporate culture teaching, intercultural communicative competence) development and ICC assessment into their curriculum. As Holló and Lázár put it, teaching culture in the foreign language classroom is still a "neglected element" (2000). The reasons for that are partly that *"the allotted time and the most immediate purpose of the class restrict the scope of English lessons*" (Holló and Lázár, 2000: 1), the lack of a "*new conceptual framework of reference in languages in order to evolve, first, from linguistic competence to language communicative competence* (*Canale and Swain, 1980) and, second, to integrate the development of ICC in the conception of second and foreign language curriculum*" (Lussier et. al., 2007: 25).

This conceptual framework is essential in order to help teachers in their work to integrate culture teaching into language teaching given that it can function as a guideline for both development and assessment of ICC in the language classroom. According to Skopinskaja, "*[a]lthough most teachers do not deny the importance of intercultural communication in their language course curriculum, few teachers actively assess whether their students are attaining their intercultural learning goals or not*" (2009: 136). She continues then that this problem may be attributed to teachers' uncertainty about how to assess culture: "*should they assess language or culture simultaneously or separately?*" (ibid). Gonnen furthermore adds that "*teachers may not know how to measure cross cultural competence and changes in students' attitudes as a result of culture teaching*" (2012: 29).

Not to mention that some scholars who thoroughly studied the topic have serious doubts whether intercultural communicative competence can be explicitly tested (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993). However, "*our worlds are engraved with the 'soft barbarity' of assessment*" (Le Goff,

1999 as cited in Dervin, 2010: 7); it is definitely a common practice in language education. Language teachers have no choice but to test and assess their learners because "*learners tend not to pay attention to what is not assessed and therefore demand that good assessment tools be developed*" (Sercu 2004: 74). Furthermore, assessment gives feedback to the teacher and to the students as well, which can improve the learning process. Consequently, it is essential to refine the ways of both assessing and evaluating intercultural learning. The term assessment as well as evaluation are used in this context because as it is highlighted by Lussier et al., "*in the Common European Framework of Reference*", assessment refers to "*the proficiency of language user (assessment tasks, assessment procedures, etc.) but not all competencies of ICC require language tests*" (25). Hence, they suggest that when referring to a broader dimension such as savoir-etre and the whole process, it is more appropriate to use the term "*evaluation*" (ibid).

3. Byram's conceptual framework of intercultural communicative competence - the five dimensions

Before discussing a particular framework for ICC assessment, it is necessary to present Byram's (1997) model of ICC. In general terms, this model involves certain (1) knowledge, (2) skills and (3) attitudes besides linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence. By (1) knowledge, Byram means knowledge "*of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction*" (1997: 51). (2) Skills include interpreting and relating, interaction, discovery and critical cultural awareness. The (3) attitudes involve curiosity, openness, readiness to see other cultures and the speaker's own without being judgmental. Byram also developed a detailed conceptual framework of intercultural communicative competence comprising five dimensions, or *savoirs* serving as a basis for a conceptual framework for assessment.

- *The first savoir, savoirs with a plural 's', constitutes the knowledge dimension of the conceptual framework. It has been defined as 'knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor's country on the one hand, and similar knowledge of the processes and interaction at individual and societal lev-*

els, on the other hand' (Byram, 1997: 35). *These savoirs together constitute the frame of reference of the people living (in) a particular culture. The words and gestures which people use, the behaviours they display, the values they believe in, the symbols they cherish, etc. are always culture-bound and carry meaning within a particular cultural frame of reference. Therefore, in intercultural communication it is important always to be sensitive to potential referential differences. Apart from culture specific knowledge, the interculturally competent person also needs to acquire a certain amount of culture-general knowledge, which will allow him/her to deal with a large diversity of foreign cultures.*

- Savoir-apprendre and savoir-comprendre together constitute the skills dimension of the conceptual framework. Savoir-apprendre refers to 'the capacity to learn cultures and assign meaning to cultural phenomena in an independent way' (Byram & Zarate, 1997: 241). *Savoir-comprendre is related to savoir-apprendre, and refers to the capacity to interpret and relate cultures. These two savoirs are clearly in line with the answers that theorists of education have formulated in response to the changing and expanding nature of the world in which people will need the knowledge, skills (and attitudes) to continue learning throughout their lifetime. Thus, the terms reflect constructivist theories of autonomous learning, as they have been formulated in, for example, Scardamalia and Bereiter* (1991, 1994), Wood and Wood (1996), or Richardson (1997).
- *Savoir-faire refers to the overall ability to act in an interculturally competent way in intercultural contact situations, to take into account the specific cultural identity of one's interlocutor and to act in a respectful and co-operative way*.
- *Savoir-être and savoir-s'engager are best considered together because they refer to a general disposition that is characterised by 'a critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one's own' (savoir-s'engager) (Byram, 1997:54) and 'the capacity and willingness to abandon ethnocentric attitudes and perceptions and the ability to establish and maintain a relationship between one's own and the foreign culture (savoir-être)'. From the above descriptions of the intercultural experience, the intercultural person and intercultural communicative competence in foreign language education, it is clear that in order to support the intercultural learning process foreign language teachers need additional knowledge, attitudes, competencies and skills?* (Sercu, 2005: 4–5).

In the framework of a project initiated by the European Center for Modern Languages (ECML) entitled "*Languages for social cohesion: language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe*," Lázár and her colleagues (experts of the topic of ICC) wrote the book: *Developing and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* (2007), which aims at giving answers, among others, to pre- and in-service language teachers regarding the following questions : What exactly does the cultural dimension mean? How can we define, develop, assess and evaluate intercultural communicative competence? In this book, Lussier et al. state that when it comes to assessing ICC, we have to answer three questions, namely: (a) What do we mean by assessing intercultural knowledge/savoirs; (b) intercultural know-how/savoir-faire; and (c) intercultural being/savoir-etre? While answering these questions, they provide guidelines and practical ideas for assessment:

> "*3.1 Assessing intercultural knowledge/savoirs*
>
> *Until now, ICC was mostly limited to the teaching and assessment of "knowledge" (savoir) by means of paper and pencil testing, including multiple-choice items, short answers, association or pairing items; all aiming at measuring the acquisition of cultural facts. Most of the time, learners have to identify similar or different cultural elements, to reorganise, regroup or compare different types of characteristics or expressions (physical, mental, moral, affective) from a text. But three domains of knowledge are to be considered: the humanistic approach linked to collective memory in terms of culture and civilisation, the anthropological approach in terms of knowing the diversity in the ways of living of different cultures, and the sociological approach looking at the sociocultural contexts of the target societies*.
>
> *3.2 Assessing intercultural know-how/savoir-faire*
>
> *Until now, in terms of know-how/savoir-faire, the emphasis has been more on the linguistic aspects of communicative competence that reflect the degree of students' ability to function and interact in the target language. But, in ICC we need to take into account how students adjust to social and cultural environments, that is, integrate experiences in the target language to use efficiently their communicative competence as intercultural speakers. It is not only a question of being able to function in a language but to interact, adjust, integrate, interpret and negotiate in different cultural contexts*.

3.3 Assessing intercultural being/savoir-être

So far, assessment related to all dimensions of being/savoir-être has been left aside and teaching has focused mostly on "cultural awareness", which refers to the understanding of differences and similarities between cultures. In the European context, it is often taught in the students' mother tongue. But, this is just one sub-dimension of existential knowledge. Nowadays, we need to teach beyond that first level of being/savoir-être. There is a need for students to reach the level of "critical" awareness and to take into account other identities, beliefs and values in reference to their own. They may need to reshape their own values and integrate new perspectives so that they eventually become intercultural mediators when facing conflict-ridden situations" (Lussier et al., 2007:26, 27).

4. Methods of intercultural communicative competence

The aim of the assessment of the three dimensions of ICC is to give feedback to language learners on their intercultural learning as well as to provide feedback to teachers on the level of their learners' intercultural performance. Assessment thus should not focus only on testing cultural information or objective culture-related knowledge but rather on "the skills 'knowing how' and the attitudes 'being'" mentioned above" (Lussier et al., 2007; Skopinskaja, 2009).

Lussier et al. (2007) discuss six main points along which the methodology of assessment should be organized:

a) Formative and summative assessment

Formative assessment aims at monitoring the learners' learning in order to provide ongoing feedback to both the teacher and to the learners themselves to support the improvement of the teaching and learning process; summative assessment evaluates the learner's achievement at the end of the an instructional unit in the form of a grade (Brindley, 2001). Because assessing ICC is a highly complex task given that cognitive, behavioral and affective aspects are to be covered, evaluation should be mainly formative (Lussier, et al., 2007).

b) Continuous assessment

It is important that assessment is carried out several times during the course (ibid). Skopinskaja then adds that ICC may be evaluated by both the teacher and the learners who can evaluate their own performance (self-eveluation) (2009).

c) Assessment at different phases of a course

"*A pre-test intends to find out the initial level of the students' intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes before the course starts, a test during the course can 'gauge progress and increase motivation'*" (Corbett, 2003:94, as cited in Skoponskaja, 2009), "*and a post-test measures the students' intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes after the course has ended, giving thus some indication of the effectiveness of intercultural learning*" (Skopinskaja, 2009: 138).

d) Objective and subjective tests

Different types of assessment should be carried out at different stages of ICC development during a course, depending on the aim of instruction. A rough distinction can be made between objective and subjective tests. As opposed to objective tests, subjective ones consist of an evaluative judgment on behalf of the teacher. When assessing learners's ICC development, teachers become observers of the whole process, rather than testers of the end product. Consequently, although objective test may be suitable for testing culture related knowledge, subjective test are more effective for skills and attitudes.

e) Holistic and analytic assessment

Holistic assessment focuses on a global judgment as well as on the task and learner's development as a whole. Considering analytic assessment, the three dimensions of ICC are closely and separately monitored by the teacher to create different profiles of learners' performance.

f) Direct and indirect assessment

Direct assessment in the context of ICC means that learners have to perform a role-play (savoir-faire), or discuss a topic related to other culture's attitudes (savoir-etre) in a small group and the teacher assesses their performance with the help of a criteria grid. In the case of indirect assessment, pen and paper tests assessing cultural knowledge are used.

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5. Acculturation process and cultural activities in the foreign language classroom

Adrienn Fekete

1. Introduction

When teaching a foreign language, the teacher automatically brings (an)other culture(s) into the classroom. Other cultures or other worlds reflecting norms, worldviews, beliefs, habits, etc. that are totally different from the learners' own. It is not surprising then that this intercultural experience is not always a comfortable one because learners cannot avoid revising their beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values that they have previously taken for granted. Consequently, if teachers want to prepare learners to learn a culture comprehensively, it is essential for them to be familiar with the research on the role of attitudes and processes of acculturation. Teachers not only need to help students revise their linguistic and cultural patterns but also to prepare students for acculturation. This chapter endeavors to support foreign language teachers in understanding the stages of acculturation in the language classroom; moreover, it demonstrates some activities designed to prepare students to make the process of accepting 'the new and strange' cultural patterns of other cultures smoother.

2. Background

One of the major changes that have recently affected language teaching theory and method is the change in the role of culture teaching, which is mainly due to the fact that culture has been defined and perceived in different ways. For example, The National Center for Cultural Competence defines culture as "*integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations*" (Goode et al. 2000: 1) Similarly, Fenner and Newby also claim that:

> "*culture is more than artefacts that 'can be found out there', it is also the glasses through which we perceive the world around us and the language we use to express the culture of which we are an integral part. We are influenced by the culture(s) we are socialized into, and simultaneously we influence that culture. This is a dialectic process, and culture must be seen as a dynamic force in continuous flux, not a static entity. The process does not only take place within our own culture; a similar process constitutes the encounter with a foreign culture*" (2000: 147).

According to this view of culture, langue and culture are tightly intertwined and interdependent because language structures and language use reflect the norms, values, behaviors, etc., shared by the speakers of that language. Furthermore, language and its speakers also have an impact on culture. Based on these changes in perception, Paige and his colleagues created the following definition on culture learning:

> "*Culture learning is the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviorally, and affectively"* (2000: 4).

The main goal of language education is thus interpreted in terms of intercultural competence (ICC) development, which is "*the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures*" (Meyer 1991: 138).

3. Intercultural experience and acculturation in the classroom

When teaching a foreign language, the teacher automatically brings (an)other culture(s) into the classroom. Other cultures or other worlds reflecting norms, worldviews, beliefs, habits, etc. that are totally different from learners' own. It is not surprising then that this intercultural experience is not always a comfortable one because learners cannot avoid revising the beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values that they have previously taken for granted (Berry et al. 1992). Hence this process is definitely an emotional rollercoaster because the learners experience a variety of feelings ranging from anger and anxiety through excitement to relief. These

emotions can be caused by many things such as "*fear of encountering something new, excitement at the discovery of new and different ways of thinking, relief through self-expression, anger that a deeply held belief may have been challenged*" (Sercu 2005: 2).

In relation to intercultural experience, Enyedi in her article entitled "*Culture Shock in the Classroom*" (2000) also discusses the process of acculturation, "*the learning process leading to adjustment to non-native cultural patterns*" (Enyedi 2000: 5), in doing so she draws a parallel between acculturation and, as she calls it, "*linguistic acculturation*" happening in the context of the language classroom. Studies related to culture learning determine stages of the acculturation process examining the cognitive, affective and behavioral characteristics of each stage. These stages which travelers go through on their cultural journey are as follows, based on Damen's acculturation model (1987): *before setting out*, *the tourist's view*, *the immigrant's stage*, and the *citizen's status* (in Egyedi 2000). After presenting these stages in detail, Enyedi compares the experiences of English as a foreign language learners' in the EFL classroom. She claims that foreign langue learning can be viewed as a journey to a foreign land, in this case, this land is the foreign language itself. Similarly to travelers, language learners also meet unusual patterns in the form of the foreign language. They also go through the same process as travelers "*to adjust themselves in this world of the unknown*" (Enyedi 2000: 7). She calls this process linguistic acculturation because "*it is brought about by exposure to the foreign language and because, as we will see, it resembles in many ways the acculturation process*" (ibid). Then she continues with the detailed description of the stages of linguistic acculturation:

> "*Before setting out*
>
> *At the complete beginner stage, learners are confined to their mother tongue. They know very little of the foreign language, but they recognise it when spoken by others. Some of them can sing along with pop singers, making up nonsense words that fit in with their image of the language. These learners are proud to be able to recognise English words around them; they are often unaware of the differences between various parts of the English speaking world (i.e., everyone is 'English' who speaks English).*

The tourist's view

The initial phase of language learning opens up the tourist's perspective of the language. Learners become aware of the strange, exotic features and usually respond to these positively ("How great that you can call everyone you in English! It is true that the spelling is totally illogical, but there are no declensions!") These learners often have an over-optimistic view of their command of English. They proudly tell their friends that they are now learning English, and that English is 'dead easy'. Contemporary methodologies often reinforce this feeling by emphasising and building on the international elements in the foreign language.

The survivor's stage

This is the critical stage in a language learner's career. The easy game is over. As learners acquire more knowledge in the language, they realise that it does not build up into a system that follows the logic of their mother tongue. They instinctively try to apply the rules of their first language to English, and it just does not work. The foreign language seems confused and confusing. The typical question at this stage is "Why is X like that in English?" (meaning that "It is not the same in Hungarian, so it cannot be right", or "The English invented it just to annoy us"). This is the stage where many language learners give up. There is an obvious conflict between the philosophy, the system, the rules or, to put it simply, the culture of the learner's first language and that of the foreign language. Failing to find one-to-one correspondences between languages and being unable to use the routines of their mother tongue results in the same stress and anxiety that brings about culture shock in travellers. For this kind of linguistic culture shock, the learners do not even need to leave the classroom. Yet it can be equally harmful.

The immigrant's stage

Once they have overcome the linguistic culture shock, learners begin to be aware of and accept the inner logic of the foreign language. They do not panic easily if there are differences between the systems of English and Hungarian; they tend to fit the newly learnt language into the system of the foreign language rather than make comparisons with the mother tongue. If learners realise and accept, for example, that the sky and trees are three-dimensional in English, they will be less tempted to make a mistake in their use of prepositions because of the interference of Hungarian. Similarly, if they are aware of the concept of time in the English language, it is much

easier to decide whether or not to apply time-shift in Reported Speech. It is important to realise that the feeling of security and comfort in using the foreign language is the result of language awareness, a deeper understanding of 'culture' rather than simply being more accurate. This is the stage where learners do not resort to translation back into or from the mother tongue all the time, but begin to think in English.

The citizen's status

Citizens in a foreign language have a native-like competence, which includes an awareness of the language system and an understanding of the culture expressed through the language. Because of this, they do not depend on a language teacher, and their further development is largely their own business. These 'learners' probably find it difficult to understand why the there is/there are structure is so difficult for beginners, and have long forgotten their own struggles with the Present Perfect. Teachers of English are an exception, of course, but they are trained to have better memories about their initial difficulties" (2000: 8–9).

4. Cultural activities

In addition to Enyedi's claims, Scheu also argues that if teachers want to prepare learners to learn a culture comprehensively, it is essential for them to be familiar with the research on the role of attitudes and processes of acculturation (1996). Teachers not only need to help students revise their linguistic and cultural patterns, but also to prepare students for acculturation. In his article entitled "*Integrating Cultural Activities into Foreign* Language *Classroom*" Scheu suggests some practical activities designed to prepare students to make the process of accepting 'the new and strange' cultural patterns of other cultures easier. These activities focus predominantly on helping the relativization of cultural norms and the development of self-awareness. This learning programme recognizes the gradual nature of the acculturation process; consequently, it starts with building up student's awareness of their own values, norms and behavior then it continues with examining the cultural patterns of foreign cultures (Scheu 1996: 36). Referring to Seelye (1987), Scheu identifies the skills of cross-cultural understanding, which are also viewed as the goals of cultural instruction. The seven goals determined by Seelye have been or-

dered according to a psychological introduction followed by the combination of linguistic and cultural objectives. The goals are the following:

"*1. Attitudes towards other societies: students will be guided to experience intellectual curiosity about the target culture and empathy towards its people.*
2. The functionality and relativity of culturally conditioned hehaviour: students will acquire an understanding of the causes of their own and foreign behaviour.
3. The interaction of language and socio-cultural variables (age, sex, social class ,etc.): students will become aware of socio-cultural restrictions upon the use of language.
4. Cultural connotations of words and phrases: students will develop an awareness that cultural images are associated with common words.
5. Conventional behaviour in common situations: students' understanding of conventions constraining how people act in common situations in the target culture will be developed.
6. Evaluating statements about a culture: students' ability to make, evaluate and refine generalities concerning the target culture will be enhanced.
7. Researching another culture: students show that they have developed skills needed to locate and organize information about the target culture." (Scheu 1996: 41)

In the following section, some selected activities are presented. They are ordered by the goals of cross-cultural understanding (for the full set of activates see Scheu (1996)).These activities were designed for teaching English as a foreign language to Spanish learners of intermediate level of language proficiency. Furthermore, they are built up to support the goals of culture teaching or intercultural competence development mentioned above. More specifically, they aim at guiding learners stage by stage through their emotional journey of acculturation, starting with the reconstruction of attitudes and world views (Scheu 1996). These goal-related activities incorporate the development of intercultural competence and the development of the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing in the foreign language classroom. Scheu highlights that for the effective use of these activates in the classroom, careful planning is necessary on behalf of the teachers. Furthermore, language teachers should aim at facilitating progressive skill acquisition in culture; more specifically, they should prepare their learners to be able to transform cultural information

into cultural knowledge and tolerance. Then Scheu concludes that this "*psychological and methodological approach will allow students to make the knowledge of the foreign language class applicable to their cross-cultural experiences*" (1996: 48).

"*GOAL-RELATED ACTIVITIES*

***FIRST GOAL**: Changing Attitudes Towards Other Societies*

First activity: Defining Culture. Students will be presented with ten examples of culture-bound behaviour and ten examples of individual behaviour. Their tasks consists of studying the examples and defining, -according to the Concept Attainment Model (Joyce and Weil 1980 as cited by Mantle Bromley 1992) the concept by looking for patterns in the culture examples. Students will also try to determine whether other examples belong to the concept of culture or not. After having given severa1 examples of the culture or individuality students will list the characteristics of the culture examples and try to provide other examples of behaviour, deciding whether it is cultural or individual. This activity will be continued until the students are able to define the concept of culture from their list of characteristics and until a definition is agreed upon by the teacher and the class.

Second activity: Cultural Awareness. Students are asked to brainstorm elements of their native culture. In small groups students then have to complete two tasks: a) continue to record as many examples of Spanish culture as they can in about eight minutes and b) decide on 15 to 20 topics that would be relevant in a short course for foreign students learning about Spanish culture. As a whole class the lists will be discussed, contrasting similarities and diversities.

Third activity: Eliciting Stereotypes. This activity for the understanding of culture-bound behaviour and the existence of stereotypes is presented by C. Mantle-Brornley (1992). The teacher will elicit commonly held target-culture stereotypes and help students determine their origin and the degree to which these stereotypes represent the overall population. Then, students are asked to collect examples that reinforce stereotypes: in newspapers and magazine advertisement. The whole class will discuss how these stereotypes are reinforced by society and why they are difficult to eliminate.

SECOND GOAL: *The Functionality and Relativity of Culturally Conditioned Behavior.*

Activity: Answering Real Questions.

Material: Large sheets of paper.

Preparation: Bring to the class large sheets of paper for each English-speaking country. At the top of each sheet of paper write the name of each of the countries.

In class: Divide the class in as many groups as countries are represented on the sheets. Each group is to move from paper to paper and write the questions they wish to ask about each country. Students may write as many questions as they like. Then each group will represent one of the countries. The papers with the questions are distributed and a period of time assigned to each group to answer the questions written about the country they represent. Tell the groups to meet outside the class to plan their presentations. Explain that they are not to write out a speech: they may use notes, but they are to speak spontaneously. Over several class periods, groups take turns to make their presentations. After all the presentations have been made, the teacher should conduct a whole-class discussion on the following questions: What did you learn about the countries represented by the people in your class? In what ways, if any, did this activity change your opinion about any of the countries?

THIRD GOAL: *Interaction of Language and Socio-cultural Variables*

Activity: This activity consists of a series of dialogues that are either acted out or taped and illustrated by filmstrips. The dialogues will show how language and gestures are influenced by the age, sex, social class, place of residence and relationship of the speakers. After listening to and observing the four dialogues, students will carry out two of the following activities:

a) The students will be asked to recall what happened.

b) Given dialogue statements, they will identify the relationship of the speakers.

c) Given similar circumstances and a dialogue statement, the students will be able to vary appropriately the expressions and gestures used in greeting a relative of the same sex. a friend of the same age, etc.

d) Students present a similar dialogue of one or more circumstances portrayed in these examples.

FOURTH GOAL: *Cultural Connotations of Words and Phrases*

Activity: Cultural connotation of a tea.

Preparation: present a popular saying "That's not my cup of tea", an example of English literature: 0. Wilde's play Lady Windmere's fin, English advertisements, a political cartoon and a short skit and provide an assortment of English teas in the class.

In class: Students will indicate the cultural meanings of the word tea in the target culture by carrying out all the following activities.

a) Students will point out the importance of the word tea in popular sayings and in literature.

b) Students will point out the role of tea in the English society. Examining the advertisements and the cartoons.

C) Students will list examples of the relationship between tea and culture upon witnessing a short skit.

d) Students will learn to identify sorts of tea by taste and name.

FIFTH GOAL: *Conventional Behaviour in Common Situations.*

Activity: Culture Capsule.

Preparation: Culture capsules are generally prepared outside of class by a group of students but presented in class time in five or ten minutes at the end of the period. A culture capsule consists of a paragraph of explanation of one minimal difference between the native and the target custom, along with several illustrative photos or relevant realia. The subject matter can be quite varied - they are not merely disassociated fragments of the life of society.

Material: A short video sequence

In class: Ask the students to take a sheet of paper and divide it with a line into two halves: 'same and different.' Tell the students that you are going to play a video sequence which contains information about the target culture. Their task is to find three things that are the same in their country and three things that are different. After they have watched the sequence twice, divide the students into small groups to discuss the similarities and differences they have observed. Ask each group to prepare on their own a culture capsule about one of the differences observed.

SIXTH GOAL: *Evaluating Statements about the Target Culture.*

Activity: Culture Assimilator. Severa1 social psychologists have developed a programmed technique to facilitate the adjustment to another culture (Fiedler, Mitchell and Triandis 1971, as cited by Seelye 1987). This technique provides the students with severa1 episodes of target cultural behaviour. Each episode describes a critica1 incident of cross-cultural interaction, a situation the native speaker finds puzzling or which he/she is likely to misinterpret, and a situation that can be interpreted in a fairly unequivocal manner.

Material: A task sheet for each student.

In class: Divide the class into small groups. Hand out the task sheet and explain the task to the students. They are to work together, discussing the situations and deciding what they would do in each situation. After the students have completed the task sheet, a volunteer from each group summarizes the group's discussion and answers. Then, distribute the answer key and have the students continue their discussion in small groups, comparing their own answers with those in the answer key.

***SEVENTH GOAL:** Researching another Culture.*

Activity: British Universities.
Prerequisite activities: The students are asked to
a) consult English magazines and newspapers in the library;
b) interview English exchange students;
c) write to an English university for copies of schedules and curricula;
d) contact the British Council for posters, flyers etc., relating to English students' life;
e) consult reference work (civilization books) containing information on British education.

Creative activities:
1. Students will present a skit of a classroom situation in British university life.
2. The students might make a notebook of newspaper articles on British academic life.
3. Students should prepare a discussion on student organization at British universities.
4. Students are asked to write a paper contrasting requirements for a university degree in Britain and in Spain."

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CHAPTER 3

LANGUAGE AND GENDER

By Helga Koczogh

1. Gender differences in conversational interaction

Helga Koczogh

1. Introduction

Gender differences in conversational habits have been a favoured subject matter of scientists and researchers for a long time. However, gendered language was not taken as a serious topic of study until the publications of Robin Lakoff in the 1970s. During our everyday interactions, we can observe several notable differences in the communicative behaviour and communication styles of men and women. Women are generally considered to be more (linguistically) polite than men. It has been shown that women tend to use less disruptive interruptions, more supportive feedback, and facilitative questions while men are likely to interrupt, criticize, challenge and control the floor.

2. Features of 'women's language'

Lakoff (1973) has identified a number of linguistic features which she claims are used more often by women than by men. She suggests that women's speech is characterised by the following linguistic features:

(1) Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g., you know, sort of, well, you see
(2) Tag questions, e.g., she's very nice, isn't she?
(3) Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g., it's really good
(4) 'Empty' adjectives, e.g., divine, charming, cute
(5) Precise colour terms, e.g., magenta, aquamarine
(6) Intensifiers such as just and so, e.g., I like him so much.
(7) 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g., consistent use of standard verb forms
(8) 'Superpolite' forms, e.g., indirect requests, euphemisms
(9) Avoidance of strong swear words, the use of e.g., fudge, my goodness instead
(10) Emphatic stress, e.g., it was a BRILLIANT performance.

(Holmes 2008: 298)

A major critique of Lakoff's study is that she overlooks the fact that a linguistic device often has several functions, and we can arrive at the right interpretation only by considering the specific context. In addition, La-

koff's claims were based on introspection and anecdotal evidence, yet they brought about a flurry of research (and debate).

3. Male and female conversational style

For the most part, studies on conversational style have reported that women are supportive and cooperative in conversation, while men are apt to be more competitive conversationalists. Fishman (1997) claims that there is an unequal distribution of work in conversation: women are more actively engaged in ensuring interaction than men.

Previous studies indicate that women are subject to a complex array of stereotypes. Spender summed up beliefs about gender and talk in the following way: "In short, feminine talk is a lot of polite talk about silly things; whereas masculine talk is a little blunt talk about important things" (Spender 1979: 41).

3.1. Talking time

A widely held stereotype is that women talk too much. However, a meta-analysis of gender differences in the amount of speech reveals that men are significantly more talkative than women (Leaper & Ayres 2007). It has been suggested that women and men tend to talk more in different kinds of situations. In public domains, such as seminars, committee meetings, and television debates, males tend to dominate talking time. It is possible that men dominate the talk when it offers potential advantages, such as status enhancement. This is supported by studies on interactions between couples in private, in which men contributed much less talk than women, while women worked hard to get a conversation going (Nordenstam 1992). Holmes (1998: 472) offers the explanation that "*women and men contribute differently in different contexts because they have different communicative aims*".

3.2. Topic and topical organization

Research shows that in same-sex interactions men usually talk about cars, sports, and jobs, while women tend to talk to each other about children and personal relations. Nordenstam (1992) reports that in her study, women talk about both men and women, whereas men mostly mention other men. Kramer's (1974) analysis of cartoons taken form *The New Yorker* magazine showed that in these the topics that women engaged in

were connected to social life, food and drink, lifestyle, life troubles and books. On the other hand, the topics men talked about were business, politics, sports, legal issues and finance. Thus, it can be claimed that women generally talk about feelings and relations whereas men focus on things and activities.

Women are also shown to use more abrupt topic shifts and initiate more topics than men do. According to Tannen (1984), abrupt topic shifting is a sign of women's 'high-involvement style' (Nordenstam 1992).

3.3. Interruptions

Regarding gender-differences in conversational style, the study of interruptions is a rich area of investigation. It is a common belief that men interrupt more than women, and that women get interrupted more than men. Zimmerman and West (1975) were among the first researchers to survey the topic and they concluded that in mixed-gender interactions men made nearly all of the interruptions of women's speech while in same-sex conversations women interrupted each other more frequently than men did with other men. Since West and Zimmerman's early work, many studies (e.g., James & Clarke 1993, Tannen 2001) have replicated their findings. Holmes (1995) notes that the tendency for men to interrupt women persists even when the woman has high status. In departmental meetings, conferences, and doctor-patient interactions the pattern holds.

However, analysts differ in how they define interruption and the fact that interruptions can serve several functions is another factor to consider. Interruptions can facilitate conversation or they can be aimed at taking away the conversational floor. The vast majority of research reports that supportive interruptions (backchannel utterances, simultaneous speech) are more common among women, while disruptive interruptions are mainly used by men.

One explanation for gender differences in the use of interruptions focuses on the social meaning of talk. It has been suggested that while women are concerned with solidarity, men are interested in status. Male talk "*appears to be more competitive, more concerned with dominating others and asserting status*" (Holmes 1995: 67). Using disruptive interruptions is a tool for doing so.

3.4. Feedback

The fact that women have in many studies been found to provide more supportive feedback to their conversational partners than men do also supports the claim that women are more cooperative in conversation. In one of her studies on the distribution of positive feedback (e.g., *mm, mhm, yeah*), Holmes (2008: 309) reported that women used over four times as much of this type of supportive feedback as men. Holmes and Stubbe (1997) also found that almost three quarters of women's feedback was explicitly supportive (expressing interest, surprise, agreement, and/or high involvement), while only about half of men's feedback fell into this category.

It is important to note that minimal responses function differently in different contexts. In addition, it has been suggested that minimal responses possess different meanings for men and women, with men using them to signal agreement while women's responses signal active listenership (Sunderland 2006: 115).

3.5. Questions and tag questions

There is an overwhelming difference between male and female use of questions and tag questions in interaction. There seems to be a consensus among researchers that both questions and tag questions are used to a disproportionately greater extent by women. Lakoff (1973) claimed these linguistic devices are indications of women's insecurity. However, Holmes (2008) emphasizes the significance of a functional analysis, pointing out that treating questions and tag questions as monolithic linguistic forms expressing uncertainty distorts reality.

Besides the epistemic function, questions have a range of quite different functions. In their research, Holmes and Stubbe (1997) found New Zealand women to be good listeners: their questions encourage the speaker to keep talking and indicate a high level of interest in the topic. Men also used facilitative questions, but at the same time questions that were distracting, challenging, undermining and disruptive occurred almost exclusively in their interactions. It has been suggested that this kind of verbal behaviour among men serves a general function of expressing group membership and tends to be a tool of competition and status negotiation.

Similarly, tag questions carry out several functions: epistemic (indicating uncertainty), challenging, facilitative (encouraging others to comment and contribute) and softening. Women and men seem to use tags for

different functions. Holmes (1995: 82) provides evidence that contradicts Lakoff's claim about women using tag questions to express uncertainty. She reports that in general men use epistemic modal tags more frequently than women do, whereas women use significantly more facilitative tags than men. In other words, it is men who are more likely to use tag questions for expressing uncertainty.

3.6. Gossip

Another common stereotype is that women gossip a lot. Gossip can be defined as relaxed in-group talk among friends in informal contexts. Its basic function is to signify group membership. Women gossip in order to express solidarity and maintain social relationships.

Women's gossip focuses predominantly on personal feelings, problems and relationships. It may also include damaging observations and negative criticism of absent others. In gossip sessions, women focus almost exclusively on the affective message rather than the referential content (Holmes 2008: 311).

Holmes (ibid.) claims that "*[t]he male equivalent of women's gossip is difficult to define*". In parallel situations, men focus on things and activities and they discuss topics such as sports, cars, achievements and possessions. The topics men discuss communicate referential information and facts rather than feelings and emotions (Holmes 2008: 311).

4. Conclusion: implications for teachers

In conclusion, we can see that there are several stereotypes about women's talk, some of which are supported by research while others are disproved. The conversational features discussed in this paper are very widespread and can be found in many cultures. In addition, the knowledge of conversational gender differences promotes effective (oral) communication. Thus, besides vocabulary and grammar, teachers should definitely devote some time to teaching gender differences in conversational interaction.

Male versus female conversational style can serve as an interesting topic for discussion for upper-intermediate or advanced level students. For example, presenting students with proverbs and sayings about gossipy women generally triggers classroom debate. We can also observe videos of males playing females or vice versa (like the Monty Python guys playing old women) and note how the performers show linguistically that

they are male or female. Alternatively, teachers can use excerpts from books or talk shows illustrating gender differences in conversational style. Another fun activity could be to ask learners to judge the sex of the speakers in dialogues taken from transcripts of talk shows. These tasks help teachers introduce the topic of gender differences in conversation and make the lessons more interesting, fun and enjoyable.

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2. Linguistic sexism in English and the use of non-sexist language

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1. Introduction

Since the feminist movement of the 1970s, there has been a growing interest in the notion of sexism and thus in proposals for gender-fair language use. Linguistic sexism can be defined as the use of language which devalues or even treats either sex, generally women, unfairly or differently, hence fostering gender inequality. Cameron (1992: 101) points out that "*the lexicon and grammatical system of English contains features that exclude, insult and trivialise women*". It is argued that the English language appears to promote notions of male supremacy because it assumes that male is the norm. Feminists have demonstrated that the biased portrayal of the sexes in language use is particularly discriminatory to women and, in an attempt to modify and eliminate these sexist biases from language, they have proposed changes and guidelines for non-sexist language use (Pauwels 2006). In what follows, the most common types of linguistic sexism in English will be illustrated and discussed along with alternative ways to avoid biased language.

2. Sexism at the morphological level

2.1. Derivational suffixes

English morphology reinforces the view that women are deviant, subordinate and unimportant. In a number of word pairs with masculine and feminine forms the female terms are typically derivatives of male forms through morphological processes. For instance, the suffixes *–ess*, *–ette*, *–ine* and *–trix* are attached to the male base to signal 'femaleness' in word pairs such as *butcher/butcheress*, *usher/usherette*, *hero/heroine*, *administrator/administratrix*. These female endings perpetuate the notion that the feminine form is a deviation, a secondary classification, whereas the masculine form is unmarked, and therefore, it is argued, the norm. In addition, Holmes (2008: 319) argues that the suffixes *–ess* and *–ette* "carry conno-

tations of lack of seriousness" in occupational lexis. For example, a *poet* is someone who writes poetry, whereas a *poetess* is just a female poet, someone who is not to be taken seriously and who is less significant. The terms *author/authoress* carry the same connotations. The suffix *–ette* belittles women and implies inferiority as it carries a sense of cuteness or littleness as a result of its primarily diminutive sense in words like *cigarette*, *kitchenette* and *sermonette*.

Furthermore, the "male as norm" principle is reinforced by the fact that it is the male rather than the female form which constitutes the base for derivation. For example, we have both *king* and *queen*, but only *kingdom* and not **queendom*. Along similar lines, the English lexicon contains *craftsman* and *craftswoman*, but only *craftsmanship* and not **craftswomanship* (Nilsen, Bosmajian, Gershuny, & Stanley 1977).

In order to use gender-fair language, job titles which refer exclusively to women should be avoided. In most cases, the use of generic terms, which include both genders, can settle the problem of unequal representation of men and women. For instance, *stewardess* should be substituted by *flight attendant*, *poetess* by *poet*, and *authoress* by *author*.

2.2. Compounds

Compounding is another main type of word-formation process that shows sexism. It can be observed that the productivity of the MAN-element is particularly prominent in English. The English lexicon contains considerably more MAN-compounds, with MAN being the first (e.g., *mankind*, *manpower*, *manslaughter*) or the second element (e.g., *postman*, *gentleman*, *workman*, *craftsman*), than WOMAN-compounds (e.g., *businesswoman*, *noblewoman*, *sportswoman*).

Some of the MAN-compounds referring to occupations (e.g., *chairman*, *policeman*, *salesman*, *postman*) can apply to both sexes, and it has been argued that their use in the generic sense renders women invisible, minimalizing their contribution as well as their worth as human beings. There are various strategies for replacing these compounds. For example, substitutions by PERSON-compounds or other words with the same stem or morphologically unrelated terms provide alternatives for the problematic MAN-compounds. Some of the alternatives are illustrated in Table 1.

Sexist exclusionary term	Gender-neutral alternatives
chairman	chair, chairperson, convener, coordinator, head, moderator, presiding officer
policeman	police officer, member of the police
salesman	sales agent, salesperson, sales clerk, sales representative, salesworker, shop assistant
postman	letter carrier, mail carrier, mail deliverer, postal delivery officer, postal worker

Table 1: Sexist exclusionary occupational nouns and their gender-neutral alternatives

Some apparently gender-neutral occupational nouns like *doctor*, *writer*, and *reporte*r, even though not formally marked for gender, tend to evoke primarily male images. Thus, when indicating female positions, these words are combined with a gratuitous premodifier to implicitly signal a female referent, and professional terms like *lady doctor* (but not **gentleman doctor*), *woman writer* (but not **man writer*) and *girl reporter* (but not **boy reporter*) come into use (Talbot 2010: 225). To assume that all doctors, writers and reporters are male ignores the female segment of the profession and reinforces the assumption that only males are "proper" professionals. Such marked compounds[1] for men are almost non-existent. A typical exception is *male nurse*, which is an anti-male bias as it conveys the view that men are inferior or deviant members of that profession.

Feminists argue that we should avoid stereotyping by omitting labels indicating the person's sex in gender-neutral contexts because they diminish the referent's prestige by drawing attention to their sex. In gender-specific contexts, the use of the adjectives *female* and *male* followed by the noun is preferred over the premodifiers *lady, woman, girl* or *madam* (Lei 2006).

[1] There is no consensus among linguists whether all these words can be considered compounds or not.

3. Sexism at the lexical level

3.1. Words with no female/male counterparts

Pauwels (2006: 553) notes that the asymmetrical treatment of men and women "affects the lexical make-up" of the English language and that "the structure of the lexicon often reflects the 'male as norm' principle through the phenomenon of lexical gaps, that is, the absence of words to denote women in a variety of roles, professions, and occupations". Numerous words with overt masculine markers (e.g., *Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, brotherhood, forefather, workman*) are used in the generic sense, which, as argued, renders women invisible. Some of the above-mentioned words have no feminine counterparts (e.g., the terms **Sister of Arts, *Mistress of Arts, *foremother* have not emerged), while others do (e.g., *sisterhood, workwoman*), yet the masculine terms seem to have high-prestige and are frequently used in a generic sense.

Bajner (1997) discusses negative stereotyping as a form of bias against males. Men are generally considered to be prone to violence and evil, and thus terms like *murderer, killer, criminal, hijacker, gangster*, etc. are associated with male referents. Nilsen et al. (1977) also report that these and similar words were consistently marked as masculine in his research using free association and semantic differentials. He also notes that there is no female equivalent to the term *rapist* in English. In fact, from the above-mentioned list only one term (*murderer*) has a female parallel (*murderess*), while the other terms can be preceded by a premodifier to signal a female referent (e.g., *female killer, woman hijacker*).

3.2. Words and expressions with masculine markers

Apart from the words listed in the previous section, there are a number of frequently-used terms and expressions with masculine markers in English that should be substituted by other gender-neutral terms, such as the ones listed in Table 2.

Sexist terms and expressions	Gender-neutral alternatives
forefather	ancestor, forebear
fellowship	camaraderie, company, league, society
masterpiece	great piece of art, classic, monument, treasure
man-made	artificial, hand-made, synthetic, manufactured
man in the street	average person, ordinary person, ordinary citizen
to man a project	to staff a project, to employ staff

Table 2: Expressions with masculine markers and their gender-neutral alternatives

3.3. Naming practices and address forms

Another prominent aspect of sexism is the lack of parallelism in the choice of personal titles. While there are two traditional honorific titles for women (*Mrs., Miss*), indicating their marital status and their availability, males are identified by the single honorific *Mr*. That is, males are identified purely in terms of gender, whereas females are distinguished in terms of their gender and their relationship to a man. It is argued that the courtesy title *Mrs.* depicts a woman as the appendage of her husband and renders her invisible. The title *Ms.* was proposed to promote gender equity because it refers to a woman regardless of marital status. Moreover, *Ms.* also solves the problem of addressing a woman of unknown marital status. However, in some speech communities, *Ms.* is marked with some negative connotations. Namely, it implies that the referent is divorced, an older unmarried woman, or a radical feminist (Beebe 1996: 104).

Furthermore, the fact that men are usually addressed by a title and last name, while women are likely to be addressed by their first names or endearment terms such as *dear* and *love* in the same situation also exemplifies the lack of parallel between the treatment of men and that of women. This issue is also one of the main concerns of feminists, who call our attention to the importance of gender-fair language that promotes equitable representation of females and males.

3.4 Sexual stereotyping

Gender stereotypes trivialize both men and women because they present certain jobs or roles as predominantly male or female.[2] For instance, to assume that child rearing is the primary concern of women excludes males from this role. That is why it has been suggested to use the word *parenting* or *nurturing* instead of *mothering* in certain contexts. As argued, *mothering* "*reinforces the 'natural' connection of women with children and childcare*" (Cameron 1992: 100), and it implies that men are not interested in child rearing. Moreover, while the phrase *to mother a child* usually refers to the life-long responsibility of raising a child, the expression *to father a child* is generally associated only with the biological role in conception. The sex role stereotype of women as homemakers is also reinforced by notices such as the first one in Table 3.

Sexual stereotyping omits or patronizes both men and women, and thus it should be avoided. For instance, referring to adult men or women as *boys* or *girls* trivializes and demeans them and indicates their immaturity. Further examples of sexual stereotyping and their non-sexist alternatives are given in Table 3.

Sexist	Non-sexist
Dear Mothers, Please bake cookies for our class party.[3]	Dear Parents, Please bake cookies for our class party.
You guys start reading the chapter.	(All of you/Folks/Students/Class) start reading the chapter.
I'll tell the girls at the office.	I'll tell the women/secretaries at the office.
Has the delivery boy arrived yet?	Has the deliverer/delivery arrived yet?

Table 3: Sentences including gender stereotypes and their non-sexist alternatives

[2] Some cases of sexual stereotyping (e.g., *lady doctor*, *male nurse*) have been discussed earlier.

[3] This example is taken from the NCTE Guidelines for gender-fair use of language.

4. Sexism at the level of syntax

4.1. Generic "man"

Generic structures provide further evidence to show sexism encoded in the English language. The word *man* has two meanings: it can refer to a male human being or to the human race, including both women and men. It has been argued that the use of *man* as a generic form marginalizes women and renders them invisible. The basis for this claim is that the meaning of *man* has become overshadowed by its masculine meaning and it is predominantly understood as male even when it is used generically (Holmes, 1998: 319–320). For instance, while it is obvious that *man* has a gender-neutral reference in the famous quotation illustrated by (1), examples (2) and (3) are awkward since *man* is associated with male images. Example (4) illustrates a clear-cut case of the gender-specific use of *man*. However, using *man* can lead to confusion as to whether women are meant to be included or not. Example (5) is a case in point.

(1) That's one small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind. (Neil Armstrong)
(2) Man, being a mammal, breastfeeds his young.[4]
(3) Liz is a man.
(4) A man took his gun and shot his wife dead.
(5) Man loves to hunt.[5]

As a result of the aforementioned points, guidelines for gender-fair use of language recommend the omission of generic *man* in favour of other alternatives such as substitution by *people*, *humanity*, *human beings*, *humankind*, *we* or *men and women*. For instance, a non-sexist alternative of (2) would be That's one small step for a person, one giant leap for humankind.

[4] This example is taken from Romaine (1998:102).
[5] This example is taken from Holmes (2008:319).

4.2. Generic "he"

The English language does not possess a gender neutral third person singular pronoun. Similarly to *man*, the masculine pronouns *he/his/ him/himself* are used generically to refer to both sexes, while the word *woman* and the pronoun *she* are marked forms that include only women. According to traditional grammar, reference to a gender-neutral noun is made with a generic pronoun. For example, consider a sentence such as the following:

(7) The candidate may leave as soon as he has handed in his exam paper.

The use of masculine pronouns *he* and *his* can lead to confusion for the same reason as *man*: it is ambiguous between the generic and the masculine meanings. In other words, the sentence can either refer to a specific male candidate or candidates in general, but it is unclear which meaning was intended.

The use of generics has been the target of a great deal of criticism for reinforcing language bias, promoting male imagery, and making women invisible. As Miller & Swift (2000: 178) point out, the average person (*the man in the street*), the active person (*the man on the move*) and the hypothetical person (exemplified by (8)) are male. "The assumption is that unless otherwise identified people in general […] are men. It is a semantic mechanism that operates to keep women invisible: *man* and *mankind* represent everyone; *he* [original emphasis] in generalized use refers to either sex."

(8) If a man can cover 600 metres in a minute, how many kilometres can he cover in 2 and a half hours by travelling the same rate?

As a remedy to the problems that the generic pronouns can cause, a number of strategies have been proposed. One of these is substitution with coordinated pronouns *he or she*, *him or her*, *his or her*, *himself or herself*, which indicates that women are included in the antecedent of the pronouns. The author should also balance the pronoun use by alternating the pronouns so that those with feminine gender will be first as often as those with masculine gender. These strategies are illustrated by examples (9a-c). In written registers slashes (*s/he*, *his/her,* etc.) can be used. In some cases, it is also possible to simply leave out the pronoun such as in (9d). Another way of eliminating the use of generic pronouns is to recast

the sentence in the plural, as illustrated by (9e). Alternatively, the gender-neutral third person singular pronouns *they*, *them*, *their*, *themselves* can be used like in example (9f). However, this strategy is often regarded as non-standard by grammarians, who argue that a singular antecedent "*requires a singular pronoun to agree with it*" (Romaine 1998: 105).

(9) a. A good professor should be able to engage his students in intellectual discourse.
b. A good professor should be able to engage his or her students in intellectual discourse.
c. A good professor should be able to engage her or his students in intellectual discourse.
d. A good professor should be able to engage students in intellectual discourse.
e. Good professors should be able to engage their students in intellectual discourse.
f. A good professor should be able to engage their students in intellectual discourse.

Nevertheless, there are other alternatives to put a stop to the gender bias created by the generic pronouns. The guidelines proposed by NCTE (http://www.ncte.org/positions/ statements/genderfairuseoflang) suggest the following: substitute with first- or second-person pronoun, substitute with *one* or *one's*, recast the sentence in the passive voice, rephrase by substituting a participle phrase for a clause.

5. Sexism at the level of semantics

5.1. Binominal phrases

The biased worldview that women are appendages of men is also reflected in mixed-gender binominal phrases such as *Mr. and Mrs.*, *Adam and Eve*, *boys and girls*, *brother and sister*, *son and daughter*, *husband and wife*, *man and wife*, *men and women*, *he or she*, *male or female.* As can be observed from the list, in these conventional expressions the male term takes precedence over the female, which suggests that men are more powerful and have a higher social ranking than women.

However, this male-first predominance is not absolute since there are a few expressions that give key emphasis to females by their ordering.

These expressions are related to domains that are perceived as stereotypically female, such as parenting (*mother and father* or the informal *Mom and Dad*) or marriage (*bride and groom*), and they mirror views about gendered social roles (Nilsen et al. 1977: 133). In these cases, perceptual markedness prevails because women are generally regarded as more principal in the role of parenting than men, and they are the more prominent participants at weddings. Another notable exception to the male-comes-first pattern is the chivalric *ladies and gentlemen*, although one might argue the contrary since it originates from the salutation *my lords, ladies and gentlemen*.

5.2. Semantic asymmetries: derogation of women

Sexism in English is also reflected in the semantic asymmetry that characterizes the portrayal of females and males in numerous gender-marked pairs of words such as *master/mistress*, *Sir/Madam* or *governor/governess*. These and other similar pairs of terms started on an equal ground, but over time the female-specific words have acquired negative connotations, while the masculine forms remained positive or neutral. The terms denoting women have a less favourable meaning due to relative lack of power (e.g., *governor/governess*, *lord/lady*, *priest/priestess*) or sexual connotations (e.g., *master/mistress*, *Sir/Madam, host/hostess*, *call boy/call girl*).

Another form of semantic derogation is when a gender-neutral word has different connotations based on the sex of its referent. For instance, when *tramp* refers to a man it means vagabond, while when the word denotes a woman, it indicates that she is promiscuous. Other similar examples include *shrew* or *professional* (Lei 2006: 89).

There are also some words in English that used to have neutral or positive connotations, but when they became associated with women, they gradually took on a negative overtone and became neutral, negative or even highly abusive. The word *tart*, for example, first meant a small pie; it then became an endearment term similar to *honey*; and eventually it was used to refer to a prostitute (Cameron 1992: 108). In similar veins, the words *spinster* and *harlot* have also undergone pejoration.

5.3. Metaphors

Another manifestation of sexism in the English language is the way metaphors are used to refer to men and women. The metaphors describing females include a remarkably high number of degrading images compared to those depicting males. Animal imagery is an example where women are depicted more negatively than men. Men *roar*, *bellow* and *growl* while women *purr*, *squeal* and *shriek*. Men are frequently referred to as *studs*, *wolves*, *stags*, *bucks*, *bulls*, *lions* whereas women are described as *birds*, *chicks*, *kittens*, *bunnies*. These terms denote that males are strong, brave, virile and sexually active while females are flighty, and sweet but helpless (Holmes 2008: 318). Even the pejorative terms referring to men (e.g., *vulture*, *beast*, *jackass*, *loan shark*) generally have some positive aspect in terms of size or strength. In contrast, the majority of derogatory animal names describing women (e.g., *bitch*, *vixen*, *social butterfly*) denote loose morals or prostitution. It can also be observed that the animal names denoting women are usually those of smaller animals, for example, prey or pets.

It is interesting to see that the metaphors referring to women are more positive when the animal is young (e.g., *bunny*, *kitten*, *filly*, *bird, lamb*) but pejorative when the animal is old (e.g., *rabbit*, *cat*, *old nag*, *old crow/bat*, *crone*). No matching metaphors exist for men.

It is also worth mentioning that some animal names have negative overtones when they refer to women and neutral or positive connotations when used to refer to men. For instance, a *shrew* means "a bad-tempered or mean-spirited woman"[6], whereas a *shrewd politician* is "artful and crafty". Similarly, a *lucky dog* is a "fellow", but when a woman is a *dog* she is "unattractive or boring" (Nilsen et al. 1977).

Another example of the semantic derogation of women is the terms used to denote horses like *jade* ("a worn-out, broken-down, worthless, or vicious horse") or *harridan* ("a thin, worn-out horse"). Over time, these terms acquired pejorative and often sexual connotations when referring to women. The former means "a disreputable or ill-tempered woman" and the latter is used for "a scolding, vicious woman".

[6] www.dictionary.reference.com

Holmes (ibid.) notes that women are frequently compared to birds that are "regarded as feather-brained and flighty". Nilsen et al. (1977) illustrate how the chicken metaphor tells the story of a girl's life:

> "*A young girl is a chick. When she gets old enough she marries and soon begins feeling cooped up. To relieve the boredom she goes to hen parties and cackles with her friends. Eventually she has her brood, begins to henpeck her husband and finally turns into an old biddy [original emphasis]*" (29).

Metaphors which connect women with food, plants, toys and articles of clothing also perpetuate the derogation and objectification of women. Nilsen et al. (1977: 32) point out that "[b]ecause of our expectations of passivity, we like to compare females to items that people acquire for their pleasure". For instance, food imagery indicates that females are regarded as sweet food that we all enjoy and that are to be devoured by men. English describes women as a *dish, (sweetie)pie*, *(sharp) cookie*, *cheesecake*, *sugar (and spice)*, *peach*, *cute tomato*, *honey(bun)*, *sweetie,* etc. The terms *honey*, *sweetie* and *sugar* are mainly used for addressing women to show love and care; however, it is argued that they have acquired negative overtones because they conceptualize women as tasty objects. Some derogatory food imagery such as *tart* and *crumpet* refer to women exclusively and they have sexual connotations. By contrast, there is considerably less food imagery (e.g., *veg*, *cabbage*) that can be used to refer only to men (Holmes 2008: 318).

Women may also be described or referred to in terms of plants (*clinging vine*, *wallflower*, *shrinking violet*), toys (*doll*, *little doll*, *China doll*), and clothing (*skirt*, *old bag*). These metaphors illustrate that females are conceptualized as passive aesthetic objects to be enjoyed (by men).

6. Conclusion: why and how to teach (non)sexist language

In summary, as is apparent from the foregoing discussion, sexism presents itself at several levels of the English language and generally, although not exclusively, discriminates against women. As Holmes (2008: 322) notes, women are often "treated linguistically as subordinate, regardless of their actual power or social status in a particular context". The linguistic biases constitute a male-oriented view of the world and foster unfair discrimination against women. It is argued that women are treated

like inferior and abnormal people and are considered mere appendages of men. In order to eliminate sexism, these days gender-free language policies are in effect in most sectors in English-language countries.

It is imperative to teach the topic of (non)sexist language nowadays when more and more people are going abroad to study, work and live there. Teachers should model nonsexist language and raise their students' awareness of the existence of sexist language since its use can even have legal consequences. According to Beebe (1996: 102) one of the roles of EFL teachers is to help "*learners to make informed choices as to how their language will immediately create an impression on their audiences*". Moreover, sexist language serves as an interesting topic for discussion; we can show students that language itself is interesting, particularly as language relates to changing social attitudes and values. Sexist language can be related to racist language, such as the once-widespread use of the word *boy* to address black men in the US.

There are a number of contexts in which teachers can introduce the topic of (non)sexist language in the classroom. For instance, you can seize the opportunity every time when sexist language appears in classroom materials. Below is a short list to give teachers some further ideas:

- vocabulary teaching (especially occupational nouns)
- introducing yourself to your students (titles such as *Ms* or *Mrs*)
- teaching how to write formal letters (address forms such as *Dear Sir/Madam*)
- lyrics of pop or rap songs (animal, food or other metaphors used for men and women).

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www.dictionary.reference.com

CHAPTER 4

INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES IN SLA

By Katalin Mónos

Introduction

Individual learner differences (ILD) are learner variables, which – through a complex web of interaction with a variety of personal, social and contextual factors – are to a large extent responsible for the outcomes of learning of all sorts, and as such, for the success or failure of second language acquisition (SLA).

Research and experience alike have shown that teachers' and learners' awareness of the role ILDs play in SLA is of high importance, and that the efficiency of learning can be greatly enhanced if ILDs are assessed and improved to the extent that is possible. Thus it goes without saying that the knowledge and understanding of how ILDs affect learning, further, how teachers can influence ILDs to the benefit of students is indispensable for practicing FL teachers.

The course therefore aims to introduce participants to the concept and types of individual learner differences, by introducing and examining various theories of second language acquisition, which had included different categories of ILDs. In so doing we will have a brief look at Willing's (1989) model of individual learner differences, and a more careful one at the socio-educational model of second language acquisition proposed Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), and MacIntyre's social psychological model.

Besides providing an overview of the different types of IDVs, such as cognitive, affective and other types, I will take a look at the ways of assessing these variables. Furthermore, I will provide ideas, methods and means of handling, expanding, training, etc. them – as appropriate – in the classroom.

The rational for all this is the conviction, grounded in research results and experience, that understanding and assessing ILDs, and then incurporating assessment results into FL teaching programs will affect all participants of the teaching-learning programme positively in the long run.

Outline of the course

1. Individual learner differences – Fundamental issues
2. Miscellaneous variables
   2.1. Intelligence and aptitude
   2.2. Personality, age of onset
3. Learner strategies
   3.1. Fundamental issues
   3.2. Assessment and training
4. Learning styles
   4.1. Fundamental issues
   4.2. Awareness-raising and expansion of learning styles
5. Motivation
   5.1. Fundamental issues
   5.2. Motivation and motivating in the L2 classroom
6. Anxiety

1. Individual learner differences – Fundamental issues

Katalin Mónos

1.1. Aims and rationale

As pointed out above, individual learner differences have been found to be consistent predictors of success, yielding multiple correlations with attainment in SLA. The aim of this unit is thus to familiarise you with the concept, by providing an overview of the most influential theories of SLA that had focussed on ILDs, and to raise your awareness of their importance, as well as of the role they play in SLA. Furthermore, you will be familiarised with the types of ILDs as suggested and described by the most prominent researchers of the field over the last 30 years.

In what follows, we will look at the history of the emergence of the term, individual learner difference, and the link between the concept and language learning.

1.2. Individual learner differences and language learning

1.2.1. The importance of individual variation in learning

Since the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, there has been intensive interest in what answers learners give to their learning problems. Since that time questions of learning and remembering as well as ideas about how to learn to learn have been in the focus of researchers' attention, particularly in the field of psychology.

Psychology has had basically two contrasting approaches to human learning: one identified the processes and structures common to everyone, while the other focused on the differences between individuals, trying to identify the major ways that people vary, and then to relate such differences to differences in performance. The examination of how learners approach the task of second language learning was greatly inspired by developments in cognitive psychology, which is the study of the workings of the mind between input and output, that is, perception, memory, learning, inference, and concept formation (Hunt, 1982).

Parallel to the rise of the interest in the individual was the recognition that no matter to what perfection our practices of language teaching develop, there still remain differences between the achievements of students. Teachers and researchers understood that while some students develop fast and achieve the desired level of proficiency relatively easily, for others language learning and experience of the same teaching methodology proves to be a waste of effort and time, often causing frustration. All these resulted in the recognition that probably there is no one way of teaching that is capable of satisfying all individual learners' needs equally. As Brown puts it: "*We began to see the importance of individual variation in language learning*" (1994: 114).

1.2.2. Language learning

But what is language learning? Let us look at the intriguing concept in general first, then language learning in particular. According to Wikipedia, "*learning is the act of acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information*" (online).

Wenden and Rubin's definition suggests that language learning is: "*Active involvement by an individual in a variety of activities the outcome of which is expected to be the acquisition of the knowledge and know-how which confer competence in the target language*." (1987: 17).

Having studied the literature on second language learning to that time, Cook (1978) emphasized the complexity of the language learning process, concluding that:

> "*...any model has to account not just for grammatical development but also for the contributions made by the learner and by the learner's environment, not to mention the individual differences between learners, and the effects of learning a second language on the learner...*" (Cook 1978: 83, in Gardner and MacIntyre, 1992: 211.)

Since Cook noted the complexity of second language learning and pointed out the importance of the learner's contribution to its success, research activity in the field has exploded. Several models of SLA have been suggested that incorporate those characteristics of the individual (ILDs) which influence how well they will succeed in the task of learning a second language.

1.2.3. Learner variables

These variables lend themselves to being grouped into various categories. The ones that affect the cognitive aspect of learning are called cognitive variables. These are language aptitude, intelligence and learner strategies. The variables that are linked to how the learner relates to the language learning task and situation – personality, attitudes, motivation or anxiety - are affective variables. Finally, there are some more, such as age or the socio-cultural background, that fall into the miscellaneous category, and could have either cognitive or affective implications.

In the following section we are going to look at some of the theories of SLA that have ILDs in them.

1.3. Models of SLA with an ILD focus

One of the earliest models was Willing's (1987), which shows the two variables: learner strategies and learning styles, in a central, and - at the same time - intermediary position between aptitude, motivation, intelligence, personality and age, on one end, and linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes, on the other. This model is deficient because the influence of the variables is shown to be invariant and unidirectional.

APTITUDE		OUTCOME
MOTIVATION	LEARNING STYLES	LINGUISTIC:
IQ		proficiency, errors
PERSONALITY	LEARNER STRATEGIES	NON-LINGUISTIC:
AGE		affective

Table 1: Influences on language learning according to Willing (1987)

Later models focussed more on the interactive and dynamic nature of the interrelationships among the various components. One of these is Gardner and MacIntyre's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (1993), developed from the social psychological model of second language acquisition suggested by Lambert (1963, 1967) and Gardner & Lambert (1972).

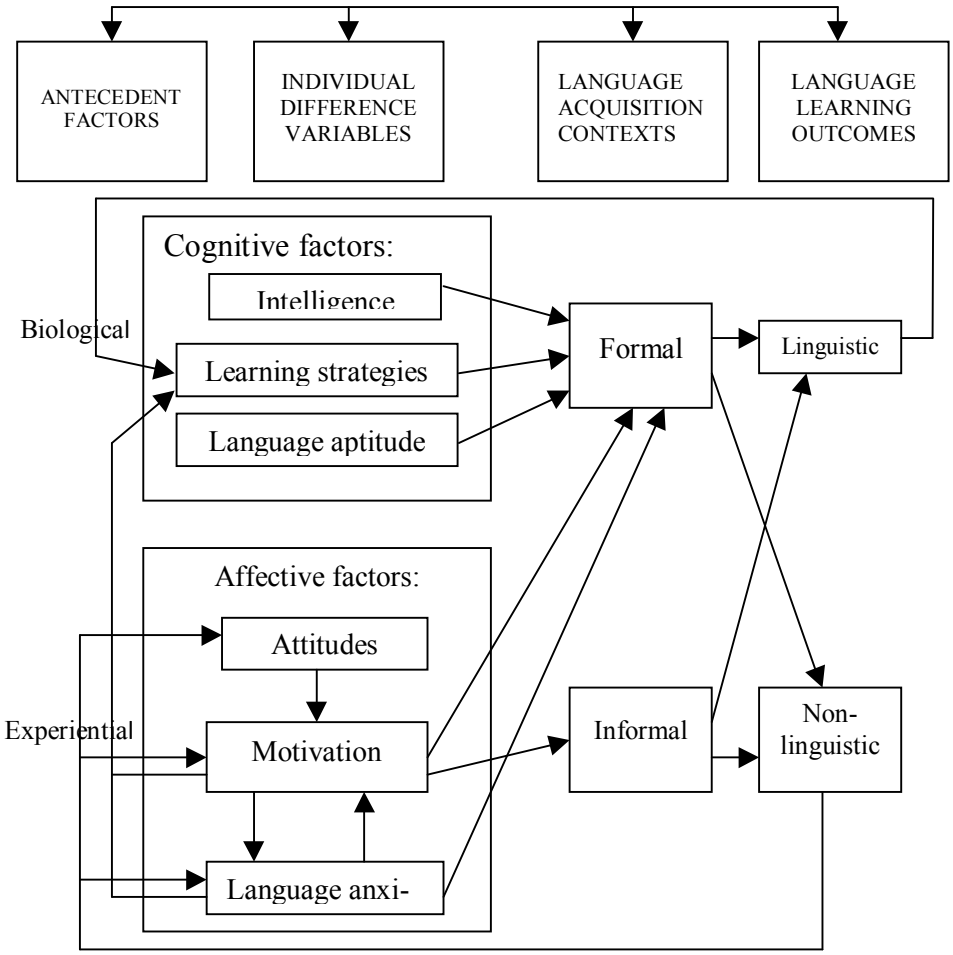

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the socio-educational model of second language acquisition (adapted from Gardner & MacIntyre 1993: 8).

As the figure shows, the model is organised around four major parts – antecedent factors, individual difference variables, language acquisition contexts and language learning outcomes – with the socio-cultural milieu determining all the major parts. It suggests that any study of second lan-

guage learning/acquisition must "*direct close attention to the social context in which the learning is taking place*" (Gardner & MacIntyre 1993: 7).

The authors posit that there are a number of factors, biological and experiential in nature, labelled *antecedent factors*, which must be considered when one studies the role that individual difference variables have in the process of second language learning. Antecedent factors include examples such as age, gender or prior language learning experience. A wealth of research evidence suggests that they might considerably affect the individual difference factors. For example, age and gender have been found to influence what strategies learners select, and earlier language learning experience is assumed to influence attitudes, motivation, and language anxiety.

The model includes six major *individual difference variables*, three in the cognitive, and another three in the affective category. The authors make it clear that they consider individual difference variables as relatively independent of one another, though it is emphasised that they may correlate significantly in a variety of ways.

The solid directional arrows indicate the causal relationships among the various individual difference variables. Attitudes thus appear to have a causal influence on motivation, while motivation is shown to be in a two-way causal relationship with language anxiety. That is, motivation is suggested to need an affective basis to be maintained, and this function is fulfilled by attitudes. Moreover, high levels of motivation are assumed to depress language anxiety, while high levels of anxiety may decrease motivation (Gardner & MacIntyre 1993: 9).

As regards the *contexts of language acquisition*, all the individual difference variables except language attitudes are shown to influence learning directly in a formal context. This indicates that these variables will have an effect on how successfully a learner acquires the material in a context where direct instruction in the foreign language is involved, such as in a classroom situation. However, in an environment whose main feature is its voluntary nature, motivation is the only variable proposed to have a significant role.

As for the fourth part of the model, *linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes*, the authors suggest that linguistic outcomes influence primarily learning strategy use, in that the choice of strategies depends on achievement in the foreign language, whereas non-linguistic outcomes appear to

have an impact on the learner primarily on affective attributes (Gardner & McIntyre 1993: 9).

The model has clear implications for both teachers and researchers interested in the field of SLA. For teachers, it suggests that the classroom experience has an effect not only on students' level of achievement but also on their feelings and motivation. For researchers, it provides a structure of analysis of the variables operating in the language learning process.

The social psychological model of language learning was proposed by McIntyre in 1994. In this rather elaborate system, learning is shown to be under the influence of a complex scheme of social psychological variables, including gender, attitudes and motivation, anxiety, cognitive style, self-confidence, teacher behavior, and demands of the situation.

1.4. The present and future of ILD research

The 90s saw a plethora of research into individual differences; interest in the issues ranging from their biological source through the interacting social and contextual factors to the resulting learning behavior and attainment for the individual. Although there may have been a loss of stamina at the beginning of the 2000, soon a renewed interest emerged, and Dörnyei found that "*each main ID area was undergoing a fundamental transition/restructuring in SL research*" (2006: 42).

As Ritchie and Bathia state, while "*traditional ID researchers tried to pin down internal characteristics of a person as the cause of the observed differences*" in attainment, "*the latest trends in ILD research indicate a growing consensus about the situated and dynamic nature of SLA...*" (2009: 623). That is to say, the search for the sources of ID and for the one unified theory of individual differences is still going on, even if researchers have realised the difficulty involved in the endeavour, namely, its highly interdisciplinary nature and the demand for theoretical knowledge as well as methodological skills.

In the forefront of current ID research, according to Dörnyei (2006), are personality, aptitude, motivation, learning styles and learning strategies. Besides these, Ritchie and Bathia (2009) consider as important factors, among others, anxiety, age of onset of acquisition and contact with the target language.

In the following chapters we are going to look at some ILDs that we find rather important and refer you to readings in the field so that you can expand your knowledge.

Recommended readings

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2. Miscellaneous variables

Katalin Mónos

2.1. Intelligence and aptitude

2.1.1. Aims and rationale

The aim of this chapter is to familiarize you with several important individual difference variables, more particularly the cognitively based intelligence and aptitude, then some personality traits. Finally, we will briefly look at the question of the age of onset of language learning.

The rationale is obvious: these are very important ILDs with serious classroom and teaching implications, which we will be discussing in the appropriate sections.

2.1.2. Intelligence

Ever since successful FL/SL learning has been a major educational issue, people have been eager to find out if there is something like a 'special ability' for language learning. Experts intuitively agree with the layman, who has no doubts about the answer to this question. However, what is language learning ability, referred to as 'nyelvérzék' in Hungarian, and mostly as 'language aptitude' in English? And where is it?

Whatever it is, it must be related to our cognition, intellectual powers and intelligence. Indeed, our classroom experience tells us that students who strike us as more intelligent and who we think have an 'ear for languages' or a 'flair' for language learning learn faster and more easily. In studies of psychology, *intelligence* has been closely associated with learning success. Psychologists suggest that intelligence influences how well and quickly a student will understand the teacher's instructions. This is a general psychological concept, rather than a language learning-specific one. On top of that, it is also problematic because its measuring is very much culture-specific. Just think about all the debates surrounding IQ tests. Therefore we are not going to look at it in any more detail here.

However, you may have come across the idea of *multiple intelligences* (MI) put forward in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner, a psychologist and professor of neuroscience from Harvard University. I personally find his MI theory that challenges our traditional beliefs about education and cog-

nitive science rather thought-provoking. Space constraints do not allow to discuss this topic in detail here. Nevertheless, if you are interested, by way of some internet research you can easily broaden your knowledge about the MI theory, even horn your skills of applying it in the classroom.

2.1.3. Aptitude

In the following paragraphs, we are going to take a closer look at language *aptitude*, thought by many to be the best predictor of and most important contributor to success in SLA. It might seem an easy concept to grasp. However, the problem with it, according to Dörnyei, is that "*there is no such thing as language aptitude. Instead, we have a number of cognitive factors making up a composite measure that can be referred to as the learner's overall capacity to master a foreign language. In other words, foreign language aptitude is not a unitary factor*" (2006: 46), but rather a complex of "*basic abilities that are essential to facilitate foreign language learning*." (Carroll and Sapon 1959: 14, in Dörnyei 2006: 46).

What are these basic, component abilities? Researchers tried to identify these as early as about a hundred years ago, making attempts to develop tests of the construct. Aptitude tests are supposed to be independent of a particular language, predicting success in the acquisition of any foreign language. The two most influential standardised tests that were designed in the US in the 50s and 60s are the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) by Carroll and Sapon (1959), and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB, Pimsleur 1966). Both are English language tests, and students have to perform tasks such as "*learning numbers, listening, detecting spelling cues and grammatical patterns, and memorising*" (Brown 1994: 259). That is, these tests require test takers to exercise their faculties, such as phonetic coding, memory, or sensitivity to sentence structure, which are widely thought to facilitate language learning.

On the basis of these tests, language aptitude seems to consist of four basic constituents: (1) *phonetic coding ability,* which is the ability to identify, distinguish and produce sounds of the foreign language; (2) *grammatical sensitivity*, the ability to recognise the grammatical functions in sentence structure; (3) *memory or rote learning abilities*, which make the rapid learning and retention of associations between sounds and meaning possible; and (4) *inductive language learning ability*, which en-

ables learners to find out how language works from samples of language that allow this deduction.

Although both these aptitude test batteries have deficiencies, and thus have undergone modifications over time, they were very popular in the foreign language profession for decades. The reason for this is probably the fact that no matter how aptitude is measured, aptitude and indices of achievement very strongly correlate. While nobody knows for sure why aptitude is the single best predictor of success in SLA, some researchers (Skehan 1989, 1990) support the idea of the positive transfer, whereby language aptitude can be viewed as a cognitive sponge. If the ability to acquire a new skill is well developed in the individual, the new skill is acquired quickly. If not, more time will be needed to make the skill part of the individual's repertoire.

The question arises then, what is the origin of language aptitude? Some research shows that the origins are in first language competencies and are not easily modified. As such, they are most likely traceable to early environmental and genetic factors. Skehan (1989) found significant correlations between the rate of L1 acquisition of young children with their L2 attainment results in their teens. Sparks and Ganschow (1991, 2001), and Sparks, Javorsky, Patton and Ganschow (1998) have suggested that the ability to learn an L2 is strongly related to the individual's L1 learning skills, while the source of L2 learning difficulties often lies in L1 difficulties. Dewaele (2007) also found high correlation between grades obtained by high school students for the first language and grades obtained for their second, third, and fourth languages.

As emphasised above, there were hardly any attempts to experiment with new measures of language aptitude after the MLAT and the PLAB appeared. Maybe one reason is that language aptitude is far too difficult to conceptualise, and researchers' views differ rather considerably. Another, more practical consideration relates to the classroom. As Brown puts it: "*How is an institute to interpret a language aptitude test?*" (1994: 260) If learners' aptitude was measured before a course, that would bias both teachers and learners. Based on the result, "*both would predict success or failure, and a self-fulfilling prophecy could easily occur*" (ibid.). I personally believe that it is probably wiser for teachers and learners alike to be optimistic, and teachers had better focus on other ILDs, namely on the ones that they can control and change.

Nevertheless, after a three-decade dominance of the MLAT and the decline of interest in researching language aptitude, there seems to have emerged a new boom in research in the field in the last 20 years or so. Looking at them would obviously break up the framework of this writing; therefore I will just refer you to Dörnyei and Skehan (2003), where you will find plenty of information that may be of importance for your professional development.

In what follows, some more ILDs will be discussed, namely *personality* and *age*. These are also beyond the teacher's control. However, they impact on the success of the SLA endeavour, thus you should have a profound understanding of how they affect your students' work.

2.2. Personality, age

2.2.1. Personality

Because personality is "the most individual characteristic of a human being" (Dörnyei 2006: 43) in Dörnyei's view it is surprising that personality plays a far less significant role in ILD research than other factors, such as aptitude or motivation. I do not think this is surprising; I believe this is rather the reason – personality is an elusive concept, with very little relevance and implications for the classroom, therefore of less concern for experts involved with FL/SL acquisition.

Personality is clearly a psychological construct. Now there seems to be a consensus among psychologists over the main dimensions of human personality. Eysenck's model of the 'Giant 3' contains the dimensions of (1) *extraversion-introversion*, (2) *neuroticism-emotional stability*, and (3) *psychoticism-tender-mindedness* (Eysenck and Eysenck 1985). The 'Big Five' construct (Goldberg 1992, 1993) adds *conscientiousness* and *openness to experience* to the three items in the previous taxonomy. (Further details in Dörnyei 2006 and Ritchie and Bathia 2009: 626–630).

Educational psychologists have tried to correlate personality traits, particularly extraversion to achievement in SLA. The expectedly positive effect of extraversion on success in SLA was examined in several studies. Researchers obviously expected more talkative and extraverted students to perform better in certain tasks than their more introverted counterparts. However, the results have been far from conclusive. Dewaele and Furnham (1999) observed that the results varied depending on too many vari-

ables; for example, how the personality trait was measured, the language being taught, the nationality of the learner, and most important, the language variable measured.

Dörnyei (2006) tries to account for this ambiguity, suggesting four reasons. Based on a number of research findings, he proposes that (1) *the interaction with situation specific variables,* such as the social context of the learning situation or the nature of the task, makes significant correlations between personality and SL achievement impossible. Other reasons for the lack of significant effects are (2) *need for less simplistic models*, (3) *supertraits or primary traits,* and (4) *methodological issues*. (2006: 44) We certainly do not have time or space here to address these issues, but the interested reader will find all the information in the indicated sources.

Despite the above, extraversion is valued high in certain educational contexts, thus teachers in Western cultures intuitively conceive of extraversion as a factor facilitating communicative competence, which requires face-to-face communication. However, they need to be careful when selecting methods that invoke extraversion. As Brown puts it, "*a teacher needs to beware of trying to "create" in a student more so-called extraversion than is really necessary*" (1994: 147). Clearly, teachers need to be sensitive to cultural norms as well as to the students' personality in class.

2.2.2. Age of onset of language learning

In the following, we will address the age-old issue of the 'critical period' for language learning, "*a biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired more easily and beyond which time language is increasingly difficult to acquire*" (Brown 1994: 52). Put in another way, we will try to answer the question whether "the younger the better?", looking at it only from a second language research perspective.

Nowadays very few researchers would question the view that the critical period for the acquisition of pronunciation or accent is around puberty, beyond which people seem to be incapable of developing native like accent. The explanations for this are partly neurological, linked to the lateralisation process, whereby certain functions are assigned or 'lateralised' to the left or right hemisphere of the brain. Although there is no complete agreement, most researchers believe that the lateralisation proc-

ess, at the end of which language functions are controlled by the left hemisphere, is complete around puberty.

Research on the acquisition of the phonology of an SL suggests that besides the neurological considerations, there are also psychomotor ones. The articulation of human speech requires the involvement of hundreds of muscles. Given their neuromuscular plasticity, children under the age of puberty are more likely to be able to acquire the sounds of the SL, while those beyond the critical period are less so or are not. We could list a number of exceptional examples for people who did manage to develop authentic pronunciation beyond the age of puberty, but these are exceptions that rather prove the rule. Instead of them, we should think of Henry Kissinger or Joseph Conrad, whose eloquence in English made a lot of native speakers green with envy, but whose foreignness was immediately given away by their pronunciation.

Besides biological factors, affective ones also play an important role in SLA. Guiora proposed the idea of the language ego, the identity a person develops in relation to the language they speak. He suggested that the language ego may account for the difficulties that adults have in learning a second language (in Brown 1994: 62). As a child's ego is flexible and dynamic through puberty, the new language does not pose a 'threat' to their ego. For adolescents and adults, however, acquiring a new language ego must be an enormous task because instead of developing a new language ego effortlessly, they may develop inhibitions towards the new language.

Finally, a couple of words about the role of attitude. With some understanding of language acquisition, nobody would dispute the importance of a positive attitude towards the language learned. It is common knowledge that negative attitudes seriously undermine the success of the language learning endeavour. Young learners, however, do not have any positive or negative sentiments towards races, cultures, ethnic groups, social classes or languages. Most of the attitudes, positive or negative, come with the socialisation process; they are 'taught' by society, and develop after puberty.

So far we have seen that the younger learner is definitely better when it comes to pronunciation learning. If authentic accent were really so important for communicative efficiency, maybe we would not want to go on looking at this issue any further. Indeed, young learners are more open-minded, curious, less inhibited, easier to motivate, and more receptive to

ideas or cultures different from their own. As regards grammar, however, we have a more complex picture. Young learners are more likely to develop native like grammatical proficiency, the critical period for this is around 15. However, given the necessary conditions, adults can also develop authentic grammatical competence, both in speech and writing.

The *rate of learning* seems to be an area where more mature learners are at an advantage. However, even this initial advantage of adults over kids can be overtaken, especially in naturalistic, informal settings, where the critical amount of exposure is available.

According to Ritchie and Bhatia (2009), the critical period debate is still very much alive. Nonetheless, there seems to be common agreement in the SLA community that there is an upper age limit in relation to all the components of the language system being acquired, and these components, in chronological order, are "*prosody, phonology, morphology, and syntax*" (2009: 635).

Recommended readings

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3. Learner strategies

Katalin Mónos

3.1. Fundamental issues

3.1.1. Aims and rationale

As we saw in Chapter 1, learner strategies are a cognitive learner variable, taking up a central position in all of the models of SLA that we have looked at. They are "*the specific actions or techniques that learners use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills*" (Green and Oxford 1995: 262). The use of learner strategies is an age-old phenomenon. The concept, however, was only discovered and named in the 1970s-80s. After a boom of research in these decades and the 90s, which brought about a number of strategy-inspired language learning models, a plethora of definitions, the identification of individual strategies and the setting up of a variety of groups and taxonomies, the beginning of the 2000's saw doubts and scepticism. Nevertheless, the educational world seems to agree on the importance of learning strategies in bringing about desirable learning outcomes. Thus, though there is considerable transition / restructuring in the researching of this ILD, learner strategies still form part of second language research in the present days.

The aim of this unit therefore is to familiarise you with the concept of learner strategies, their features, the factors that affect their choice and use, and the ways and means of assessing and training them. I do this in the belief that even if some of the doubts and scepticism about learner strategies remain, understanding them and applying this understanding in the classroom is a very useful tool in the hands of the practising teacher.

3.1.2. Definitions

Some of the scepticism referred to above can be spotted in what Dörnyei says about strategies in his article on ILDs: "*I have always believed in the existence and significance of learner strategies and yet I became increasingly puzzled over the years about the lack of an unambiguous theoretical definition of the learning strategy construct*." (2006:

57) Then he continues saying that " *most of the relevant literature in the L2 field seems to ignore this problem*." (ibid).

Unfortunately I am not in a position to claim that I know all the relevant literature, nevertheless, I think extensive efforts have been made by theoreticians and practitioners to produce all-embracing descriptions and definitions of this construct. Let me show you some of them. These will hopefully throw some light on the difficulties researchers faced when trying to grasp the essence of learner strategies.

According to Wenden "*The term learner strategies refers to language learning behaviours learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of a second language*" (1987: 6). Later she proposes the following definition: "Learning strategies are *mental steps or operations* that learners use to learn a new language and to *regulate their efforts* to do so." (Wenden 1991: 18).

Rebecca Oxford, a most remarkable figure in learner strategy research, offers the following definition: "*Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations*." (1990: 8). After nearly a decade of research, she reformulates her definition:

> "*(strategies are) ....specific actions, steps, behaviours or techniques that students use to improve their own progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval or use of the new language.*" (1999: 518).

Cohen's broad definition (parts italicised by him) goes like this:

> "*Second language learner strategies encompass both second language learning and second language use strategies. Taken together, they constitute the steps or actions consciously selected by learners either to improve the learning of a second language, or the use of it, or both*" (Cohen 1998: 5).

It is obvious from these examples that the concept of strategy was "*not easy to tie down*" (Ellis 1994: 529), and that different researchers put the emphasis on different aspects or features. This is clearly seen in the fact that some researchers call strategies *behaviours,* others call them *steps, actions, operations* or *techniques,* while yet others refer to strategies as

tactics, *potentially conscious plans*, *learning skills*, or *problem solving procedures*, to mention just a few.

The most recent definition I have come across was offered by an influential American strategy expert, Claire Weinstein. In her view "*Learning strategies include any thoughts, behaviours, beliefs, or emotions that facilitate the acquisition, understanding or later transfer of new knowledge and skills.*" (in Dörnyei 2006: 57)

Dörnyei finds nearly all the above definitions logical and exhaustive, still he thinks one cannot find out from them what distinguishes *learning* from *learning strategy use*, or *ordinary learning* from *strategic learning* (2006: 57). To put this question another way: "*What are the features of learning strategies?*" Next we are going to look at this.

3.1.3. Features of learner strategies

In the beginning, there was little agreement whether strategies should be seen as *conscious* and *intentional* (Cohen 1990), or *subconscious*, or both (McDonough 1995). Now it is widely accepted that *potential consciousness* is one feature that distinguishes strategies from not strategic processes. That is to say, behaviours that are so unconscious that the learner is unable to identify -even when asked to- should be referred to as *processes*, whereas *strategy* should be maintained for behaviours the learner is able to identify.

A second feature subject to dispute is whether strategies should be perceived of as *behavioural* (and thus, *observable*), or *mental* (taking place in the mind, thus unobservable), or both. In Chamot & Rubin's interpretation learning strategies are largely *unobservable* cognitive processes, *mental* and personal in nature, the application of which may be observable behaviours (1994: 773). A resolution to this problem in Cohen's view (1998) lies in acknowledging that whereas some strategies are behavioural and observable, others may be behavioural, but not readily observable, and yet others are purely mental and not observable.

Views also differed on a third question, which is whether strategies are more *general* in nature or tied particularly to *specific* content or task. Brown (1994) is clearly of the view that strategies are problem and task specific, contextualised battle plans, which vary from moment to moment and from individual to individual. Cohen (1998), however, puts forward the idea that general as well as more specific acts that learners engage in

to enhance their learning should be included in the strategy concept. He suggests placing strategies along a continuum from general to most specific. While *forming concepts and hypotheses* about the working of the target language is a general strategy, *summarising a text* is more specific, and *writing on-going summaries in the margin in note form* is an even more specific one.

Weinstein et. al. (2000, as cited in Dörnyei 2006: 58) indicate three characteristic features: *goal-directed, intentionally invoked* and *effortful*. Dörnyei finds these "*intuitively appealing attributes*" (ibid) problematic, saying that these could apply to any hard and focussed learning, not just strategic one.

Cohen (1998) highlights the element of *choice*, emphasising that a distinguishing feature about strategies is that they are voluntarily chosen and employed by the learner. Dörnyei acknowledges the fact that choice is clearly an important feature; still in his view it is not enough to distinguish strategies from non-strategies. What is strategic learning then? The key to it lies in the *appropriate* and *concerted use* of strategies: learners choose and apply strategies appropriate to the task, the purpose of learning, their own learning styles, in a concerted fashion.

Besides the features discussed above, Oxford (1990) emphasises that strategies *contribute to the development of communicative competence, allow learners to be more self-directed, involve all aspects of the learner* (not just the cognitive, but also the affective and social sides), are *influenced by a variety of factors*, and finally, *can be taught/trained*.

In the following section, I am going to look at the factors that influence learners' strategy choice.

3.1.4. Factors influencing strategy choice

Research has shown that the quality as well as the quantity of strategy choice are affected by the interplay of a variety of factors: learner variables, and situational and social variables. Learner variables subsume age, motivation and learning styles; situational and social variables include L2 stage and proficiency level, teaching method and task type/requirements, gender and culture. There is detailed information about the link between all these factors (except for culture) and strategy use in Mónos (2004: 36–48), as well as in Arabski and Wojtaszek (2011: 23–26). The interested reader can do follow up reading in those sources, or in any of the ones

indicated in them. Besides, the next chapter in this material will be devoted to learning styles; therefore I am not going to say any more about the link between strategies and styles here.

As for culture, nowadays it is widely accepted that cultural norms exert a strong influence on the way people learn, consequently on their learning strategy choice and use. Rebecca Oxford devoted a whole volume entitled *Language Learning Strategies Around the World: Cross-cultural Perspectives* to this issue. She claims that the less conscious aspects of culture, such as certain beliefs, perceptions and values, often influence how people learn languages, including their general learning styles and specific learning strategy choices. Oxford and her associates found that though culture is not the single determinant, it often plays a significant role in the learning strategies adopted (1996: x). Given that any language learning is fully situated in a given cultural context, the activities and cultural influences cannot be separated from what is learned in the L2 classroom.

As you are most likely to teach students with a mono-cultural background (i.e., students functioning in the Hungarian educational context), I am not going to look at how different cultures affect strategy choice. Therefore, we are not going to examine the strategy choice patterns of, say, Hispanic or Chinese or Israeli student groups. Instead, we will deal with the learner strategies of Hungarians in the session on strategies in the further training programme.

3.1.5. Classifying strategies

As discussed above, the major concern of early research in the 70s and 80s was to identify and describe learners' strategies. Soon after that, attempts were made to organise the strategies into groups and categories, and to create systems of broader categories within which to subsume more specific strategies. As a result, taxonomies emerged, which were informed by a variety of classifying principles. Of the nearly two dozen (Oxford 1999), existing classification systems we will only take a brief look at Cohen's (1998), and a more careful look at Oxford's (1990), which is probably the most comprehensive one to date.

You may remember that Cohen distinguishes between strategies of language learning and of language use (see Section 3.2). Language *learning* strategies in his broad framework are those that are used to iden-

tify the material to be learned; to distinguish it from other materials if needed; to group it for easier learning, to engage oneself repeatedly in it; and to commit it to memory formally when not acquired in an informal context.

Strategies of language *use* include four subsets: those of retrieval, rehearsal, cover and communication strategies. *Retrieval strategies* are activated to recall material from long term memory; *rehearsal strategies* are for practising the material in a variety of ways; *cover strategies* are used to create the impression that the learner has control over the material when it is not the case; and *communication strategies* are approaches to conveying messages in a way that they are both meaningful and informative for the listener/reader (Cohen 1998: 5–7).

Oxford's taxonomy, developed as a result of "*years of struggling with issues of language learning and teaching*" (1990: ix). Her main concern was to subsume within her system all the strategies that had been identified and discussed in the literature. She suggests two broad classes of strategies: *direct* and *indirec*t, which are further subdivided into three classes each.

All *direct strategies* involve the target language directly, operating specifically on the L2 material to facilitate its storage and recall from memory. *Indirect strategies* do not operate on the second language itself, but they are important, as they "*provide indirect support for language learning, through focusing, planning, evaluating, seeking opportunities, controlling anxiety, increasing co-operation and empathy*" (Oxford 1990: 151).

Within the *direct strategies* Oxford subsumes memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. "*Memory strategies… have a highly specific function: helping students store verbal material and retrieve it when needed*" (1990: 39). They are particularly important in helping students cope with vocabulary learning, "*the most sizeable and unmanageable component in the learning of any language*" (Hague 1987, cited in Oxford 1990: 39). *Cognitive strategies* are also essential for learning an L2. This lot of strategies, unified by the common function of manipulation and transformation of the target language, enable learners to understand and produce new language by different means (Oxford 1990: 43). "*Compensation strategies* allow learners to use the language for either

comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge" (Oxford 1990: 47).

Please note that this definition resembles that of communication strategies in other authors' writings, for example, in Tarone's (1980) and Bialystok's (1990), who distinguished between learning and communication strategies. Oxford (1990), however, emphasised that the split between learning and communication strategies was artificial and inaccurate; therefore she completely avoided it in her taxonomy. Clearly, Oxford's compensation strategies correspond to communication strategies of other systems. Her *indirect class* is divided into the groups of metacognitive, affective and social strategies.

> "*Metacognitive strategies allow learners to control their own cognition – that is, to co-ordinate the learning process… Affective strategies help to regulate emotions, motivations and attitudes. Social strategies help students learn through interaction with others*" (Oxford, 1990: 135).

The six strategy groups are then subdivided into altogether 19 strategy sets -10 in the direct, and 9 in the indirect group- which are further broken down into individual strategies. For example, one type of cognitive strategy is *receiving and sending messages*, which consists of such individual strategies as *getting the idea quickly* and *using resources for receiving and sending messages*. Social strategies consist of three sets, one of which, *co-operating with others,* has got the strategies of *co-operating with peers* and *co-operating with proficient users of the language* subsumed under it. The entire system thus includes sixty-two individual strategies (1990: 18–21).

Next we will see how learners' strategy use can be assessed and trained.

3.2. Assessment and training

3.2.1. Assessing learner strategies

In the previous sections we made some fundamental claims about strategies: (1) the use of appropriately chosen ones brings about favourable learning outcomes; (2) strategy choice is influenced by a variety of factors; and (3) by manipulating these factors, learners' strategic behaviour can be changed, possibly through training. Furthermore, we saw that

(4) strategies are probably teachable and trainable. However, without knowing what strategies our learners use, there is no point in trying to teach or train any. Therefore, before setting up any strategy training program, we need to investigate our learners' strategy use. But how?

In what follows, we will take a quick look at the methods available for this, particularly for the sake of those readers who do not have an easy access to any of the sources indicated below. I recommend these, because they contain all the necessary information about the methods of strategy assessment: Cohen 1998: Chapter 3, Mónos 2004: 48–56, Oxford 1996: Chapter 7, Wenden 1991: Chapter 6.

In the following sections, I will provide just the essentials about these methods: observations; interviews, questionnaires; self revelatory verbal reports; diaries, dialogue journals; recollective studies; and computer tracking.

3.2.1.1. Observations

The main concern of early strategy studies in the 70s and 80s was to identify, describe and classify the strategies used by the 'good language learner', and to create some kind of theoretical framework within which these strategies could be placed. Researchers at that time tried to collect information by observing learners carrying out language learning tasks, normally in their natural classroom settings, with the observers taping/videotaping them and/or taking field notes. However, it was soon realized that observations were only useful for observable strategies, whereas many of them are not, and for the identification of strategies for specific tasks. Thus researchers came to the conclusion that observations should not be used as an only instrument, rather in tandem with other methods.

3.2.1.2. Retrospective methods: interviews and questionnaires

The two retrospective methods, *interviews* and *questionnaires,* have proved to be fairly successful in a large number of studies. Both rely heavily on the retrospective accounts of the strategies learners use. In *highly structured interviews* the researcher has a predetermined agenda in a list of questions. The other extreme is *unstructured interviews*, where the researcher has little or no control over the direction the interview takes -it being dictated by the responses of the respondent. Most research-

ers favour *semi-structured interviews*, because there is normally a prompt to elicit information on matters of the researcher's concern, but researchers and respondents alike may pursue topics of interest as they arise. When used appropriately, interviews help researchers identify strategies used on a given task over a given time period, or more specifically used strategies. However, they are less useful for identifying 'typical' strategies.

Questionnaires most resemble highly structured interviews, in that they have the potential of eliciting a large amount of information on a predetermined set of questions. In contrast to interviews, they are generally administered to large groups of students, thus are probably the most cost effective mode of strategy assessment (Cohen 1998), being easy and quick to administer. By appropriately used *questionnaires* researchers can identify 'typical' strategies of an individual. They are useful for measuring a wide array of strategies within a short time- and at low costs. However, they are certainly not useful for identifying specific strategies on a given language task at a given time, or for an in-depth analysis of an individual's strategy use.

Although a large number of studies utilised retrospective studies, these have not been left uncriticised. The critiques argue that the gap between the report and the event of strategy use might distort the data, that learners' reported strategy use may not necessarily be an accurate account of what they actually do, that subjects may have problems formulating their ideas about the task of language learning, that they may under- or overestimate the frequency of the use of certain strategies, as well as their unawareness of when and how they are using them (Cohen 1998: 31). Questionnaire items referring to general behaviour may be more likely to elicit answers reflecting what learners believe they do rather than what they actually do.

3.2.1.3. Self-revelatory verbal reports

Efforts to obtain learner strategy data that describe the events of language learning or language use immediately at or near the moment they occur motivated researchers to reach back to introspective methods developed in the late 19th century. At that time experimental psychologists started studying mental processes and the contents of the human mind by asking their introspectionists to "think aloud" as they performed mental tasks. This methodology was incorporated into research on language ac-

quisition by researchers of native language reading and writing, later second language research also adopted it (for references see Cohen 1998: 35). Self-revelatory verbal reports are either *self-observation* or *self-revelation*.

Self-observation is

> "*the inspection of specific, not generalised, language behaviour, either introspectively, i.e. within 20 seconds of the mental event, or retrospectively - e.g. 'What I just did was to skim through the incoming oral text as I listened, picking out key words and phrases*" (Cohen 1998:34).

Self-revelation is

> "*the 'think-aloud', stream-of-consciousness disclosure of thought processes while the information is being attended to – e.g. 'Who does the "they" refer to here?*" (Cohen 1998:34).

Self-revelatory research methods identify in-depth the strategies used in a given, ongoing task. Similarly to the other methods, they have also been criticized on a number of grounds. According to Cohen, it is in them that that the inconsistencies of learner strategy research culminate (1998: 47). At the same time, advocates argue that researchers who are aware of these problems and are experienced can find ways of getting around them (Elekes 2000), particularly in the research planning phase. If self-observation and self-revelation reports are elicited with care and interpreted with full understanding of the various aspects of the context, they may serve as a fully reliable and valuable source of information on cognitive processes. Finally, they should not be employed as the only instrument, but used together with other data collection tools.

3.2.1.4. Diaries and dialogue journals

Another form of self-disclosure, diaries and dialogue journals, are means of eliciting thoughts, feelings, concerns, achievements, strategies and impressions from learners. While diaries contain an individual's reflections on language learning, usually in the first person singular, dialogue journals have got an extra element added to them, a reader who is to respond. In formal learning contexts it is usually the teacher who responds, but peers or others involved with the writer's learning, may also participate as readers.

As diaries and dialogue journals are primarily learner-generated and unstructured, entries are bound to cover a wide range of issues and topics important for the diarist (Cohen 1998: 41). This is at the same time regarded to be a major drawback- in that there may be too much information disclosed in the diary or dialogue journal which is completely irrelevant for strategy analysis purposes. Another concern relates to the subjectivity of the data, which stems from the random and free-form nature of the entries. This is difficult to deny. However, one should note that the goal of diary studies is hardly ever to generate quantifiable data that enable the researcher to generalise the findings to other learners. Instead, they have been primarily used to highlight the affective states of learners. In addition, regular writing helps diarists become more focused and more aware of their strategies, thus diaries can play an important role in raising learners' awareness of themselves, of language and of language learning, which are all prerequisites of successful learning.

3.2.1.5. Recollective studies

In recollective studies (also called 'learner histories') learners give account of some earlier learning experience and reflect on what it was like. These may contain information about specific strategies or learning problems, but because of the time gap, what learners are most likely to recollect are experiences. This is the biggest drawback of the method: the inevitable memory deterioration, which is likely to result in loss of detail, generalisations, possible reinterpretations and distortions of events. The problems notwithstanding, this method also has advantages. It allows learners to gain invaluable insights into the strategies that work best for them and the settings that they tended to prefer. (Cohen and Scott 1996: 102) This self-awareness of learning preferences is of high significance to learners who want to take a more active role in the managing of their own learning. However, the researcher must bear in mind that the data yielded by recollective studies should be handled as anecdotal, individualistic and distorted accounts of learners' strategy use.

3.2.1.6. Computer tracking

Computer tracking is a relatively new development in learner strategy assessment. It helps identifying learners' strategies associated with the use of resource functions accompanying word processing programs, such

as a dictionary, a thesaurus, a reference grammar, a style and/or spell-checker, tutorials on how to complete certain tasks, and background information on given topics. As opposed to all the other methods discussed above, computer tracking eliminates the subjective, retrospective element and the problem of distortion by the human mind from learners' strategy use accounts. This is a great advantage. However, it can only record strategies resulting from the use of resource functions, nothing else. For example, the use of the inferencing strategy, a common one for finding out the meaning of a word, cannot be tracked by a computer programme (directly). Another problem is its online nature, which, according to Cohen and Scott (1996: 104), may interfere with the data collection. All things considered,

> "*such programs are quite suitable for studying strategies for producing written language while lacking adequate linguistic knowledge.... also, computers can track strategies for forming concepts and hypotheses... during the composition or reading process*." (ibid).

In conclusion, we can say that there are a variety of ways available for interested teachers and researchers for the assessment of learners' strategy choice and use. Because all the methods have advantages as well as limitations, researchers have to apply the method 'triangulation', the combination of several techniques in a number of ways most appropriate to the research context, the objective of the study, the participants, or availability of resources.

3.2.2. Issues in learner strategy training

Learner strategy training, or learner training, for short, encompasses all the approaches to L2 teaching where accent falls on teaching learners the application of learner strategies which are supposed to bring about improved language attainment. The idea dates back to the 'good language learner' studies in the 1970s, when researchers' main concern was to identify the strategies successful learners apply with a view to training other learners in their use.

A basic tenet of learner strategy training is that the learner strategies of successful learners can be codified and taught to poor learners, which in turn will result in increased learning efficiency of the latter. Equipping students with the tools necessary for transforming themselves into suc-

cessful learners involves helping them consider the factors that affect their learning and discover strategies that work best for them.

A second premise is that there exists a linear, causal and significant correlation between strategies and improved performance. A vast number of studies conducted along this line (Cohen 1990; Green & Oxford 1995; Phillips 1991; Rost & Ross 1991) found that students who were better in their language performance demonstrated a higher level of overall strategy use and frequent use of a greater number of strategy categories or individual strategies.

In the spirit of these tenets, research into learner strategy training started. Although there was a lot of research that failed to produce any significant proof for the beneficial effect of learner training on learning, other strategy training schemes have provided plenty of evidence for the opposite. You can find information about both types in Oxford and Leaver (1996: 227–247) as well as in Mónos (2004: 56–66) and Pawlak (2011: 27–29). Therefore I will not provide any detail here.

However, I find it important to share with you a most remarkable criticism of learner strategy training, which was put forward by Rees-Miller (1993). She questioned the existence of a direct causal link between strategy use and proficiency gains, arguing that the studies researching it employed different means to measure proficiency: furthermore, they interpreted the notion of proficient language learning and learner in differing ways. Thus, in her view, it is problematic to conclude that better performance is the direct result of the frequent use of certain strategies. Conclusions from the research on unsuccessful learners also warn that it is not necessarily a lack of a repertoire of strategies or infrequent strategy use that makes them ineffective, but the lack of ability to select strategies appropriate to the task.

Additionally, there are far too many unresolved questions about learner training that caution against it should be "entrenched as a methodological cornerstone of classroom teaching" (Rees-Miller 1993: 681). The disputable issues Rees-Miller raises are as follows: What strategies or combinations/clusters of strategies to include in a training program? Should the strategy involved be more general, of wider applicability, or more specific? Should it pertain to particular tasks or skills? What are the criteria of the appropriateness of a certain strategy to a particular task or learner?

How to measure the effectiveness of the training? What is the evidence for students profiting from an awareness of their personal learning styles?

Most of her criticism draws on the argument that the fundamentals of learner training may intuitively be correct, but proper validation would require a lot of empirical and longitudinal research. Indeed, there had been relatively few longitudinal studies on the factors involved with the provision of instruction in strategy use. However, Rees-Miller's critical analysis did the cause of learner training good service. It accelerated the clarification of a number of issues challenged by her. As a result, more studies and experiments of learner strategy instruction have been conducted, and learner strategy training materials have been created.

Based on the answers to the reservations about learner training and on the experience that had been accumulated about its practical application, it has become possible to suggest principles and a general framework for the implementation of strategy training programmes:

- L2 strategy training should be built on learners' stated needs, attitudes and beliefs;
- Strategies should be chosen so that they mesh with and support each other and so that they fit the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals and learning styles;
- Training should be integrated into regular language activities, over a longer period of time;
- Affective issues – such as motivation, anxiety, beliefs, interests - should be directly addressed in L2 strategy training;
- Strategy training should be overt, explicit and relevant;
- Strategy training should not be solely tied to the class at hand, but provide strategies transferable to future (not only) language tasks beyond the given class;
- Strategy training should provide learners with the mechanisms of evaluating their own progress, and the success of the strategies and of the training. (cf. Oxford, 1994: 3)

Rebecca Oxford's resource book (1990) introduces an eight-step model for long-term strategy training with a variety of practical suggestions, immediately applicable in the classroom. The eight steps are as follows:

1. determine the learners' needs and the time available;
2. select strategies well;
3. consider integration of strategy training;
4. consider motivational issues;
5. prepare materials and activities;
6. conduct completely 'informed training';
7. evaluate the strategy training;
8. revise the strategy training. (Oxford, 1990: 204)

In conclusion, let me quote Chamot's and Rubin's words (cited in Oxford and Leaver 1996: 246):

> "*We stress that learning strategies instruction is not a magical formula to improve learner performance… Still, the evidence… leads us to feel confident that such instruction, properly carried out, can positively assist language learners to become engaged in their own learning processes, thus taking on greater responsibility for learning. Teachers can introduce learning strategies instruction into their language class in the knowledge that it will help many if not most, students*."

In the further training programme, we are going to address all the issues discussed above and look into the possibilities of implementing learner strategy training in your teaching contexts.

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4. Learning styles

Katalin Mónos

4.1. Fundamental issues

4.1.1. Aims and rationale

Rebecca Oxford, whose name will sound pretty familiar to you from the previous chapter, and her associate, Anderson, wrote the following in their *State of the art article* on a cross-cultural view of learning styles:

> "*For optimal language progress, language instructors need to understand their students' learning styles and the (cultural and cross-cultural) influences that help shape those styles. The problem is that many language teachers have not yet been taught to identify their individual students' styles, nor to comprehend the myriad influences... affecting the development of language learning styles. Often teachers view language learning difficulties.... as a problem inherent in the students themselves, rather than a lack of understanding by the teacher.... Conflicts occur when a student has a learning style that differs from the instructional style of the teacher, especially when the teacher does not understand the.... reasons for this difference.... The classroom thus becomes a place of inequity, where some students receive what they need... Some students struggle along while feeling somewhat deprived or confused, and others drop out.*" (Oxford and Anderson 1995: 201)

I think this long quote provides a very good rationale for this chapter – indeed, understanding of students' learning styles is crucial for teachers if they want to provide the best instruction for their learners. Furthermore, it is very important for teachers to be able to recognise the problems resulting from the mismatch between their students' learning and their own teaching styles, and draw the necessary conclusions in such situations. Lack of understanding on teachers' behalf, however, is not necessarily their fault, because most teacher education programmes do not equip teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for identifying and handling difficulties arising from learning styles issues (ibid).

Although Oxford and Anderson wrote this 20 years ago, I am convinced the situation has not changed much for the better in our country

ever since. Therefore, this chapter aims to introduce the concept and dimensions of learning styles, as well as the importance and means of recognising, identifying and expanding them.

The first part of this chapter will be devoted to the fundamental issues of learning styles: the existing definitions and models, learning style dimensions, and then the style category of perceptual preferences will be dealt with at more length. Why? For I believe this is the most relevant category to the FL/SL classroom. The last subsection in Part 1 will review what has been found out about the link between styles and strategies. Then in Part 2 you will be introduced to the possibilities of measuring and expanding learning styles, which is often referred to as 'style flexing'. The related issue of the so called 'style war' will also be addressed in Part 2.

4.1.2. Definitions and models

When talking about learning styles, we refer to "*an individual's natural, habitual and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing and retaining new information and skills*" (Reid, 1995: x). Premising by way of introduction that the terms *styles* and *strategies* are often interchanged and confused, Brown introduces the learning style construct with defining *style* as a "term that refers to consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual", and *strategies* as "*specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information*" (1994: 104). Then Brown pointed out that the way we approach things in general and the particular attack we make on problems is the reflection of the link between personality and cognition, which is often referred to as cognitive style. When this is related specifically to educational contexts, the more general term to use is *learning styles*.

Like the concept of strategy, learning style is a complex construct involving the interaction of a number of elements. The available definitions reflect the diversity of the elements, ranging from reference to preferred sensory modalities to cognitive information processing patterns. According to a most frequently cited definition by Keefe, learning styles are:

> "*_cognitive, affective and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment… Learning style is a consistent way of functioning that reflects underlying causes of behaviour*" (Keefe 1979: 4).

Ehrman & Oxford suggest that learning style "*indicates preferred or habitual patterns of mental functioning and dealing with new information*" (1990:311), while Skehan offers the following definition: "*a general predisposition, voluntary or not, toward processing information in a particular way*" (1991: 288).

Strategies -as we saw- are dependent in a complex and not always predictable manner upon a variety of factors and on their interplay. As for styles, however, it is their relative stability and endurance over time that is emphasised. As Kinsella puts it, styles persist, regardless of teaching methods and content area.

> "*Everyone has a learning style, but each person's is as unique as a signature. Each signature appears to be influenced by both nature and nurture; it is a biological and developmental set of characteristics.*" (Kinsella 1995: 171)

Though a number of researchers are of the view that styles are stable traits in adults (Ellis 1994: 499), this view has been criticised. Some argue that though individuals show general tendencies toward one style or another, style preferences are context-bound; that is, differing contexts will evoke differing styles (Brown 1994). Little & Singleton (1990) forward the idea that mature learners can be helped to explore their own preferred ways of learning and adjust their learning approach to the particular task. The idea of 'style flexing' (details in section 4.2.2) draws on the latter view.

A number of learning style models have been advanced, which seek to grasp all the dimensions involved in the concept. Dunn et al's multidimensional model (1979, 1989) encompasses five stimulus categories as potentially interacting to produce a person's learning style. These are: *environmental*, *physical, emotional, sociological* and *psychological* stimuli. For example, the distinctions of brain hemispherity, that is, left or right brain functioning, the analytic/relational and the reflective/impulsive dichotomies derive from the way learners respond to psychological stimulus (cf. Kinsella 1995).

Oxford & Anderson (1995) have proposed a somewhat different, six-element model: in their interpretation, *cognitive* elements are responsible for patterns of mental functioning, the *executive* aspect deals with the organisation and managing of the person's learning process, the *affective* aspect refers to clusters of attitudes, beliefs and values that impinge upon

the way an individual responds to a learning situation, the *social* aspect concerns the extent to which learning with others is preferred by the individual, the *physiological* element involves the partly anatomically based sensory preferences, and the *behavioural* aspect relates to the tendency to seek situations which are compatible with one's learning style.

4.1.3. Style dimensions

An individual's learning style is the composite of at least 20 learning style dimensions. Not all relate equally to the teaching–learning context in general, or to SL/FL contexts in particular. Of the variety of distinctions that have been suggested the following ones have proved to be significant for second language learning: field dependence / independence; left/right brain functioning; ambiguity tolerance / intolerance; reflectivity / impulsivity; feeling / thinking; relational / analytical; intuitive-random / concrete-sequential; and extroverted / introverted. Looking at all these style dimensions in detail and at how they relate to success in the foreign language classroom would far exceed the limits of the present writing. Thus I will only touch upon the basics. If you are interested, you will find all you want to know in Oxford and Anderson's cited *State of the art article.*

The multiple elements that comprise the individual learning styles are bipolar, representing a continuum from one end to the other. No one fits into one or another of these categories to the exclusion of the other, parallel category (e.g.: it is unlikely that a learner always adopts a completely and only analytical approach to learning), although preferences exist, and sometimes these preferences are as strong as to suppress the parallel category entirely. The most important message, at least for me, is that no value judgment is to be attached to where a learner falls on the continuum. That is to say, no student should be evaluated negatively for being, say, a reflective learner, rather than an analytical one, (which is usually more welcome in our educational system). Because styles are not in any way related to intelligence, students should not be labelled or stigmatised for having any set of learning style characteristics. Oxford (1990a) makes the point that each style preference has significant advantages as regards learning, and the important thing is for learners to identify their style preference because their 'comfort zone' falls within their favourite style. She also suggests that learners stretch their comfort zone through practice.

In the following section, the distinction on the basis of perceptual preferences will be discussed in some detail.

4.1.4. Perceptual preferences

Educators usually refer to the sensory channels through which perception occurs as modalities, and the modalities through which an individual best absorbs and retains information is called 'modality strengths'. Four modalities exist*: auditory, visual, tactile* and *kinesthetic*. Although *tactile* suggests learning with one's hands through manipulation of objects, and *kinesthetic* implies total physical involvement with the environment through movement, these two terms are often used interchangeably; some researchers amalgamate the perceptual properties of the tactile / kinesthetic learner into the *haptic* category.

There are also important distinctions within the auditory and visual categories. While some auditory learners prefer perceiving input through listening to instruction from teachers or tapes and films, others may additionally need to process information through talking aloud to themselves or through small group and/or class discussions. As for visual learners, they normally gravitate toward silent reading, prefer quiet and like working on their own. While some visual learners need verbal visual backup to oral input, others prefer less verbal presentation of visual input in the form of pictures, charts, diagrams and graphs.

Learners vary to a large extent with respect to their perceptual preferences. Modality strengths may occur in a single channel, or may be mixed with one or more modalities dominating over the others. Most people learn how to absorb and retain information through several channels as they grow older; the modality strength is retained in that learning is easier through the preferred channel. While children in their lower primary years are more tactile and kinesthetic, the visual, then later the auditory strengths evolve by the upper primary age.

This is a consequence of the changing learning environment provided by the school, in that there is less and less variety in the way the material is presented, to the extent that towards the end of the upper primary years students receive most of the input through listening and reading. Those adolescent and adult students who still prefer learning through tactile/kinesthetic and visual non-verbal approaches may easily become disadvantaged in traditional educational settings, where – according to

Reid's American data (in Oxford & Anderson 1995: 210) – 90% of classroom instruction caters to the competent auditory learner. In all educational systems, learners with mixed modality strengths are advantaged over those with one strength because they are able to absorb information in whatever way it is presented.

Next, let us see how styles and strategies are linked.

4.1.5. Linking styles and strategies

Although our understanding of learning strategies in the context of styles is far from complete, it is obvious from the previous chapter -on learning strategies- that strategic learning means the choice of strategies appropriately to, among other factors, one's individual learning style.

Thus, a clear understanding of the learner's learning style is needed so that students can be assisted in finding the strategies most appropriate for them. Brown posits that some styles evoke certain strategies; therefore, in order to discover strategies that work best towards one's success, it is important to become aware of one's styles (Brown 1991: 71).

What we know about the link between styles and strategies draws on research carried out mainly in the United States. In a large-scale study of American adults, Ehrman & Oxford (1995) investigated how a range of individual difference variables, among those various learning style dimensions, related to proficiency ratings. Although some of the variables (aptitude and motivation) showed strong correlation with proficiency test results, none of the learning style dimensions did. In another study (Rossi-Le 1995), which investigated the link between learner strategies assessed through the *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (Oxford 1990b) and perceptual preferences assessed through Reid's instrument (1984), perceptual preferences were found to be closely related to the strategic approaches to learning of adult students with differing cultural backgrounds.

In sum, learning styles, even if the concept might be "ill-defined and overlapping with other individual differences of both an affective and a cognitive nature" (Ellis 1994:508), are far too influential on learning to be ignored. Given that all style dimensions have advantages as well as disadvantages as regards learning outcomes, learners should be made aware and reflective about their own styles - as well as learn how to compensate for the weaknesses stemming from their styles. This is one way of ensur-

ing that learners can adjust their working modes and strategies to their styles – and also – to the dominant style of teaching. Moreover, an awareness of learning style is the key to expanding styles, or 'style flexing' (Kroonenberg 1995:80) and to developing flexibility in the learning approach. These extremely important issues will be explored further in the next part.

4.2. Awareness-raising and expansion of learning styles

4.2.1. Becoming aware of learners' learning styles

As we saw in the previous part, learning styles are consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual. Everybody has a learning style, but everyone's learning style is different. What is more, it is unique, like a signature. Students with learning styles that are welcomed in the classroom have got a much better chance of performing well than those whose styles are not accommodated. Clearly, the understanding of learning styles is of crucial importance for teachers. Strategic learning, which involves choosing learner strategies appropriately to one's learning styles, also requires learning style awareness on behalf of the student. Thus the knowledge of learning styles is fundamental for all parties in education, but especially for teachers and students. The question arises how this awareness can be raised, and then what is to be done in possession of this awareness. In what follows, we are going to address these issues.

How can students be helped to discover their own learning preferences and the modalities and strategies that work best for them, whereby they can develop a more flexible approach to learning, not only an FL/SL, but also other subjects? How can teachers broaden their own understanding of their students' learning styles?

Teachers are in a relatively lucky position, since several instruments have been developed to measure learning styles in SLA. Cohen, Oxford and Chi's *Learning Style Survey* (2001) is designed to assess participants' general approach to learning and provides information about eight different learning preferences, among them modality strengths, reflectivity / impulsivity, extraversion / introversion, etc. We will look at it in detail in the further training programme. The *Ehrman and Leaver Learning Style Questionnaire* (Ehrman and Leaver 2003) investigates ten established

style dimensions under a new, superposed, comprehensive one, whose two poles are labelled *ectasis* and *synopsis*. The style dimensions include the classic ones, such as field dependence-independence, but not the sensory preferences.

Now let us turn to sensory preferences, the best established style dimension in SLA research. Studies that have tried to identify modality strengths and learners' attitude towards assessing their sensory preferences (Oxford & Ehrman 1993, Kroonenberg 1995) suggest that learners need to be given the opportunity to describe and discover the senses through which they are best able to absorb input. Awareness-raising of modality strengths can take several forms, ranging from one-to-one through whole class discussions to surveys. The available self-reporting questionnaires are numerous, of which I am referring you to the ones developed by Reid (1984), O'Brien (1990), Kinsella (1993) and Oxford (1993). (We will be working with some of them in the training programme.)

4.2.2. Expansion of learning styles

Although Reid warns that with the present state of our knowledge and understanding of learning styles the instruments must be used with caution, bearing in mind that none is perfect, what is more, students and styles grow and change, she asserts that both teachers and students will find them illuminating (Reid 1995: xiii). Kroonenberg (1995) is of the view that it is impossible for any one teacher to constantly bear in mind all the individual difference variables and sensory preferences- or to remember how individual students learn best. Therefore, it is primarily learners who must be made aware and reflective about their own perceptual strengths.

Having administered an instrument of sensory preference assessment, teachers can work closely together with learners, analysing and modifying their teaching styles, while giving learners tools to enhance and expand their styles and introducing them to learning strategies that are best suitable to their styles. How exactly this can be done is a purely technical question. Therefore, together with the techniques and procedures available for teachers and students for this purpose, the question of learner style expansion will be dealt with in detail in the further training programme.

Besides helping students become better learners, style flexing is also one way of reducing the 'style war', which often exists between teacher and learner. (Kroonenberg 1995: 85). But what is this 'style war', and why should this exist? Most probably it exists because of teachers who believe that their students have got the same learning preferences that they themselves (used to) have. Consequently, they teach in the way that they learned best at school. The conflicts arising from the differences between teachers' instructional style preferences and learners' preferred ways of learning may lead to the style war.

Such style conflicts will inevitably affect learning and students' grades negatively. A diagnostic approach to this problem is to assess both learners' and teachers' style preferences before determining what instructional style is most appropriate for a given class. Congruent with this view is Kinsella's solution, who puts forward the idea that the best way for the teacher to meet the demands posed by the inevitable diversity of learning styles is to make classroom instruction consistent with the findings of learning style assessments. Although Kinsella's handling of the style war problem applies to the sensory preferences construct, which, we remember, is the most relevant to the L2 context, it can obviously be extended to conflicts arising from students' and teachers' style differences in other dimensions.

> "*Learning style research supports what experienced classroom practitioners know intuitively: that students absorb new material and skills through their senses and prefer some senses over others in specific situations. When lessons are presented visually as well as verbally, and reinforced through writing, drawing or speaking activities, students are not only able to learn in the way best suited to their style, but also to develop a full and varied repertoire of modality strengths. The best instructional approach, then, regardless of subject matter or grade level, is a deliberate multisensory approach*." (Kinsella 1995: 175)

Finally, let me say a few words about the link between learning style preferences and culture. Though culture has a tremendous effect on learning styles (Oxford and Anderson 1995), understanding how this effect works may be less important for us who operate mainly in monocultural environments, than for teachers working with multicultural and/or multiethnic student groups. We can safely assume that our students'

learning styles and thought patterns are under similar influences. As Hofstede states (1986, as cited in Oxford and Anderson 1995:203), "*Our cognitive development is determined by the demands of the environment in which we grew up...*" But can we really be certain that all our students belong to the same cultural groups? I suppose we have to acknowledge that with the growing numbers of minority students – children of immigrants, gipsy students from a totally different subculture – we will have to think about considering their needs in terms of their learning preferences. Put in another way, we will have to help students with cultural backgrounds different from that of mainstream groups discover their preferred ways of learning and expand their learning styles.

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5. Motivation

Katalin Mónos

5.1. Fundamental issues

5.1.1. Aims and rationale

Most people regard motivation one of the most important, if not the most important, ingredients of success in FL/SL learning. As Pit Corder famously stated nearly 50 years ago, "*given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language (if he is exposed to the language data)*" (Corder 1967: 164). Even if we doubt that motivation alone is enough for successful language learning, we acknowledge that motivated language learners have a better chance of achieving good results than demotivated ones. Therefore it is compulsory for FL/SL teachers to have a clear understanding of the notion of motivation: its roots, types, and the ways of creating and maintaining motivation for their students. Thus, the aim of the chapter is obvious: to introduce all the issues about motivation that are relevant to the classroom teacher.

5.1.2. Types of motivation

5.1.2.1. The integrative/instrumental dichotomy

Motivation is probably thought of by the layman "*as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action*" (Brown 1994a: 152). Motivation research, and research into other ILDs, has always been in the forefront of educational psychology. Researching motivation in the L2 context started in the 1970's, in Canada, where Robert Gardner and his associates, particularly Wallace Lambert, carried out significant empirical studies of motivation in second language learning. They examined motivation as a construct consisting of several kinds of attitudes. In order to determine how attitudinal and motivational factors affect language learning success, they gathered empirical data through scientific research procedures and standardised instruments.

The key concept in their motivation theory was the *integrative motive*, "*a positive interpersonal/affective disposition towards the L2 group*" (Dörnyei 2006: 50). The integrative motive is employed when learners -

driven by the positive attitude towards the target language, its speakers and/or culture- want to integrate within that culture. Integratively motivated language learners want to identify with valued members of the target culture to the extent that they may even wish to withdraw completely from their original group. The other cluster of attitudes identified by Gardner and Lambert gave the notion of *instrumental motivation*. This kind of motivation applies when learners regard the knowledge of the target language as an instrument that helps them attain goals, such as furthering a career, translating latters, reading technical materials.

Most of the early studies found the superiority of integrative motivation and concluded that it might be one of the most important requirements for successful language learning. Soon, however, evidence started to accumulate which led to this claim being challenged. Research conducted in contexts different from those of Gardner and Lambert did not necessarily support the superiority of integrative motivation. While Gardner and Lambert mainly studied second language learners learning the L2 in the target language environment, other researchers found that learners of English as an FL or as an international language were rather motivated by instrumental factors. Later research started questioning the validity of all the instrumental-integrative construct, saying that the theoretical underpinnings as well as the measuring instruments were not reliable enough. It was also pointed out that in most studies it was impossible to attribute language learning success to either exclusively integrative or instrumental causes: what is more, that motivation was not a static but a dynamic construct, its type and intensity likely to change over time.

As Brown observes, these findings "*do not necessarily invalidate the integrative-instrumental construct*" (1994a: 154). They just remind us, researchers, teachers and educators, that there is not just one way of being motivated: some learners in some contexts learn better when motivated primarily integratively, or primarily instrumentally, but most situations involve a mixture of types of motivation.

All the claims and counterclaims about this dichotomy notwithstanding, the integrative-instrumental debate has helped highlight the role of affective variables in language learning, and draw the conclusion that L2 learning is to large extent an emotional activity in whose success a positive attitude is of primary importance.

5.1.2.2. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

In the classroom context, another dichotomy, the *intrinsic/extrinsic* one gained ground in the last decades. "*Perhaps the most powerful dimension of the whole motivation construct in general is the degree to which learners are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to succeed in a task*" (Brown 1994a: 155). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are related to the reward system. According to Deci, intrinsically motivated learners are those for whom there is no apparent reward but the activity itself (in Brown 1994a: 155). These learners learn for their own sake- or/and because they enjoy the activity or the internally rewarding outcomes, such as the sense of achievement, competence in the language and a high self-esteem. Extrinsically motivated learners, on the other hand, engage in language learning in order to obtain some kind of rewards from outside, beyond the self. External rewards can be grades, prizes, money, or even positive feedback. Learning for fear of being punished for not learning, which we often experience among our students, is also a sort of extrinsically motivated behaviour.

The question arises, which form of motivation is more effective in the classroom. Research on motivation as well as the experience of the classroom teacher are consonant in supporting the idea that intrinsic motivation, especially in the long run, is far more powerful than extrinsic. This agrees with psychologists' view, who say that the human being will always strive for self-esteem and fulfilment, even if extrinsic rewards are available.

We had better distinguish this dichotomy from Gardner's integrative-instrumental one than amalgamate the two ends of each. Some instances of intrinsic motivation may turn out to be integrative, but certainly not all. For example, one could wish to learn an L2 for intrinsic purposes and want to immigrate or get married to someone from the target culture (intrinsic and integrative) at the same time. However, it might also happen that the person learning the L2 for intrinsic purposes also wishes to pursue academic studies (instrumental). Examples of extrinsic and instrumental motivation do not necessarily overlap, either. A learner may develop a positive attitude towards the target language (integrative) for purely extrinsic reasons: teachers' or parents' encouragement.

In sum, one can say that the intrinsic/extrinsic dimension is probably applicable to all the classrooms of the world, regardless of the ethnic or socio-cultural background and the attitudes and beliefs of the learners and

teachers. Furthermore, intrinsic/extrinsic factors can be easily identified, while the integrative-instrumental continuum makes sense mainly in a social-psychological context. Our task in the FL teaching business is to motivate our students somehow, but first and foremost, to provide the tools that help them to become intrinsically motivated learners. We will take a look at the ways of creating intrinsic motivation in the classroom in Section 5.2. However, before that, a little more history of motivation research.

5.1.3. Development of the 1990's and the 2000's.

The 1990s saw a renewal of interest in motivation research, which some researchers called a "motivational renaissance", and brought about a broadening of perspectives, a number of new approaches and models. Though diverse at first sight, the new studies shared three common features. 1. All aimed at complementing Gardner's social-psychological approach. Rather than downgrading it, they claimed that in certain educational contexts the social dimension might not be the only relevant, what is more, not even the most important one. 2. All tried to conceptualise situation and task-specific motivation, as opposed to the broad, whole-community-level tendencies in the forefront of research following the Gardnerian paradigm. 3. Closely related to number 2, researchers of the 90s called for a pragmatic, classroom-centred approach, the results of which are immediately applicable by the L2 classroom teacher (Dörnyei 1998: 125).

The theoretical developments of the 2000's provided ground for three major directions: the process-oriented conceptualisation of motivation, the reinterpretation of the integrative motive, and the reframing of L2 motivation as part of the self-system (Dörnyei 2006: 51). The major issue about the process-oriented approach is that it acknowledges the dynamic and temporal nature of motivation. That is, it emphasises the fact that the type and intensity of motivation changes over time, reflecting the ups and downs of the L2 learning experience. The result of the reinterpretation of the integrative motive is its applicability to learning contexts in which the target language does not have its own culture and speakers behind it towards which learners can develop a positive attitude. These are contexts where English is an international or global language, and where the idea of Gardner's integrative motive cannot apply. In such cases, the L2 learner may still want to identify with some kind of L2 community with

particular socio-cultural features that the learner finds attractive. The third theory, the *L2 Motivational Self System*, proposed by Dörnyei (2005), shifts the focus away from the integrative onto the identification aspect and the learner's self-concept. In this theory, the traditional integrative motivation dimension equates the *Ideal L2 Self*. The Ideal L2 Self incorporates all the wishes and desires that the learner wants to fulfil. L2 learners will be successful if their ideal self makes them want to become competent L2 speakers. Using Gardner's terminology, this learner has an integrative orientation. Besides the Ideal L2 Self, there is another self-dimension, the *Ought-to L2 Self*. This concerns the attributes that learners think they ought to possess but they do not. Most of these motives are instrumental in nature. The third dimension of the L2 *Motivational Self System* is the *L2 Learning Experience.* This consists of executive motives related to the learning environment and experience.

All in all, one can conclude that motivation is a notion that has been attracting a plethora of theoretically as well as more practically orientated research over the past decades, and there is still a lot to research and clarify. In the following part, however, we are going to look at the ways of taking motivation into the classroom.

5.2. Motivation and motivating in the L2 classroom

As we saw in Section 5.1.2.2., the motivation construct most immediately applicable in the classroom is the intrinsic/extrinsic dichotomy. It was also highlighted that of the two, intrinsic motivation is more powerful because it is more likely to lead to successful language learning than extrinsically motivated behaviour.

Let us take a brief look at the classrooms (of any subject) in the current system of state education in Hungary, with the aim to decide if they are ideal places for intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. What we can see is that primary and secondary schools are burdened with extrinsically motivating factors. What are these? The school curriculum (dictated by often politically influenced institutions), society's values, parents' and teachers' expectations, tests and exams – all these are forced upon students whether they like them or not. The result of the system is a rather product and competition orientated environment in which content, product and correctness matter, and students fear failure above all, and therefore refrain

from potentially intrinsically rewarding risk taking or innovative behaviour. (Brown 1994b: 40) Certainly, this picture is not 100% true, but most of it unfortunately holds true in our educational context.

Can the picture be changed at all? In what follows, we will see ways of changing it and, of diverting the extrinsic elements into a more positive direction. The following table shows what can happen in a school burdened with extrinsic elements; how that school can turn those elements in an intrinsic direction and finally achieve the desired motivational results.

EXTRINSIC PRESSURES	INRINSIC INNOVATIONS	MOTIVATIONAL RESULTS
School curriculum	learner centred personal goal setting, individualisation	self-esteem, self-actualisation decide for self
Parental expectations	family values	love, intimacy, acceptance, respect for wisdom
Society's expectations (conformity)	security of comfortable routines, task based teaching	community, belonging, identity, harmony, security
Tests and exams	peer evaluation, self-diagnosis	experience self-knowledge
Competition	cooperative learning, group and team work	manipulation, strength, status, security
Pressure never to fail	risk taking, innovation, creativity	learn from mistakes, nobody is perfect

Table 1: From extrinsic to intrinsic motivation in educational institutions
(based on Brown 1994b: 40)

For example, a school curriculum can be modified to a certain extent to include learner centred elements, providing ground for personal goal setting and individualisation of the lessons and activities by the learners. The motivational result is higher self-esteem, better chances for self-actualisation and more individual decision making for the self. The basic idea is that a school under extrinsic pressures can turn itself into a more positive

environment for its students, without aiming at the impossible: revolutionizing society. Letting learners set long-term goals and encouraging cooperative leaning techniques, (e.g.: team and group work, allowing risk-taking behaviour, rewarding innovation and creativity and emphasizing what is good about learners' achievement), are methods of redirecting extrinsic values towards intrinsically oriented directions.

Besides the importance of intrinsic motivation, the classroom teacher needs to be aware of the methods and techniques of assessing their students' motivational orientations with a view to creating and maintaining motivation in their classrooms. Teachers of English as an L2 are lucky since there is a huge literature devoted to these topics – if there is a problem at all it is the abundance rather than the lack of materials. However, there is no space here to look into any of these materials. We are going to deal with these issues at length during the course. Let me just recommend a couple of sources, all of which are relatively recent, are built on research carried out also in English as a foreign language contexts, and which provide plenty of practical ideas on the methods of researching and creating motivation.

Recommended readings

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Dörnyei, Z. (2010): *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing*. (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

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6. Anxiety

Katalin Mónos

6.1. Aims and rationale

Anxiety is a phenomenon that all of us have some kind of experience with: as teachers we will have had learners who were too anxious to perform well enough in or out of our classes; and I am sure we all remember times from our student years or teaching career when we had our own anxiety to fight in order to achieve good results. Indeed, anxiety is the feeling that may get in the way of good performance, often crippling the person who is under its influence.

As we saw in Gardner and MacIntyre's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (1993, see Section 1.3 in this course material), high levels of anxiety will have a detrimental effect on language attainment. In complete agreement with other views, the model suggests that high levels of anxiety will decrease motivation, which is bad enough in itself. On top of that, anxiety will affect learning outcomes negatively in formal learning contexts, such as the FL/SL classroom. Indeed, anxious learners often find language learning too traumatic an experience to perform well enough. However, both SLA and psychological research agree that anxiety can be handled, particularly by learners and teachers who are aware of it – more particularly of its types, roots, causes, effects and ways of handling.

Therefore, this chapter will be devoted to the discussion of anxiety, an affectively based ILD variable, and is intended to provide insight into its various aspects with a view to helping participants of the SLA/FLA process recognise and reduce it in order to benefit language learners.

6.2. Definitions, types

Broadly speaking, anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system (Spielberger 1983). General psychology views anxiety as "a more permanent predisposition to be nervous" in a wide range of situations (Scovel 1978 as cited in Ellis 1994: 479). As such, it can be regarded as a personality trait; therefore, this type of anxiety is

also called *trait anxiety*. Besides this, state and situation-specific anxieties can be distinguished. *State anxiety* is experienced in a particular moment in time, as a response to a certain situation of whatever nature. *Situational anxiety* is apprehension aroused by a specific situation, such as public speaking, an exam, or participation in an anxiety-inducing event.

The three cannot be clearly separated but would rather be viewed as placed on a continuum with trait anxiety at one end and state anxiety, the moment-to-moment experience of a transient emotional state, at the other. Situational anxiety falls in the middle of the continuum, representing the probability of becoming anxious in a particular type of situation.

How shall we relate to this continuum the apprehension experienced by language learners in language learning and language use situations? Put in another way, where does language anxiety belong? Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope saw foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety, and conceptualized it as a "*distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process*" (1991: 31). A most prominent figure in anxiety research, Peter MacIntyre, observed that language anxiety is a form of situation-specific anxiety, and defines it as follows: "*the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language*" (1998: 27).

In most of the literature, anxiety – foreign language or the more general type – mostly appears as something negative. However, drawing on the conflicting and mixed results yielded by different anxiety measures and its different conceptualizations, Scovel (1978) suggested a distinction between facilitating and debilitating anxiety. *Facilitating* anxiety makes learners 'fight' the situation, inspiring them to make extra efforts to overcome their apprehension and aversion to the learning task. Intuitively, one tends to believe that this can only apply to low levels of anxiety, and that the facilitating effect can only occur in rather simple learning situations. In more demanding ones, anxiety is more likely to have a *debilitatin*g effect on the learner, making her/him try to avoid the source of anxiety.

Before looking at the sources/causes of anxiety as uncovered by research, we will briefly discuss the means of measuring it.

6.3. Measuring anxiety

According to Zheng, the complexity of the anxiety construct is reflected in the means of its measurement. In his study he says that there are three major ways of measuring anxiety: behavioural observation or rating; physiological assessment such as heart rates or blood pressure tests; and participants' self-reports, in which internal feelings and reactions are measured (2008:3). Educational studies, which may also focus on language anxiety, mainly utilise self-reports. SLA research measures anxiety by means of correlational studies involving measures of anxiety and learning and through diary studies (More details in Horwitz and Young 1991).

A number of researchers have developed questionnaires to measure anxiety. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) developed the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale*, which is based on conversations with beginner learners who identified themselves as anxious. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) have also developed an extensive set of scales (23 in all) to measure various forms of anxiety.

One of the main questions researchers seek to answer in these studies is *what causes* anxiety. The other important issue is *what effect* it has on learning. In the following sections we are going to look at the main findings related to these questions.

6.4. Causes and effects of anxiety

The diary studies referred to above found that a *main reason* for learners to feel anxious is the competitive nature of the classroom learning situation. Students inevitably compare themselves to other learners and often find their own proficiency and competences to be on lower level. Other sources of language anxiety identified by diary studies were tests, learners' perception of their relationship with the teacher, and teachers' questioning techniques (cf. Ellis 1994: 480).

Based on findings yielded by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) attributed language anxiety to three *causes*: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and fear of tests. Price (1991) concluded from his case studies that the difficulty level of foreign language classes, personal perception of language aptitude, certain personality variables (e.g., perfectionism and fear

of public speaking), and stressful classroom experiences are all possible causes of anxiety.

In addition, Young (1991) identified six potential sources of language anxiety from three aspects: the learner, the teacher, and the instructional practice. He claimed that language anxiety is caused by (a) personal and interpersonal anxiety, (b) learner beliefs about language learning, (c) instructor beliefs about language teaching, (d) instructor-learner interactions, (e) classroom procedures, and (f) language testing. Young (1994) also claimed that these sources of language anxiety are interrelated.

MacIntyre sees language anxiety as part of social anxiety, which is attributable to the social and communicative aspects of language learning. Remember that MacIntyre examines anxiety, together with the other ILDs, as part of the particular socio-cultural milieu, which determines all the factors in the particular socio-educational context. (See Section 1.3 in this course) Therefore, it is no wonder that he sees language anxiety as a function of the interplay of the social and contextual elements of the language learning situation.

Next, let us see what *effect* anxiety exerts on the learner. Researchers agree (in Ellis 1994: 481) that anxiety affects three stages of the learning process: input, processing and output. We should bear in mind, though, that most research in this field has focused on output, that is, mainly speaking and a little on writing, in the FL. Thus, relatively little is known about the influence that anxiety has on the input and processing stages.

MacIntyre proposes (1998) that anxiety affects the learner in at least five ways. Academically, high levels of language anxiety are bound to lead to low levels of academic achievement in second/foreign language learning. Socially, learners with higher language anxiety have the tendency to avoid interpersonal communication more often than less anxious learners. The third, cognitive aspect means that anxiety can become an affective filter that prevents certain information from entering a learner's cognitive processing system (see Sellers 2000) thus, it can influence both the speed and accuracy of learning. Fourth, anxiety arousal can impact the quality of communication output as the retrieval of information may be interrupted by the "freezing-up" moments that students encounter when they get anxious. Finally, personally, language learning could, under some circumstances, become an unpleasant experience that may deeply undermine one's self-esteem or self-confidence as a learner.

6.5. Relation to other factors

ILDs, affective variables included, do not operate independently from one another. We saw in the models of second language acquisition, among others, in Gardner and MacIntyre's socio-educational model (1993) that anxiety was in an intricate and usually causal relationship with several other features of the model (see Section 6.1).

Besides the relationships described in this model, research has shown that personality and anxiety are also interrelated. Personality traits, such as introversion and extroversion, are associated with anxiety arousal (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). The underlying assumption is that introverts are more likely to be anxious than extroverts (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001). Introverts usually prefer individual work more than group work, so they may easily become anxious when put in a more communication orientated classroom setting. Another personality-related feature, perfectionism, can also be linked to anxiety, in so much that perfectionists, like anxious students, may easily find language learning unpleasant, particularly when they are not satisfied with their own accomplishments, having had higher expectations of themselves.

As we saw in Section 4.2.2. (about the 'style war' in the context of learning and teaching styles), learning styles and anxiety are also related. As many others, Oxford found (1999) that students' learning styles / preferences and teachers' teaching styles are often in conflict, which will inevitably cause anxious feelings in a number of students. Finally, let me remind you again of the two-way relationship between anxiety and motivation (see Sections 1.3, 6.1). While anxious learners are more likely to lose their motivation to learn, highly motivated learners will more easily find ways of handling their negative emotions and attitudes toward language and language learning.

The next section will be devoted to the question of how to handle the very often debilitating phenomenon of anxiety.

6.6. Helping students reduce anxiety

Language anxiety is a pervasive phenomenon, a truly influential, emotional construct in any FL/SL context. There is an analogy between the Linguistic Threshold level (Bernhardt and Kamil 1995), which implied that a level of second language linguistic ability must be obtained in order to achieve efficiency, and the language anxiety threshold, a level of language anxiety below which second/foreign language learners feel uneasy. An understanding of language anxiety threshold will help learners and teachers alike avoid harmful feelings of anxiety and carry out interventions (e.g., coping strategies, tailored programs). Even if it is recognized that one's language anxiety threshold is far from being fixed; it varies from culture to culture, from individual to individual, or even from moment to moment. Teachers and educators have to develop strategies of intervention in order to help learners boost their self-confidence and reduce anxiety for better achievement and performance.

This being primarily a practical matter, we are going to look at the ways and means of handling/reducing anxiety, available for either learners and/or teachers, in a class delivered in the further training programme.

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Young, D. J. (1994): New directions in language anxiety research. In C. A. Klee (Ed.), *Faces in a crowd: The individual learner in multisection courses* Boston: Heinle & Heinle. 3–46.

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CHAPTER 5

WEB 2.0 WAYS TO LEARN/ TEACH A SECOND LANGUAGE

By Gyula Sankó

1. Web 2.0 ways to learn / teach a second language

Gyula Sankó

1. Introduction

Due to the recent developments in technology, websites have become the most popular information and communication tool among young people. They talk and socialize in websites. The new Web 2.0 technologies also allow students to become the generators of content instead of the consumers of content as in the case of printed textbooks (Küfi and Özgür 2009, Girgin 2011). They can construct new knowledge using their old experiences and knowledge. "*Technology and Web 2.0 tools are supportive of knowledge construction, immersion in a foreign language, and interactivity across sites*" (Chang, Pearman, and Farha 2012: 52). Language learners gaining linguistic knowledge through working with a community of native and nonnative speakers in an authentic social context on the worldwide web is also in line with Vygotsky's (1986) sociolinguistic theory on the importance of social interactions in learners' cognitive development.

The term Web 2.0 was coined in 2004 referring to the second generation of Internet services more dynamic and flexible by nature than the first generation (Uzunboylu 2011).

Google was no longer used only as a web browser, but also as a tool for sharing documents (GoogleDoc), and communicating (Gmail), and a range of other useful applications appears, such as Skype, blogs, wikis, Facebook, YouTube, etc. All these easy-to-use tools are based on social networking and emphasize collaboration among users, enabling them "to create, share, organize, and integrate various artefacts" (Orehovacky, Granic and Kermek 2013: 3039). Moreover, they all make it possible for users to create contents, that is they facilitate, or rather require the active and creative participation of the users. This is the feature that should be exploited in foreign language education.

As Pieri and Diamantini (2014: 1217) point out, the use of Web 2.0 allows teachers and students "*to actively participate in the learning process, giving them the possibility to generate and propose contents, to sti-*

mulate discussions and in general, to create real learning communities." Pieri and Diamantini (2014) also highlight that the introduction of the ICTs in education changes the rigid and hierarchical teacher-student model to one where the teacher is more a facilitator and a guide than an instructor, and the source of all knowledge. The linear mode of studying is replaced by a "*hypermediatic disorder*" (Pieri and Diamantini 2014: 1218), and the behaviorist or cognitive model of knowledge transmission gives way to constructivist knowledge production, where individuals actively choose their personalized learning paths and construct a learning environment most suitable for the new surroundings and circumstances. Loureiro, Messias, and Barbas (2012: 536) also stress that new media allow students to create a personal learning environment, what is more, they "t*ake a risk and say that lifelong learning has evolved with new media*".

Duthoit, and Metz (2012: 144) found that informal, non-mediated Web 2.0 contexts "facilitate the learner in his help's seeking through anonymity as a face protector and openness as potentially provider of many replies". Studies also suggest that the use of Web 2.0 in teaching and learning can increase students' motivation and creativity (Skocko, 2012). In situations like in Hungary, where the classroom is the only venue for foreign language learning, Web 2.0 can

> " *provide [learners] opportunities to practice reading, writing, speaking and listening outside the classroom walls at their own pace, in real life-semblance and safe environments*" (Pop 2010: 1189).

Pop (2010), however, also notes that in spite of the fact that 21st century education relies more and more on new technologies, foreign language instruction is rather resistant to employing the new Web 2.0 technologies. On the basis of my experience I risk and state the same about the Hungarian language teaching population, where Web 2.0 language learning applications are little known (except for some everyday ones like Facebook or perhaps Skype) and are scarcely (if at all) used in education.

The purpose of this paper is to familiarize Hungarian teachers of English with a range of Web 2.0 applications, occasionally providing some practical hints to recommended classroom activities. The structure of the paper does not follow the four language skills, rather it is organized according to the functions of particular software programs. Since many of the following applications can be put to more than one linguistic/ lan-

guage learning use, it is left to the imagination and creativity of teachers to try and put them to the best possible use.

The paper is divided into four main parts. The first part of the overview focuses on communication and collaboration, the second shows tools for organizing learning/ teaching content; the third part presents applications that can handle still and moving (video) images, audio, and the combination of these, i.e. multi- or hypermedia materials, and the final part deals with social networking web tools.

2. Web 2.0 tools for communicating and collaborating

Huang, Hood, and Yoo cite Downes (2005), according to whom "*Web 2.0 is not a technology but rather it is an attitude that brings an immense social change*" (2013: 58). Huang, Hood, and Yoo's (2013) study revealed that females felt more anxious of using Web 2.0 applications than males, but, surprisingly, no such difference was found on social networking tools and online video sharing tools.

2.1. Weblogs and virtual online whiteboards for communication and collaborative work

Weblog, asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC), is gaining popularity in the educational realm and is used extensively in English language leaning contexts. Weblogs are organized in a reverse chronological order; that is the latest published Blog is in the first or top entry and each published Blog has a date that indicates when the Blog is published, which feature allows the reader to identify the most recent post. The posts can be edited by the author, and the Blogs can be archived and searchable through database. The three types of Weblog used in the language classroom are the tutor blog, the learner blog, and the class blog (Noytim 2010).

"*The adoption of using blogs as instructional technology can create a space beyond the more traditional classroom setting that can be used judiciously to facilitate learners' collaborative writing processes and interactions. Blogs offer students a high level of autonomy while creating a new opportunity for interaction with peers*" (Amir, Ismail, and Hussin 2011: 542). The authors also add that through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and acquisition students often learn as much from each other as from

instructors or textbooks. Below you can find some blogging applications out of which the most popular (and the most refined) is perhaps Tumblr.

Blogs – (Tumblr – https://www.tumblr.com/, Kidblog – http://kidblog.org/, Class BlogMeister – classblogmeister.com, WordPress – https://wordpress.org/, Blogger – https://www.blogger.com/)

Glogs – (www.edu.glogster.com) (graphical blogs): blogs with an image-rich interface that can include audio and video. Glogster is a multimedia tool that you can find for free on the Internet. It is a tool to create virtual posters called glogs. The advantage is that you cannot just use pictures and write on your poster as you do also with conventional posters, but that you can include other media such as music and videos.

Online "whiteboard" surfaces for collaboration

Twiddla – (www.twiddla.com) is a free website that combines a whiteboard with other webpages. The result is that the teacher and student can look at a live website and then jointly draw all over the site at the same time. The changes to the board (drawings, adding or erasing shapes) are only seen by those sharing the exact "Twiddla room" (shared surface). It also has a text and audio chat system built in. Twiddla provides a cutting-edge environment dedicated to real collaboration, and extensive support of multiple document types (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, PDF), without the need to download anything. It may be ideal for collaborative reading and annotation of documents, particularly with team-based learning, brainstorming sessions or curriculum development. With such a strong feature set, the possibilities are endless (Hirschmann 2014).

Scribblar – (www.scribblar.com) Online whiteboards allow a student and teacher to work together simultaneously on the same surface, which means that each can see what the other is doing. Scribblar is browser-based (no download / installation needed) and independent of any other program. There is also no need for an account – you are given your own room automatically when you start.

Padlet – (http://padlet.com/) enables users to add "post-it" style notes to a shared online notice board. These notes can contain links, videos, images and text. Padlet walls can be set to private or public view. Private walls require a password to access them or can be accessed by registered users whose email addresses have been specified by the wall creator. The

creator of a public wall can specify who can or can't post notes to the wall. They can also moderate all notes before they appear.

PiratePad – (http://piratepad.net/front-page/) text is synchronized as you type, so that everyone viewing the page sees the same text. This allows you to collaborate seamlessly on documents. Different users can write in different colours so that you can track participation.

2.2. Collaborating by using Edmodo, Wikis, and online word processors

Edmodo – (https://www.edmodo.com/) is a private communication platform for teachers and students, useful to store and share files etc. This Web 2.0 tool is great for foreign language teachers who want to organize their classes and get students engaged. Its Facebook-like interface pulls kids in, and it is easy to navigate for teachers as well.

Wikis – (https://www.wikispaces.com/,) or (www.pbworks.com/) are websites that make possible the collaboration of many different authors. A *wiki* site allows anyone to edit, delete, or modify the content on the web; it may serve as an easy-to-edit webpage. Wikis are characterized by a variety of unique and powerful information-sharing and collaboration features. Some researchers have drawn attention to the potential of wikis for collaborative learning because participants can create a shared digital artifact, and this activity may facilitate the development of collaborative learning processes. Pifarre and Li (2012) argue that such students create and engage in powerful, critical and reflective dialogs using Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate the co-construction of new knowledge. Kovacic, Bubas, and Coric (2012) used wikis for teaching grammar and reported great success in this activity. Papadima-Sophocleous (2012) also concludes that "*the use of wiki in the CALL course provided ample opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, skills and experiences in the area of computer assisted language learning pedagogy*" (178). Kids can access the class wiki for research on projects, to check homework, to share comments on a presentation and for many other purposes. Wikis are popular because of all the other tools that you can easily incorporate into them.

Online word processors

GoogleDocs – Google Docs is Google's online and free answer to Microsoft's Word, Excel and PowerPoint products. Google Docs offers users a word processor, a spreadsheet application and a presentation builder. Users can upload their documents to their Google Docs account, which also allows for online backup and the interactive sharing of content. Google Docs will backup and save a users work as they are compiling it, which helps users avoid losing any data or having to worry to click on a Save button all the time. For language learning purposes collaborative writing projects can easily be done at a distance (for instance for homework); users can even track the history of changes to understand how the document developed over time. Collaborative Writing: students can write texts together and share them with the teacher. Just as wikis allow teachers to see who added what, the same is true with Google Docs (click on: Tools > Revision History). Students need not be in the same room; they can each edit at the same time or at different times.

Zoho Writer – (https://www.zoho.com/) is an online word processor that offers users a number of helpful features. Users can share documents over the Internet and collaborate with individuals or groups online. All collaboration changes are made in real time so the user is always viewing the most recent version of the document. Zoho Writer also lets users import and export documents from Google Doc or their desktop. Offline support tools are available that allow users to access and edit documents even when they are not connected to the Internet. A page view editing option allows users to make changes just as they would see the document in print. Zoho Writer also supports blog posting, which includes a WYSIWYG editor. Users can also begin by choosing a template from the Zoho Writer template library.

Wiggio – (https://wiggio.com/) is a free, online platform that allows teachers and students to work in groups by scheduling meetings, virtual video and audio conferences, chat-rooms, etc. Wiggio allows users to create text documents and spreadsheets online with file uploading and managing files into sub-folders. Users can also set up conference calls, virtual meetings, chat-rooms and create polls, surveys, etc. With Wiggio polls, users can easily setup polls consisting of three types of questions like Yes/No questions, Multiple Choice questions and Open Response questions. Users seeking collaboration can schedule group meetings ac-

cording to date and time. Furthermore, users can easily notify other group members by sending them quick text messages or mails.

Etherpad – (etherpad.org) is an online editor providing collaborative editing in real-time. Etherpad allows you to edit documents collaboratively in real-time, much like a live multi-player editor that runs in your browser. You can write articles, press releases, to-do lists, etc. together with your friends, fellow students or colleagues, all working on the same document at the same time. All instances provide access to all data through a well-documented API and supports import/export to many major data exchange formats.

2.3. Online voice and video communication, chat and instant messaging, discussion forums

Voice and video communication

Skype – (www.Skype.com) is the most widely used voice and video communications service currently available. It is a communication tool that allows users to make audio and video calls over the Internet. Calls to other Skype users are free. As an e-mail address is necessary to send e-mails, so a Skype account is required to make and receive calls. Users choose a user name, which remains with them for as long as the account is active.

Instant Messaging or Chat

Skype has a chat function that can be used for a variety of purposes. Users may chat while in a real-time audio or video call. This is useful if the connection breaks up. Users may indicate that they are unable to see or hear well using the chat function. In addition, if another call comes in while a user is in a real-time call, he or she may send the other party a quick instant message to let them know that their call cannot be answered at that time. The chat function helps to smooth out online communications, allowing users to briefly acknowledge one another or explain a situation, rather than simply terminating a call. This is particularly useful for ESL/EFL students who may find writing easier than speaking. In addition, users can exchange files and share their screens.

Most people tend to use the chat app of the community site they use (***Facebook, Twitter, MySpace,*** etc., or use mobile apps for instant messaging, like ***Viber***, or ***WhatsApp***).

2.4. MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning)

"*Mobile learning can be defined as the use of mobile devices as mediator in the process of learning and teaching*" (Alexander 2004). The term learning from mobile implies the use of mobile devices as a tool to deliver learning materials (Al Hamdani 2013). Reinders (2010) –offers twenty ideas for using mobile phones in the language classroom. Below you can read some of them.

Idea 1: Most mobile phones have a feature that allows them to take notes. Ask students to use this feature to take notes on the English they read or hear outside of school and either present the notes to the class or send them to you as a text message. Instead of giving regular homework, you can ask students to hunt for specific language forms (e.g., common nouns, the past perfect tense, formulaic expressions), and the student who collects the largest number of correct samples wins.

Idea 2: Use the Camera feature to take pictures of text. One of the easiest ways to use a mobile phone for learning is to record samples of the target language by taking pictures. Students can take pictures of English text by using the Camera feature on their mobile phones. They can then make a collage of the images or upload the pictures to a shared Flickr account (www.flickr.com).

Idea 4: Use the Voice Memo Recorder feature to record language from media outlets. Most phones include a memo recording feature that can collect language samples from TV or radio. The students' collected samples give you an opportunity to analyze the language, discuss where they were collected, and provide feedback.

Idea 5: Use the Voice Memo Recorder feature to record conversations outside the classroom.

Idea 6: Use the Text Messaging feature to reinforce vocabulary learning.

Idea 7: Use free programs to make flashcards for mobile phones.

Idea 8: Use the Text Messaging feature for circular writing. Students create a story together by contributing one text message at a time. Each student writes a sentence or two and then sends this on to the next student,

who adds another message, and so on until the story is complete. The teacher is copied and has a record of the story as it emerges.

Idea 9: Use the Text Messaging feature for tandem learning. In this activity two students who wish to learn each other's native language pair up and exchange text messages.

Idea 10: Use the mobile phone to keep a blog.

Idea 11: Use the mobile phone for microblogging on Twitter.

Idea 12: Use the mobile phone for social networking.

Idea 13: Use the mobile phone for a language exchange. In this activity two students who want to learn each other's native language talk in that target language for half of the call time. This activity may be expensive unless students can use Skype on their mobile phones.

Idea 14: Use the mobile phone for "phlogging". To encourage students to practice individual speaking, they could start *phlogging*, a recent form of blogging that entails calling a number and leaving a message on a website. Some programs like the currently free www.ipadio.com will even automatically transcribe the recording. This is an excellent task-based learning tool for students to update oral and written reports about a given project.

Idea 15: Use mobile phone memory to distribute listening material.

Idea 16: Use mobile phone memory to distribute reading material.

Idea 17: Use the mobile phone to play games. Many of the free games for mobile phones, such as Scrabble and crossword puzzles, involve a focus on language. Although not all of them may be suitable for second language learners, they at least encourage students to engage with the target language, and to do so in the context of entertainment.

Idea 18: Use the Voice Memo Recorder, Notes, and Calendar features to keep a portfolio.

Idea 19: Use the mobile phone to check student comprehension and get feedback. The previous ideas focus on learning, but mobile phones can also help you in your teaching. One way is to add an element of interactivity to your classes through audience participation. Polleverywhere (www.polleverywhere. com) is a free program that allows theteacher to pose survey questions to students. Students respond by texting their responses and the results show up immediately in a PowerPoint presentation or on a website. This tool is particularly useful in larger classes where it is not easy to get feedback from all students.

3. Web 2.0 tools for organizing learning/ teaching content; writing and presentation

Mansor's (2011: 430) proposes the following ideas about using Web 2.0 to make some of the teacher's organizational tasks easier, faster, and more flexible.

Ideas	*Recommended Solutions*
1 Collecting students' assignments online	1. Create special e-mail 2. Use upload file function from Dropbox, then collect through jotform.com
2 Conducting real-time consultation with students	1. Use Pingbox 2. Use Chat function (Chat n go, YM, Google Talk) 3. Use social media such as Facebook and MySpace
3 'Auto publishing' students' reflective	1. Blog co-authoring 2. Using e-mail posting address
4 Collecting students feedback using Google	1. Using Google Form to collect responses 2. Using Google Spreadsheet to analyse data
5 Sharing your lecture slides with students.	1. Google presentation 2. Slideshare

3.1. Applications for creating webquests, simple classroom activities, mindmaps and flashcards

Webquests – are inquiry-oriented activities in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet. Essentially, webquests are mini-projects in which a large percentage of the input and material is supplied by the Internet. Webquests can be teacher-made or learner-made, depending on the learning activity the teacher decides on. Reasons for using webquests:

They are an easy way for teachers to begin to incorporate the Internet into the language classroom, on both a short-term and long-term basis - no specialist technical knowledge is needed either to produce or use them. The characteristics of webquests allow them to be used in various ways:

- More often than not, they are group activities and as a result tend to lend themselves to communication and the sharing of knowledge - two principal goals of language teaching itself.
- They can be used simply as a linguistic tool, but can also be inter-disciplinary, allowing for crossover into other departments and subject areas.
- They encourage critical thinking skills, including: comparing, classifying, inducing, deducing, analyzing errors, constructing support, abstraction, analysing perspectives, etc. Learners are not able to simply regurgitate information they find, but are guided towards a transformation of that information in order to achieve a given task.
- They can be both motivating and authentic tasks and encourage learners to view the activities they are doing as something 'real' or 'useful'. This inevitably leads to more effort, greater concentration and a real interest in task achievement. You can read further details about producing and implementing a webquest on the British Council and BBC homepage at http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/webquests.

Here are a few examples of EFL/ESL webquests: http://www.world-english.org/webquests.htm, http://www.nelliemuller.com/ESL_WebQuests.htm

Creating classroom activities:

Classroom Tools – (http://www.classtools.net/) can create your own educational games or mini-tools. Create free games, quizzes, activities and diagrams in seconds. Host them on your own blog, website or intranet.

Zondle – (https://www.zondle.com) Using Zondle you can create, play and share games to support teaching, learning and assessment; any subject, any level, any language, anywhere.

Creating mindmaps

Bubbl.us – (https://bubbl.us/) is a simple and free web application that lets you brainstorm online. Create colorful mind maps online, share and work with friends, embed your mind map in your blog or website etc. Ideal for revision of vocabulary. Start with a topic area, such as *In the*

house, add words for rooms in the house, furniture, activities, opinions etc. Students can collaborate on a single mind map or create their own.

MindMeister – (http://www.mindmeister.com/) has been built to facilitate collaboration. Part of what makes MindMeister such a powerful tool is that it is built and designed with a major focus on collaboration. This means that you do not only have the ability to quickly develop your own ideas, you can also quickly share your mind maps to brainstorm and collaborate with as many others as needed, and all in real time. Similar sites for creating and sharing mind maps are:

Mindomo – (https://www.mindomo.com/)

Mind42 – (mind42.com/)

Eploreatree – (www.exploratree.org.uk/)

Creating flashcards

Funnel Brain – (http://www.funnelbrain.com/) Create flashcards with videos, photos, audio and text, wich can be a homework task to help with revision.

Quizlet – (http://quizlet.com/) Create your own flashcards or use the many available flashcards within the site. You can create groups for students to work together and join in on their discussions with live chat. There are many modes including familiarising, learning and testing. Quizlet's flashcards, tests, and study games make learning fun and engaging for students of all ages.

Wordle – (http://www.wordle.net/) is a toy for generating "word clouds" from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. The images you create with Wordle are yours to use in any way you like. You can print them out, or save them to the Wordle gallery to share with other people.

Hot Potatoes – (http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot/) The *Hot Potatoes* suite includes six applications, enabling you to create interactive multiple-choice, short-answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises for the World Wide Web. Hot Potatoes is freeware, and you may use it for any purpose or project you like. It is not open-source. The Java version provides all the features found in the windows version, except: you cannot upload to hotpotatoes.net, and you cannot export a SCORM object from Java Hot Potatoes.

3.2. Creating virtual posters and message boards

Message boards

There are several Web 2.0 tools that function as virtual corkboards or whiteboards for messages. All of these sites are great at getting students to write short notes or share information with the rest of the class.

Glogster – (http://edu.glogster.com/) Create a poster on a certain topic, e.g. *My holidays*. Add photos, text, and most importantly, audio, to talk about what you did, where you went etc. You can also add video.

Narrable – (http://learn.narrable.com/) enables users to create short narrated slideshows. Start by uploading the pictures that you want to talk about. You can then record a narration for each picture via your computer's microphone or by uploading an audio recording that is stored on your computer. Narrable projects can be shared via email, Facebook, or by embedding them into a blog or wiki.

Eyejot – (http://corp.eyejot.com/) allows for one-minute video messages. Message receivers do not have to sign up to watch the message. Teachers can send messages to students and encourage them to continue and reply. Students can send one another messages to practise speaking and listening.

3.3. Giving presentations

Google Presentation – (www.google.com/slides) Google Docs is a very good presentations tool for free.

Prezi – (http://prezi.com/) Creating a presentation in Prezi allows you to zoom in and add multimedia. You can use it to teach a new topic (vocabulary, etc.) or pupils can make their own.

SlideRocket – (www.sliderocket.com) provides presentation software that helps you create and share presentations; gain powerful insights with high security.

SlideShare – (www.slideshare.net/) offers users the ability to upload and share publicly or privately PowerPoint presentations, Word documents and Adobe PDF Portfolios.

3.4. Organizing/ bookmarking online materials

Symbaloo – (www.symbaloo.com/) Access your bookmarks and online favorites with Symbaloo. A free social bookmarking service in the cloud.

Delicious – (https://delicious.com/) **and Diigo -** (https://www.diigo.com/) web based collaborative repositories of Internet bookmarks (URLs or links). They are able to save and categorize a personal collection of bookmarks and share them with others. Users may also take bookmarks saved by others and add them to their own collection, as well as to subscribe to the lists of others. Bookmark your favourite websites. Diigo also allows you to annotate them. You can also create a list of useful sites for students as well. Diigo is a *multi-tool* for knowledge management. The link below will take you to a collection of language learning and teaching bookmarks on Delicious: https://delicious.com/miscositas)

Evernote – (https://evernote.com/) is not only for saving your notes. There are seven other apps that Evernote makes, like the Evernote Web Clipper, Evernote Hello, and Evernote Food, and there are hundreds of other great apps that independent developers have made that help Evernote users do amazing things with personal and team data.

4. Web 2.0 tools for using still and moving images, audio, video, multi- and hypermedia materials

4.1. Applications that help you work with still images

Recite This – (http://recitethis.com/) is an easy to use poster creator. Insert some text, and generate posters with a range of fonts and backgrounds that you can print off and display or share electronically.

Wondersay – (http://www.wondersay.com**)** You can animate any type of sentence. Wondersayings are easy to create, customise and share. There are no software programs to download (it is all online) and no sign-up is required. *Wondersay* can be saved simply by copying the link.

Flickr – (https://www.flickr.com/) makes it easy to access, organize and share your photos from anywhere. Any lesson topic you want to present to your class can be supported by materials. For example, you can use *Flickr* to help prepare for oral examinations such as those found on the Cambridge First Certificate, Cambridge Advanced English, and Proficiency exams. Students are asked to describe similar photographs, as well

as to point out the differences between the two through an interlocutor led discussion.

Picasa – (picasa.google.com/) is an image organizer and image viewer for organizing and editing digital photos, plus an integrated photo-sharing website.

Photobucket – (photobucket.com) Using *Photobucket* you can get free image hosting, easy photo sharing, and photo editing.

Shutterfly – (www.shutterfly.com/) Create photo books, personalize photo cards and stationery, and share photos with family and friends at Shutterfly.com. Free with unlimited storage size of your photos. Allows you to add pictures directly from your memory card, camera or computer Easy to use, organize photos through album creation. Free customization of photos is also possible. Privacy setting allows users to share selected albums.

PicMonkey – (www.picmonkey.com) is a pretty powerful yet user friendly photo editing service with lots of filters, effects, stickers, textures and so on. You upload or drag and drop a photo into the site and you can edit it as you wish. Users can also crop, change exposure, adjust colors and add text to their project. Once you have finished your work, PicMonkey allows you to share it via email, Twitter, Facebook and/or Pinterest, or download it to your computer.

4.2. Using online screen recorders to save interesting content for further use

Jing – (http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html) enables you to capture what is displayed/happening on your screen along with a voiceover. You can talk about a document, image, video clip etc or show someone a process step by step. Language teachers could use Jing to create visual explanations of morphological, syntactic or semantic phenomena in the target language.

ScreenCast – (www.screencast.com/) On top of its basic function explained above this program offers free online storage and sharing with **Screencast**.com. 2 GB of storage and 2 GB of bandwidth per month are available for free.

Easy Capture – (easycapture.en.softonic.com**)** is a handy capturing utility that includes all the tools you need to capture anything on your screen, from a tiny user-defined area to the whole desktop. You can use

hotkeys for capturing and also open as many images as you want on the program's tabbed interface. Additionally, it includes some basic effects that you can easily apply on your photos. It can also add clipart to the images. You can highlight text with a virtual marker, use rectangular shapes and arrows to draw attention to certain elements in the captured image, insert text fields and also fun text balloons to add annotations.

Screencast-O-Matic – (www.screencast-o-matic.com/) It is a free online screen recorder for one-click recording.

ScreenR – (https://www.screenr.com/) is a web-based tool that lets you create screencasts without installing any software. You just click the record button and your screen activity is recorded along with narration from your microphone. ScreenR then publishes your screencast in high-definition Flash format. Screenr makes it easy to share your screencast on Twitter, YouTube or anywhere else on the web. Even iPhone users can view your screencast.

4.3. Creating your own animated stories, comic strips and cartoons

Comic Creator – (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/) you can create a basic comic to practise role-play scenarios with your students.

ToonDoo – (www.toondoo.com/) lets you create comic strips and cartoons easily with just a few clicks, drags and drops. Ideas for the classroom:

- Students can create a visual representation of a character from a novel
- Students can use the site to summarize a book/chapter of a book
- Students can create their own comic strip to show mastery of Cause and Effect
- Can be used to teach/show mastery of dialogue, grammar, punctuation, etc.
- Can be used as a warm-up to get students thinking about the concept of the day (https://teachweb2.wikispaces.com/ToonDoo)

Scratch – (scratch.mit.edu/) This application creates stories, games, and animations, which you can share with people around the world. Scratch is a site specifically developed to provide classroom ideas for children aged 8 or more to develop creativity together with other skills. The possibilities are endless. Here are a few:

- Animations
- Simulations

- Interactive projects
- Music projects
- Storytelling
- Extend traditional classroom projects (TeachWeb).

Story-Scrapbook – (http://storyscrapbook.com/) is a piece of software that enables you to create interactive pages that combine voice recordings, web captures, notes or photos. Finished stories can be exported as an image file.

StupeFlix – (studio.stupeflix.com/) With this application you can make (and download) video recordings up to 20 minutes long using your photos and videos. All the editing, synchronising-to-the-music is done by the program, so you can focus on your story. You can post your finished product to YouTube or Facebook with ease.

4.4. Using audio applications for collaboration, speaking and listening

SoundCloud – (https://soundcloud.com/) is an audio platform that enables sound creators to upload, record, promote and share their originally-created sounds. Sound Cloud is a cool way to make music and share it with your colleagues or students. Once your track is made, other users can comment on your music. Some ideas for the classroom are as follows:

- Students can create and record their song on Sound Cloud about a number of classroom topics.
- Teacher can create songs on classroom topics and use Sound Cloud to allow students to listen and learn more about that topic.
- Students can sample music from different areas of the world and try to recreate that music from a particular area (TeachWeb2).

Podcasts – a collection of digital media files which is distributed over the Internet. Despite its name, a podcast is in mp3 format, which may be played through a variety of digital audio software and hardware and is not limited to the iPod (Rahimi and Katal 2012). "Podcasting provides increased flexibility, user control, and portability, and allows for time-shifting and multitasking" (Abdous, Facer, and Yen 2012: 44). On developing a podcast see Chartrand (2012).

Audacity – (http://audacity.sourceforge.net/) is a free, multi-track audio editor and recorder. You can export recorded files in a range of formats and use them to create podcasts or with other software such as *Voki,* the

program in which avatars can express your thoughts and utter words. The help facilities on the Audacity website provide precious support for the amateur user.

PodOmatic – (www.PodOmatic) is a site where users can find and share free educational podcasts. It enables anyone to find, listen to, create and distribute audio and video podcasts. Below you can read some ideas for its classroom use:

- Play music quietly while the students are working quietly
- Listen to a story that the class is reading the class is reading aloud
- ESL student can use podcasts to practice speaking and pronunciation
- Practice fluency and storytelling with comment options for peer comments and feedback
- View video podcasts from around the world as semi-virtual field trip type experiences
- Authentic assessment tool (TeachWeb2).

PodBean – (www.podbean.com/) is an easy and powerful way to start podcasting. Everything you need. No technology to learn. Here are a couple of ideas for the classroom:

- Students can create a class podcast around a particular theme or subject
- Teachers can share daily events with parents (TeachWeb2)

AudioPal – (www.*audiopal*.com/) is free web based audio software that enables you to create audio for your own website or for other pages such as Facebook. You can do it either by clicking on the microphone option on the tab below 'Add your audio' or by using prerecorded files. After hitting the Text-to-Speech button and selecting a language and gender from the drop down menu you can practise writing skills through a dictation task.

SpeakPipe – (http://www.speakpipe.com/) is a free service that enables visitors of your blog, website or Moodle to leave a voice message. You can also use SpeakPipe to email voice messages.

iSpeech Text to Speech – (http://www.ispeech.org/text.to.speech) By using this application you simply upload any supported document (Word, PowerPoint, PDF etc) or type in your text directly and convert it to an audio file (which, unfortunately, is limited to 1 minute). After choosing a male or female voice and a language, you can listen to, share, embed or

download the created file. You could use this resource for creating short classroom dictations or podcasts.

Vocaroo – **(**www.vocaroo.com) is another site that lets you record your voice, send the sound file to a friend by email or put the embed code or link directly into your website. You can also save the recorded file in mp3 or wav format for use as a podcast or with Voki. There is no time limit to your recording.

Chirbit – (www.chirbit.com) is a program which allows you to share audio with other people on social sites as Twitter, Facebook, or Tumblr. Your audio or voice can be embedded online from any part of the world by uploading mp3, wav, aiff or any other audio format via web or your smartphone.

iPadio – (www.ipadio.com/) is an application which can make phone-casts and phlogs simple and immediate through streaming any phone call live on the web.

4.5. Creating images/slideshows with supporting sound – noises, music, commentaries

Yodio – (www.yodio.com/) is a tool for audio creation and uploading that allows the user to create personalized voice to photos by using your phone number to record. You take a topic or educational project to record or tell the story of a photo. Once you have created the presentation from your phone or computer, you can embed it into any website.

Photopeach – (photopeach.com) is to help you tell better stories online using photos.With PhotoPeach you can create a rich, engaging slideshow in a short time. It also supports background music, captions, and comments so you your story can be further developed.

Fotobabble – (www.fotobabble.com/) allows the user to upload images and record a commentary. Here are a couple of ideas for classroom use:

- Students can recite a poem they have written.
- Students can create an advertisement for a product (TeachWeb2)

Woices – (woices.com) is a free Internet service that allows you to create, share and consume echoes, audio records which are linked to a particular geographical location or a real-world object. *Woices* aims to extend reality by creating a new layer of audio information, which the creators call the echo sphere. Echoes, which can be about any topic, are

words, left by one person at some precise place, which can be later listened to by anyone, as if their author was still there. In the classroom this tool can be used to communicate with other students in different countries (TeachWeb2).

Voki – (http://www.voki.com/) is a Web 2.0 tool that enables users to express themselves on the web in their own voice using an avatar, a talking character, which they can customize to their liking. Using *Voki* you can type in a text, and the character you choose will read it out in either a male or a female voice in numerous languages. *Voki* is a great way to get your students to present their ideas on a topic in a few minutes. The features of this application will have them organize their thoughts and focus on key ideas.

VoiceThread – (http://voicethread.com/) is a collaborative, multimedia slide show including images, documents, and videos, which allows you to navigate these slides and leave comments. It can be used either within or outside of the lesson for communicating and collaborating with other classes in other schools. Learners can create a slideshow with comments, then share it and allow fellow students to add further comments.

Blabberize – (http://blabberize.com/) enables you to upload a photo and animate the mouth of a person or animal in the photo so that it speaks. The program, which can be tried out without needing to register first, needs a microphone to record your voice or a pre-recorded sound file to work with. Here are two ideas how it can be used in the language classroom:

- It can be used to encourage students to prepare presentations to introduce themselves.
- Students can be asked to use it to demonstrate their content knowledge (TeachWeb2).

4.6. Applications that help you work with moving images (video)

Animoto – (http://animoto.com/) is a Web 2.0 tool that allows users to produce videos that blend photos, video clips, text and music. For example, *Animoto* could be used for the following educational purposes:

- Students can illustrate step-by-step instructions for procedure writing.
- Teachers can create an *Animoto* video on a previously taught topic in the curriculum for their students to view.

- Students can share their *Animoto* videos with their peers in class (TeachWeb2).

GoAnimate – (http://goanimate.com/) is free animation software that allows you to generate videos that incorporate a selection of characters, backgrounds and technical effects. The program can convert typed text to speech in several languages, but a voice over (for example in the target language) can also be incorporated. A free account allows you only a limited possibility export your film (you can upload it to YouTube only with a paid account), but the finished product can be embedded in a wiki or blog or the link can be emailed.

Vimeo – (https://vimeo.com) is a tool for displaying student work. With it you can watch, upload and share videos. Some ideas of their possible use in second language education:

- Students can post videos created on Moviemaker or iMovie and share projects with other students.
- Fellow classmates can comment and give feedback to each other (TeachWeb2).

WeVideo – (https://www.wevideo.com/) is a cloud-based, interactive and collaborative editing program. Ideas for classroom application:

- Students can collaborate with one another or with other students across the world.
- Teachers can assign each student a chapter from the course book, and ask students to create a lesson using WeVideo (TeachWeb2).

Wideo – **(**wideo.co/) is the perfect online video tool that allows you to have fun by easily making animation videos for your presentations, or teaching lessons.

Videolicious – (https://videolicious.com/) It is easy to make a video with this application. All you need to do is to shoot the video with your phone or tablet, choose your shots and *Videolicious* will do the rest; it gives you professional-quality video automatically in seconds, without having to do work that requires photographic technical skills.

5. Using Web 2.0 tools for social networking

"*Social networking web sites, such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, have become extremely popular among Internet users who wish to share their ideas, videos, and other activities online*" (Chartrand 2012: 2 cites Dieu & Stevens 2007). In these connections, relative, communica-

tion, friendship, authority and gender relations can be considered. (Donmus 2010: 1499). Social networks have generally been used for noneducational social interaction purposes. Social networking tools allow users to create their own online profiles and interact with other online users within their circle or network (Stevenson and Liu 2010). From a language learning perspective social networking sites can be divided into two main groups: a) foreign language learning sites that use social networking features, and b) general social networking sites, which can be repurposed for second language learning/teaching purposes.

5.1. Foreign language learning sites that use social networking

There are several very popular language learning web sites with use social networking. Some of these sites are as follows.

Palabea – (http://www.palabea.net) whose user interface resembles a fun game, offers community based language learning with virtual classrooms. Users can find friends and interact with them by audio or video conferencing, receive video and podcast lessons, record their own lessons and upload videos to the site (Tresnick 2010).

The Mixxer – (www.language-exchanges.org/) is a free educational site which is designed to connect language learners around the world so that everyone is both student and teacher. You can help your language partner learn your native language and/or leave comments on other people's writing. Professional teachers can connect their students with native speakers via written posts or Skype during or after class hours.

LiveMocha – (http://www.livemocha.com) is a complete social network with over 6 million users. In a Facebook like fashion, your personal profile appears with your picture and your friends list. You build your own profile and indicate which languages you want to learn and which languages you already know. Live chat is available with anyone who is online and people use the chat to practice their language of choice (Tresnick 2010).

MyLanguage Exchange – (*www.mylanguageexchange.com/*) uses the Cormier method of language exchange that has been proven for 3 years at the C.E.L.M. language school in Montreal, Canada. In this method, small mixed groups of native speakers of two languages spend half the time speaking in one language and half the time in the other language. Activities are structured to ensure all areas of language acquisition are exercised

such as vocabulary, pronunciation and listening comprehension. The method relies on ensuring the students have fun and are relaxed to make language practice more enjoyable and therefore more effective.

Bussuu – (busuu.com) is a language community that functions like a cool interactive game. It offers free interactive lessons, exams, text and video chat, writing exercises, reading comprehension tests and many other features. Users can write text in a foreign language and submit it to have a native speaker in the network correct their writing. Most of the features on the site are free, though paid upgrades are available for features like audio samples, PDFs and Podcasts (Tresnick 2010).

Italki – (https://www.italki.com/) offers an enormous community of speakers of over 100 languages from over 200 countries. You can connect with new friends and language partners that speak the language you want to learn, find a language teacher, use the questions and answers section, and access a variety of other features to learn your desired language. In addition to being a social network, there really is an impressive body of resources to be found in this site (Tresnick 2010).

Lang-8 – (www.lang-8.com/) offers language students the ability to connect with native language speakers from 180 different countries. Its focus is on writing correction wherein people can submit their writing to be corrected by other native language speakers and learn using this method (Tresnick 2010).

VoxSwap – (www.voxswap.com/register) matches up people to teach their mother tongues to each other.

My Happy Planet – (www.myhappyplanet.com) offers a great way to find new friends across the globe to chat with. There are also many video lessons to choose from and many written lessons that other members have posted (Tresnick 2010).

5.2. General purpose social networking sites

As Pop (2010) notes, English teachers were the first to notice that common social networking sites can also be used for language learning/teaching purposes. Let us take a look how some of these sites can be repurposed for learning/ teaching a second language.

Twitter – (https://twitter.com) is a social networking site that demands precision of expression. because each post or "Tweet" you can make is limited to 140 characters. Therefore, you must be concise in your mes-

saging. This is excellent for improving your English because you eliminate unnecessary words (Chartrand 2012). Twitter also helps you improve your English reading skills through the following of other tweets. Twitter is like a discussion forum, but the messages are too short to have titles. Possible uses for language learning can be reading, for example following public tweets, tweeting in an in- or out of-class community, which facilitates both reading and writing, correcting tweets collectively or individually, etc. (LEO Network).

Facebook – (https://hu-hu.Facebook.com/) or (https://www.Facebook.com/ is a social networking service whereby users can create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages. This includes automatic notifications when they update their personal profile. Facebook users can also join common-interest user groups that they find useful.

In a nutshell, Facebook is a web portal for keeping in touch with others. You choose whom you allow to access your Facebook pages. You can post text, pictures, images, video, and music on your Facebook page. You can use a "Wall", which other members can use in order to text each other messages. In addition to text, messages can also contain photos, videos, music and links to other websites. This is another excellent mechanism for building your English skills. You gain English writing experience through composing your various messages.

Facebook also builds your English reading skills. You can read an assortment of messages from those whom you allow into your pages. This diversity of messages means you can learn new words from people all over the world, depending on your list of friends. Facebook exposes you to a significant selection of writing (text) in which to build your English skills (LEO Network).

LinkedIn – (https://www.linkedin.com/) is a social networking site for professionals. It is an excellent site for connecting with other professionals, be it in business, academia, or other organizations. On LinkedIn you can build your business English skills through writing your profile, and then keeping it updated. You also build your business English skills through sending messages to others, reading their responses, and replying in kind (LEO Network).

YouTube – (www.youtube.com) is a video-sharing website. Users upload, share and view videos on this social networking site. Learning English via YouTube involves listening to the language via the videos you

view. You also learn through reading the comments posted in English, situated below each video. In addition, some YouTube videos are text presentations in a slide show format, or have subtitles available, so you can actually read English in each screen shot.

If you are feeling extra brave you can even post your own video and become the next YouTube sensation. Tell people about your life, read some poetry, sing a song, showcase your talent. You can even create cartoon videos using software like Muvizu (LEO Network).

Flickr – (https://www.flickr.com/) is a social networking site with a difference, because you build contact with people by sharing photographs, and short videos. If you have a digital camera, you can share your life with an online community. Put up some pictures and find people who have taken photos of things you are interested in and leave a comment for them, or find groups on subjects you like to take pictures of. There are groups for countries, hobbies, animals ... just about anything you can think of (LEO Network).

6. Summary – Staying up to date with Web 2.0 tools

As could be seen in this paper, English teachers and learners can be very much lost for choice when it comes to Web 2.0 applications which can make language learning more interesting and profitable. Not using any of them would mean ignoring the needs of the 21st century language learners and the challenges of the society that we live in. Aydin (2014: 161) provides some further practical recommendations for EFL teachers. He claims that if they really want to facilitate their students' learning, they need to revise their roles as language teachers and increase their interactions with their students. "*Specifically, they should assume roles such as organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, counselor and investigator rather than the roles of controller, corrector, and assessor*".

Finally, we must not overlook the fact that technology keeps developing rapidly, and by time the applications described here may become out of date, or may simply disappear due to the volatility of the Internet. If you are interested and want to stay up to date on this topic, you could visit some of the sites listed below:

- @innovativeEdu http://t.co/stkjxOM.
- @techlearning http://t.co/VKpE9in.

- @TeachPaperless http://t.co/1EUbGsG.
- @langwitches http://t.co/zqZpJZ0.
- @web20classroom http://t.co/IqUuCfT.
- @rmbyrne http://t.co/kaETv1h.
- Edutopia's world languages forum (http://www.edutopia.org/blogs/tag/world-languages) for lots of good Web 2.0 tools.

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CHAPTER 6

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: PAVING THE WAY FOR LEARNER AUTONOMY

By Ildikó Csépes

1. Assessment for learning: Paving the way for learner autonomy

Ildikó Csépes

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore some current issues and research findings related to classroom-based assessments, more specifically what *assessment for learning* may involve. By now it has become clear that in the language classroom, traditional forms of assessment, which are usually associated with assessing achievement in a standardised manner through tests, need to be complemented with other, so-called alternative forms of assessment that are more learner-centred and thus more informative for the individual learners when they are trying to make progress. This kind of assessment also fulfils formative purposes like traditional pen and paper progress/achievement tests and so it is intended to inform both the learner and the teacher about strengths and weaknesses; however, the outcomes of the assessment are clearly different: they may not be used or are not intended for cross-comparisons within the learning group. Instead, they are meant to help learners to be better informed about their own current learning position, their future learning target(s), and the potential ways to bridge the gap between these two. New terms such as alternative, dynamic or learning-oriented assessment as well as diagnostic teacher assessment have been put forward to account for the new challenges teachers have to face. Furthermore, in assessment for learning the burden of and responsibility for the assessment are recommended to be shared by all the parties involved in the learning process: the teacher, the learner, and the peers.

Classroom assessment practices (formative assessment) as well as high-stakes testing (summative assessment) can have far-reaching implications for individuals although the consequences of the latter are more widely discussed and acknowledged. It is often the case that performance on a single standardised test may result in admittance to or rejection from specific educational programmes, but the consequences of classroom assessment seem to be regarded less far-reaching, less tangible, and there-

fore less serious, but in some cases the consequences may be just as detrimental. For instance, learners may lose their motivation for learning in the long run if classroom assessment is restricted or questionable in its scope and format compared to the instruction learners have received. On the other hand, the potential for assessment as a motivator in itself seems to be somewhat overlooked or undervalued. According Earl and Katz (2006: 7), learners' intrinsic motivation can be enhanced as a result of carefully chosen classroom-based assessment options when assessment:

- emphasizes achievement (success) rather than failure,
- gives feedback that helps learning to move forward,
- gives learners control over and responsibility for their own learning,
- builds their confidence,
- encourages them to take risks,
- is relevant and appeals to learners' imagination.

While low-stakes and high-stakes assessments undoubtedly differ in terms of the size and nature of impact on the learner, I believe that both of them should be based on *democratic principles* because assessment cannot become only a tool for authority for power and control. Instead, as Shohamy (2001) puts it, assessment should entail pedagogical benefits that lead to more effective learning and teaching as well as *shared authority*. This goal can be realised, for example, by "*conducting and administering testing in collaboration and in cooperation with those tested*" (Shohamy ibid. 378). Collaboration and cooperation imply mutual effort between testers/assessors and test-takers/assessees, thus resulting in shared authority or partnership for the outcomes of assessment (Chen 2008; Stefani 1998). Self- and peer-assessment is one of the means to realise these goals in assessment.

Involving students in the assessment process can also be argued for on the ground of *constructivist theories of education*, which propose that knowledge is actively constructed by learners (von Glasersfeld 1989); it is created by constantly interacting with the environment through an active process of sense making. In a constructivist paradigm, classroom assessment addresses learning processes as well as learning outcomes, the expectations are visible to students, and they are engaged actively in evaluating their own work (Shepard 2000). Through reflection, peer discussion, and feedback, learners can engage in a dialectic process that leads to the

evaluation of their learning performance in the form of self- and peer assessment. By identifying strengths and weaknesses, learners are also informed about how they may improve, which makes assessment an integral part of teaching and learning. Furthermore, if learners understand the assessment process and the evaluation criteria their self-monitoring capacity as autonomous learners is enhanced.

The following table gives a summary of the main differences between traditional, teacher-centred forms of assessment (referred to as assessment *of* learning) and learner-centred, alternative forms of assessment (assessment *for* learning).

Teacher-centred assessment (tests)	**Learner-centred assessment (portfolios, teacher-student conferences, self- and peer-assessment)**
authoritarian	democratic
enhances dependence on the teacher	promotes life-long learning and self-reliance
no emphasis on partnership	emphasis on collaboration, cooperation
the learners' progress is the Teacher's responsibility	the learners must assume responsibility for their own learning
test scores may hide learning goals	learner motivation is enhanced because of individualised feedback
enhances competition as learners are assessed along the same dimensions	can highlight individual strengths

Table 1: Teacher-centred vs. Learner-centred assessment

The rationale for a constructivist and democratic assessment practice with a focus on self- and peer assessment appears to be convincing; nevertheless, there seems to be little empirical research on how widely the above views have been adopted in practice or what stakeholders'− learners' and teachers' − perceptions are concerning the use and impact of this kind of assessment. In this chapter, I will review some empirical research

on self- and peer-assessment in relation to stakeholders' perceptions, the effects of training on its implementation, and its scoring validity in relation to more traditional forms of assessment. In this review, the research contexts range from foreign language classrooms to other disciplines and from primary schools to higher education contexts. The discussion will focus primarily on assessing students' oral performances.

2. Advantages of self- and peer-assessment

Undoubtedly, there are several benefits entailed in self-assessment (SA) and peer-assessment (PA). The assumptions underlying the benefits include the promotion of learning and the enhancement of learner independence, autonomy, and life-long learning skills because it is through active involvement in assessing their own learning performance that students gain ownership of their learning and become empowered (Oscarson 1989; Patri 2002; Chen 2008). Furthermore, PA encourages reflective learning through observing others' performances and becoming aware of performance criteria (Falchikov 1986 as cited in Saito 2008). When SA is informed by peers, learners are likely to assess their own performances more effectively and, as a result, their use of meta-cognitive strategies, their evaluative attitudes, and goal-orientation are enhanced (cf. Boud, Cohen, & Sampson 1999). Reflection is also believed to raise learners' self-awareness of learning strengths and weaknesses as well as their confidence skills (Oscarson ibid., Chen 2008). While working with peers in the classroom, students develop a sense of shared responsibility (cf. Somervell 1993 as cited in Saito 2008), which may positively influence group dynamics and, at the same time, it lessens the assessment burden on the teacher (Oscarson ibid.)

In the case of young learners, alternative forms of assessment rather than traditional ones (e.g., pen-and-paper tests) seem to better reflect curricular goals because both achievement and the developmental process can be evaluated with the help of on-going feedback and self-evaluation. In contrast, traditional testing emphasises discrimination because its main function is to rank order students along the same scale, allocating them to different categories and thus labelling them as "strong" and "weak", which necessarily leads to competition among them. Young learners,

therefore, can benefit from SA and PA because of their collaborative, non-competitive nature.

The effectiveness of SA and PA seems to be dependent upon some contextual factors such as the transparency or clarity of the assessment criteria, whether learners are provided with training in SA and PA, and whether the guidance and feedback in the implementation phase is based on constructive information (Chen 2006). In high-stakes test, clear assessment criteria and rater training are considered essential to ensure rater consistency; therefore, similar measures are desirable to enhance the reliability of the assessments in SA and PA.

However, L2 learners as raters are different from teacher as raters because their developing language proficiency influences their perceptions and ultimately their rating. Learners' developing competence suggests that their perception of the construct of language proficiency is constantly changing and, as a result, SA and PA can only be effective if they are involved in self-directed assessment that is supported by constructive feedback.

3. The role of feedback

As has been suggested above, self- and peer-assessment should guide future learning and not only lead to claims about what students have learnt. In SA and PA, the process (reflection and arriving at judgements) should be as important as the product, namely, the ratings. As Liu and Carless put it, "*Engaging learners in thinking about achieving outcomes to certain agreed standards is a learning process and giving marks or grades is only part of that process*" (2006: 280). The former is captured by the term peer feedback, the latter by peer assessment, although these terms are used somewhat inconsistently in the literature. Peer feedback is a precursor for peer assessment, and it has greater potential for learning than peer assessment because it helps learners to become actively engaged in articulating their evolving understandings of subject matter.

Kim (2009) goes even further to suggest that the assessee, who is usually just a passive receiver of peer feedback, should give back-feedback to the peer assessor. In this way, assessees can help assessors to reflect upon their own learning, thus making them more motivated to be assessors because they assess those who have assessed them.

Before learners can take over the responsibility of giving feedback to each other, the teacher must introduce diagnostic/descriptive feedback to provide them with good models. I believe that such feedback for learning is a natural part of good teaching. It is immediate, descriptive, detailed, specific and regular. It involves more than just estimating whether the performance was good or bad, or giving short, non-specific comments of praise or censure. Feedback for learning encourages learners to think about and to respond to suggestions. Although students' response may not always be articulated, good diagnostic feedback is believed to stimulate learners' internal self-monitoring or self-regulatory skills. Earl and Katz (2006: 47) propose that "*Effective feedback challenges ideas, introduces additional information, offers alternative interpretations, and creates conditions for self-reflection and review of ideas*." I believe that learners benefit the most from diagnostic feedback if they are encouraged to articulate their thinking, which can be easily facilitated when SA or PA is used. Furthermore, feedback in itself may not facilitate learning, unless learners engage with it and act upon it (Gibbs & Simpson 2004 as cited in Carless 2007).

Teachers' diagnostic feedback is often constructed in interaction with the learner by using various prompting techniques, such as reminder, scaffolding or example prompts (Earl & Katz 2006: 33). These prompts give support for the learner to a varying degree because reminder prompts simply encourage the learner to say more, scaffolding prompts give more concrete direction or structure for the learner to carry on, and example prompts provide actual illustrations (by the teacher) to highlight the target problem. Here are some examples from Earl and Katz:

- A reminder prompt: "*Say more about how you feel about this person*."
- Scaffolding prompts: "*Can you describe how this person is a good friend?*"; "*Describe something that happened that showed you what a good friend this person is*"; "*He showed me he was a good friend when…*"
- Example prompts: "*Choose one of these statements to tell me more about your friend.*" "*He is a good friend because he never says unkind things about me.*" Or, "*My friend helps me do things*."

4. Stakeholders' perceptions of using self- and peer-assessment

Students and teachers have shown both positive and mixed attitudes toward the use of SA and PA. It is comforting to find acceptance on the part of some stakeholders as their favourable comments reinforce many of the assumed advantages discussed above. The negative perceptions, on the other hand, can highlight those contextual variables that can undermine the successful implementation of SA and PA.

Hanrahan and Isaacs (2001) examined self- and peer-assessment in a tertiary education context, where students were asked to self-assess and evaluate one of their peers' work on their own without having a group discussion. Their findings revealed that SA and PA can develop empathy with tutors because students reported that they had gained insights into the difficulty tutors experience in assessing students. Students also reported an increased level of motivation for task completion because they wanted to impress their peers with their work.

Mok (2011) conducted a case study in Hong Kong to explore 12 to 14-year-old school students' perceptions of the implementation of peer assessment in their English speaking classes. Along with other researchers (Dickinson & Carver 1980, Kolláth 1996) Mok stresses that teachers need to prepare students for PA both methodologically (by providing training and explaining the assessment criteria) and psychologically (by explaining the underlying principles of PA, raising students' comfort level in using PA through allowing the use of L1, for instance). In the classroom context described by Mok, such preparation was missing. The four students interviewed reported difficulty in evaluating or giving feedback on their peers' oral performances in the target language. Despite their acknowledged lack of ability in peer assessment, all of them perceived peer assessment positively because it enhanced critical thinking and setting learning targets.

It seems difficult to guarantee that students benefit from SA and PA as planned because there may be unforeseen psychological forces at work. Hanrahan and Isaacs (2001) report in their study that peers are sometimes too critical and at other times they find it uncomfortable to critique their peer's work. Vickerman (2009), on the other hand, suggests that peer assessment does not work as a strategy for all students because students with different learning styles seem to benefit to differing degrees from

peer assessment: there are students who require more direct rather than self-directed support in assessment.

Teacher perceptions seem to be more mixed than learner perceptions because teachers can see potential gaps between theory and practice more directly. Bullock (2011) explored EFL teachers' perceptions in relation to self-assessment and, although in general it was perceived positively, there were some problems identified in relation to its implementation. The respondents pointed out that self-assessment was time-consuming and teenage students did not take it seriously. This latter concern seems to be closely related to another difficulty in the implementation mentioned by the respondents: helping learners to formulate appropriate aims for future learning. Bullock argues that if self-assessment fails to lead to choice and opportunities for self-direction, then learners' intrinsic motivation may decrease. Despite teachers' overall positive attitudes to self-assessments, Bullock also remarks that they are not necessarily indicative of teachers' actual or future practices.

Liu and Carless (2006) collected data from a large-scale questionnaire survey on peer assessment beliefs and experiences of academics and students in tertiary education contexts in Hong Kong. They found reluctance both on the part of academics and students. They identified four main reasons for resistance to peer assessment processes using grades:

- peers are thought to be less reliable assessors than academics;
- academics are considered to have expertise in assessment (some classmates are unable to provide insightful feedback);
- power relations are disrupted: academics may resist sharing their power, students dislike having power over peers, they may feel resentful because they have to surrender some power and control over their own work to peers;
- it is more time-consuming than traditional assessment.

The perceived imbalance in power relations reported above can be explained by the sociocultural milieu of education and the social norms and roles in assessment. Hamp-Lyons (2007 as cited in Butler & Lee 2010) proposes that there are two conflicting cultures of assessment: *a learning culture* and *an exam culture.* The former emphasises the learner's progress in learning whereas the latter recognises mastery or achievement in relation to group norms. The teaching and learning context can have an

important impact on self- and peer-assessment depending on which assessment culture is dominant in the given context. To support this assumption, Butler and Lee (ibid.) found that teachers' and students' perceived effectiveness of self-assessment was quite different depending on the teaching/learning contexts and on the role of assessment to which individual teachers subscribed.

5. Issues of validity in SA and PA

It is important to understand how the validity of self- and peer-assessments may be affected by specific contextual variables. Drawing on previous research, Butler and Lee (2010) identify three main sources of variability in self- and peer-assessments:

1. the ways in which questions and items are formulated and delivered;
2. the domain or skill being assessed;
3. learners' individual characteristics such as age, proficiency level, or previous language learning experience.

In the next section, I will discuss the effects of variability of some factors related to all the three sources mentioned above, focusing on the scoring validity of SA and PA compared to more traditional forms of assessment (proficiency tests or teacher assessments).

In relation to the first source of variability, Heilenman (1990) investigated response effects in self-report measures of second language abilities. The self-report measure focused on grammar, vocabulary, accuracy and fluency and consisted of 65 items to be rated on a five-point scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The response effects the study focused on were acquiescence (a tendency to respond positively) and self-presentation (to present oneself in a favourable light, consciously or unconsciously inflating reality). In order to investigate the former, matched pairs of positive and negative statements were used. The effect of overestimation, on the other hand, was explored through statements that were assumed to represent different difficulty levels in relation to the ability level of the target group. Results show that students find it more difficult to agree with a negative statement and a tendency toward rating high was

also confirmed. The author recommends the exclusion of negatively worded questions in self-report measures.

In relation to the scoring validity of SA, Blanche (1990) reported both high and low agreement between self-ratings and teacher assessments on standardized achievement and oral proficiency tests. Similarly, the comparison of teacher assessment with peer assessment also revealed mixed results (Patri 2002). Clearly, some of this inconsistency may be attributed to 'friendship marking' (Pond, Ul-Haq & Wade 1995 as cited in Patri 2002), that is, over-marking by peers and 'decibel marking' (ibid), which refers to when loud or extraverted individuals get high marks because they dominate a group. However, the domain and skill learners have to assess also seem to influence considerably the reliability and validity of SA and PA. Learners were reported to have more difficulty in assessing inferential dimensions, such as appropriacy and fluency, than performance dimensions (Shore, Shore, & Thornton 1992 as cited in Patri 2002).

The variability resulting from the skill being assessed was examined by Ross (1998), who explored the relative strengths and weaknesses of SA across skill areas (reading, speaking, writing, listening), based on a statistical analysis of 60 correlations reported in relation to self-assessments. The correlations between self-assessments and reading were found to be the strongest and therefore relatively more valid than in the case of listening skills, where the correlations showed greater variations. The reason for this, as suggested by Ross, is that the given learners probably had less frequent exposure to those skills in the higher education contexts where the studies were conducted. In the case of both speaking and writing skills, relatively lower correlations were found between self-assessments and the criterion measures. Ross suggested that in terms of accuracy of the self-ratings, self-assessment may be appropriate for use in low-stakes decision making only. He (ibid.) also explored whether there was a difference in the accuracy of achievement-based versus general proficiency-based self-assessments. In his own study, he found evidence in support of the assumption that learners can more accurately estimate their achievement directly linked to practice in a specific course than achievement that is expressed in more abstract terms and can only be linked indirectly to coursework. Ross proposed that to ensure accuracy of self-assessment of language learning achievement, the self-assessment

instrument should be designed on the basis of specific curricular content rather than general ability description in relation to the criterion skill.

Several studies have focused on specific individual learner characteristics to examine how they influence the scoring validity of SA and PA. Among the variables investigated, the age and proficiency level of the learner as well as the previous learning experience, more specifically the presence or absence of training in SA and PA, seem to emerge as the most important ones. Butler and Lee (2010), for example, correlated young learners' self-ratings and external proficiency ratings. They found that over time learners' accuracy improved, which was taken as evidence in support of the contention that even young learners can be trained to self-assess. Most of the studies, however, focused on more mature and proficient learners, pursuing studies in tertiary education. In Hong Kong, Cheng and Warren (2005) compared teacher assessments to how undergraduates assessed their peers' spoken language proficiency. Although the student and teacher assessments were not widely different, and by the end of the experiment they even got reasonably close, when the peers awarded marks, they actually reported that they had failed to include all the elements of language proficiency that the teachers assessed. For example, students associated oral proficiency more with oral fluency. This is, in fact, not so surprising because some of the students admitted that they were unsure how to make peer assessments given that they did not regard themselves competent for the task either linguistically or professionally. This finding reinforces the need for learner training, which may not only increase the reliability of peer assessments but, as Cheng and Warren also point out, it can enhance learners' confidence in their own ability to carry out such tasks and thus increase their positive attitude towards the peer assessment exercise itself.

Patri (2002) investigated the agreement amongst teacher-, self- and peer-assessments of students in the presence of peer feedback while testing oral presentation skills. In her study, she divided 56 Chinese university students into control and experimental groups. The participants in the former group practised the tasks of self- and peer-assessment complemented with peer feedback for four weeks while the latter did so without any peer feedback. Performances were assessed for organization of content, language use, manner and interaction with the audience. These criteria were all included in a questionnaire, which was used for teacher-,

peer- and self-assessments with minimal modifications. The behaviour of peer assessment was found to be somewhat different from that of self-assessment. When rating their own performances individually, participants were not able to judge them in the same way as the teacher had done either in the presence or absence of peer feedback, but in the experimental group peer-assessment was in high agreement with the teacher-assessment ($r = 0.85$, $p \leq .005$) when there was peer feedback. As a result of peer discussion, students were able to make judgements of their peers' oral presentations comparable to those made by the teacher. Patri's conclusion suggests that peer feedback can enhance learners' ability to make judgements on their peers' oral presentation skills; therefore, peer feedback is essential in order to achieve scoring validity in relation to teacher judgments.

Chen (2008) also compared student assessment with teacher assessment in order to explore the validity of self-ratings of oral performance in English. In this case study, 28 Chinese university students went through a 12 week instruction period that included both training and a 10-week practice phase in peer and self-assessment. The assessment components were collaboratively developed by the teacher and the students and included content (30%), language (30%), delivery (30%), and manner (10%). Students were asked to assess their own performance using the same criteria as those used for peer and teacher assessment and all three forms were conducted jointly. There was a significant match between self- and teacher scorings towards the end of assessment practice; that is, there was improvement in the assessment accuracy. Chen noted that the students and the teacher emphasized different aspects of the established criteria: the former commented on delivery and manner most of the time while the latter commented more on aspects of content, language, and delivery. As time passed by, learners' negative comments decreased and more positive and neutral comments were offered. By the end of the experiment, the learners' comments were more similar to the teacher's, becoming more positive and constructive as they began to notice their own strengths. Giving and receiving feedback in class for ten weeks thus helped students to change the negative tone of their comments to a reflective and suggestive one. Chen concluded that this assessment procedure involved two simultaneous processes: learning to assess and assessing to learn.

Finally, the impact of training on peer assessment of L2 oral presentation was explored by Saito (2008) in a Japanese university context, using treatment and control groups. Both groups received a series of instructional inputs on 12 skill aspects of presentation, but only the treatment group was offered rater training, which involved viewing and rating three videotaped presentations of former students. Ratings were discussed and feedback was given by pointing out over- and under-rating. Later in the course, students in both the treatment and control groups rated and commented on all classmates' performances in their own class. Saito found that „*instruction on skill aspects without rater training may be sufficient for peer assessment to correlate with instructor scores to a certain degree; however, rater training seems to help students provide more relevant comments, citing more skill aspects on peer performance*" (ibid.: 575). On its own, instruction on skill aspects that learners can rate is not likely to increase correlations between learner and teacher ratings. With the help of rater training, however, learners' awareness of skill aspects can be enhanced, which is reflected in the frequency and relevance of the comments learners gave. Saito suggests that "*peer assessment training is a meta-cognitive activity in which student attention is drawn to the features of a language learning task*" (ibid.: 577).

In summary, the findings reported above have emphasised the need for learner or rater training that involves awareness-raising of skills aspects of performance and practice in applying specific assessment criteria. By creating opportunities for interaction and clarification, instructor feedback and peer discussion both seem to have an important role in enhancing the scoring validity of SA and PA—although in contexts that can be characterised to have an *exam culture* (cf. Hamp-Lyons 2007 as cited in Butler & Lee 2010), stakeholders' perceptions of the role of assessment may undermine both the implementation as well as the outcomes of self- and peer-assessment because neither learning to assess nor assessing to learn is recognised as curricular goals for learners.

6. Conclusion

As has been shown above, there are several benefits that self- and peer-assessment entail, although I have also highlighted some potential problems. We agree with Boud (2000 as cited in Liu and Carless 2006), who recommends the creation of a course climate in which the giving and re-

ceiving of peer feedback is a normal part of teaching and learning processes. It remains to be seen whether Boud's call has been answered or not. In Poland, a recent survey by Lewkowicz and Zawadowska-Kittel (2011) has revealed that in the Polish sate primary and secondary school contexts there is a low level of popularity of alternative assessment tasks in the English language classroom because the teachers reported using peer- and self-assessment in mostly small percentages. At the primary school level, self-assessment was reported by 44% while peer assessment by 11%. At the lower secondary level these percentages changed for 31% and 16%, while at the upper secondary level 31% and 25% of the teachers reported to use these alternative forms of assessment respectively. In Hungary, where the teaching and learning culture is very similar to the Polish one, little is known about the use of alternative forms of assessment in the Hungarian state school context, thus future research needs to address these issues.

Reflection Task: Diagnose your own Feedback Practices.

In order to review your own feedback practices, consider each of the following statements below, and indicate how frequently you do those things R (Rarely), S (Sometimes) or U (Usually).

A. Gathering feedback FROM students about learning	R	S	U
I use a variety of assessment strategies, (e.g., thumbs up, learning logs) to gather feedback about students' learning during each instructional period.			
I note where students need further instruction or a different approach and adjust instruction accordingly.			
B. Providing feedback TO students about their learning	R	S	U
The feedback I give includes what was done well			
The feedback I give includes what needs improvement			

The feedback I give includes specific suggestions for how to improve			
The feedback I give relates to the learning goal(s) which I shared and clarified with students at the outset of the learning cycle.			
The feedback I give is based only on the criteria for success which I shared and clarified with students at the outset of the learning cycle.			
I give specific guidance on the next steps so that students know what to do, but without doing the improvements for them.			
The feedback I give is descriptive (i.e., it provides information that students can use to improve) rather than evaluative (a mark or grade).			
The timing of my feedback (oral or written) provides students opportunities to use the information while they are still learning and practising the requisite knowledge and skills.			
C. Considering feedback when planning instruction and assessment	R	S	U
I identify the criteria for successful achievement of the learning goals and plan how to develop and/or share those criteria with the students at/or near the outset of the learning.			
I plan activities that provide students the opportunity to practise and demonstrate their learning so that feedback can be given and acted upon.			
I plan opportunities for students to act on feedback with my support.			

I look for ways to maximize feedback to students while helping them take on greater responsibility for providing peer feedback and for self-assessing. That is, I:			
– provide group feedback to students who share similar strengths and needs.			
– provide oral feedback during conversations and observations.			
– ensure major assignments are staged to permit time for feedback and action.			
D. Developing students' ability to monitor their own learning	R	S	U
I explicitly make connections between the purpose of a task and the learning goal(s).			
I encourage students to think continuously about the criteria for success.			
I encourage students to look for the criteria in their demonstrations of learning.			
I involve students in defining and applying success criteria.			
I use a variety of strategies (e.g., a think-aloud) to explicitly model providing descriptive feedback.			
I have students use criteria to provide feedback to peers and to self-assess.			
I provide students feedback on the quality of the peer- and self-assessments.			

Adapted from: http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesAER/VideoLibrary/Feedback/ViewingGuideFeedbackAfLVideoSeries.pdf22

Recommended Reading

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