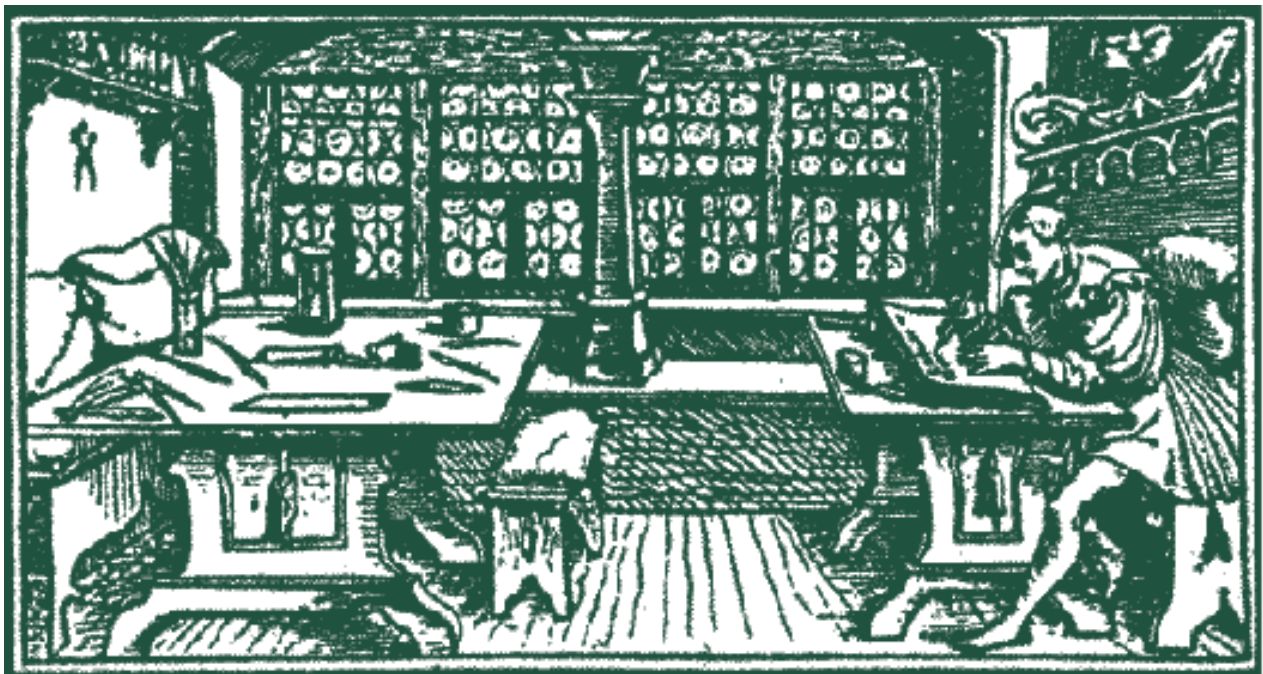




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THE EXPERIENCE OF MULTICULTURAL LEARNING IN ISRAEL

LIAT BEN HORINE¹

ABSTRACT. *The Experience of Multicultural Learning in Israel.* Israel is a highly multi-cultural society, a fact reflected in almost every aspect of daily life, the educational one included. This article informs on a qualitative study conducted as part of a PhD thesis examining the experiences of Arabic speakers in multicultural college environments who study Academic English as part of their Bachelor of Education Degree. The study focuses on the way culture influences their college and career choices. It also discusses the affective impact of multiculturalism on communication between different ethnicities in the college and the implications for their future coexistence in the country.

Key Words: *English, college students, multiculturalism, Arabic speakers, Israel, coexistence.*

REZUMAT. *Experiența educației multiculturale în Israel.* Israelul reprezintă o societate multiculturală cu un grad ridicat de diversitate reflectat în aproape toate aspectele vieții cotidiene, inclusiv în sfera educațională. Prezentul articol se constituie ca un raport asupra studiului calitativ al unei teze de doctorat care examinează experiențele vorbitorilor de limbă arabă în medii universitare multiculturale, unde aceștia studiază limba engleză la nivel academic ca parte a programului de studiu la nivel licență. Studiul de față examinează influențele de ordin cultural asupra alegerii colegiului și carierei de către acești studenți și dezbate impactul afectiv al respectivului context multicultural asupra comunicării dintre diferitele etnii din colegiu, precum și implicațiile sale pentru viitorul coexistenței acestor etnii în cadrul aceluiași stat.

Cuvinte cheie: *multiculturalism, învățarea limbii engleze, student la nivel licență, vorbitori de limbă arabă, Israel, coexistență*

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Israel is, along with many countries of the developed world, a multi-cultural society. This diversity is reflected in very specific and unique ways, in almost every aspect of daily life, including the educational one. The Israeli Arab community is diverse. Making up approximately 20% of the population², this sector is comprised of not only Muslims, who are the majority, but also of Christians and Druze. This in itself is an oversimplification, as Bedouins, for example, share a belief in Islam with Muslims, but constitute a separate ethnic group with different cultural outlooks and traditions. Furthermore, political aspirations and identifications differ radically amongst the Arab speakers of Israel, some identifying themselves as Palestinians, others as loyal to the Jewish state. They do not even speak the same Arabic; at least three dialects have been identified (North, South and Central).³

The context of this research is that of two Hebrew speaking teacher training colleges in the north of Israel. Here, some multi-lingual, multi-cultural educational communities have evolved, which afford an excellent opportunity for research purposes. Studying together for the first time, as compulsory schooling in Israel is generally separate⁴, all students are obliged to learn Academic English for a Bachelor of Education degree. In order to understand the language learning experiences of those minority students within the colleges who speak Arabic as their native tongue, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both teaching staff and students with a view to gain a perspective on this issue. The following represents a summary of the content based analysis that was conducted on the data collected⁵.

An important element in the successful acquisition of English skills at a college level is the type and level of motivation students have, not only to study the language, but also to fulfil the degree requirements and become teachers. The reason for their presence as students in a Hebrew speaking college of education, when alternatives in their mother tongue exist, is also relevant to their success, as is their degree of comfort within the aforementioned learning environments.

Practical considerations relating to the physical proximity of their college to their home were found to have been highly relevant: *I wanted to learn in a place near home, there is only this college*. Interviews revealed that the choice for the

² Rass, Ruwaida Abu. "The influence of Arab Culture on Arab students reading academic texts in English." Presented at the *UTELI Annual Conference*, February 2009, Tel Aviv University, Israel.

³ Khamis-Dakwar, Reem, Karen Froud and Peter Gordon. "Acquiring Diglossia: Mutual Influences of Formal and Colloquial Arabic on Children's Grammaticality Judgments." *Journal of child language* 39.1 (2012): 61-89. *ProQuest*. Web. 3Apr. 2012.

⁴ Wolff Laurence, with Elizabeth Breit. "Education in Israel: The Challenges Ahead." University of Maryland. *Institute for Israel Studies* (2012): n. page. Web. Oct.2012.

⁵ Stemler, Steve. "An Overview of Content Analysis." *Practical Assessment Research and Evaluation*. 7.17. (2001). Web: 12 Nov. 2014.

female Arab respondents had been restricted: *There is an Arab college far away but the family doesn't want us to go.* In addition, Arab students frequently indicated that the career advantage gained by studying in a Jewish institution had been a factor in their choice: *It's good for my Hebrew which is very important for my future career, and the level here.* The Arab students stressed that the status of the college's prestige (as opposed to that of an Arab college) had been a decisive factor for them: *Here it is more recognized as a college of education.* Thus it can be seen that the choice of a Hebrew speaking college had been guided by both societal pressures and career concerns.

Interviews with Arab student participants revealed that the motivation to become teachers had been influenced by their families, particularly their fathers: *My dad liked the idea; He really liked the idea that I be a teacher.* This influence was reiterated by the expert witness (a lecturer with special responsibility for the welfare of Arab students), who explained the status of the profession in the community: *Firstly, the teacher's job is a respected one amongst Arab minorities. Secondly, for the female Druze or Muslim, teaching is the most appropriate. ... the easiest and best work that will keep her culture is to work as a teacher. She hasn't got many options, can't be a salesmen, she can't be an airhostess, she can't be a pilot, she can't work as a waitress at night for a bit, so it's the most convenient, mentally, culturally and economically.* These reasons for choosing the profession were also cited by the Arab girls themselves. In overall terms, there was a strong feeling that the decision to study and what and where to do so, had been more influenced by the community amongst the Arabic speaking interviewees. The Arab students, whilst sometimes mentioning that their career choice suited them, rarely spoke in terms of a calling to their chosen professions. By contrast, this was a more dominant theme amongst the Jewish teacher trainees, indicating a deep-seated difference in motivation between the two groups.

Very few of the students exhibited a high, intrinsic motivation to study English. The majority rather reluctantly acknowledged the importance of English studies and the impossibility of avoiding them. Most, however, agreed it had become an important life skill: *On household products it's all in English and also you need to manage at work.* However, on a direct personal level, many of the students reported giving it a low sense of priority in their studies. For some students, this low motivation appeared to have been engendered by a sense of its irrelevance in immediate terms: *It is important to me to pass the exam. One doesn't need English much in life; what do I need it for? There are a lot (of Arabs) who only want to pass.* Despite the fact that some Arab students reported using the Internet in English and listening to songs, the majority of them indicated that they were distanced from the language in their day-to-day lives. Arab students only occasionally mentioned having travelled abroad, and those who had, had very often been exclusively to Arabic speaking countries such as Syria or Egypt.

Thus, findings on motivation reflect a clear understanding by the Arab students of the importance of studying, together with the knowledge that this was expected of them from their home environment. It was also clear that they understood that the possession of a degree represented an important opportunity to better themselves. Despite this, students' enthusiasm for English studies appeared to be muted, undertaken reluctantly, as a means to an end. However, an appearance of low language motivation may be due to a cultural misinterpretation of their behaviour; Arab students may be investing and caring about their English studies more than meets the eye. A low level of participation in lessons might be due to the discomfort of the social situation caused by the mixed cultural environment.

Other factors which may detract from successful learning are the students' personal and home background (including their parents' educational background) and the level of parental involvement and support of their children's study program. This is in addition to the culturally influenced personal characteristics and life experiences of the students.

An analysis of the interviews conducted revealed that very few of the students from any ethnicity came from what could be considered a traditional academic background. Hardly any parents had been educated in higher education; most parents were reportedly in manual employment or blue collar jobs such as ambulance driver, construction worker, and carpenter. In the case of Arab students, a reoccurring motive was their parents' lack of active involvement in their school education: *My parents never interfered in school. My Dad worked in a taxi. He didn't take much interest.* This lack of involvement was stressed by H., a Bedouin Muslim who remembered a chaotic lack of discipline in classrooms and an absence of parent-teacher contact: *The parents by us don't care about their son, what he does, the most important thing is that he is here (at school), they (the school) will educate him. On the other hand, the teacher gets tired of it sooner or later.* Arab students reported not having been given any additional support from their school or their parents even when it was obvious that they were experiencing problems in English. In other words, a lack of parental involvement from the early years of schooling increased the home-school divide and added to the difficulties of the minority population during their path to academic success. Arab students frequently mentioned the low educational level of their fathers. Students stated that their parents had not completed their school education because of economic pressures or because of the fact that education was not so valued 'back then', often saying that their fathers had left school in the elementary or middle stages of schooling: *My Dad ... didn't learn because of the economic situation; My Dad worked in Metula (town). He didn't go to school at all after elementary school.* When questioned about their mothers, they responded that they didn't work, and that they were sometimes supportive: *My Mum encourages*

me to study and succeed, but often didn't understand the world their children were in: My Mum doesn't understand. This lack of parental education goes some way to explaining the aforementioned school-home divide. However, a noticeable trend is that despite these young students being the first generation of educated youth from their communities, they are far from being the sole representatives of their families.

A large number of students reported having siblings studying at university or already working in a white collar profession. There appeared to be a high consciousness amongst the students that there had been a change in attitude to education: *My Dad was good at school, but they took him out to work, you know how it is, especially in the Arab sector in that period. Now it is the opposite, everyone wants their kids to learn Everyone I am telling you everyone!* This revolution in educational experiences has left the current generation largely alone to negotiate higher education demands and expectations: *They hardly know what is happening with me in the college, only if they ask.*

When describing their past educational environment there is a striking impression that the students' current educational environment represents a dramatic change from the one they are used to. *I am from __ village. There they don't teach us like this. There they just teach any old way. They read us a story and we read it and that's it; "Listen to the teacher!" That's it and at the end of the year there was an exam, nothing; there's a big difference. There we did nothing.*

The divide between the school and home world continues to be wide for the Arab students during their college experience: *I have no one at home with the knowledge.* This gap will narrow as the current undergraduates become parents, aunts and uncles in their home communities, improving the support networks for future generations of pupils and students.

Jewish student participants were on average three to four years older than their Arab counterparts. The Arab male students interviewed often had had work experience of some kind either during their school years (as they worked to help finance their families) or after High School in unskilled or semi-skilled labour. Whilst some of the Jewish students had worked in teaching-related fields which prepared them in some way for the college experience (kindergarten assistant, elementary school volunteer, teacher of new immigrants), the Arab females were most commonly high school graduates directly from school or slightly older, having spent the intermediary time in a non-specified way '*at home*'. This resulted in a restriction both in their exposure to the majority Jewish culture and in their knowledge of Hebrew. It also meant that their independent life skills were more limited by comparison to Jewish students: *The truth is in the first weeks, they are in culture shock. They see things that they didn't see in their village; the exposure of the boys is from a younger age than that of the girls, the boys can go out at night to have fun, the girls are limited.*

Discussions with female Jewish students indicated a higher level of self-confidence and personal responsibility: *It's up to me; I do have concentration problems but... I take myself in hand and sit up front.* Whilst this was not reflected in the attitudes of all Jewish students: *I don't learn or invest, just do the test and go, my grades aren't high,* there were, nevertheless, more frequent expressions of determination and responsibility. This was reflected in the reports of their teachers. There was a sense that an overall feeling of passivity and fatalism was more characteristic of the Arab population than of the Jewish one: *I don't think they are as mature; they want to be led, they want to be fed. More Hebrew speaking students tend to come and look for that extra help from me than the Arab speaking students.*

In conclusion, it can be seen that there are numerous cultural factors influencing a student's success in academic studies. It appears that Arab students, as the first generation of students from their community, have had little personal example or direct practical support from their parents. As a result, in many cases they have learned to 'cope' by utilizing indirect sources of help, rather than learning to interact with the classroom environment actively in such a way as to integrate fully.

Content analysis of the data collected shows that the use of Hebrew as a language of instruction in the English language classroom is a factor in the Arab students' acquisition of English. All teachers said that they used Hebrew as the major language of instruction and that Hebrew was also used as the language of communication between the students themselves in the mixed contexts in which they functioned: *The whole classroom atmosphere is one of Hebrew.* Whilst many of the students were functionally competent in most respects, the pragmatic meaning of instructions, comments, criticisms and compliments remain likely sources for misunderstanding in the tri-lingual context existing in the classes.

An analysis of the students' comments reflect a contradiction between students' strong desire to become more proficient at Hebrew: *I already know Arabic enough (from birth). I want something new, even if it is hard;* and an understanding that the use of Hebrew as a language of instruction interferes with or inhibits their progress: *They (Jews) understand more than us because they understand faster what the teacher says, and answer immediately, and it takes us longer to understand.* This appears to affect their confidence: *Every class we are in, the Hebrew speakers are more dominant, they always want to speak, and they have confidence because they are native speakers, unlike us.* There is evidence to suggest that Arabic speakers go through a tough process of adjustment in their early stages of degree studies which is overcome by determination: *In the beginning it didn't work ... but now I think I am good at Hebrew and I have a lot of words, one word and another word.* This determination to master Hebrew appears to be

based on the knowledge that this is a passport to their future career success. It is supported by a lot of encouragement from home: *At first it was hard because they talk and I used to look on and not understand at all, but slowly my dad said "Don't be afraid and this and that" and I managed.* In addition, the support from fellow students featured as a prominent theme: *When the teacher speaks in Hebrew I don't really understand it all. I ask about everything if there is someone next to me.* Teachers continually emphasized their concerns about negotiating meaning through the medium of a third language: *I would explain in Hebrew, but that doesn't mean that they understood it; They are usually filtering through their mother tongue, their second language ... their second language and the learnt language, so there are additional steps.* In conclusion, it would appear that learning through the medium of Hebrew influenced their progress with the additional language and that their proficiency in this second language (Hebrew) was significant in their ability to function fully in the multicultural language learning environment.

Teachers often indicated a difference in participation levels between the language groups: *There are more Jewish students who participate more even when they come from places that are weak.* Even though overall motivation from all students in these classes was perceived as weak in the eyes of the teachers, there was a tendency to rate Arab involvement as lower: *They would come late more; they would want to leave early.* This was, by and large, echoed by the Arab students, who perceived themselves to be less active in participation in the English language classroom: *There are the ones who stand out in every class whether they are Arabs or Jews, but there are more Jews like that than Arabs.* This appeared to reflect an inhibition rather than a lack of motivation: *We don't participate much in class, we want to, but we don't.* There were, however, no claims of discrimination or marginalization by either the Arabs, or the Jews: *They speak up when necessary, no one marginalizes them,* and rather representatives of both groups ascribed the lower participation levels to shyness. This might also explain the seeming inhibition to ask for clarifications or explanations in class: *They are embarrassed to say they didn't understand. The Jews do not have this problem, they have self-confidence.*

This difference in population participation is reflected in the seating pattern in class. Nearly all the student and teacher participants in the research stressed the existence of a general physical divide between students. This occurred naturally, either in terms of a right left split, or in terms of a forward backward classroom division, which although not hermetic, seemed to reflect a naturally forming divide: *Almost there are two sides to a classroom, and the Arabs are on one side or the other.*

No students of any ethnic background expressed ideological problems working with peers from other groups. Individual Jews and Arabs reported that they did so successfully and with enjoyment: *It connects us to each other. And they help us; they give us a lot to our studies.* However, they felt it was natural that in most cases they should work separately, as they tended to feel more comfortable with fellow members of the same language group: *If we are sitting together waiting for the group so we'll sit together but not really if they tell us to split into pairs or groups they will divide amongst themselves and us too, everyone stays in the place where he is more comfortable.*

Arabs were described both by Jewish students and by teachers as being more restrained and respectful: *In Arab culture they do defer to you and they relate to you as "the teacher" with more politeness and more acceptance of your status whereas to Jewish students you're just another person; Hebrew speaking students can be more mouthy.* The expert witness supported this view: *Usually these students (Arabs) show respect for the teacher no matter what he is or what he says.* However, **seemingly** politeness could be a sign of reticence caused more by language barriers than a wish to honour and respect their teachers. A student claimed that he never challenged the teacher when she made a mistake on his grade due to embarrassment: *Because of the language I'm ashamed.* Students appeared to appreciate the social learning situation that such multicultural classrooms facilitate. One student acknowledged that the heterogeneous classrooms allowed them to assimilate new behaviours indicating that there was a difference between their old and new student persona: *We learnt how they (Jews) behave, how they learn in the classroom.* If this is the case, insecurity about correct student roles and behaviours and how to express them in language may act to distance Arab students from their Jewish teachers or even Arab students from their Jewish peers.

Teachers reported feeling discomfort when Arab students took on a kind of dependent familial role towards them. One teacher felt she was seen as a mother figure. Others remarked on the overdependence of Arab students: *Sometimes they expect more help from their teacher and ask more questions than necessary.* Many Jewish teachers also reported having a more restrained personal relationship with the Arab students than with Jews as a result of uncertainty about correct behaviours, or the 'borders' of correct religious behaviour (from the male teachers particularly): *There are certain ways I can't relate to women, Muslim women; I am not sure as if what I am saying is the right thing to say to be sensitive I am afraid of being offensive.*

This student-teacher distance was confirmed by one student who explained that she had had little personal contact with lecturers during her first year of studies, claiming that she had not spoken to them at all: *There is a stronger connection between lecturers and Jewish students.* Such issues of interpersonal relations are all obviously of relevance to the success of the language learning process.

Arab teachers who were interviewed claimed that the school environment the students had known as pupils was very different to their current college environment: *It's a different world*. They explained that as they would have been taught differently, so they had learned to learn in different ways. In addition, it was felt that their bank of general knowledge was not the same of that of the teachers or the Jewish students: *They don't have the same general knowledge*. Their claims for the existence of more old fashioned ways in the Arabic speaking schools were backed up by the impressions of the Jewish teachers: *This student has largely been taught to memorize; In the Arab schools I see old-fashioned ways; they don't come necessarily with critical thinking kinds of skills*. This difference or disadvantage needs to be addressed by teachers and taken into account in both the planning and delivery of lessons.

Teachers' assessments of the mixed learning environment were very positive on the theoretical side, stressing the beneficial aspects of the meeting of cultures and the uniqueness of the experience. This was because the college was, for many, the first place where intercultural contact and interaction could take place: *It's good and it's essential because they start experiencing it here for the first time*. Teachers unanimously expressed their approval of the social opportunities afforded by the multiculturalism of the college environment despite its difficulty: *It's difficult for them but it is important, it is the only way to peace*.

A more detailed consideration of actual practice in the classroom revealed that whilst the students were sitting in the same physical space, interacting at a certain level and cooperating in a friendly way (when specifically encouraged to do so by the teacher), true self-initiated integration was rare: *They don't talk amongst each other they are not friends with the others; They stay within the divide an awful lot*.

Pedagogically there appear to be disadvantages. An Arab teacher had known some of her present college students previously having taught them some years ago (when they were in the 5th grade in her village). She reported being surprised at how timid and passive they were in their new environment. This feeling was confirmed by other teachers who noticed a tendency for Arab students to be quiet and seem rather overwhelmed by the multicultural setting: *They are a bit overawed by the self-confidence and brashness of Israeli students and that could well be why they don't speak up and speak out as much as they would in a different setting*.

Reports of classroom tensions along racial lines were relatively rare. A Christian Arab teacher who was teaching in the college after an extended stay in the United States of 30 years assessed the situation favourably: *I haven't seen anything negative ... really, honestly. ... I am surprised by it to be honest with you. I saw [a] more negative [atmosphere] when I taught in the U.S.*

Teachers described occasional intercultural tensions. These typically began on an individual level caused by some irritating behaviour by an individual student but would quickly cause tension along racial lines for many class members: *It won't be "this student is bugging me", but the "Arab students"; It would start with simple things, all of a sudden it becomes like a group thing along cultural lines.*

A process of adjustment appears to have been necessary for both Arabs and Jews: *I don't know, at the beginning maybe it bothered me a bit, but now its fine; at first it was hard but with time we have gotten used to it.* Students were divided about the need to be recognized as having a different cultural identity, for although some student minorities admitted that their classmates didn't know enough about their culture, others denied that this was relevant.

One Muslim student, whilst claiming to feel comfortable in the college complained about the lack of balance and equality: *They took all the Arabic and Hebrew speakers to the ghetto uprising museum they wanted us to learn, also to learn about the holocaust, so why don't the Jews learn about the hard situations of the Arabs?*

Some students were willing to speak about incidents that had made them uncomfortable: *Unpleasant remarks I've heard, but it's just stupidity, a question of misunderstanding or inappropriate language.* In general, there were no ostensible tensions and a relatively cooperative class atmosphere prevailed.

Many Arab students stressed the positive value they felt from the multicultural exposure from emotional, social and practical viewpoints: *There's Jews that I can improve my Hebrew talking to, and such like, and people that I talk to them all the time to improve myself and everyone's together, they love each other,* and from a more ideological standpoint: *It gives something; it helps coexistence, Arabs and Jews living together.* Jews too voiced their approval: *I get to know different kinds of people. If, for example, in sociology we learn about the status of women, you learn and it's interesting and then you learn things from their culture and I can bring things that they don't know.*

In conclusion, it appears that the affective environment is not a negative factor in the students' learning, although the brashness of the Jewish students can feel intimidating. Nevertheless, the amount of exposure the students have to one other remains rather superficial, and the students, particularly the Arab ones, seem open to teacher intervention, which would increase their opportunities to mix and learn from, and about, each other.

Despite the pedagogical complications and the extra demands on their interpersonal skills that were created by the special setting, the teachers were pleased to be working in a multicultural environment. They saw it as an opportunity to build coexistence through encouraging a better understanding in

each cultural group of the *Other*. The native English speakers were generously outspoken in the name of multiculturalism and the opportunities it afforded: *I see us as being models for what it means to coexist*. Such sentiments existed but were more restrained amongst native Hebrew speaking teachers, who seemed to need to go through more of a process of sensitization to the needs of the other students. For many of them, the college experience of multiculturalism had been completely new: *At the beginning, I couldn't care less; now I see there is a difference*. There was an awareness of the needs of the Arabic speaker group which required a constant effort from their teachers: *I am keeping myself culturally neutral to everybody; I always monitor my speech so that it be appropriate to the situation in all the classrooms*.

The expert witness was convinced that more interfaith knowledge was needed and that this should be given in a structured way to ensure smoother integration: *One of the problems in this college is that there are some lecturers who don't know anything about other cultures*. This, according to the expert witness is a mistake which needs rectifying: *You have to know where he comes from, what social fabric he comes from, why he behaves as he does. If I understand the culture, I can deal more successfully with personal or even pedagogical problems. A student who lives in a tent can't do homework until 12 midnight!*

In addition to a constant monitoring of speech and behaviour, teachers often saw themselves in an additional role as a kind of cultural mediator between the groups in the class: *I try to bridge between them; It is always helpful to show them ... the more common things that all cultures have rather than the differences*. This ranged from a general awareness and avoidance of all things potentially sensitive, to a pointed effort to enforce mixed work groups and relate directly to minor conflicts that arouse. In pedagogical terms, the teachers often pointed out the additional effort they would make to overcome language barriers: *Frequently in the class I will turn and say, Arab speakers do you have this? Help each other if the word is not clear. I don't do it with Hebrew speakers*. They felt this was very much appreciated by the students as were any efforts to use Arabic, albeit in a limited way, or to show cultural knowledge or interest. Even teachers who did not know Arabic found ways to try to be inclusive: *If I show them I know some of their culture, they communicate better, they listen better, and they cooperate more*. In other words, if used effectively, culture can be a facilitator, rather than a barrier to learning.

It was felt that often the topics in the text book used in class were too far from the students' lives and experiences: *Sometimes they cannot relate to the culture in the more American texts*. Many teachers reported feeling that general knowledge was unreliable as a base line for understanding texts, as it was in fact, cultural in origin. A kind of bewilderment and frustration can be recognized in the

following words: *You have a text that is talking about multiple intelligences. It's not something maybe that an Arab speaking student has heard about, but a Jewish, a Hebrew speaking student has heard about.* Other texts were problematic, as they led to discussions that Arab students are less comfortable discussing in a public domain: *If the subject is, for example, sensitive or touchy, or you know, you find that more Jewish girls are more courageous to talk.* Sometimes a word or a phrase in English has been adopted into Hebrew with political connotations that make for sudden and/or unexpected tension. Other foreign language words are also loaded, in the current political reality. Their innocent appearance in the unrelated context of a text can cause tension just by being mentioned: *A lot of the stuff is neutral but we just hit an article about occupying okay and you could see that when we had that word come up they flinched, they flinched and the Jewish students didn't have that reaction.* Thus, the teachers found themselves consciously or unconsciously checking, vetoing or adapting materials to suit their perception of the cultural sensibilities that they were dealing with.

Teaching such groups in such conditions requires a commitment and sensitivity to students for which the teachers have not been prepared and do not receive any counselling or ongoing support. Teacher time and energy is being constantly channelled into mediating the cultural environment in a continual attempt to balance it, and provide egalitarian learning experiences for all. It is unclear to what extent they succeed.

Suggestions were made in order to adapt the cultural climate of the class. The first relates to additional teaching time: *They need extra tutoring because of the transition from a second to a third language.* This idea was encouraged by the expert witness: *More Arabic speaking teachers, and reception hours for Arabic speakers that find it hard in Hebrew or English, so they could get an explanation in Arabic.*

A second suggestion was the introduction of separate classes for Arabic students, although this was often raised with an air of doubt and uncertainty: *Of course you could always ask would they be better off with an Arabic speaking teacher?* The justification was that this might simplify the pedagogical and personal relationships in the classroom: *I imagine it would be a more simple communication setting; you'd have less issues going on and more straightforward communication with them. I have the feeling there would be more common knowledge between us so therefore, it might be more comfortable for them.*

Another rather hesitant suggestion that English be used instead of Hebrew as the language of instruction was qualified by saying that to work, this policy would need to be implemented in classrooms way before the college level.

When asked if they felt they would benefit more from a homogenous Arab speaking environment, student opinion was divided. Several mentioned that the

social aspects of being all together caused a lack of concentration: *This one disturbs that one, I'm talking to him, and this one is that one's friend, it's a kind of neighbourhood street party.*

A minority claimed that it would make them feel more comfortable: *This is my first time in the college that I have learned with an Arabic teacher of English. If there is anything I don't understand I ask him. It helps me, it makes it easier.* Others mentioned that they sometimes felt uncomfortable with Arab teachers: *I had a course with an Arab teacher and I did not feel comfortable at all.... He is not from my religion and he failed me.* Students were not keen on the idea that English be used exclusively in classrooms: *When she spoke in English, I didn't understand anything; you teachers only speak in English..., English English, I need some Hebrew.*

In conclusion, whilst there appeared to be pedagogical disadvantages to the cultural mix, students and teachers were not unanimous in their opinion about this, or the way in which best to deal with the situation. At an institutional level, the problems created by the mix were generally ignored. There was agreement that the multiculturalism of the college was the right way to proceed, but together with this, there was a sense that its social implications were not dealt with thoroughly or exploited enough: *There is some kind of minority thing which I don't think any of the colleges made enough effort to overcome.* Such an effort must be made if the full potential of this situation is to be exploited:

Education cannot stop the forces buffeting the tiny country of Israel; it cannot prevent terrorism, create water where there is none, or protect a beleaguered economy from global economic trends. It can however promote curriculum and teaching that help students from all the population sectors to develop knowledge understanding and shared goals.⁶

More is at stake than mere learning. Multicultural study environments have an opportunity to influence the very future of this country and its struggle towards equality of opportunity, cooperation, collaboration and peaceful coexistence for all.

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Appendix

STUDENT Interview Guide

1. What feeling do you have when you are learning English at the college? Is it more or less stressful than other college lessons? Is it more or less stressful than your school English learning experiences?
2. How comfortable do you feel in your English lessons in college (in relation to the teacher/ in relation to the other students)?
3. How much social /cooperative contact do you have with other students in your class whose mother tongue is different to yours?
4. Do you ask questions when something is unclear to you? Who do you ask? Why? Why not? Do you ever volunteer to answer questions that the teacher asks in class?
5. Do you ever speak to the teacher on a personal level? At break/before the lesson/on orbit
6. Does anyone in your home /social environment support you in your English studies did you ever take private lessons in the past?
7. Do you take notes/write vocabulary in Hebrew or Arabic?
8. Do you feel comfortable with the use of Hebrew in the classroom?
9. Which language is easier for you to use to take notes in English lessons? Written Arabic or written Hebrew?
10. Do you feel you know enough about the Hebrew speaking students in the classroom? Does anything about their behavior shock or surprise you? Do you think that learning together helps cultural relations? Would you feel more comfortable in an homogeneous class?
11. Is the teacher's behavior and expectations understandable to you .Are the course expectations clear to you?
12. Do you feel your level of English is strong average or weak in relation to the class?
13. To what do you ascribe your strengths/weaknesses
14. What changes would you like to see in the class to make it more effective for you?
15. Do you feel anxious before/during English tests and exams-to what extent? Do you understand the topics of the texts you study? Are they interesting to you?
16. How much time do you spend on English outside of class time?
17. How focused are you during the class? Very/Partial/Hardly at all
18. How important is knowledge in English to you? Why do you think you need English? How much English are you exposed to in your day to day life? Why did you decide to study to be a teacher? Are you thinking of continuing your education?
19. How comfortable do you feel with your teacher? Describe? What is the cultural/language background of your current teacher? In your past have you ever had a teacher who did not share your L1 What differences do you notice?
20. Do you think your teacher and classmates know enough about your culture/religion/ language? Do they make any effort to find out?
21 Do you think it would be easier or more difficult to study in an all Arab college of education? On what basis did you make your current choice?

LIAT BEN HORINE

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
1. What is your native tongue? What is your strongest additional language? What other languages do you know?
2. In your opinion does the behavior/learning processes/achievement of students differ significantly between the different cultural backgrounds?
3. How important is knowledge about your students' cultural background to you? Do you think you know enough about the cultural backgrounds of the different groups in your class? Do you think you should know more in order to teach more effectively? Do you think there is a difference between them in terms of their learning/behavior? Is there a difference between the different groups of Arabic speakers in your class in terms of participation or performance?
4. Do you ever modify material/speech/classroom practices with reference to cultural sensitivities?
5. Do you think there is cross cultural communication in your classroom?
6. Is there any obvious cross cultural tension in your classroom? How do you respond to this? Is there cross cultural cross linguistic cooperation?
7. Do you think the texts, tests and quizzes are culturally and linguistically appropriate for all your students?
8. How many LD students in your class are Hebrew speakers?
9. How many LD students in your class are Arabic speakers?
10. Can you differentiate between the different groups of Arabic speakers: Druze/Bedouin/Muslim/Christian How? What do you need to know?
11. Do you use mainly English or mainly Hebrew as a language of instruction?
12. Do you ever mediate in a third language?
13. What can be done within the present academic framework to improve the academic achievements and experiences of the Arab speaking students?
14. In your opinion, what can be done more to promote our students' English learning (For the Hebrew speakers and for the Arabic speakers) in the college's English program?
15. What implications do you think heterogeneous learning settings have on cultural relations?
16. Do you have the same amount of personal contact with Arabic and non- Arabic speakers?
17. Do the Arab speakers participate to an equal level in classroom activities-elaborate?

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: SOCIOCULTURAL RAPPROCHEMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS

DIANA COTRĂU¹

ABSTRACT. *Intercultural Communication: Sociocultural Rapprochement in the International Class.* The international class is a nexus of manifest linguistic and cultural proclivities of identity making, even while it mirrors the language contact phenomena occurring worldwide as a direct consequence of the growth in the spread of English across the globe and as the lingua franca of higher education. This paper explores the consequential theoretical assumptions as to how the curricular scenarios need to be adapted culture-wise so as to avoid miscommunication and identity conflicts and ensure intercultural harmony in the ever increasing number of multi-ethnic classes of international higher education programmes.

Keywords: *internationalism of English, cultural identity, intercultural communication, audience design*

REZUMAT. *Comunicare interculturală: Ajustarea socioculturală în grupele cu studenți internaționali.* Grupele de studenți internaționali constituie centre de manifestare a tendințelor lingvistice și culturale de producere a identităților, oglindind, concomitent, fenomenele de contact lingvistic care au loc la nivel mondial ca o consecință directă a diseminării crescânde a limbii engleze pe glob și ca lingua franca a învățământului superior. Acest articol explorează consecințele prezumțiilor teoretice vizând necesitatea de a adapta scenariile educaționale vizavi de apartenența culturală a cursanților, pentru evitarea erorilor de comunicare, a conflictelor identitare și pentru asigurarea unei armonii interculturale în cadrul grupelor tot mai numeroase din cadrul programelor de studiu ale învățământului superior internaționalizat.

Cuvinte cheie: *caracterul internaționalizat al limbii engleze, identitate culturală, comunicare interculturală, design de audiență*

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Introduction

Perhaps most skeptics have overcome their early apprehensions about becoming citizens of a nascent (now, functional) global tribe and the negative scenarios anticipated as to losing one's individual or group (ethnic) identity in the great melange generated by the globalised media, increased professional mobility and intense migration mainly from the 'have not' to the 'have' countries of the world. The process started, in fact, millennia ago, to mention just the translation to conquered lands of critical masses of people for all the political and administrative reasons entailed by colonization in the age of the great empires, so that one should expect that by now mankind were accustomed to it. One would expect the methods to have been refined over the centuries and across geopolitical contexts, so as to no longer render people anxious of the possibly negative social and cultural impact. But while in centuries before the pace was slower and it affected relatively self-contained territories, today its velocity and span have taken on a breath-taking rhythm sucking everyone into the maelstrom that, some fear, will eventually produce a homogeneous newfangled people, language and culture. Such fears are extreme and irrational, and such scenarios are nothing but short of cataclysmic, for there have always been and will be such phenomena as cultural mingling and language shift and contact. Of recent, amongst other things, this has led to the emergence of what has been termed International English. What is International English and its functional uses in classes with students from varied ethnic backgrounds and how teachers need to juggle with cultural sensitiveness and resolve self- and other's (cultural) identity crises even while they are transmitting knowledge and creating or developing professional and linguistic competencies will be the focal concern of our paper.

The International Class and Higher Education

Given that for some time now most educational policies of universities have reoriented towards enrolling and integrating international students, with the ensuing administrative, organizational and curricular actions so designed as to accomplish this goal, universities have gradually become multicultural micro-universes replicating or even foreshadowing new trends in globalisation. Tutors, thus, may have to use English, for instance, rather than their native language during most of the time they spend on the institutional grounds, in lectures, socializing during recess with students or international visiting fellow professors, giving tutorials, or generally guiding students. Such contexts and situations have made it almost mandatory for English to become the main second language for all students

(whether local or international) and tutors. Needless to enumerate the historical factors that have led to the prevalence of English as *the* lingua franca of most universities across Europe today. Let us just say that within the European Higher Education Area, despite the numerous efforts to create a context conducive to language diversity and linguistic dynamism by showcasing their beneficial effects, which in turn could lead to the employment on equal and equalitarian terms of majority and minority languages, of regional and wide circulating languages, across the European educational institutions of all levels, the results have not lived up to the expectations. English is still the main language used in the academic realm and its status as the favourite language for interaction in multi-ethnic contexts is reaching new peaks.

As a staff member of such a university, and given my scientific interests in the area of cultural sociolinguistics, I have encountered many opportunities that have enabled me to observe and form some conclusions grounded on the theory derived hypothesis as to the function of English in identity production and reception in an international higher education milieu and their impact on language use. And while my observations are empirical and interpreted as such rather than quantified analytically and thus giving way to some tentative rather than definite conclusions, they have nevertheless been made with the keen eye of the participant-observer.

With a view to examine how *audience design* (Bell 1984 cf. Joseph 2004:72) comes into effect, since the linguistic performance of teachers and students is dependent on cultural factors and ideologies, a number of aspects were considered to be fairly predictable:

- the international class comes to prove, yet again, that interpretations and definitions of social situations in general, and of contexts in particular, are variable across cultures and languages. For instance, whereas age, power or gender of participants may be relevant in all or many communities, other social attributes of participants – e.g. specific kinship relations – may be more or less relevant in different communities, which, however, does not exclude the existence of universals of context. (Van Dyck 2009:154-155)

- the use of International English (as a variety in itself) by students of varied ethnic backgrounds from regions comprised in the outer circle or the expanding circle, or even the inner circle, for that matter;

- the conscientious linguistic accommodation by the non-English native teacher in response to his/her audience (the afore mentioned students);

- the general fluidity of identities: individuals (in speech) becoming linguistically someone else as one accommodates to the identity one has constructed for one's interlocutor. (Joseph 2004:73)

Less of a certainty might be whether one is at ease making his cultural or ethnic identity relevant in an international class/group/aggregate. Given attitudes to language, general or individual cultural stereotypes, and even one's relationship to language (English) use may influence identity production and reception. The last element should come as no surprise as, apparently, although English has been for some time reigning as *the* lingua franca of business, travel, media, etc., reactions to the world's globalization under the banner of English are conflicting. To some the spread of English is somewhat elitistic since it is mainly diffused through the educational system and thus becomes the property of the affluent. But the spread of English is just as well the product of an almost uncontrolled spread by all kinds of speakers who just wish to use it, under any circumstances. (Schneider 2011:11)

In this sense, international students may have been acting in both of the capacities mentioned above. They are most probably the cohorts of children who not only experienced English formally in school, but have by then already encountered it through varied channels and computer games, TV cartoons with the original sound tracks, advertising, and the media in general. It is common knowledge that more and more school pupils of all ages encounter English in informal contexts outside the class and thus are benefitted in their linguistic competence by non-institutionalized yet, most probably, systematic ways of developing it. They are exposed to more flexible and inventive ways of English within youth subcultures for instance, as shown by (Davies 2005:37), who notes that vocabulary choices and accents are influenced by media personalities such as sports or pop idols.

To complete the picture, it's been ascertained that more people from a wider range of social backgrounds enter higher education so that the once exclusive and pervasive standard/formal/academic English is now permeated by quite an array of accents. (Davies 2005:40) In addition, usage of English across the world has also been affected by seminal changes in social attitudes partaking in the increasing internationalism of English. It would seem that the general belief marks a departure from the parochial notion that 'correct' English is spoken only in England. By expanding, English usage was confronted with the needs of a diverse worldwide audience and has diversified conceptually, functionally and interactionally, while today's world of international travel, global media and communication have contributed to the enhancement of its new features (see the 3 circle model of Braj Kachru² accounting for the changes in English brought about by its global spreading).

² The Three-circle Model of World Englishes developed by Kachru in 1985, one of the most influential models for grouping the varieties of English in the world, describes the spread of English in terms of three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. These circles represent "the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages."

Communicative competence in the international class

The classrooms are fundamental sites for learning, where in addition to acquiring subject matters and the related professional knowledge one also learns how to communicate appropriately and thus broadens one's communicative competence. The traditional university can be a complex social milieu peopled by the main agents in the process of learning: under- and post-graduates students, the teaching staff, the administrative staff and where the human construction is multi-ethnic, the constellation of social and cultural statuses, attitudes and dispositions is, if anything, even more demanding as well as congenial to knowledge transmission and social skills enhancement. Everyone involved needs to establish for themselves, at variance or all at once, their cultural, social or professional position within the group and make the best of both a learning and socializing situation.

It is a matter of scientific interest tracking down the formation and the management of social relations through communication in the multicultural learning environment, as with every group of students some of the procedures are similar, while others can be wholly innovative or in need of *ad hoc* solutions. For instance, in an international class of Media Studies master's programme, one of my native Romanian students confessed that it's been tacitly agreed by the bulk of the local Romanian students to use English in all of their virtual group conversations on school matters, so that the international students can share in the information circulated. Since I have no access to the group, it is impossible to say whether there is code-switching and, if any, what are the elements determining the shifts from one language to another. Thus, while in face-to-face conversations more of the local language may be used, the cyberspace seems to encourage the almost exclusive use of the target language (in this case, English being the linguistic medium for the programme courses). Not only that but, between the two, English is the more conducive to the formation of multiplex networking as there is transaction not only on a professional level but also social bonding and rapport work.

It could be argued that the multicultural classrooms have exceeded the potential of the ethnically linear class as learning environments. In line with the Sociocultural Theory (SCT) – a theory of the mind that recognizes the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artefacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking (Lantolf & Thorne 2006:4) – culture is understood as an objective force that infuses social relationships. Proponents of SCT claim that the historically developed uses of artefacts in concrete activity and culturally constructed meaning is the primary means that humans use to organize and control their mental functioning.

The sense of meaning expressed hereby is not of the referential sort but is comprised of conceptual meanings created by communities of speakers as they carry out goal-directed activity mediated by language. Thus, if learning a new language is more than acquiring new signifiers for already given signifieds – it is acquiring new conceptual knowledge and/or modifying already existing knowledge as a way of remediating one's interactions with the world and with one's own psychological functioning (Lantolf & Thorne 2006:4), one can only fathom the depth and complexity of conceptual acquisition and creativity in a CLIL (language and content integrated) learning context. Indeed, local and European projects have been dedicated to establishing the actual cognitive benefits of learning through the medium of a second/foreign language.

Challenges for the non-native English teacher

While both students and teachers benefit from intercultural learning encounters, it is nonetheless true that such contexts need extra tackling when involving a non-native English teacher in an International class with English as the target language and comprising students of varied ethnicities. In the majority of such cases English is the language of instruction as well as the lingua franca of the group when outside the classroom, thus putting to full use the ideational, transactional and interpersonal functions of the language. This can only compound the possible cultural and linguistic hazards that a teacher (and students) can be facing in the classroom and the proximate social or professional spaces (hallways, cafeterias, administrative offices, etc.).

As professional communicators teachers need to be aware and reflect on the risks of miscommunication arising mainly from failing to interpret the intentions of the *other* and his/her own discourse conventions. And to complicate matters, communication in such classes is usually between a local non-native speaker of English (teacher) and the incoming non-native speaker of English (student). One can only imagine the potential for conflict and misunderstanding in a multicultural social aggregate when members of the same culture may often misread what others are saying. Indeed, longstanding results of interactional sociolinguistic and conversational analytic research indicate the fact that by being socialised into different gender roles men and women acquire different communicative styles which can often result in miscommunication. (Tannen cf. Scollon & Scollon 2001:9) Accordingly, differences between the students and tutors in such classes can be considerable as they have different discourse experiences, backgrounds, and histories. A patchwork takes shape of social,

gender and ethnic juxtapositions that makes it difficult for one to make the 'correct' inferences necessary for precluding miscomprehension. Communication can thus easily become faulty and conflicts can arise that might even compromise the educational goals.

One such sensitive issue is handling the heterogeneous cultural norms for *face* relationships (Scollon & Scollon 2001:23), which is the art of not impinging on someone and at the same time not demeaning oneself by doing so. Politeness, deference, and social distance, or alternately, friendliness, closeness and solidarity can be expressed communicatively and implicitly linguistically in varied ways across cultures, which, contrary to the best of intentions can often lead to misunderstanding and conflict. This is not solely the result of the different interpretive frameworks individuals operate with but also the result of observing and applying different cultural conventions. And while *othering* – the opposite of socialization – may not be the envisaged goal of the communication, it may often be the result of an interactional encounter.

Intergroup discourse – intercultural discourse between different groups – often displays the struggle of resolving possible communication conflicts, as certain combinations of, say, gender and race (e.g. African American women) can be more prone than others to linguistic prejudice and racism. The side effects of more recently developed attitudes such as Eurocentrism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism are not only reproduced in discourse *with* and/or *about* the others (van Dyck 1997:145) but can very well be mirrored by classroom language use. According to van Dyck (1997:147-148), the study of discourse and communication between groups that are defined in terms of their ethnic or cultural specificities and differences, needs also to consider the fundamental contextualizing framework of societal structures, power and dominance. Sometimes ethnic clusters can form within the international classes – power vectors can be influenced by these, and they might or might not replicate the dominance-resistance ratio that holds across Europe. In such contexts, locating oneself within a multicultural context through language becomes a seminal concern and a deliberate act of construing identity and negotiating status.

Cultural differences that give rise to communication conflicts are not merely discursive, but may also have to do with different contextual matters. Van Dyck (1997:147) states that it is mandatory to look beyond the text and context in the study of intercultural conflict or harmony, to aspects such as cultural knowledge, attitudes and ideologies, norms and values, power relations, the setting and other properties of the social situation that are relevant for the appropriate accomplishment of discourse as social practice.

Performing identity in the international class

Defining oneself as similar to some but different from others is a matter of constructing and negotiating identity. The effort put into the production and reception of linguistic identity, even if unconscious some of it, can be painstaking in at times, for some have diagnosed our times of unprecedented cultural and ethnic diversity with a pandemic crisis in identity. And since new language contact phenomena and developments are occurring due to massive demographic shifts and cultural and professional migration at an unprecedented pace, the traditional theoretical framework for studying identity needs reconsidering. Thus, such parameters as were taken for granted: gender, ethnicity, social class, after having been shown to be communicatively produced (Gumperz, Dell Hymes cf. Joseph 2004:78), a definite breakthrough was made when identity itself was perceived and declared fundamentally fluid. (Le Page cf. Joseph 2004:79) Every individual possesses a linguistic repertoire of choices s/he can tap into for identity construction, as deemed adequate for the situation or beneficial to the speaker *and* his/her interlocutor. Rather than displaying a definite, immutable idiolect, individuals are linguistically flexible and just as identity may oscillate contextually so will the language employed fluctuate although it will preserve some in-depth idiosyncrasies.

The conception of identity as fluid has turned the tables on identity as something fixed, paralleled by the claim that identities are continuously being construed in interaction. Thus, if early research on linguistic identity signalled social class as the main parameter that correlated with patterns in linguistic usage and that consequently one could make fairly good predictions and assumptions about the particular linguistic variants an individual would use (Labov, Trudgill), it was later noted that, in practice, the social networks the individual was a member of more or less determined the use of language with the context of the interaction being essential. Then the concept of community of practice (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992 cf. Joseph 2004:65) was introduced as the main factor of influence on language use: the aggregate of people coalescing around a mutual engagement in an endeavour, share norms, underlying ideologies and normative beliefs, which eventually shape language use. Still later, through psychological observations the fact was pointed out that we form relationships with others based on our instinctive judgments in turn based on how they use language. (Lambert tradition cf. Joseph 2004:71) Moreover, it would seem that our own way of speaking to that someone we form judgments about may change in response to the judgments. Hence the accommodation theory (Giles cf. Joseph 2004:72) – the speaker is not a given, nor a constant but is constructed in interactions with his/er interlocutors.

Within the international class there may also occur a small scale identity crisis affecting the student aggregation with a direct impact on their linguistic behaviour within their emerging community of practice. Linguistic performance of identity in the international class is likely to reflect an array of attitudes to language (considering some language varieties to be more prestigious than others, holding some in esteem while demeaning others), some of which are universally held while others are the result of home context-bound biases. Under the circumstances, negotiating one's situated identity³ displays a whole new set of cultural dimensions, which in turn may inbreed linguistic and social classroom conventions, many of which may be neutral in unmarked contexts. Thus, the communicative activities of the classroom and their resources, the particular participants and their histories, and the very process by which the participants conjointly use the resources to accomplish their lives as members of their classrooms or other learning contexts, become the fundamental element of analysis. (Hall 2002:64) This goes on to justify a furthering of research on language learning from this perspective, to gain an understanding of the conditions by which language learners' involvement in various constellations of their classroom communication practices is shaped, and of how such involvements affect in time the development of their social and psychological identities both as learners and users of language. (Idem)

Indeed, just as important as understanding how identities are formed is understanding why they are formed. With apparently little theorization of the various purposes for which such identity work is accomplished, most of it has been carried out within sociolinguistics and related fields, where several different but overlapping models of identity have been developed, which, however, do not completely address the issues of culture, power, and agency. (Bucholtz and Hall in Duranti 2004:382) If language use can be shaped by language attitudes, then the assumptions about the use of English, or the kind of English used, are, too, closely connected with beliefs about power and status⁴, which explains why English as the target language in the international class needs to be taken a closer look at.

³ *Discourse* identities are the ones assumed by participants in the varied sequences of an interaction: current speaker, listener, questioner, answerer, etc. The *transportable* identities are the ones that the individuals carry along across all interactional situations, they are usually visible and identifiable based on shared understandings. The *situated* identities, point at how one creates an identity for oneself that is relevant, to which the interlocutors orient, and whose force is manifested by its consequentiality in the interaction. (Zimmermann, D., 1998:90-91)

⁴ Davies remarked that attitudes towards the status of British and American English in postcolonial and multilingual cultures can be complex and unpredictable. The development of new Englishes, x-isation speakers and writers in the Outer Circle challenge the traditional supremacy of the Inner Circle standard Englishes.

International English versus English as a second language

The numerous aspects that should be carefully considered by the non-native teacher in an international class pertain to matters cultural, pedagogical and sociopsychological as they all have a direct bearing on the general classroom atmosphere. Yet most assuredly the linguistic aspect ranks high among the composite characteristics of the international class.

It is axiomatic that prior to their enrolling in universities abroad international students have been educated in more or less different languages, and in most cases it is the mother tongue and English as a second or foreign language. Where English is concerned, we have to take into consideration these students' English is most likely to be International English bearing specific features through contact with their mother tongue. Naturally, as mentioned before, this poses all the more challenge to the teacher who is a non-native English speaker herself.

And to complicate matters even more, there is the aspect of English as a lingua franca – international variety versus English as L2 varieties, marking, if need be, the general fragmentation of the language. On the one hand, the variety branded International English has evolved to fulfil specific international functions in different parts of the world, so that large numbers of people across the world need to learn EIL even if they already speak a local variety of English. (Davies 2005: 143) On the other hand, according to Davies, distinctive nativised or hybrid varieties of English have also developed and are routinely used by educated people in their own regional and cultural context, as English in the Outer Circle has undergone transformations expressing postcolonial identities.

English in the Expanding Circle is also taking big strides – English is absorbed into some other languages at a phenomenal rate, bringing about changes both in the languages concerned and in the sociolinguistic and cultural contexts in which they are spoken. (Davies 2005:57) Moreover, in many countries of the Expanding Circle, the status of English is shifting – in Sweden, the Arab Emirates, Argentina, etc. English is used as a medium of communication within the country as well as for international communication, so that it is more like a second language than a foreign language to them. (Davies 2005:141) In my own Media Studies class of students there were members of the Outer and Expanding Circles: one Nigerian female student, one Dutch male student and one German female student, with the bulk consisting in local Romanian majority and Hungarian minority students. Given that the rate of course attendance was rather poor and inconsistent, there was too small an amount of quantitative interaction for me to be able to verify the feature consistencies of the varieties of English used in

class or in the interstices. The few and far in-between virtual conversations, and that exclusively through emails, did not supplement essentially the volume of language display necessary for definite conclusions. Thus, considering that our lecture encounters were part of the 3rd semester curricular activities of a two-year master's degree programme, and that the students by then were nearing the end of their courses, and the fact that an overall assessment of their language use and behaviours identified few, if singular, visible linguistic materialisation of efforts at audience design and at building a culturally situated identity (throughout our course encounters the students performed the incipient linguistic identities they displayed when embarking on the course) it is difficult, or rather impossible, to verify the theoretical assumptions enumerated and/or the conclusions already reached and published by other researchers.

Conclusions

The international class is a locus for immersion and local students to be linguistically creative and to fashion for themselves identities that are appropriate in the context and advantageous status-wise. While equally so for the teachers involved, the latter are additionally confronted with some extra linguistic, sociopsychological and cultural challenges posed by the educational management of multi-ethnic groups of learners. As professional communicators, lecturers in international classes have to be culture-sensitive enough in order to command audience design, to avoid miscommunication and misinterpretation, to be aware and act upon the existence of differences, as well as similarities, in discourse conventions so as to manage inter-group discourse confidently and to ensure valid content knowledge acquisition.

Identity production and reception with international students is rather more complex today than a few decades ago. Given the increasing phenomena of language shift and contact and the accelerated spread of English across the globe as generated by massive demographic movement, globalised media, world travel and rapidly developing internet technology, English as the lingua franca of the majority of the higher institutions organising international educational programmes needs to be re-scrutinized. We now have such distinct varieties as International English, English as a second language and English as a foreign language – that is, several Englishes – to differentiate between in order to be the efficient and the accomplished lecturers that can successfully perform quality educational acts in the international class.

Building rapport and professional competencies with local and immersion students in an international class necessitates refined pedagogical approaches, superior sociolinguistic command of the target language and intercultural competence, so that one can tune into the range of linguistic identity dispositions, placate possibly negative language attitudes, sense incipient cultural antagonism, all of which can lead to miscommunication and even failure of the main educational goal.

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CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN EUROPEAN ADVERTISING: ADDRESSING IDENTITY THROUGH THE “MADE-IN” EFFECT

MUDURE-IACOB IOANA¹

ABSTRACT. *Cultural Communication in European Advertising: Addressing Identity through the “Made-In” Effect.* Nowadays expansion of advertising in European markets is primarily a matter of economic development and a proof of market heterogeneity. Even if the European space consists of a common identity, the communication process is hardly a homogeneous entity. In this respect, the paper will analyze the framework of advertising representation towards European customers and the premises that allow a cultural discourse to cover distinct values and norms. Having decided upon the framework of reference, it is salient to discuss the relevance of the “made-in effect” that producer countries instill when advertising products in European markets.

Key words: *advertising, communication, made-in effect, multiculturalism, identity, discourse*

REZUMAT. *Comunicarea culturală în publicitatea europeană: adresarea identitară prin efectul “made-in”.* Expansiunea publicității pe piețele europene reprezintă în primul rând un aspect de dezvoltare economică și o dovadă a eterogenității de piață. Chiar dacă spațiul european are o identitate specifică, procesul de comunicare nu poate fi o entitate omogenă. În acest sens, lucrarea va analiza contextul reprezentării prin publicitate a consumatorilor europeni, respectiv premisele care permit existența unui discurs cultural menit să acopere anumite valori și norme. În baza acestui context de referință, este importantă relevanța efectului “made-in” pe care țările producătoare mizează în promovarea produselor pe piața europeană.

Cuvinte cheie: *publicitate, comunicare, efectul made-in, multiculturalism, identitate, discurs.*

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Knowing how to address consumers in the European market is a prerequisite for both building of the discourse and for the direction in which advertising can be oriented. Furthermore, the analysis of “made in” effect that producer countries build and consumer countries experience is mandatory in the understanding of how cultural and national images are built within the advertising realm. In order to build the sphere of reference for a European market it is necessary to establish the direction in which advertising communication is oriented: either towards a common, nearly uniform market by use of European standardized media channels, or towards a fragmented market, by use of customized channels. Having decided upon the framework of reference, it is important to discuss the relevance of the “made-in effect” that producer countries instill when advertising their products to European markets. Likewise, the subliminal cultural messages will show how the authority of European advertising is questioned when confronting national identities with market trends. Eventually, the focus will shift towards the building of a European cultural identity using as tools frequent and stereotypical values in advertising.

Addressing as Europeans versus addressing as local: the internationalization of European advertising

Considering the possibility of addressing the consumer either through standardized or through multicultural advertising, and assuming that the European market is a very complex and problematic one, the subsequent question would be: how can advertising communicate effectively, in the European context, without omitting the local color and without disconsidering the profile of a unified market that shares common rules and regulations? Moreover, since the process of Europeanization² has a deep implication both at cultural and economic level, how can media channels and media content information be molded so as to fit a desired

² Europeanization can be understood as an umbrella term for a series of social and economic changes that have been adopted within European boundaries, more precisely by and for the states of the European Union, in view of establishing the guidelines for a continental identity and polity. Among the first attempts to define the term there is Ladrech’s conceptualization (1994, p. 69), which refers to Europeanization as ‘an incremental process of re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the extent that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy making.’ Adapting the Europeanization frame to the domain of marketing and advertising there is an ambivalent direction: on the one hand, there is the continental attempt to instill a “united in diversity” identity by forging campaigns and issuing regulations that support a mutual understanding and participation and, on the other hand, there is the profile of each member state who is responsible with adapting its local culture and identity to the larger European construct, while using European channels of media addressing to the European market.

and proficient pattern of advertising? The prerequisite to answering these questions stands in elaborating on the pan-European framework in advertising and, more importantly, in discussing the implications that such a continental phenomenon has upon national cultures and their customers. To do so, the leading premise will be that pan-Europeanism is responsible for creating the "Europe without frontiers" creed, but it is also held responsible for mishandling of a joint advertising discourse.

Firstly, the pan-national background that Europe provides was designed to respond to multicultural interactions and to cater for representation needs of the member states of the European Union (EU). If initially pan-Europeanism aimed at establishing a sense of common identity, recent movements in the economic field and expansion of markets have led to a stringent need for addressing the domain of advertising. The dilemma that appears at this point refers to the profile of the addressee of advertising discourse: should European advertising have in view multicultural traits of its varied consumers or should the discourse search for an uniformisation of its target audience?

This phenomenon becomes problematic, to say the least, when applied to advertising, because the public sphere cannot be imagined as a compact construct. Indeed, the Europeanization of media "has the potential of creating its own public sphere, outside and potentially against the domain of the nation state" (Holmes 2005, 143), however, without being able to build an essence for national cultures. Having the pragmatic scope of convincing consumers to buy goods and services, media advertising can hardly furnish a basis for a common platform of identity. Furthermore, even though advertising can be distributed through multiple media channels, the necessity to address the discourse in a European framework reduces the choice drastically. Namely, only specific media channels are suitable for the European advertising implementation- those who respond to pattern molding and that have extended access to population.

The construction of the European advertising framework cannot exist without the "Europe without frontiers" and MEDIA programs³, whose responsibility was to set legal grounds and provisions for the broadcasting movement within the continent's boundaries. With television being both the most widespread and the most efficient media channel, the next step was to adapt advertising to such

³ Both represent support programmes for the audiovisual industry in Europe designed to create an effective single market for audiovisual media and to set regulations that controls and monitors the advertising and media programs in member states of European Union. In this context, the most important measure taken in the direction of advertising was the "Television without Frontiers Directive" (1989), whose aim was to ensure free broadcasting movement throughout the continent. Needless to say, this led to a boom epoch of the advertisement proliferation and continental distribution, and a thorough informative campaign for the European population.

television broadcast channels so as to fit the tastes of the newly enlarged customer base. Nevertheless, this came with strings attached: the targeted audience that televisions had in view were not the same target groups that advertising required, due to differences by interest, culture or lifestyle and even by differentiation in interest groups (such as the public of MTV, Eurosport) or age group (Jetix, Nickledon for children).

Consequently, European advertising is forced to respond to specific niche markets, and employ themed media channels so as to ensure a proper display of messages. "The notion and definition of Europe as a broadcasting space implies some sense of shared identity within that space. Thus, many of the newer pan-European channels assume such a bond, no matter how tenuous, between the countries to which they broadcast. However, to what extent can they take 'common knowledge' for granted – the kind of knowledge acquired through media and market as well as other types of socialization, and based on inter textual and linguistic foundations?" (Holmes 2005, 148) The problem of "shared knowledge" is critical for European advertising, because it plays with both local variables and European identity.

While trying to bond the member states as potential advertising customers, the main and perhaps unique solution to the need for a universal discourse is at linguistic level. Europe's multiculturalism and multi linguism sets a fragmented market for advertising, which must choose a link language so as to ensure proper reference. Obviously, English remained the canonical choice of link language in such a way as most advertisements displayed on European broadcast channels used English exclusively in the beginning. Later on, after the "Television without Frontiers Directive" was thoroughly implemented, the policy of "big languages"- French, German, and Italian- also seemed a promising choice, and soon enough media transformed into a multilingual channel. Euronews, for instance, is, in this respect, a relevant case: their broadcast was made in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish, so that the viewers could have a sense of identity in their preference for news media.

More importantly, this was the emergence of what Helen Kelly Holmes names "regional European clusters", namely, specific consumer groups for whom the advertising and media organization considers criteria of culture, socio-economic conditions and symbolic values. "The future cultural-communicative context of pan-European market discourses may in fact consist not of a giant homogenized market, but of regional Euro-clusters within which advertisers will share similar economic demographic and/or lifestyle characteristics which cut across cultural and national boundaries". (Holmes 2005, 151) Dealing with regional clusters requires a shift away from standardized advertising, since applying the same strategy to

culturally and economically distinct structures is doomed to fail. Thus, the shift that European advertising can benefit from has a single possibility: the proper management of media channel in the European framework.

Even though the "Europe without frontiers" program aims at allowing a free structure of broadcasting among member states, there is also a subliminal message to the legislative framework. Namely, by liberalization of media channel markets, advertisers can enjoy a basically unlimited market to refer to: the customer base enlarged to all states that have access to a specific media channel. Consequently, television and advertising become "cultural agents for creating a collective European consciousness and instruments for reinforcing European values." (Shore and Wright 1997, 140)

Likewise, advertising functions at the level of ideas and images in the European space, which means that very often advertisements are confronted with nation-state ideologies. Given the status of television as an instrument for nation-building- due to its national timeline distribution, to the local media content and to the various regional displays- the nature of European advertising in relation to national television channels was initially under close scrutiny. Viewing commercials for products that were not yet in range for all the customer base was considered a proof of unreal marketing, because the availability of the advertised subjects was not reached. However, with the European Union expansion, all this commercial movement and tourist mutation was made possible, which resulted into an increase in the advertising industry. Moreover, to maintain European advertising at a high stake, it was necessary to build "supernational institutions" and to add European cultural value to the national and local media channels. Such a supranational institution was in fact an adaptation of the Television channels that broadcasted using several European languages- Euronews, Eurosport, MTV- whose success resided in penetrating local markets through the display of advertisements that broke language barriers.

In the aftermath of the communist block fragmentation, European advertising gained a rather homogeneous and blinded virgin market, which had little if no previous contact with motors of commercial information. Consequently, in the 1990s the marketing trend was directed towards a *synchronization of advertising* so as "to fit the all-European media, and take advantage of new border-crossing tourists, readers and viewers. Advertising will gain by going all-European." (Elinder 1995, 3) Whether this synchronization means the use of standardized brand names throughout all customer countries, or the use of link languages for all advertisements, or, even more, the dubbed translation of commercials in all languages of target customer base, the result is inevitable: Europe has opened its gate to all communities by means of advertising its union products and by encouraging continental development.

Simultaneously with this success, European advertising was also presented with a new typology of customer: the European consumer, whose reference dimensions were no longer of single national character. Instead, advertisements must approach its public by taking into consideration a series of factors: trends in consumption from various regions of Europe, differences in product perception, acceptance of uniformity pattern and distribution means. All these elements make advertising in Europe a serious and difficult business industry, in which audience differences matter most. However, nowadays European legislation aims at correlating to a high degree the trends in local advertising industry with the larger campaigns produced at continental level, an example of this measure being the public awareness campaigns broadcasted in all the European Union space.

Apart from the aspect of the European customer typology there is another stringent aspect to be discussed: the concept of "single market", which is a misleading term applied to the European frame. The fact that the members states of the EU adhere to common economic and social trends does not necessarily mean that their population constitutes a uniform and homogeneous market. On the contrary, "the reason why demand for many products varies across the European community is mainly because of differences in preferences, habits, language, culture, climate and incomes." (McLauchlin 1993, 3) This inevitably calls for regional communication strategies, because what matters is the proper choice of a message to convey to the European customers.

In this respect there are two main variables to take into account when building the advertising message for the public. On the one hand, how standardized does the message or the theme have to be so as to influence a larger public? "By emphasizing a broad-based message throughout the continent, with simultaneous country-specific messages about their products, companies who advertise believe they can be successful. This strategy uses the cost advantages of a single theme while coping with the reality that difference between countries will remain." (McLauchlin 1993, 6) Consequently, the best solution would be to convey a continentally valid message and slightly adapt it in terms of cultural appreciation and regional demand.

On the other hand, the European advertising message is highly dependent on the language differences across countries, which don't share the same language, and, quite often, don't even speak a link language. Needless to say, translation is not always a valid choice because it can lead to unfortunate failures of communication and can pervert the desired message. To note a few such cases, one can refer to the British company Braniff's translation of a slogan touting its upholstery, "Fly in Leather," which translated in Spanish as "Fly Naked", a hilarious slogan for any product, which failed to catch the public's interest. Likewise, Coors put its slogan, "Turn It Loose," into Spanish, where it was read as "Suffer

from Diarrhea", again a failure of communicating the product's uses. Thirdly, the case of Clairol, which translated the "Mist Stick," a curling iron, into German only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure. Even though these ended up as humorous advertisement, the failure of advertising communication cannot be neglected in a context where multilingualism is still dictating the rules of advertising games.

Not only is the aspect of standardization of advertising debatable, but the context of multiculturalism and legal uniformization imposes new reference standards. To internationalize European advertising means simultaneously two things: to address a standardized but multilingual discourse to a heterogeneous market built up of all nations within EU and to redirect local advertising produced by member states so as to fit the larger European standards and to engage other customers in the economic development. Achieving success in both directions would constitute undeniable success and will guarantee that cultural communication is fairly realized through the vehicle of advertising.

The "made-in effect" - how culture undermines advertising's authority in communicating the national identity

The dimension of advertising in the European framework involves more than the aspect of shaping the message so as to address the large public and cover multiculturalism and the standardization of commercial communication. Given that the subject of analysis is how advertising communicates in Europe, special emphasis must be placed on the "country of origin" or the "made in" effect. The theoretical provisions for these concepts have been extensively treated by literature even from the 1970s, when the subject first entered the sphere of interest and today, the "made in" effect is the object of intensive debate for promoters of Europeanization of advertising.

In order to understand whether the "country of origin" undermines, or, by contrast, supports advertising's authority, it is salient to draw some baselines for the conceptual framework of the term. By and large the "made in" effect refers to the influence that the country of production exerts upon the advertising process, on the one hand, and to the reactions and acceptance of the respective products by members of other countries. Applying the term to countries in the European space further expands the meaning of the concept, because there is also an attached European label to the "made in" effect. This means that advertising a European product/service involves a substratum of disseminating the image of the producer countries to countries that may have specific stereotypical attitudes towards the producer.

The effect created by the “made in” label is in fact a tripartite construction that actions at “cognitive, affective and normative level” (Cannon and Odber 2012, 12) due to the fact that advertising effects are always filtered by demographic and psychographic factors. Firstly, the *cognitive effect* is, in its turn, divided in two components: the halo effect and the summary one. “The halo affects consumers’ beliefs about product attributes and indirectly affects over all evaluation of products through those beliefs” (Cannon and Odber 2012, 19). This happens because of the trajectory that advertising takes: from announcing the country of origin to building the message and transmitting it to the customer base, who, in turn, filters the information through beliefs and arrives at enforcing, or, by contrast, rejecting the brand. In the case of the summary effect the trajectory is somehow diverted, as the building of the effect starts from the beliefs system upon which advertising creates the message, and transmits by use of country image in order to build the brand identity.

Secondly, the implications of the “made in” effect expand to the psychological level, through the *affective stage*, in which “beliefs and attitudes are prime factors that shape advertising and that control the consumer’s reaction to advertisements.” (Erickson, Johansson and Chao 1984, 698) For instance, when advertising products made in China, the first and common reaction is to associate the product with low quality and cheap materials, whereas products made in UK bring forth a trustworthy attitude. Thirdly, there is also a *normative effect*, a rather recent theoretical addition, which focuses on consumer ethnocentrism and the external/internal forces that shape his/her reactions to advertising. This is essential for the analysis of “made in” advertising effect because of the nature of consumers’ attitude towards other regional clusters. Namely, consumer ethnocentrism refers to “ethnocentric views held by consumers in one country, the in-group, towards products from another country, the out-group” (Shimp and Sharma 1987, 285). Such a rejection attitude towards the products that are made in other countries than those of customers’ origin comes from belief that by purchasing foreign products the national economy is hurt.

The three levels at which “country of origin” effects function are proof that consumers accept advertisements only after filtering them through their cultural, personal or ideological frames, among which is the attitude towards other countries. The “made in” effect “influences beliefs of consumers on appropriateness and morality of buying products made abroad” (Cannon and Odber 2012, 15) by building a solid reference system in their commercial behavior. In this respect, it is interesting to note that some countries react better to advertisements of foreign products as compared to their perception of national production. A case to support this theory is Romania, whose expenditure on foreign products exceeds by far the internal consumption, even for the products that are known to be manufactured in Romania- namely, clothes, fruit and vegetables.

On the other hand, several countries resort to intensive advertising for their own national products, especially in time of crisis or economic depression. Such countries, France, Germany, Spain or Norway, also have the advantage of having a very strong nationalistic spirit and, generally, the campaigns for own products promotion work efficiently. In these cases, the "home made" effect is a strong impulse in strengthening the national identity. At a third level, the "made in" effect can be equated to the "made in Europe" label, which expands the production of goods to a continental entity and aims at constructing a common European identity. In this situation, the image that advertising sends is that of a joint entity, and, consequently, the value of "country of origin" effect is diminished.

Furthermore, European advertising poses another significant dilemma in terms of identity recognition for "country of origin" effect, namely, the *supranationality* and the *subnationality* identities. This fragmentation applies to countries whose socio-cultural background determined the occurrence of noteworthy minority groups and specific regional identities which demand private recognition. Perhaps the most significant example is Spain and Catalonia, where the desire for regional division is obvious and accounted for. The "nacionalidades historicas" cannot be therefore unified in a common national identity, because a Catalanian will always stick to his regional identity, rather than adopt the larger Spanish denomination. Consequently, the "made in Spain" effect becomes further fragmented: one must consider the impact of advertising Spanish products both for the Spanish customers and for the Catalanian ones, who cling to their private identity and have a "lack of will to develop a national image." (Cannon and Odber 2012, 29).

Similarly, a larger understanding of supranationality occurs when conceptualizing advertising for products, and especially services in the Mediterranean region. Marketing the sun, sea, and sand trio is perceived as a landmark for the entire Mediterranean locus, but what happens when the object of advertising is only one country located in the Mediterranean space? The whole idea of applying subnational and supranational identities in the advertisements of the "made in" culture is to use icons and cultural associations that surpass boundaries. This way, one can avoid the consumer ethnocentrism, because customers will report to the advertised products in terms of associations and similarities with their own cultures. Moreover, these entities of identification become prolific marketing tools in the building of the larger "made in Europe" construct, where networking must be an all-encompassing framework.

Having discussed the significance and the direct impact of "country of origin" effect, a new premise must be introduced: what is its use and how it can serve the interest of advertising. The "made in" of a product/service is efficient for

advertising in the sense that it can serve as a stereotype surrogate for “other product attributes for individuals unfamiliar with it or the product category” (Peterson and Jolibert 1995, 885). In other words, “country of origin” serves at replacing other attributes that consumers use when applying the advertising information and purchasing a product. The amount of information is hereby reduced because the label “made in” already gives cues about the quality, standard and trend of the manufactured products, helping advertising in the strengthening of the country’s identity.

In addition, the “made in” has a serious impact upon consumers’ response to “products exported from another country; designed in one country yet manufactured in another; manufactured in more than one location; and manufactured in one country but branded in another.” (Roth and Romeo 1992, 491) Advertising for products that have such a trajectory is always a difficult process, because the implications resort to several factors and entities to be represented in the campaign. The dimensions of the country image play an essential role in this context, because they allow a clarification of why certain product categories are preferred from one country and not another. Country image can be thought of as “the overall perception consumers’ form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country’s production and marketing strengths and weaknesses.” (Roth and Romeo 1992, 483)

The country image that the “made in” advertising transmits, therefore, investigates a more direct passage of information. However, if the producer country has a negative image in the eyes of the consumers, advertising loses its power of influence. In Europe the superior or inferior position that some member states hold defines the success or failure of advertising: French and British advertisements for their own products are commonly the result of a trustworthy attitude on behalf of the targeted market, be that Western Europe or its Eastern side. Nevertheless, this doesn’t apply to Russian advertising, which “must reduce its targeted audience to the former Soviet countries, since the Western perception of Russian production is still under scrutiny” (Johansson, Ronkainen and Czinkota 1994, 179).

All in all, when referring to the influence of the “country of origin” upon European advertising a major baseline would be that the “made in” label has a dual impact on product advertising evaluations. On the one hand, by its acting as informational cue, the effect replaces additional information that advertising commonly has to provide consumer with and functions as stereotypical agent. Obviously, this does not necessarily mean that “country of origin” is helping advertising, but rather, it translates as a subordination relation, where perceptions and beliefs cannot be shaken even by the most original ad. On the other hand, by its acting as source variable, the “made in” effect moderates the impact of

ads on product evaluations. Consequently, a triangle is forged between "country of origin", customers' stereotypical frame of reference and ad representation, making the process of advertising a highly dependable one.

Eventually, advertising communicates by use of its meanings and codes, which convey a plethora of messages from economy towards culture and vice versa. In trying to regard advertising as a hybrid between culture and economy, there cannot be any pre-established direction: advertising is in as much a direct product of economy activity as it is a consequence of the cultural forces. In the eyes of consumers this reads as follows: individuals, who aim at displaying their social status, can only resort to the advertising consumerism frenzy so that they can locate themselves in a global society.

Such a global village is extremely biased however, because it imposes a specific role to advertising. Namely, the scope is a dual opposition: it aims at a global economic accomplishment of consumption patterns and it addresses the messages in a polyglot discourse. Nevertheless, the result of these advertising strategies is highly dependent on a few other elements, such as the distinction between local and international identity, the "made-in" effect over advertising and, not less importantly, the building of symbol cues in the advertising context.

Furthermore, the molding of advertising communication requires elaborate procedures of mingling between the economic and the cultural, but also between the local and the international. The debate here goes further than establishing which type of advertising- standardized or adapted- applied to the European space, but rather how the customer base should be regarded from these two perspectives. Hence, the internationalization of European advertising is also a bilateral process that wants to address a standardized (but multilingual) discourse to a heterogeneous market and to redirect local advertising (produced by states) towards a European pattern.

The relevance of the "made in" effect upon European advertising leads to the conclusion that "country of origin" labels induce double impacts the evaluation of on product advertising. At the pole of informational function, this effect has the advantage that it provides consumer with additional and reassuring information, even though it can also give birth to subordinated relations between countries. At the other pole, the "made in" effect moderates the impact of ads and reduces therefore the wrongly assumed authority of advertising. Additionally, the problem of "values" requires that advertising recognizes consumers' identity and forges a bridge between the advertised product and the highest level of social values. Whether the bridge has a foundation of "country of origin" cues, "local" European color or value communication, the viable conclusion remains that cultural communication is consolidated upon the process of advertising.

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ELEMENTS OF PRAGMATICS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT. *Elements of Pragmatics in Political Discourse.* Politics is about “language in context.” Put simply, there could be no political discourse outside a political context and without the support of language. Seen from this perspective, pragmatics plays a decisive role in the process of political communication. Still, the most interesting part is to detect these elements of pragmatics in political discourse and to analyse if they are used properly, that is, in accordance with pragmatic laws. Of course, the speaker may be or may not be aware of all these pragmatic rules, most of them “squeezed” into discourse at the well-nigh intuitive level of common-sense, but if we detect that they are broken too often, we might talk about cases of linguistic manipulation.

Keywords: *pragmatics, political discourse, language in context, speech-acts, cooperative principles, legitimating function.*

REZUMAT. *Elemente de pragmatică în discursul politic.* Politica funcționează prin limbaj în context, spus simplu, nu ar fi posibilă existența discursului politic în afara contextului specific al acestuia și fără suportul instrumental al limbajului. Din această perspectivă, pragmatica joacă un rol decisiv în procesul de comunicare politică. Partea cea mai interesantă în această poziționare este aceea de a detecta aceste elemente pragmatice din discursul politic și de a analiza dacă sunt folosite corespunzător, mai precis în concordanță cu legile pragmaticii. Bineînțeles, vorbitorul poate fi conștient sau nu de aceste reguli pragmatice, majoritatea apărând în discurs la un nivel natural, aproape intuitiv al vorbitorului, însă dacă se detectează încălcarea acestora cu o frecvență sporită, poate fi vorba de instanțe de manipulare lingvistică.

Cuvinte cheie: *pragmatică, discurs politic, limbaj în context, acte de vorbire, principiul de cooperare, funcție de legitimizare.*

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Elements of Pragmatics and Their Position within Political Discourse

Politics is about “language in context.” Put simply, there could be no political discourse outside a political context and without the support of language. Seen from this perspective, pragmatics plays a decisive role in the process of political communication. An attempt to define pragmatics, on the other hand, is not that easy. It is about “language in context” as well, but the status of pragmatic theory is not clear: “Of course, this situation is to be expected when we recognise how many disciplines are directly or indirectly engaged in the study of <language in context>, as we intuitively may characterise the domain of pragmatics” (Teun van Dijk; 1981: 27) From this point of view, the “concept definition” assumed in the present article will be that of “language in action.” More specifically, the communicative motivations for the selection of linguistic forms, as “language is inseparable from other aspects of our life and the selection of linguistic form should be explained in terms of authentic human communicative needs (i.e. social, interactional, cognitive, affective needs). This position is compatible with and inspired by insights from a number of different sources, including anthropology, cognitive science, functional linguistics, psycholinguistics, philology and sociology” (Weiyun He: 2003).

The dominating pragmatic features in political discourse include the following:

- **Context:** the correlation between the political context and the linguistic context – as linguistic choices are not made arbitrarily but, rather, are systematically motivated by contextual factors (*ibid.*), in the case of political discourse there appear to be two types² of factors combined in the SPEAKING³ acronym (Hymes: 1974): Situation (setting, scene), Participants (addressor and addressee), Ends (goals and outcomes), Act sequence (message form and message content), Key (tone, manner), Instrumentalities (channel, form of speech), Norms (norms of interaction and norms of interpretation), and Genres (text types).

- **Rhetorical goal:** rhetorical structures of information

- **Speech Act:** Speech Act Theory (Austin 1962, Searle 1969, 1979) in the acceptance that language is used not only to describe things but to do things as well

A) Make political requests (*directives*)

² Linguistic factors and political factors.

³ An influential model to describe context: the range of parameters that have to be taken into consideration when characterising context.

- B) Political promises (*commissives*)
- C) Political apologies (*expressives*)
- D) Political declarations (*declaratives*)
- E) Political truth claims (*representatives*)

F) *Felicity conditions*: utterances cannot be assessed in relation to truth and falsity, but in relation to the necessary and sufficient conditions for their accomplishment: “politically relevant speech acts may include complex conditions such as the power or status of the speaker, the institutional location, the holding of an election, and the style of language used” (Chilton: 2004)

G) *Level of utterances*: the literary level (*locutionary act*), the implied level (*illocutionary act*), and the consequences of the implied level (*perlocutionary act*)

• **The Co-operative Principle**: The Gricean Paradigm postulates the assumption that human rationality incorporates an *a priori* commitment to being co-operative in communication. The truisms: Maxim of Quality, Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Relevance and the Maxim of Manner

Maxim of Quality: “Seek to say that which you know to be true and, do not say that which you know to be false, or for which you lack adequate evidence” – in political discourse, this Maxim is often broken due to the fact that language, in this instance, is used to defend a “political face,” it carries ideological connotations and the concept of “false facts” becomes relative.

Maxim of Quantity: “Make your contribution as informative as, and no more informative than, is required for the purposes of the ongoing discourse” – often broken in circumstances such as “modular speeches,” or persuasion techniques, where rhetorical elements adorn political discourse to ensure the public adhesion.

Maxim of Relevance: “Be relevant” – most of the time broken because one of the most important aspects of political discourse is to legitimate a political group in order to access power and being relevant does not ensure gaining power; on the contrary, it might cause “adhesion damage.”

Maxim of Manner: “Make your contribution clear, and intelligible, brief, orderly, and not ambiguous” – broken because political discourse stakes on the prevalence of ambiguity, it is never “brief” (brief discourse lacks in persuasion), rarely “clear” (clear things do not need arguments, and political discourse is built on “manufactured” political argumentation).

- **Scripts and plans:** how the utterances will be processed in the head of the listener
 - **Referentiality:** how entities are referred to in utterances
 - **Topicality and thematicity:** the ways in which information is presented
 - **Sequential organisation:** the selection and interpretation of linguistic forms in a given utterance have a lot to do with the *sequential context* of the utterance (Weiyun He: 2003)
 - **Linguistic resources for Doing and Being:** especially how *institutional, professional activities* are carried out linguistically (roles and identities) (Weiyun He: 2003).

Pragmatics: Language as Action

In the case of political discourse, language is action because “neither conversational dialogue nor speech acts occur without the participants being assigned particular speaking and hearing roles which may involve a social and political ‘role’, or ‘place’, or ‘position’, in a broader sense. You may be ‘positioned’ as someone who speaks, gives orders, gives advice, or gives the ‘facts’; or you may be ‘positioned’ as someone who listens, takes orders, takes advice, or accepts the ‘facts’. Analysts of political discourse frequently find that pronouns and the meanings associated with them, give a kind of map of the socio-political relationships implicit in a discourse” (Chilton and Schaffner, 2002). So, the notion of speech acts is central to political discourse analysis, because it proves that language and action cannot be separated and they occur simultaneously. Without this positioning, the roles would not be identifiable, thus leading to the impossibility of a “power hierarchy construction.” The structure of power relationships determines a certain construction of the identity of a political group, on the one hand, and distributes the political duties within the group, on the other: “Positioning of this kind can be seen as serving a LEGITIMATING FUNCTION with respect to the leader’s authority within the party, but also as a delegitimising FUNCTION, since it draws boundaries between groups, one of which is claimed to be right and the other wrong” (*ibid.*).

Another important aspect of language as action relates to the “polite and the politic,” more specifically to the notions of *positive face and negative face* (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967). The principle of positive and negative face postulates that in interpersonal communication, the interlocutors

“pay attention to, and have to achieve a balancing act between the positive need to establish a <common ground> and the negative need not to have one’s territory encroached upon” (Chilton and Schaffner, 2002:13). Brown and Levinson incorporate these motivations into the *face-threatening acts (FTSs)* which occur through speech acts: “They classified in great detail the linguistic formulations (syntactic and lexical) which speakers use in order to *mitigate* their FTAs. The effect of their mitigation strategies is a function of the relations of power and intimacy between speakers” (*ibid.*).

The last important aspect of “language as action” is that of the context. Political contextual features influence and determine elements pertaining to the linguistic structure of discourse: “However, the relationship is circular, or, rather reflexive, since texts themselves contribute to the constitution of context” (*ibid.*).

Conclusion

The present article has aimed to point out the role and position of pragmatic elements within political discourse. Whether we are aware or not, all these elements are present and, most of the time, they play a decisive role in “building up” the strong core of political discourse from a linguistic point of view. Far from being an exhaustive approach, the present paper delivers a key list of elements that have to be kept in mind in the case of an in-depth analysis on such a type of discourse. An elaborate sample of such an analysis would not fit within the limits of this paper, but it would nevertheless be an interesting approach for all those interested in “taking apart” the carefully built structure of today’s political discourse.

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DYSPHEMISMS FOR ETHNICITY: CAUTIONARY LABELLING OF DISPARAGING ETHNIC WORDS IN SOME ROMANIAN DICTIONARIES

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ABSTRACT. *Dysphemisms for Ethnicity: Cautionary Labelling of Disparaging Ethnic Words in Some Romanian Dictionaries.* The present article is an attempt to investigate the policies of inclusion and labelling of derogatory ethnic words in nine major dictionaries of Romanian. After providing a brief overview of recent theories of ethnicity and identity, and of some controversies over definitions of ethnic words in Romanian dictionaries, I shall examine the treatment of 40 terms of ethnic derision and abuse. I thus aim to discuss and assess the extent to which disparaging ethnic labels are properly marked for negative attitude in Romanian dictionaries.

Key words: *derogatory ethnic labels, monolingual dictionaries, usage labels, labelling policy.*

REZUMAT. *Disfemismele în reprezentarea identității etnice: precizări stilistice atașate epitetelor etnice injurioase în câteva dicționare românești.* Acest studiu își propune să analizeze modul în care nouă dicționare importante ale limbii române și-au formulat și aplicat strategiile de includere a epitetelor etnice injurioase, precum și de circumscriere stilistică a acestora. După o scurtă trecere în revistă a teoriilor recente privind identitatea etnică, voi urmări modul în care sunt prezentați în dicționarele românești 40 de termeni etnici injurioși. Prin acest demers îmi propun să analizez măsura în care, în dicționarele autohtone, epitele etnice injurioase sunt însoțite de mărcile stilistice adecvate.

Cuvinte cheie: *epitete etnice injurioase, dicționare monolingve, mărci stilistice, norme de redactare.*

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As indicated by research in the field, as well as mere familiarity with one or several languages, the terminology of ethnic identity is vast² and the words people use to describe and represent themselves and the others speak volumes for the manner in which a particular community relates to those living in its geographical proximity or with whom it has had (usually) lasting and impactful historical or cultural connections. The main focus of the present article will not be the language of ethnic praise and appreciation, but rather some of the dysphemisms which speakers of Romanian can use to 'label' ethnic groups which are either currently living on Romanian soil or shared a past with the Romanian community, or both. I shall begin by giving a brief overview of recent theories of ethnicity, then go on to indicate how the relevant literature describes the rationale behind, as well as the pernicious effect of, derogatory ethnic labels. The bulk of the article will refer to the treatment of terms of ethnic derision and abuse (or the specific such senses of otherwise neutral words) in several major monolingual dictionaries of the Romanian language, and to some controversies occasioned by this treatment. I thus seek to investigate, and draw conclusions on, the extent to which derogatory ethnic labels are appropriately marked for negative connotation in Romanian dictionaries.

Ethnicity and identity: “self-identification and social ascription”

Theorists of ethnicity are usually believed to take either an essentialist (or primordialist) view of ethnicity or, more frequently in recent decades, a constructivist or instrumental approach to the matter. Supporters of the former hold that ethnic identity is an intrinsic and stable feature of an individual, shaped by particular life circumstances (being born in a certain place, speaking a particular language, sharing and internalizing the values and constraints of a particular social community etc.). Proponents of the latter, however, argue that words are constitutive of the “categories they represent to us so that ethnicity is a malleable discursive construction. That is, ethnicity is formed by the way we speak about group identities and identify with the signs and symbols that constitute ethnicity for us” (Baker and Galasinski 123). Moreover, following the work of F. Barth, supporters of an anti-essentialist view of ethnicity maintain that “ethnic groups are not defined by given cultural attributes but in relation to other groups” (Christ 28).

² As Greenberg et al. point out, quoting research in the field, “there is documentation of American usage of more than one thousand terms for ethnic groups, and most of them are derogatory” (Greenberg et al. 74).

In other words, ethnicity is seen as a “*relational* concept concerned with categories of self-identification and social ascription. What we think of as our identity is dependent on what we think we are *not*” (Baker and Galasinski 123).

Of these conceptualizations of ethnicity and identity I shall retain for the purposes of the present article the view that an ethnic group’s sense of having a shared identity is, to a considerable degree, dependent on its defining itself in terms of perceived differences from some other ethnic group(s). From the perspective of an investigation of derogatory ethnic labels, it is also highly significant that, while awareness of such differences may become a source of respect for and valuation of the other(s), the literature in the field indicates that this is not always the case. Quite on the contrary, “considerable research suggests that, except intimate contacts, people usually prefer out-groups that are highly similar to themselves to in-groups that are highly different [...] the mere existence of dissimilar others is inherently threatening because dissimilar others threaten the consensual validation we require to maintain faith in the way we construe the world” (Greenberg et al. 76-77). And, if all “labels encourage thinking in terms of in-groups and out-groups” (Greenberg et al. 76), derogatory ethnic labels arguably epitomize in-group members’ desire to (mis)represent the other(s) as at the same time different and unworthy of positive valuation.

Research in the field has shown that people will use derogatory ethnic labels for a variety of reasons: to convey negative feelings toward the referent, to degrade or humiliate a targeted group (possibly in preparation for further violent action) or to boost the speaker’s self-esteem and enhance his/her sense of membership in the in-group community (Greenberg et al. 77). The last outcome is rendered possible by the circumstance that every disparaging ethnic label is implicitly “a cultural legitimization of a negative conception of members of a particular out-group; the mere existence of the term implies at least some cultural sanctioning of the concept it represents” (Greenberg et al. 78-80). Which is not to say that all in-group members will condone the use of terms of ethnic derision, especially given the positive impact of current egalitarian social norms³ and the anti-prejudice policies implemented in recent times. However, as research has also pointed out, people will more probably use derogatory ethnic labels “when they believe others present share their dislike for the out-group. In a given culture and in groups within the culture, it is usually clear which groups are acceptable targets of DELs [derogatory ethnic labels] and which are not” (Greenberg et al. 80).

³ As Greenberg et al. have also remarked, such egalitarian social norms have indeed diminished overt expression of prejudice towards minority ethnic groups. However, hidden forms of prejudice may not have decreased to the same degree (for a discussion of the relevant research and findings, see Greenberg et al. 77-78).

The effects on members of the out-groups regarded as belonging to the former category can be, as indicated in the same study, various but always highly detrimental: people who are targets of abusive ethnic language are likely to feel that they are denied their humanity and sense of self-worth. They may consequently develop feelings of resentment, anger and distrust towards the majority group or even “come to accept the negative view of their group conveyed by the DELs” (Greenberg et al. 81), thus internalizing a perception of worthlessness of their own ethnic community.

On what’s in a name, yet again

In recent times various ethnic communities have voiced their concern over, and even forcefully protested against, dictionary definitions of ethnic terms which they found inappropriate or insufficiently marked for negative attitude⁴. In Romania, to the best of my knowledge, there have been two such public interventions, both incriminating definitions in *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române* (DEX), the best-selling monolingual dictionary of the Romanian language (published under the aegis of the Romanian Academy). With respect to the treatment of the word *jidov*, representatives of the Center for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism in Romania notified the Romanian Academy in 2011 that, while the 1989 edition of DEX did label the word as “popular and pejorative”, in the 2009 edition it was listed merely as “informal”⁵ with no mention of the term’s offensive nature. In the same year members of the Roma community petitioned the National Council for Combating Discrimination on the grounds that the third sense of the word *țigan*, defined as “epithet given to a person with bad behavior”⁶, went unlabelled in both the 1998 and the 2009 editions of DEX, although the definition reflected adversely on people of Roma ethnicity. In their public interventions, representatives of both communities highlighted the pernicious effects which the lack of warning labels for such words and senses would have on members of their respective ethnic groups. Maximillian M. Katz, founding president of the Center for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism in Romania, emphasized (in a letter, which he co-authored, sent to the Romanian Academy on August 8, 2011) the strongly negative associations that the term *jidan* bore for the Romanian Jewish community in the wake of anti-Semitic propaganda, World War II persecution, as well as the current resurgence of the word in far right anti-Semitic online sources. Gelu Dumitrică, the executive

⁴ For an overview of such criticism levelled at OED definitions as early as the 1920s, see R. Burchfield (286-93).

⁵ In Romanian, “familiar”. All English translations from Romanian, in the present article, are mine.

⁶ In Romanian, “epitet dat unei persoane cu apucături rele”.

director of “Împreună” Agency (a Roma NGO based in Bucharest), also denounced what he regarded as the highly offensive and discriminatory generalization implicit in the DEX definition (sense three) of the word *țigan*⁷.

All these objections were taken into account when the 2012 edition of DEX was issued, revised definitions being offered for both *jidan* and *țigan*. In an article published in the same year, *Despre discriminare în DEX (About Discrimination in DEX)*, Monica Busuioc, head of the Department of Lexicography of “Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti” Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy, provides valuable insight into the circumstances of the redefinition (and the rationale behind it) of the words in question and their derivatives. While drawing attention to the fact that the extended definition of the word *informal* in the 2009 edition of DEX did include reference to it as also meaning “without appropriate respect, irreverent”⁸ – a sense which implicitly indicated the derogatory connotations of the term *jidan* – M. Busuioc describes the stages of the process which has led to the current definitions for *evreu*, *jidov* and *jidan*, a process which involved dialogue with the representatives of the Jewish community in Romania but was equally grounded in documented awareness of past developments of the Romanian language. Similar considerations have resulted in a redefinition of the word *rom*, with due recognition being given to the Roma minority’s right to self-definition⁹. As M. Busuioc also points out, for reasons that have to do with the history of the Romanian language, the generic term used to define Roma ethnicity has remained *țigan*, but the word and all its derivatives have now been labelled “often pejorative” with a view to signalling their potential offensiveness.

‘Dictionary identity’: policies of inclusion and labelling of derogatory ethnic words in some Romanian dictionaries

For the present study I have surveyed nine major monolingual dictionaries of the Romanian language, all but one of which were first published after 1950: DA¹⁰, DL, DM, DLR, DEX 1998¹¹, MDA, DEXI, DEX 2009 and DEX 2012. As some of

⁷ As Gelu Dumitrică pointed out in an interview he gave to *Gândul* journalist Raluca Ion, “my unborn child thus comes to bear the stigma of “a person with bad behavior” only because he is Romany” (Ion, par. 6). In Romanian, in the original: “copilul meu nenăscut ajunge astfel să poarte stigmatul de “persoană cu apucături rele” doar pentru că este rom”.

⁸ In the original, “care este fără respectul cuvenit, ireverențios”.

⁹ Although the word *rom* is now recommended in official documents, it remains to a certain extent controversial, as M. Busuioc indicates, not all members of the Romanian Roma community wishing to be thus designated.

¹⁰ The historical dictionary of the Romanian language consists of two series: DA (letters A-L), first published in volume in 1913, last fascicle in 1949, and DLR (1965-2010; letters: M-Z, also D, E, L).

¹¹ DEX was first published in 1975, but for the purposes of this study I have only used some editions issued after 1989.

these dictionaries indicate their coverage and others do not, and not all of them have been digitalized, it is sometimes difficult to specify the total number of word-forms each has listed. According to the information in the front matter of DM, DL and DM have approximately 50,000 entries each (the latter including in fact 1,000 more words than the former). DA and DLR, taken together, list about 175,000 headwords and lexical variants and so does, as indicated in its prefatory material, MDA. DEXI registers 113,893 entries, of which 101,805 are fully described lexical items. No information has been available to me about the coverage of any edition of DEX.

As regards policies of inclusion and labelling of derogatory ethnic words, these are extensively discussed only in some of the dictionaries (mostly) published during the communist regime: DL and DLR address the matter explicitly, DM by implication as the dictionary is described in its front matter as an abridged version of DL. The question that poses itself to the editors of these works is whether terms of ethnic abuse should be listed at all: DL and DM decide for exclusion, DLR receives them but under certain specifications. In all three cases I believe the respective handling of derogatory ethnic labels needs to be read within, and as motivated by, the political context of the time (indeed, as constrained by it, as it is well known that scholars working on state-commissioned assignments, such as academic dictionaries, had limited freedom in terms of the editorial principles they would profess and apply). The prefatory material of DL indicates that the purpose of the dictionary is to offer a description “mainly of the current state, and present-day developments, of our language”¹² (X), an endeavour undertaken under guidance from “Marxist theses [which] indicate the true path of lexicographical work”¹³ (IX). I believe it was on such grounds that the decision was taken to exclude from the dictionary not only “vulgar terms and those which incite to national and racial hatred”¹⁴ (XI), but also the words associated with “the class jargons of the bourgeoisie and the landed gentry, which mirrored the specific tastes of the former ruling classes but are not used by ordinary people”¹⁵ (XI). In other words, the Romanian language had to be expurgated from all the elements that were either politically undesirable or could reflect negatively on the new socialist realities.

¹² In the original, DL “a căutat să înfățișeze în primul rând aspectul actual, în plină dezvoltare, al limbii noastre”.

¹³ In Romanian: “aceste teze marxiste precizează adevăratul drum al muncii lexicografice”.

¹⁴ In the original, “expresiile triviale și termenii de ațâțare la ură națională și rasială”.

¹⁵ In the original, “termenii din jargoanele de clasă ale burgheziei și moșierimii, care au oglindit gusturile specifice ale fostelor clase stăpânitoare și care nu fac parte din limba comună a poporului”.

Issued in the early 1960s, in a similar though perhaps slightly less rigid political context, the style guide (*Normele tehnice de redactare*) that was to steer the lexicographers compiling DLR establishes that offensive terms will be listed in the dictionary. However, all definitions “for words with mystical, superstitious or chauvinist content will necessarily be accompanied by a statement on the lexicographer’s stance, expressed in a decided but restrained fashion”¹⁶ (122). Illustrative citations, on the other hand, are expected to be “free from political or ideological mistakes”¹⁷ (164). Therefore, citations with xenophobic content will be “eliminated without hesitation”¹⁸ (164) in all but those cases in which the term of ethnic abuse is itself the headword. In such situations, it is expected that if “the lexicographer’s stance towards the content of the respective word is clearly expressed in a parenthesis that precedes the definition or in the definition itself, the citations will at most corroborate his/her stance by their great frequency in certain past times and their absence from contemporary literature”¹⁹ (165).

Of the other dictionaries I have examined in this sample only DEXI hints, but rather very briefly, at its policy of inclusion of derogatory ethnic labels. Advertizing itself as an updated monolingual dictionary which seeks “to record, in a scientific and objective manner, without prejudice or inhibitions, the vocabulary of the Romanian language”²⁰ (V), DEXI adds that it has aimed for large comprehensiveness and has listed “more slang, offensive, vulgar and informal words, derisive epithets etc. than previous dictionaries”²¹ (VII). DEXI is also the only dictionary in my sample to mention that its anticipated readership consists not only of Romanian users but equally of non-native speakers with an interest in the study of the Romanian language. Although all the nine dictionaries I have surveyed list the full inventory of labels they have used, including cautionary labels for derogatory ethnic terms, none of them offers any explanation about their respective policies on the systematic application of labels for negative attitude.

¹⁶ In the original: “definiția cuvintelor cu conținut mistic, superstițios, șovin etc. va include în mod necesar o luare de atitudine din partea redactorului, formulată hotărât, dar sobru”.

¹⁷ In the original: “să nu conțină greșeli din punct de vedere politic sau ideologic”.

¹⁸ In the original: “înlăturat fără ezitare”.

¹⁹ In the original: “în măsura în care poziția noastră față de conținutul cuvântului este bine precizată în paranteza explicativă care precedă definiția sau chiar în cuprinsul definiției, citatele pot cel mult veni în sprijinul afirmațiilor noastre prin marea lor frecvență într-o anumită epocă și prin absența lor din literatura actuală”.

²⁰ In the original: “să prezinte într-un mod științific și obiectiv, în același timp fără prejudecăți sau inhibiții, lexicul limbii române”.

²¹ In the original: “inventarul de cuvinte conține mai mulți termeni de argou, injurioși, licențioși, familiari, porecle depreciative etc. decât dicționarele anterioare”.

Cautionary labelling for some Romanian words of ethnic derision

The present inquiry into the labelling, in nine Romanian dictionaries, of 40 words that refer to ethnicity in a derogatory manner has been inspired by a similarly focused article of J. Norri's, *Labelling of Derogatory Words in Some British and American Dictionaries*²². Following Norri, I shall present my findings in tabular form: a zero will be used to indicate that a certain word has not been listed in a given dictionary, a plus sign will accompany terms that have been marked for negative attitude in one form or another (either by some label or within the definition itself), and a minus sign will show that no such warning has been attached to a given word. Table 1 gives a description of the treatment that the sample words have received in the nine dictionaries under examination. On the same grounds as Norri²³, and in a manner similar to hers, I have also indicated in Table 2 the frequency of labelling of derogatory ethnic terms for each dictionary in my sample.

Table 1.

Labelling of derogatory ethnic words.

	<i>DL</i>	<i>DM</i>	<i>DA / DLR</i>	<i>MDA</i>	<i>DEX 1998</i>	<i>DEX 2009</i>	<i>DEX 2012</i>	<i>DEXI</i>
<i>Arapină</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: -	0	0	0	0	+
<i>Arțibur</i> (Armenian)	0	0	DA: +	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Balaoacheș</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: +	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Balaur</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: +	+	0	0	0	+
<i>Bahniță</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: +	+	0	0	0	+
<i>Baragladină</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: +	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Boanghen</i> (Hungarian)	0	0	DA: +	+	0	0	0	0
<i>Boroi</i> (Romanian)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	0

²² The scope of Norri's inquiry is in fact larger, her investigation also covering offensive terms for lack of intelligence, deceitfulness, sexual orientation, as well as derogatory terms for women and men.

²³ "When comparing the dictionaries examined with one another, we cannot simply use the number of words carrying a label as a basis for comparison, because the number of words included varies [...] It is more illuminating to calculate for each work the percentage of the words given that are accompanied by a 'negative' label or an equivalent comment" (Norri 79).

DYSPEMISMS FOR ETHNICITY: CAUTIONARY LABELLING OF DISPARAGING ETHNIC WORDS IN ...

	DL	DM	DA / DLR	MDA	DEX 1998	DEX 2009	DEX 2012	DEXI
Cioară (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	+
Ciorânglav (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	+
Cioroi (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	+
Cioropină (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	+	+	+	+
Ciufut (Jew)	0	0	DA: -	0	0	0	0	0
Ciutac (Turk)	0	0	DA: +	+	0	0	0	0
Danci (Romany child)	0	-	DA: -	-	-	-	-	-
Faraon (Romany)	0	-	DA: -	+	+	+	+	+
Garoi (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	-
Garvan (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	0
Gaşper (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	-	+	-	-	-
Graur (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	+	0	0	0	0
Grecotei (Greek)	0	0	DA: +	+	+	+	+	+
Honț (Saxon)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Iuhman (Jew)	0	0	DA: -	0	0	0	0	0
Iuflă (Jew)	0	0	DA: -	0	0	0	0	0
Încărbunat (Romany)	0	0	DA: -	0	0	0	0	0
Jidan (Jew)	0	0	DA: +	+	+	-	+	-
Jidov (Jew)	0	0	DA: -	+	+	-	+	-
Jupân (Jew)	0	0	DA: +	+	0	0	0	0
Parhal (Jew)	0	0	DLR: +	+	0	0	0	0
Parpalec (Greek)	0	0	DLR: +	+	+	+	+	+
Poleac/polac (Polish)	-	-	DLR: -	-	-	-	-	-
Puradel (Romany child)	+	-	DLR: -	-	-	-	-	-
Rusneac (Ukrainian)	-	0	DLR: -	-	0	0	0	-
Şalvaragiu (Turk)	0	0	DLR: +	+	0	0	0	+
Şocăţ (German)	+	+	DLR: +	+	+	+	+	+

	<i>DL</i>	<i>DM</i>	<i>DA / DLR</i>	<i>MDA</i>	<i>DEX 1998</i>	<i>DEX 2009</i>	<i>DEX 2012</i>	<i>DEXI</i>
<i>Șoangher</i> (Hungarian)	0	0	<i>DLR: +</i>	+	0	0	0	0
<i>Șoanghină</i> (Hungarian)	0	0	<i>DLR: +</i>	+	0	0	0	0
<i>Șonț</i> (German)	+	+	<i>DLR: +</i>	+	0	0	0	+
<i>Ștronț</i> (German)	0	0	<i>DLR: +</i>	+	0	0	0	0
<i>Târtan</i> (Jew)	0	0	<i>DLR: +</i>	+	+	+	+	+

Table 2.

Percentage of labelling of derogatory ethnic words.

	<i>DL</i>	<i>DM</i>	<i>DA / DLR</i>	<i>MDA</i>	<i>DEX 1998</i>	<i>DEX 2009</i>	<i>DEX 2012</i>	<i>DEXI</i>
Words included	5	6	<i>DA: 27</i> <i>DLR: 12</i>	33	14	14	14	25
Words labelled +	3	2	<i>DA: 10</i> <i>DLR: 9</i>	28	11	8	10	16
Percentage of labelling	60%	33%	<i>DA: 37%</i> <i>DLR: 75%</i>	85%	79%	57%	71%	64%

As shown by the results of this investigation, the frequency of labelling of words of ethnic derision²⁴ varies considerably among the Romanian dictionaries I have examined. While, given DM's policy of exclusion of derogatory ethnic terms, it is not surprising to find few such words listed in the dictionary, the lack of cautionary labels for those that have been included is rather more difficult to account for. The other conspicuous example of low percentage of labelling, DA, would appear less so if the phrase "nickname for..."²⁵ (used to describe the terms

²⁴ The (potential) derision I have sensed in the 40 words in my sample has been based on subjective impression, as a native speaker of Romanian, in only three cases (for *iuhman*, *iuflă* and *poleac/polac*). In all the other cases, at least one Romanian dictionary, other than the nine examined here, has given the respective terms a cautionary label.

²⁵ In the original, "poreclă pentru".

arapină, boroi, cioară, ciorânglav, cioroi, cioropină, ciufut, faraon, garoi, garvan, gașper, încărbunat, that is 44% of the total DA words in this sample) were in fact regarded as an implicit marker of negative attitude. I have not, however, indicated what might have been implicitness by a plus sign for any of the words mentioned above. Nor have I done so for those merely labelled “informal” in MDA or any edition of DEX. Concerning this latter case, it is true that M. Busuioc (see the discussion above) has pointed out that the DEX definition of *familiar* (the Romanian word for “informal”) does list the sense “without appropriate respect, irreverent”. However, as a number of other words in both MDA and DEX are given double labels of the kind “informal and ironical”, “informal and pejorative”, “informal” plus “term of abuse”, I have not considered “informal” alone as a cautionary marker for derogatory meaning. On the other hand, I have counted among those given warning labels the words marked by DEXI compilers as “jocular” (i.e. *arapină, cioară, ciorânglav* and *cioroi*), although I have done so with considerable reservations: while some speakers may intend to use these words in a merely humorous fashion, I find it highly unlikely that they would be perceived as such by any member of the Roma community of whom they would be spoken²⁶. In all these cases, I believe, a more explicit manner of indicating the potential offensiveness of the words in question would be welcome, all the more so as DEXI advertises itself as catering for the needs of native as well as non-native speakers of Romanian.

Conclusions

As research into the circumstances of use and effects of derogatory ethnic terms has amply indicated, the utterance of such words will likely foster a sense of division (and potential conflict) among communities, while at the same time triggering from targets responses that can vary from anger, resentment and desire for retaliation to an internalization of negative valuation and perceived worthlessness of one’s own ethnic group. For such reasons, I believe it is important that the major dictionaries of a language – which, though (usually) no longer prescriptive, do have a role in indicating appropriateness and restrictions of usage – show due concern for cautionary labelling of derogatory ethnic terms. Because, as Norri rightly points out, “people seeking information from these works expect to be told something about the geographical, stylistic or social

²⁶ It is with similar misgivings that I have given a plus sign to the word *graur* as registered by MDA. MDA compilers have labelled it “euphemistic” which, given what I believe is the term’s clear offensiveness, can hardly be seen as an appropriate usage description.

restrictions governing the use of a given word. If significant details of this kind are poorly indicated, or perhaps ignored altogether, dictionary users may with good reason feel cheated" (72). All the more so the members of those communities that are targets of abusive ethnic words which, if left unlabelled by a given dictionary, may thereby seem to be unwittingly condoned. Given the findings in this article, it is perhaps not surprising that the two communities which questioned the treatment of certain entries in Romanian dictionaries are the Roma and the Jewish communities: out of the 40 derogatory ethnic words in my sample, the largest number, 18 (45%), refers to members of the former group and the second largest, 8 (20%), to members of the latter. An overall comparison with British and American dictionaries in terms of frequency of labelling of derisive ethnic terms indicates that the percentage is lower in Romanian wordbooks²⁷. While this may be due to a variety of reasons, probably an important contributing factor is, as M. Busuioc (46) has also suggested, the fact that full awareness of the importance, and sensitiveness, of such issues has only emerged rather recently among Romanian lexicographers. It is therefore to be expected, and hoped, that the future editions of Romanian dictionaries will further increase their percentage of labelling of derogatory ethnic words, whenever necessary and appropriate, and more clearly articulate their policies on the systematic application of labels for negative connotation.

ABBREVIATIONS

DA = Pușcariu, Sextil, ed. *Dicționarul limbii române*. București: Librăriile Socec & Comp. și C. Sfetea - Universul, Întreprindere Industrială a Statului, 1913-1949. Print.

DEX = Coteanu, Ion, Luiza Seche and Mircea Seche, eds. *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*. București: Editura Academiei, 1975. Print.

DEX 1998 = Coteanu, Ion, Lucreția Mareș, eds. *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*. 2nd ed. București: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1998. Print.

DEX 2009 = Coteanu, Ion, Lucreția Mareș, eds. *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*. 2nd revised ed. București: Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2009. Print.

DEX 2012 = Coteanu, Ion, Lucreția Mareș, eds. *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*. 2nd revised ed. București: Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2012. Print.

DEXI = Dima, Eugenia, ed. *Dicționar explicativ ilustrat al limbii române*. Chișinău: Editura Arc, 2007. Print.

DL = Macrea, Dimitrie and Emil Petrovici, eds. *Dicționarul limbii române literare contemporane*. București: Editura Academiei, 1955-1958. Print.

²⁷ J. Norri's article (95-96) shows that for derogatory words for nationality the percentage of labelling in British and American dictionaries is between 68% and 90%, whereas for words for racial or cultural groups it is between 61% and 100%.

DLR = Jordan, Iorgu, Alexandru Graur and Ion Coteanu, eds. [since 2000 Marius Sala, Gheorghe Mihăilă eds.] *Dicționarul limbii române. Serie nouă*. București: Editura Academiei, 1965-2010. Print.

DM = Macrea, Dimitrie, ed. *Dicționarul limbii române moderne*. București: Editura Academiei, 1958. Print.

MDA = Sala Marius, Ion Dănăilă, eds. *Micul dicționar academic*. București: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 2001-2003. Print.

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ROMANIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN EUROPE

DINA VÎLCU¹

ABSTRACT. *Romanian as a Foreign Language in the Context of Language Assessment in Europe.* The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is at the basis of a coherent system of assessment of language competence. The assessment of Romanian as a foreign language can benefit from the premises of quality offered by the relationing with such a system. The present study shows some of the steps taken in this sense at the Department of Romanian language, culture and civilisation from the Faculty of Letters in Cluj-Napoca. Our intention is to make available, quite soon, a complete system of assessment for any person who would like to verify and certify their knowledge of Romanian as a foreign language.

Key words: *assessment, Romanian as a foreign language, stakeholders, washback, item bank*

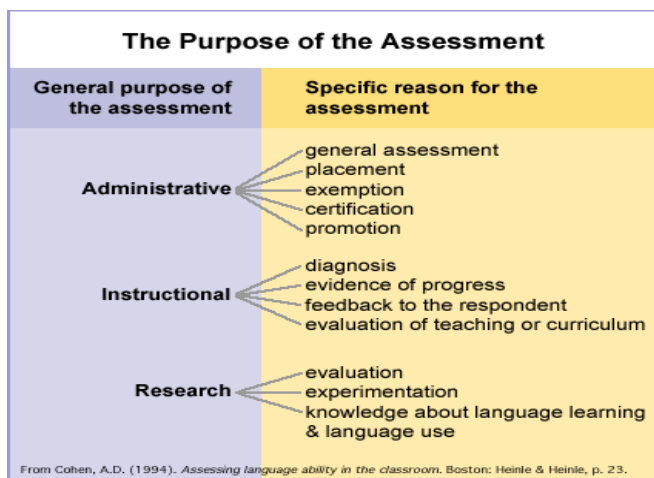
REZUMAT. *Apariția Cadrului European Comun de Referință pentru Limbi (CECR)* a stat la baza unui sistem coerent de evaluare a competenței într-o limbă străină. Evaluarea limbii române ca limbă străină poate beneficia de premisele de calitate oferite de racordarea la un astfel de sistem. Studiul de față prezintă câțiva dintre pașii făcuți la Departamentul de limbă, cultură și civilizație românească al Facultății de Litere din Cluj-Napoca, în acest sens. Intenția noastră este ca, în curând, să punem un sistem complet de evaluare la dispoziția oricărei persoane ce ar dori să își verifice și certifice cunoștințele de limba română ca limbă străină.

Cuvinte-cheie: *evaluare, româna ca limbă străină, categorii interesate, washback, bancă de itemi*

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1. Introduction

We have been long used with a rigid and, at the same time, schizoid perception of assessment in general and of language assessment in particular in the educational context in Romania. Assessment is perceived, by many of the different categories of *stakeholders*², rather like a menace, an activity susceptible of endangering the educational or professional pathway, vital for the individual who finds himself/herself, unwillingly, most of the times, in the position of a test taker. Moreover, this posture is usually seen as an imperative necessity, imposed by some external authorities. The attributes through which I characterized the perception, in our country, of assessment not only co-exist in defining the status attached here to this process, but they find themselves, actually, into a relation of reciprocal determination, generating a very disadvantageous perpetuation. The main problem might result from the fact that the educational system (the same as the one of work market, actually) have not found, so far, sufficient points of tangency between the types of assessment through which an individual is evaluated in different stages of his life as a student or as an employee. The functions of assessment or the purposes for which it is applied are numerous. Different studies having as a topic language assessment provide us with various categorisations. One of the most clearly structured is the one realised by A. Cohen (1994), presented below (*Scheme 1*):



Scheme 1

<http://www.carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/research/theory.html>

² Temporary or permanent members of this community are traditionally considered: persons who follow an educational pathway, teachers, parents, administrative officials in the work market. For a completion of the concept, see L. Taylor, *Stakeholders in language testing*, Cambridge, Research Notes, 2000, p. 2 – 4.

The categorisations of this type, addressed not only to the specialists, but also to persons interested in the domain, are very useful. Following an intuitive pathway, rather parallel to classifications of this kind, realised as part of research, almost all those involved in the process of assessment, irrespective of their position, maintain a much too clear cut between these types of assessment. Thus, the assessment realised with the purpose of checking the proportion in which the curricular information was assimilated and can be used by the test taker almost never meets the one realised for certification, and the one realised for research is, unfortunately, almost inexistent. An example in this sense is the one of the assessment of Romanian as a second language, extremely heterogeneous even within the educational system, not only from one level to the next, but also from one examination session to the next. This aspect can be identified, for example, by analysing the content of the examinations from successive baccalaureate sessions. The tasks are the same for the candidates who speak Romanian as a second language (the students from our country of a different ethnic group than Romanian) and for those who have Romanian as their mother tongue. While in case of the second category of candidates the variation in style, oldness of language used, complexity do not cause, usually, special problems, the non-native speakers of Romanian seem to be exposed by chance to different levels of complexity of the language, sometimes extremely different from one session to the next. Without getting into further details here³, I will only mention the fact that, from the point of view of the convergence between assessment during school years and the one realised, for example, with the purpose of certification, there is not much to compare, actually, since the second category, in the case of Romanian as a foreign/second language, is almost inexistent⁴.

2. Assessment at an international level

The situation in almost all Europe is different from the one of Romanian as a foreign language. Efforts have been made for years in order to connect the assessment within the conventional educational system with the one offered by

³ For a more detailed analysis of this problem and of the consequences which lack of systematicity of the assessment of Romanian as a second language involves, see D. Vilcu, *Evaluarea elevilor din clasa a VIII-a. Între examenul public și cel „social”*, în *Româna ca limbă nematernă (RLNM). Actele Conferinței de lansare a proiectului „Perfecționarea cadrelor didactice din învățământul preuniversitar care predau limba română minorităților naționale”*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, 2011, p. 284-300.

⁴ There are a few institutions which offer certificates of Romanian as a foreign language, like the University of Alicante, in partnership with the Institute of Romanian Language from Bucharest. However, Romanian should benefit from a considerably larger variety of certification instruments, constantly related to the newest and best research in the domain.

specialised organisations of assessment with the purpose of certification. The tests proposed by organisations of this kind are characterised by the fact that they are created in relation with independent reference systems, like the *Common European Framework of Reference for languages: teaching, learning, assessment (CEFR)*, on the one hand, and with the requests/indications issued by those *stakeholders* who are directly interested in the skills which a language certificate can be proof of.

These efforts do not target exclusively the adult population or the persons graduating from a learning cycle and ready to search for a job and so extremely interested in obtaining a language certificate. On the contrary, in some countries, the authorities in the educational domain initiated the preparation of the students while they are still integrated in this system for this type of examinations. A very pertinent example is the adoption of international certification in state education in France. More exactly, the Ministry of National Education initiated a project through which a number of advantages of such an action were identified: facilitating cross-border mobility; ensuring external, objective assessment, realised by experts in the domain and giving priority to productive oral and written skills⁵. This system triggered giving up the emphasis of receptive skills assessment, privileged in the past, along with the negative assessment realised exclusively in relation with the participants' grammatical knowledge, in a system of dictation and reduction of mark with every mistake. The international testing system was applied for 16 year old students (finishing their compulsory education) and targeted first the German language. At the same time, as part of an agreement signed by the presidents of the two countries, the system was also applied in Germany, targeting the French language. The immediate effect of the implementation of this testing system was the increase of the interest for the German language in France and for the French language in Germany. The test is optional and free of charge. In 2008, the first year of the project, 74% of the eligible persons took the examination, while in 2009 the proportion grew to 86%. Given the success that this examination had, France initiated similar projects for the languages English and Spanish.

It is important to mention the fact that the tests which were applied as part of the project, for all the involved languages, were created by the most prestigious testing institutions from those countries (*Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques*, for French, *Goethe Institut* for German, *Cambridge ESOL* for English and *Instituto Cervantes* for Spanish). All these organisations are members of ALTE (The Association of Language Testers in Europe). When they graduate from the

⁵ A. Harvey, A. Balch, A. Salamoura, *Cambridge ESOL: Research Notes*, «The adoption of international certification in the French state school sector», 2010, p. 7. This study represents the source for all the information and data further presented with reference to this project (p. 7-9).

first high school cycle, the students in the countries in which the project was implemented can, thus, obtain a B1 certificate in a largely spoken language. More than that, the productive and receptive skills are tested, without a separate component of grammar and vocabulary. This ensures for the candidates not only more confidence that they can pass the examination, but also a significant preparation for a direct contact with the country, at the level of its educational system, of its work market or simply of social interaction.

Another important element of this testing system is related to the assessment and marking of the examination papers, which is realised by teachers from the state educational system from the country in which the test is applied. They are not allowed to mark the papers of their own students but, after participating in training sessions organised by the institutions which created the tests, they are the ones who check and mark the exam papers of the candidates. A very beneficial relationship is thus created between the external assessment system, realised by prestigious institutions in the domain and the one specific to the national assessment system, which takes full advantage, through the test takers, but also through the teachers, of the experience which can be acquired through participation in the project.

3. The case of Romanian as a foreign language

Babeş-Bolyai University, through the Department of Romanian language, culture and civilisation, from the Faculty of Letters, has the status of ALTE affiliate institution since the year 2001⁶. Due to this quality, members of the Department have participated in numerous biannual ALTE meetings and also in the last three ALTE conferences, which are organised every three years. These participations resulted in a permanent relationship to the most recent research in the domain, to the changes and the experiments in the domain, realised in different parts of the world, for different categories of public and for different purposes. We gradually adapted to the present state in the domain of testing. Thus, the examinations of Romanian as a foreign language applied at the Department became, with every session of administration, better in different respects: creation of the items, administration, information of the stakeholders, marking and rating, monitoring of the quality of the examinations, but also of the quality of marking and rating, etc.

The participation in the ALTE meetings resulted in a rapid change of our assessment system, with a clear tendency of opening our examination to different categories of public. Consequently, the examination of Romanian language started

⁶ A presentation of our institution in this quality can be seen on the site <http://www.alte.org>, in the section *membership*.

to be prepared not only for verifying whether the students registered with our Department assimilated the information taught during one course of Romanian, but also for being able to certify the receptive and productive linguistic abilities in the domain of Romanian as a foreign language of any person interested in obtaining a document to certify his/her qualification in the domain. Through the new structure of our examination, we proposed, from the beginning, to realise the convergence of more functions of assessment: verifying the degree in which the curricular content was assimilated, as well as the assessment for certification, which is realised, actually, in present, for the level B2, in the case of the persons who need a certificate of Romanian as a foreign language in order to register in a university in Romania. These main functions of the assessment of Romanian as a foreign language are accompanied by the ones of feedback and *washback*, both of them extremely important, while the research function is realised at two levels: one concerning the psychometric analysis of the marks obtained in examinations and pretesting, whose results are used in the process of test review and revision, and also for monitoring the marking and rating of examination papers and productions, and the other one, more theoretical, targeting the impact of assessment in general.

Unlike the French-German model presented above (and many others applied in Europe and in the world), what we tried to do at the Department of Romanian language, culture and civilisation was not to import an examination created by a prestigious institution in order to apply it to our students, but to produce an examination which could go along the two dimensions mentioned here, with the main functions of verifying assimilation of information by the students, on the one hand, and certification of the skills in Romanian as a foreign language, on the other hand. This initiative did not prove easy to accomplish and we cannot say that we are at the end of the road, but rather in the middle or maybe even in the beginning of it.

I will present below some of the elements which define the examination of Romanian as a foreign language, with its double function.

3.1. Syllabus, specifications and the washback effect

An examination is more efficient if it is considered already in the beginning of the educational process, influencing also the syllabus of the course, as well as its actual development. In addition, a course could have a better quality if the modality in which it is organised and developed takes into consideration the profile of the examination it will conclude with. The influencing of the educational process by the assessment has been known for a long time as the *washback effect*⁷.

⁷ Alderson & Wall 1993, Baily 1996, Messick 1996, Baily 1999 are only a few of the most relevant references for defining and explaining this concept.

Different studies revealed both the positive and the negative dimensions this effect can have. Weigle and Jensen (1997, p. 205) summarise in just a few words the idea of *positive washback*, saying that, if a test has positive *washback* effect, then “there is no difference between teaching the curriculum and teaching to the test.” On the other hand, *negative washback* is defined as “abandonment of instructional goals in favour of test preparation” (Wall 2012).

As teachers of Romanian as a foreign language, we understood, from the moment when we started the process of profound revision of the system of teaching and assessing RFL in our Department, that the profile of the examinations which we propose for testing the degree in which our students assimilated and are able to use the information which they had been taught will reflect in the course we teach in class. As a result, the first step which we made in the revision process was to give a new shape to the examinations of Romanian as a foreign language. Thus, beside the fact that they were created in direct relation to the *CEFR*, their structure was conceived so as to test the receptive and productive skills of the candidates, as well as the accuracy with which they can use the grammar knowledge specific to each level. The first volume with tests written by the team of the Department (Medrea, Platon, Sonea, Vesa, Vîlcu 2008) fully reflected these transformations. A first point of reference indicated here is *Programa RLS (RFL Syllabus)*, designed, in its initial form, before the volume with tests was published. The syllabus reflects both the content of the examinations and the one of the courses. Its main elements can be found in the content of the *Textbook of Romanian as a Foreign Language (RFL). A1-A2 (Manual de limba română ca limbă străină (RLS). A1-A2)*, published by members of the Department in the year 2012⁸.

On the other hand, as providers of an examination of linguistic competence adjusted to the levels in the *Common European Framework of Reference*, we elaborated the specifications for an examination which could be opened, in future, to the large public. These specifications⁹ are now at the basis of the elaboration of the examinations administered by our Department, ensuring, thus, the connection between the two types of testing we have in view.

3.2. The item bank

The creation of item banks for each level we provide examinations at and for each of the skills offered us a new opportunity to submit the proposed items to

⁸ See pages 4-5 for a detailed summary of the proposed units, organised in function of the receptive and productive skills, as well as in function of the elements of communication construction (*Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing*).

⁹ A version of the specifications, conceived such as to be clear and accessible to the public, is available on the site of our Department <http://romaniandepartment.com/>.

a process of external validation. More exactly, we made an inventory of all the tasks from the examinations which we have administered in the last years, selecting the ones which we considered good enough for the new examination and organised them, according to the skill they were designed for, in documents that we sent to ten experts, members or ex-members of our Department, but also RFL teachers working in universities from our country and from abroad. The experts were kindly asked to 1) place each item from every task at the level they considered it adequate for; after centralising all the received answers, we analysed the measure in which the level attributed individually by the experts to each item matched the one for which we had proposed those items; we calculated the degree of deviation for each item (we attributed a point for each extra level considered by the experts, in comparison with the one at which we had placed the items; we allowed a degree of deviation of maximum 0,50 points; if the deviation was greater, we revised the items, sometimes giving up not only the problematic items, but the task altogether); 2) indicate any obscurity or vagueness in the formulation of the items, any problem in the structure of the input text or in its use at a certain level, as well as the problems related to the correlation between the items and the input text. The modifications we made and the justification for not making any modifications even in cases where the deviation degree would have asked for, were registered in a technical report elaborated for each of the components of the examination for which the validation operation was performed (listening, reading, elements of communication construction).

This process made it possible for us to ensure that our examinations are not strictly related to the course syllabus and are not validated only at the level of our Department. The stage of validation developed due to the involvement of the experts we contacted confirmed their value and adequacy or indicated the modifications necessary for them to correspond to the proposed purpose.

3.3. Pretesting

Another connexion with the examinations organised with the purpose of certification, irrespective of the aspect of following a certain course or not, is a new filter through which the tasks are passed before getting into live examinations: pretesting.

After the items were conceived according to clear and strict specifications and after they passed through the filter of the experts, they are confirmed again by our first and most direct beneficiaries: our candidates or potential candidates. Thus, the item banks containing the tasks validated by the experts or modified according to their indications become the source from which items are selected for pretesting. In order to apply pretesting, a representative sample from the students registered with our Department is selected. These persons also represent, for the moment, our main public. The participants in

the pretesting process are representative for the population taking the live examinations through the fact that they correspond greatly to that population with respect to: age, educational background, purposes for studying Romanian, number of hours of study¹⁰.

Pretesting is organised for the components: listening, reading and elements of communication construction. The results of the participants are statistically analysed. The most important results we obtain are related to the item difficulty coefficient, discrimination coefficient, reliability and validity. Other very important information is obtained with regard to the time allotted to item solving and the adequacy of the themes of the input texts. The tasks pretested in one year become material for live examinations in the following year, when the results obtained after statistical analysis are verified. The necessary interventions will be made afterwards so that the items can be validated also as a result of their passing through the process of pretesting.

In order to test the possibility of applying our examination system to any person willing to obtain a certificate of linguistic competence in RFL, we extended the pretesting process towards candidates other than the students registered with our Department. Pretesting was applied in other universities from Romania, in centres of modern languages, but also in universities abroad, where Romanian as a foreign language is taught. The results we have obtained confirm the fact that the system of examination we designed is adequate to a large public, possibly interested in certification of their linguistic competence in Romanian as a foreign language.

3.4. Marking

One of the greatest difficulties we face in fulfilling our intention of opening the testing system towards the large public is related to the marking system. Our examinations are applied currently as part of the official system of education in Romania. This is why we also need to apply the official marking system, so to consider an examination as being passed if the candidate obtains mark five. For an examination which does not depend on such a marking system, the limit between passed and failed (*cut off score*) is established after a procedure called *standard setting*, which can be realised through more methods the examination providers have at their disposal¹¹. They can choose among these methods in function of the

¹⁰ The greatest difference is registered with respect to the mother tongue and other languages spoken by the candidates. Heterogeneity also characterises, from this point of view, in the same measure, the persons who participate in pretesting, as well as our candidates. This aspect represents, for that matter, one of the greatest challenges both in conceiving the examinations, and in organising and developing the RFL courses.

¹¹ A detailed presentation of the *standard setting* methods, used to establish *cut off score* can be found in *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR). A Manual*, Language Policy Division, Strasbourg, 2009, p. 57-88.

specificity of the context in which the examination will be applied, the population it will test and other relevant factors.

In order to ensure the following of the procedures necessary for setting the *cut off score* and to apply, at the same time, the marking system specific to the educational system in Romania, we tried to adopt both these systems. Thus, we applied the procedure of *standard setting* through the method of contrasting groups, which we adapted by using it in relation not with the ensemble of a test, but with each of its components. We considered that the results will be more relevant this way, and the examination components thus validated can be included as such into a special item bank, being then combined with other components in live examinations. The results we have obtained so far show a situation of the *cut off score* in the area of the limit passed/failed indicated as well by the educational system in Romania, more exactly, in the middle area of the maximum number of points available. These results represent a confirmation of the validity of the items which are to be part of the live examinations.

3.5. Marking and grading. Monitoring marking and grading

In order to ensure an objective and fair assessment of our candidates, we adopted a special system of evaluation and grading both for the oral and the written parts of the examination. The assessment of the oral productions is realised by commissions composed of three persons: an examiner and two assessors. The examiner has the role of engaging in a direct dialogue with the candidates, of explaining them the parts of the oral examination and of monitoring the time allocated to each candidate for producing his/her oral part. The assessors mark the productions of the candidates individually, using an assessment grid designed by members of our Department. The maximum difference allowed between the numbers of points given by the two assessors is of two points. The average between the points given by the two assessors is calculated and this average represents the mark the candidate gets for his/her oral production. The same double assessment, realised according to the assessment grid, is also performed for the writing component. For the components of listening, reading and elements of communication construction, the double checking has the role to verify and confirm the first checking and marking. In the case of these components, no difference in the number of points allotted is allowed and no average can be realised between two different numbers of points allotted.

The marking and grading performed by the assessors are monitored and analysed and a rate of error is calculated for each of the persons involved in assessment. In function of the result, an assessor can be recommended to follow a new training in assessing; he/she might also be followed more closely during following sessions of examination.

The system of assessment and monitoring of assessment adopted by our Department has the role of ensuring objectivity and fair marking of all the candidates, as well as compatibility with a system of interpretation of linguistic competence of the candidates in relation with a certain CEFR level, easy to understand and interpret internationally. Permanent instruction and training of the assessors through workshops became a periodic activity in the Department of Romanian language, culture and civilisation.

4. Conclusion

The obvious transformations produced in our system of assessment in the last years demonstrate the fact that the connection of the system to principles supported by and to the methods proposed in the *Common European Framework of Reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment* generated a constant improvement, with every session of administration, of the tests created at our Department. The content of the examinations and their structure, the system of assessment, the procedures of administration, the modalities of organising and offering information to all the categories of public interested in our examinations, in short, the whole system of assessment was changed, becoming more professional, more objective and benefitting from much better communication with all those interested in our examinations. Connecting these examinations to the *CEFR* involves not a temporary transformation, but a permanent relationship with its principles, resulting in keeping and growing quality with each administered examination.

Due to the fact that Romania is a member of the European Union, the certificates issued by the state institutions of higher education are recognised at a European level. However, currently, the certificates issued by the Secretariat of the Faculty of Letters, as part of Babeş-Bolyai University, on the basis of assessment realised by members of our Department, are part of a conventional educational system. We hope that we will soon become full members of ALTE and that we will give, this way, greater significance to our examinations through the fact that they could function independently of the academic system or the courses taught at our Department. By aligning the system of assessment of Romanian as a foreign language to the *CEFR* we intend to obtain not only the quality mark specific to the examinations offered by members of this association, but also recognition of our certificates at a European level on the basis of the quality of the assessment process developed by the members of our Department. We also intend that, by fulfilling our plan of becoming an ALTE member, to give Romanian as a foreign language the place it deserves among the European languages.

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CLIL TEACHING: A HISTORY LESSON FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT. *CLIL Teaching: A History Lesson Framework.* One goal of the current study was to give an example of a CLIL lesson in the topic of history. Content and Language Integrated Learning is the name given to a kind of teaching and learning where the students study a subject and, at the same time, learn the language they need to understand and talk about the subject in the second language. It is different from ESP (English for Special Purposes) that makes use of English in a particular context related to employment needs. The study provides an extended presentation of the course content in order to give background information for the subject. The history course focuses on Zionism in Romania and on the development of the Zionist press in this country.

Key words: *CLIL, history, Zionist press, teaching.*

REZUMAT. *Predarea integrată a conținuturilor: exemplul unei lecții de istorie.* Articolul de față își propune să exemplifice o lecție construită în jurul metodei învățării integrate a conținuturilor transmise prin intermediul unei limbi străine. Prin această metodă se asigură predarea unei materii, cu întreg conținutul ei de specialitate într-o altă limbă, varianta fiind deosebită de predarea limbajelor de specialitate, aceasta din urmă fiind legată de un context specific ce ține de cerințele de pe piața muncii. Pentru a asigura o bună înțelegere a lecției articolul face și o prezentare pe larg a subiectului în sine și anume sionismul românesc și apariția presei sioniste de limbă română.

Cuvinte cheie: *CLIL, istorie, presa sionista, predare.*

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The current article is based on a teaching experience I had with students at the faculty of European Studies majoring Jewish studies a few years ago. For one semester they had a course on the history of Zionism in Romania with two hours of lectures and seminars per week. The course content focused on the following: teaching and debating of underlying concepts regarding Zionism; familiarizing students with the history and ideology of Zionism and the personalities that influenced the movement; studying Zionism in Romania with a special focus on the Zionist press.

The language study was integrated into this broad curriculum and concentrated on genre analysis of newspaper articles with the following aims: to help students to understand and produce genre features and to classify them into different categories; to develop reading comprehension skills;

Methodology

The methodology used throughout the course was CLIL, an acronym for Content and Language Integrated Learning. This is the name given to a kind of teaching and learning where the students study a subject such as biology, history or geography and, at the same time, learn the language they need to understand and talk about the subject in the second language (Harmer 2013:225).

From a language point of view the CLIL 'approach' contains nothing new to the English language teacher. CLIL aims to 'guide language processing and support language production in the same way as ELT by teaching strategies for reading and listening and structures and lexis for spoken or written language. What is different is that the language teacher is also the subject teacher, or that the subject teacher is also able to exploit opportunities for developing language skills. This is the essence of the CLIL teacher training issue.' (Darn: 2006).

From the point of view of the European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education we speak about a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to predefined levels. (Maljers, Marsh, Wolff, Genessee, Frigols-Martin, Mehisto: 2010).

The course content

One of the main aims of the course was to teach information about the Zionist press issued in Romanian and to link it to the development of Zionism in Europe and Romania. "Israelitul Român" was the first Jewish newspaper printed on April 3, 1857. From that point on, the Jewish press developed and improved

year after year creating its own audience of readers, offering a new perspective to hundreds of Romanian Jews. Its main aim was to support the Jewish community on its struggle for political rights. It had four different areas of interest according to which the newspapers can be grouped as: pro emancipation, socialist, pro assimilation and Zionist.

The Zionist press developed as a result of the strong impact that Zionism had with the Jews in Romania.

By the middle of the 19th century the first modern pre-Zionist ideas were already familiar to most Romanian Jews. The interest can be noticed from a letter that a doctor in Giurgiu addressed to A.I.U. in Paris, on 29 May 1867². In 1873 there were established the first groups of haluzim with the goal to immigrate to Erez Israel and work the land. The initiative started from Nicorești with a group of 100 families, joined by some others from Tecuci, Galați, Piatra Neamț, Bacău and Iași.

Aliyah became more and more an option after the Congress of Berlin (1878) where the Romanian authorities refused to completely modify the famous Article number 7 that restricted the right to Romanian citizenship to those of Christian origin.

As a response to the difficult living conditions of the Jewish population after that year a new movement called “Jishuv Erez Israel” came into being. It was suggested the creation of a central committee and on January 11-12 1882 the first meeting of 32 branches from throughout the country took place in Focșani. The president of the meeting was Samuil Pineles. It was decided that a first group of 100 families to leave for Erez Israel.

After the deadlock in 1884 when the central committee ceased its activity, the pre-Zionist movement was resurrected again under the influence of the movement in Russia. Between 1890 and 1892, branches of Hovevei Zion were formed in some towns. By 1895 such branches existed in 31 towns and two conferences had been held. A central committee was elected under Samuel Pineles’ leadership and actions regarding new settlements were organized. In 1897, at the end of the 19th century there were 26 Zionist associations and the number increased to 136 in 1899. These associations had about 2394 members in 1907.

Despite that intense activity, we cannot speak about a press covering Zionist issues exclusively until 1897. It was a direct result of the participation of some outstanding Zionist personalities to the First Zionist Congress in Basle (1897) where the opening speech was delivered by the oldest delegate Karpel Lippe. Samuel Pineles was elected vice-president. Even earlier, in 1896, a Romanian translation of Herzl’s “Der Judenstaat” was published in Botoșani.

² Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România. De la excludere la emancipare (1866 - 1919)*, Ed. Hasefer 1996, p. 283.

Dr. Karpel Lippe had an extremely important role in the publishing of the first political Zionist newspaper entitled "Zion" (16 November 1897), issued in Brăila.

Dr. Lippe unambiguously stated the goal of the newspaper as passing the Zionist ideology among the Jewish people. Moreover, in the second issue K. Lippe wrote an article to support the Zionist ideas in front of the ultra orthodox rabbis who were opposing it for religious reasons. His second aim was to familiarize the Jewish readers with the Zionist ideas.

It was for the first time that a Jewish newspaper didn't focus on the difficult living condition of the Jewish population or asked for political emancipation. There were headlines revealing articles focusing on the speeches held at the Congress in Basle concerning the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Also, the newspaper underlined the necessity of creating new Zionist groups opened to those who were not involved in the movement or were part of socialist or assimilation groups. The effects of the new strategy were optimistic: the number of Zionist groups increased from 26 in 1897 to 136 in 1899. "Zion" was the first newspaper to publish articles concerning political Zionist ideology and tried to convince the members of "Hovevei Zion" that agricultural settlements had to be replaced.

The publishers of "Zion" were H. Lubrich and A. Guttman. Because the segment of readers that bought this publication was rather narrow, the newspaper ceased to be printed after 12 issues.

Its place was taken by "Ahavat Sion", published in Galați (1898). The newspaper deals again with the problem of the relationship between Hovevei Zion and political Zionism. An issue is dedicated to the Zionist Conference in Galați (April 5-6 1898), an event with extremely important results: for the first time there was established one central leadership of the movement. Also, the two distinct groups "Hovevei Zion" and Herzl's followers agreed to join in a common attempt to buy lands in Palestine by attracting funds according to the new "shekel policy".

The Conference also adopted the line of action proposed by the Congress in Basle regarding the necessity of having a coherent way in spreading the Zionist ideas. Consequently, the following issues of "Ahawath Sion" published texts that summarized the most important Zionist ideas: the right to a country and land; the return to Judaism; a homeland in Palestine; the establishment of a national Jewish fund (shekel) in order to buy land for settlements in Erez Israel, the recognition of the Jewish nation among the other nations.

The newspaper ceased to be published on August 28 1898, after 30 issues.

In 1898 A.D. Rosen and A.S. Gold both, worried about the absence of Zionist magazines, took the decision to issue “Vocea Sionului” (The Voice of Zion) in Ploiești.

In its first issue was published an article signed by Sam Pineles on behalf of the Central Zionist Committee, article that mentioned the magazine as the official voice of the Romanian Zionists.

The magazine brought a certain maturity regarding writing and this had to do with the fact that many important leaders of the movement were contributors to it: dr. Karpel Lippe, Sam Pineles, A. Stern, Moritz Stern, Roza Elman and I.H. Elman.

The topics were: reports from the second Zionist Congress in Basle (1898); the situation of agricultural settlements in Palestine; the modern Jewish culture; Biblical symbols in non theological interpretations.

“Vocea Sionului” ceased to appear after one year mostly because the town in which was published, Ploiești, was not relevant for the political Zionism.

It was followed by another newspaper issued in Iași in 1898. “Darabana” was the attempt of a group of young journalists to publish a newspaper in an important Zionist centre. They failed, mostly because their lack of experience (Darabana had only one issue).

Another attempt, this time a successful one, was made in 1899 in the same town, Iași. “Răsăritul” (Sunrise) was sponsored by a sustainer of the Zionist movement, H. Rosenbaum. It was recognized from the very beginning as the official magazine of the Zionist movement. It had a great success, mostly because of the editors' diligent attempt to maintain the high profile of the publication and their search for new and talented journalists.

The topics in “Răsăritul” referred to³: the attitude regarding the strong assimilation trend that was a threat not only for Zionism but also for the future of the Jewish community in Moldavia. Against those who were tempted to give up their Jewishness in order to have access to a certain career, the newspaper reacted promptly by publishing different articles on the topic (including polemics and satire); reports, articles and pictures regarding everyday life in the agricultural settlements in Palestine; translations of works regarding Zionism (Th. Herzl's “Jewish State”; a prize was offered for the best translation of Moses Hess' “Rome and Jerusalem”).

Besides these topics related to Zionism the newspaper also had a cultural section with scientific and literary articles and reports on Jewish cultural events

³ Some titles of articles: “Zionism in Iași” (year I, issue 2); “The Reconstruction of the Jewish Nationality” (year I, issue 5); “The Danger of Assimilation” (year I, issue 2); “The Jewish State and Th. Herzl” (sequel); “Zionism and Culture” (sequel) etc.

in Romania and in Europe⁴. Great attention was paid to the encouragement of new literary talents such as the poets Enric Furtună, M. Rusu, or the writer S. Ianovici. Pursuing this policy, the editor in chief A. Steuerman - Rodiou tried to prove that a Zionist magazine could deal with a large range of topics that were appealing not only to members of Zionist associations but also to Jewish intellectuals of all ages.

Although "Răsăritul" was one of the best newspapers that represented the Zionist movement, it ceased to be published after 100 issues at the end of the 19th century. The main reason was the effect that the difficult conditions of living during the winter of the year 1900 had on the Jewish population, effects that led to a mass emigration to America⁵.

A new magazine was issued in Bârlad but it lasted for only four months. Although there were articles signed by personalities such as M. Kisineff, M. Botoșeneanu, E. Cohen and S. Gross in it, "Aurora" never had the quality of "Răsăritul". The topics that were dealt with were various: the problem of anti-Semitism in Europe (comments on the Dreyfus trial), the activities of local Zionist associations and literary works of some Jewish intellectuals.

An important urban area that was neglected by the Zionist press until the end of the XIXth century was the Romanian capital city. It was only in 1899 when the first Zionist magazine was issued in Bucharest.

The declared goal of "Viitorul" ("The Future"), a weekly magazine, was not only to make Zionism popular but also to fight against the process to emigration to America. But this task proved to be too ambitious for it and the magazine ceased to be published after only four months. It can be noticed that the attempt to spread the Zionist ideas in Bucharest was rather unsuccessful, the Jewish community preferring to leave the country with destinations different from Israel. Also, the quality of the magazine suffered from lack of professional contributors, the literary articles (poetry and sketches) had a low level. There were also articles concerned with the activity of the various Zionist groups in the country, columns about the Zionist ideology. The magazine had only a few issues.

The second magazine published in Bucharest was "Dorul Sionului" on December 23 1899. Although the ambition of its editors was to make it a powerful Zionist voice, the magazine had only two issues.

The first prestigious magazine issued in Bucharest was "Tribuna Israelită" (January - March 1900) with 10 issues. Well written, with excellent cultural columns, the magazine was very promising. But the massive emigration wave to

⁴ Examples of such articles: "The National Gallery" (year I, issue 2); "The Jewish Culture at the Beginning of the Century"; "The Poetry of the Bible" (January 1900).

⁵ In 1900, 16678 Jewish people emigrated because of economic difficulties that led to starvation. C. Iancu, *Evreii din România. De la excludere la emancipare (1866 - 1919)*, Ed. Hasefer 1996, p. 296.

America led the journalists to give more and more space to this issue. As a result, the main topic (Zionism) became of a lesser interest and "Tribuna Israelită" had to end its appearance.

The last unsuccessful attempt of the Zionist press in Bucharest at the beginning of the XXth century was the magazine "Macabeul" (September 1900 - January 1901) with few pages but quite good reports on the Zionist movement in Romania and abroad. It had only 8 issues.

To conclude it can be said that in its early years the Zionist movement in Romania was influenced by the other trends that existed in the Jewish community: the constant struggle for emancipation and socialism. Newspapers and magazines entirely dedicated to political Zionism were issued only from the fall of 1897. The event that decisively made a contribution in that direction was the First Zionist Congress in Basle. The personality who played a crucial role in funding the Zionist press in Romania, was Karpel Lippe, delegate to the Congress.

Characteristic for the period of time between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century is the large number of newspapers and magazines that were published (10 newspapers were printed between 1897-1901), most of them ceasing to exist after a few issues (the first on this list is "Darabana" with only one issue). The explanation can be the lack of experience of some of the editors and the fact that the Jewish readers sometimes preferred newspapers of different orientations. Then, in the interwar period Zionism became stronger and the press ideologically attached to it gained in importance and improved in quality.

Generally, the topics discussed in the Zionist press were: propaganda articles about the Zionist ideology, the activity performed by Zionist groups in Romania and abroad, reports from Zionist Congresses; cultural issues: translations of important Zionist works (Herzl's "The Jewish State", Pinsker's "Autoemancipation"), literary works (poetry, sketches, short stories) by Jewish authors, articles on cultural events concerning the Jewish community; the permanent fight against the danger of assimilation ("Răsăritul") or emigration ("Viitorul"); the gender issue: the roles of women in Zionism; reports from Palestine.

Geographically speaking the Zionist press was more spread in Moldavia than in southern Romania. This can be explained by the strong influence that the movement in Russia had across the border. The community in Bucharest was more prone to fight for emancipation or for assimilation. The leading position of Moldavia can be noticed from the geographical location of Zionist societies: in 1907 from 49 independent societies only 7 were in towns from Walachia⁶.

⁶ See "Tabloul Societăților sioniste independente in 1907" in Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România, De la excludere la emancipare (1866 - 1919)*, Ed. Hasefer 1996, p. 287 - 288.

The language content

It is teacher’s task to identify what kind of language students should learn in a CLIL lesson. What is usually taught in such cases is *cognitive academic language proficiency* which relates to the language taught in different subjects. Usually, the following areas of language are approached: vocabulary, structures and functions as part of the content obligatory language.

Besides taking into consideration the language input teachers should also think about ways of activating prior knowledge and developing thinking skills.

The lesson

The following example is a ninety minute lesson that is focused on studying genre features and developing communicative skills. In order to do these teachers must give students guidance by providing them with a text as a model. This is the starting point of genre analysis and subject specific vocabulary study.

Before beginning the lesson the teacher is reading a paragraph from Herzl’s *Diaries*⁷: “*In Basle I established the Jewish State. If I were to say it publicly today, the response would be laughter from all directions. Perhaps in another five years, 50 years at the most, everyone will recognize it*”. Then she is asking students to recognize the author and to say how much they know about him.

In order to find out more information students are given an encyclopedia entry on this famous Zionist leader, Theodor Herzl. While reading, they are asked to find answers to some questions, such as:

Table1.

While-reading questions

1.	What is the purpose of the text?
2.	How is the information structured?
3.	What information is given in each paragraph?
4.	What order are the events in the entry presented in?
5.	What tenses and time adverbials are used?
6.	What subject specific vocabulary is used?

⁷ Herzl, Theodore, *Diaries 1895-1904*, Jerusalem 1997-2001, p. 482.

Then students read the following text⁸:

Herzl was born in 1860 in Budapest, Hungary, and was educated in the spirit of the Jewish-German Haskalah of the time.

In 1878 he moved with his family to Vienna, where he completed his law studies. After a year of practicing law he started writing. He published stories and plays, some of which were performed in Austria and in Germany. In the years 1896-98 Herzl tried to obtain the support of wealthy Jews – Baron Morris Hirsch and Baron Edmond de Rothschild – for the establishment of a Jewish State. He also tried to receive a concession from the Ottoman Empire for Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael, and for this purpose met with the Sultan and the Grand Vizier.

In 1898 Herzl met the German Kaiser in Jerusalem and proposed to him that the Jews should undertake to rehabilitate the finances of the Ottoman Empire in return for the Sultan foregoing his rule over Eretz Yisrael, and for his agreement to establish an independent Jewish State. His efforts did not bear fruit.

In August 1897 Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress - the National Assembly of the Jewish People seeking its renaissance - in Basle. At this Congress the Basle program, according to which the goal of Zionism was “to establish a National Home for the Jewish People in Eretz Yisrael, that will be secured on the basis of the Law of Nations”, was approved, and the Zionist Organization was established. Herzl chaired the debates in the Congress, and was elected President of the Zionist Organization. He served in this position until his death.

After discussing the answers and making sure that students have understood the purpose of the activity the teacher comes with a follow-up task: students have to search for information on another important leader, this time from Romania, Karpel Lippe. They are given the following resources: http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Lippe_Karpel, Lucian-Zeev Herşcovici, “Hebrew Maskilim Writers in Romania, 1850–1900,” in *Studia judaica* 6 (1997).

In the feedback stage the information is checked and discussed. Then the teacher turns a receptive skills activity into a communicative one by asking one student to come on the *hot seat* and pretend to be Dr. Karpel Lippe, chairman of the first Zionist Congress. The other students must ask as many questions as they can in order to get information about the Congress proceedings.

In the following stage students are given a short article from the second issue of the newspaper *Zion*, article that describes the events and atmosphere at the Congress in Basle.

Then students are asked to write their own piece of news related to this event as if they were participants. This task is used as assessment; the teacher collects the pieces of writing produced by the students for home correction.

⁸ From www.en.wikipedia.org

The lesson plan

Aims: studying genre features (writing an encyclopedia entry); developing productive skills (speaking and writing); developing reading comprehension; learning information about Zionist leaders and historical facts

Materials: handouts, encyclopedia entries, books.

1. Activity one (5 minutes)

The teacher is reading a paragraph from Herzl's *Diaries*⁹: *"In Basle I established the Jewish State. If I were to say it publicly today, the response would be laughter from all directions. Perhaps in another five years, 50 years at the most, everyone will recognize it"*. Then she is asking students to recognize the author and to say how much they know about him.

Teacher-student interaction

2. Activity two (15 minutes)

Students are asked to read a text that will be used as a model for writing an encyclopedia entry and answer some guiding questions.

Language focus: *to establish a state/organization, settlement, to forego a rule over something,, to convene a congress, to chair a debate.*

Structures: *past tense, passive voice.*

Functions: expressing opinions

Solo work

3. Feedback (5 minutes)

4. Activity four (15 minutes)

Students have to search for information on a Romanian leader, Karpel Lippe.

Pairwork

5. Feedback (5 minutes)

6. Activity five (15 minutes)

One student is invited to come on the *hot seat* and pretend to be Dr. Karpel Lippe, chairman of the first Zionist Congress. The other students must ask as many questions as they can in order to get information about the Congress proceedings.

Student-student interaction

⁹ Herzl, Theodore, *Diaries 1895-1904*, Jerusalem 1997-2001, p. 482.

7. Activity seven (10 minutes)

In the following stage students are given a short article from the second issue of the newspaper *Zion*, article that describes the events and atmosphere at the Congress in Basle.

Solo work

8. Assessment (20 minutes)

Then students are asked to write their own piece of news related to this event as if they were participants.

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PRE-SERVICE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHANGING ROLES OF TEACHERS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT. *Pre-Service Students' Perspectives on the Changing Roles of Teachers in the Digital Age.* The use of digital technologies as pedagogical tools offers meaningful and diverse possibilities for teaching and learning foreign languages. Still, in order to integrate efficiently digital technologies in education, teachers need to make proof of their digital competence. Moreover, digital technologies could also be perceived as a cultural hub since they enable users to have a multileveled contact with various socio-cultural contexts. In today's digital world, the teacher is required to question, in this new and dynamic learning environment, the relationship between self, identity and language.

Key words: *digital competence, ICC, the role of the teacher, foreign language teaching*

REZUMAT. *Perspectivile studenților de la nivelul I de formare pedagogică privind redimensionarea rolurilor cadrelor didactice în contextul informatizării societății.* Valorificarea tehnologiilor digitale în manieră pedagogică oferă numeroase posibilități de predare și învățare a limbilor străine. Dar integrarea eficientă a noilor tehnologii în domeniul educației presupune ca profesorii să facă dovada unei competențe digitale. În plus, noile tehnologii pot fi percepute ca fiind o resursă care favorizează contactul cu alte culturi și cu diverse contexte socio-culturale. În context actual, cadrul didactic trebuie să fie conștient de relația de interdependență între sine, identitate și limbaj.

Cuvinte cheie: *competența digitală, CCI, rolul cadrului didactic, predarea limbii străine*

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The first part of this paper intended to explore relevant literature in order to provide a theoretical framework for the changing roles and competencies of teachers in the Digital Age. The second part of the paper addressed the following two research questions: How do pre-service student-teachers perceive the roles of teachers in today's digital and knowledge society? How do pre-service student-teachers perceive the competencies of non-native foreign language teachers in the context of today's digital society? The data obtained has been analysed both in a qualitative and a quantitative manner.

Redefining the competencies of foreign language teachers in the Digital Age: the intercultural communicative competence and the digital competence

Education has been challenged in the past two decades to embrace innovative approaches to teaching foreign languages and creative ways of achieving professional development for teachers. The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) within the teaching practice implies a complex pedagogic endeavour both for teachers and learners, as well as for the specific learning context. Increasingly, the use of digital technologies as pedagogical tools offers meaningful and diverse possibilities for teaching and learning foreign languages such as flexibility and a student-centred approach to teaching. In addition to the face-to-face traditional instruction, technology offers learners different levels of interactivity: e-learning, blended-learning, mobile learning or virtual learning.

A research conducted in Romania within the Digital Agenda program² commissioned by the European Union indicates that there is, in comparison to other European countries, a high percentage (between 56% and 71%) of students taught by teachers who are subject to mandatory ICT training. This percentage is sustained also by the fact that many pre-service teacher training programs at bachelor level offer ICT training. The pre-service teacher training program offers to students enrolled at the Faculty of Letters a similar course in the 6st semester of their studies. Still, the course – The didactics of the English language– provides various contexts in which vocabulary and the four skills are taught with the use of digital technology. One such example is the use of an application called padlet.com that offers students almost the same opportunities as a wiki does.

In today's digital world, the teacher is required to question, in this new and dynamic learning environment, the relationship between self, identity and language. The impact of globalization on identity is experienced both on a personal and professional level. Because language and culture are interrelated, the cultural

² https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf, p. 30.
Accessed on November 15th, 2014

identity of foreign language teachers started to become a matter of interest for many policy makers. According to Braine (2013, 12-13), *the non-native speaker movement* began within the TESOL organization in 1999 but had its roots in the publication of Phillipson's *Linguistic Imperialism* in 1992, which dealt with the "native speaker fallacy". In order to acknowledge the rightful place of teachers who are non-native speakers (NNS) many researchers provided valuable insights into this matter and disagreed with the NNS teachers' discrimination (Medgyes 1994; Canagarajah, S., 1999; 2013; Murtiana, R., 2013, Liang 2002;). Nowadays, with the help of technology, the rigid borders that previously indicated a NNS teacher's place of birth have vanished. Instead, teachers who are native speakers as well as those who are NNS need to make proof of their professionalism and disregard discrimination rooted in identity.

Digital technologies could also be perceived as a cultural hub since they enable users to have a multileveled contact with various people that belong to various socio-cultural contexts. Both teachers and learners need to become acquainted with digital etiquette and with how culture is reflected in the resources used for teaching foreign languages. In addition to the subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical skills and ability to put in practice various learning activities, the teacher has to make proof of his/her intercultural communicative competence (ICC). According to Guilherme (2000, 297) the intercultural communicative competence constitutes the ability to interact in an efficient manner with people that belong to other cultures. In order to facilitate learners' integration within the broad society teachers need to become *cultural mediators* (Bârlogeanu, 2002) and *orchestrators of social contexts for learning* (Diamond and Moore 1995 quoted in. Gay, 2000, 42-43). Due to the great number of economic and social changes that influence education, teachers need to demonstrate intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Byram, 1997). Therefore, in the globalized world and the Digital Age, the intercultural communicative competence represents a prerequisite for the teacher who intends to achieve professional and personal development.

According to various rules and regulations established by policy makers, teachers are expected to acquire digital competence and be able to use ICT. The European Union issued in 2006 a Recommendation on Key Competences³ needed to be acquired by young people and adults, particularly in the context of lifelong learning. Likewise, digital competence is a transversal key competence that implies critical use of information and basic skills in mastering the ICT.

³ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm. Accessed on November 16th, 2014

In addition, the International Society for Technology in Education⁴ issued in 2008 a standard model and various performance indicators that redefine the skills and attitudes of teachers towards the use of ICT. Consequently, teachers have to be able to design and develop digital learning experiences and be able to promote digital citizenship and online responsibility. The Romanian work standard for teachers issued in 1999 by the Council of National Occupations Standards (1999, 3)⁵, also indicates the need of teachers to acquire technological knowledge and digital skills in order to master effectively the use of ICT.

This paper embraced the model of electronic literacy proposed by Moser (2000 in O'Dowd 2007, 24). The reason for choosing this model resides in the fact that it brings together two important elements that have been also presented in the literature review, namely technology and intercultural (socio-cultural) competence. This model comprises four types of competencies that teachers need to master in order to engage efficiently in online learning activities:

- technical competencies
- cultural competencies
- social competencies
- reflexive competencies

The research conducted in the second part of this paper is grounded on the model proposed by Moser. From the perspective of a pre-service teacher training programme, technical competencies refer to knowledge of technical details, ways of integrating video and multimedia tools in a learning activity, designing interactive teaching resources etc. Cultural competencies refer to the ways in which users of technology are able to communicate with people belonging to different cultures, while social competencies refer to the ability to communicate efficiently in diverse communicative context. A reflexive attitude aims at developing the would-be teachers' motivation, interest and willingness to use ICT for conducting learning activities and for achieving personal and professional development.

Redefining the roles of foreign language teachers in the Digital Age

Jacques Delors (UNESCO 1996, 141-142) anticipated the upcoming changes in education due to globalization and technology development and assigned an important role to the teacher: that of an *agent of change*. Education, in

⁴ http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-T_PDF.pdf

⁵ <http://www.ccd-bucuresti.org/documente/Standarde%20ocupationale/Profesor%20gimnaziu%20-%20liceu.pdf>. Accessed on November 24th, 2014

its broad sense, needs to adapt to the constant needs of the society and its learners. Therefore, according to Galaway (2013, 3) teacher education programs have to remain attentive to the social context in which education takes place.

Harmer (2007, 25) indicates several teacher roles in a face-to-face teaching context: controller, prompter, resource, tutor and assessor. One could easily add a considerable amount of other roles to the list: a participant, a diagnostician, a friend, a facilitator etc. These roles and the responsibilities linked to them are bound to change in a learning environment that is focused on integrating ICT tools. Still, the transition from a traditional teaching to one based on ICT tools implies an adaptation of these teacher roles. This idea of adaptation is supported by Goodyear et al. (2001, 71) who note that "it is important to recognise the similarities between conventional face to face teaching and online teaching and not to assume that there is no transfer between conventional teaching skills and online teaching skills".

Education in the Digital Age intends to make teachers more aware of the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to develop in order to become efficient users of ICT. Goodyear et al. (2001) identified eight key roles for online teaching: content facilitator, process facilitator, adviser-counsellor, assessor, designer, technologist, researcher and manager-administrator. Almost all these roles can be found in a face-to-face teaching context, excepting the role of the technologist. Another perspective that takes into consideration the socio-cultural context of the online teaching context is that provided by Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2000) who designed a framework called Community of Inquiry (CoI) which is a dynamic model of online learning. It is comprised of three core elements that are interrelated: cognitive presence, social presence and teaching presence. The two literature references above focus on the subject-matter knowledge and on the teaching skills that are necessary to conduct teaching in an online learning context.

The research

The second part of this paper presents the results that have been obtained for the two research questions. The details of the research are presented below:

Location: Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

Span of time: November 2014

Respondents: 3rd year students, specialization: English-minor

Recruitment: students volunteered to take part in this research after they had been informed about the details of the study.

Research method: survey, containing various items that were analysed in a qualitative and a quantitative manner

The profile of the respondents

First of all, respondents were required to answer some questions (related to gender, age, number of spoken languages, time spent online) in order to establish a group profile. Out of a total number of 24 respondents, 22 were women and 2 were men. The majority of the respondents (N=19) were 21 years old. Figure no. 1 indicates other details related to the age of the respondents.

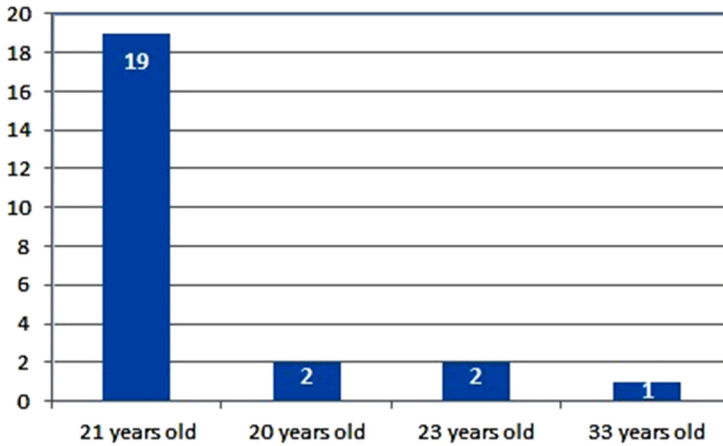


Fig. no. 1. The age of the respondents

Figure no. 2 indicates the number of languages that respondents are able to speak:

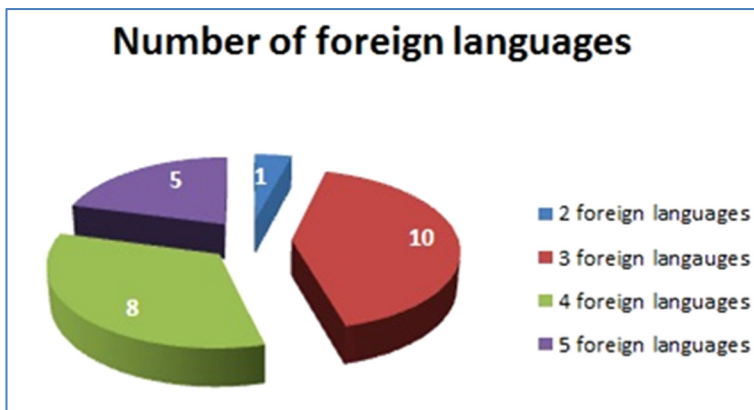


Fig. no. 2. Number of foreign languages spoken by students

A number of respondents mentioned that they were able to speak three foreign languages, while a number of 8 respondents were able to speak four foreign languages.

Out of the total number of respondents, just one answered that he/she does not have permanent access to the internet. As regards the time spent on the internet, the answers provided by the respondents range from: 2 h/ day (5 students) to 3 h/day (3 students), 4 h/day (7 students), 5 h/day (3 students) and between 6/day and 8 h/day (3 students). A number of 21 respondents use the internet for both personal and academic purposes, while 3 students just for personal use.

Respondents provided answers on a Likert scale to a survey containing 8 items. The items presented below in table no.1 are based on the model of electronic literacy proposed by Moser (2000):

Table no. 1.

Survey – the competencies of teachers in the digital age

1. I would rate my <i>content/subject-matter knowledge</i> as:
2. I would rate my <i>pedagogical knowledge</i> as:
3. I would rate my <i>knowledge of digital technology/ ICT (information and communications technology)</i> as:
4. I would rate my <i>ability to use digital technology</i> as:
5. I would rate my <i>motivation to use digital technology</i> as:
6. I would rate my <i>willingness to use digital technology</i> as:
7. I would rate my <i>social competencies</i> when using digital technology/ ICT as follows:
8. I would rate my <i>cultural competencies</i> when using digital technology/ICT as follows:

Respondents chose their answers from a Likert scale grid where 1- very poor and 5 – very good. The results were analysed in a quantitative manner using IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Table no. 2 indicates the data that was collected and the statistical *mean* (m) obtained for each item of the survey:

Table no. 2.

Statistical data regarding the competencies of teachers in the digital age

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
N Valid	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
N Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3,6667	3,5000	3,6250	3,8750	4,1667	3,9167	3,7500	3,5833
Median	4,0000	3,0000	4,0000	4,0000	4,0000	4,0000	4,0000	3,0000
Std. Deviation	,81650	,58977	,87539	,85019	,70196	,77553	,73721	,82970
Minimum	2,00	3,00	1,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	2,00
Maximum	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00
Sum	88,00	84,00	87,00	93,00	100,00	94,00	90,00	86,00

For items number 1 and 2, 10 respondents, respectively 13 respondents answered that they were not sure, i.e. they do not know how to evaluate themselves either in terms of subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Data is presented in table no. 3:

Table no. 3.
Self-evaluation of students' subject-matter and pedagogical knowledge

Q1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not sure	10	41,7	41,7	45,8
	Total	24	100,0	100,0	

Q2					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not sure	13	54,2	54,2	54,2
	Total	24	100,0	100,0	

As regards their knowledge of digital technology (item no. 3) and ability to use ICT (item no. 4) a number of 17 respondents, respectively 13 respondents answered that they have a good level of mastering ICT. The highest score was obtained for item no. 5 (mean= 4.166) where 12 respondents answered that they are motivated to use ICT, while 8 respondents are highly motivated to use ICT. Data is presented in table no. 4:

Table no. 4.
Self-evaluation of students' motivation to use digital technology

Q5					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	not sure	4	16,7	16,7	16,7
	good	12	50,0	50,0	66,7
	very good	8	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	24	100,0	100,0	

A high score was also obtained for item no. 6 where 10 respondents answered that they are willing to use ICT, respectively 6 respondents answered that they demonstrate willingness to use ICT to a high degree. A number of 13 respondents answered to item no. 7 that they have good social skills when using ICT, as opposed to item no. 8 where just 7 respondents answered that they have good cultural competences when using ICT. The table below indicates the data gathered for item no. 8.

Table no. 5.
Self-evaluation of students' level of cultural competencies when using digital technology

Q8

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
<u>poor</u>	1	4,2	4,2	4,2
<u>not sure</u>	12	50,0	50,0	54,2
Valid <u>good</u>	7	29,2	29,2	83,3
<u>very good</u>	4	16,7	16,7	100,0
Total	24	100,0	100,0	

The data gathered using the survey based on the model of electronic literacy proposed by Moser (2000) indicates that respondents are able, willing and motivated to use digital technology. Still, the considerable amount of answers rated on the Likert scale with no. 3 *not sure* – indicates that some respondents lack the ability to evaluate their knowledge. Moreover, the data obtained for item no. 8 indicates that respondents need to further develop their cultural competence (knowledge of general and specific cultural information, the ability to use language appropriately in different cultural contexts etc.) which is of paramount importance in today's digital and globalized world.

The second part of the survey was comprised of five items which respondents had to provide answers to. The data was analysed in a qualitative manner. The items of the survey are indicated in table no. 6:

Table no. 6.
Survey – the roles of teachers in the Digital Age

1. Aspects of my teaching which I think are strong
2. Aspects of my teaching which I need to give special attention to in order to improve:
3. Indicate some roles of teachers in <i>the traditional classroom</i>
4. Indicate some <i>roles of teachers in the Digital Age</i>
5. How do you perceive yourself as a <i>non-native foreign language teacher</i> in the context of today's digital society?

For item no. 1 respondents provided a variety of aspects ranging from subject-matter knowledge to the ability to communicate effectively and explain various grammar points to their would-be students. Respondents indicated a considerable amount of other aspects that regard their attitudes towards teaching: perseverance, creativity, patience, empathy, motivation. Just one respondent mentioned that he/she is confident in using digital technology.

The aspects that respondents intend to improve (item no. 2) range from cognitive and behavioural aspects to attitude development. Respondents want to be able to master flawlessly the subject-matter, to manage effectively classroom management scenarios or to improve their communication skills. The abilities to stir students' curiosity, to use digital technology or to improve social skills constitute represent meaningful aspects that respondents take into consideration. In terms of attitudes, respondents would like to become more creative, patient and flexible.

Respondents were requested to indicate for item no. 3 some roles that teachers might perform in the traditional face-to-face classroom. Their responses have been introduced in an application called Wordle which generates *word clouds*. Wordle (www.wordle.net) organizes the data in terms of frequency, so a bigger font size indicates a high frequency of the key word and a lower font size indicates a low frequency. The respondents' perspective on the roles a teacher might have in the traditional classroom is indicated in image no. 1:



Image no. 1. – Teacher roles in the traditional classroom

The respondents' view is that most often the teacher is a controller, a resource and an observer. The other roles written in smaller font sizes were not mentioned by respondents with the same frequency. Indeed, it is often the case in the traditional face-to-face classroom that the teacher is in charge of managing the whole classroom and acts as the sole owner of the subject-matter knowledge.

The respondents' perspective on the roles of teachers in the Digital Age undergoes some changes. The data obtained is presented in image no. 2 below:



Image no. 2. – The roles of teachers in the Digital Age

The roles of a facilitator and of a guide (for item no. 4) gathered the highest number of the respondents' choices. Apparently, respondents consider that in an online environment the teacher acts more as a mediator and facilitator of information rather than being an authoritative controller. One could observe by looking at images no. 1 and 2 that the responsibilities of the teacher undergo some changes in the online learning environment. The information intended to be taught or put in practice (i.e. vocabulary, grammar points) is already online. Therefore, the responsibility of the teacher resides in providing guidelines to students, in providing coordination and pieces of advice in order to reach a specific item of information. The focus is placed, as within a constructivist framework, on the student and the appropriate use of available knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The rationale for including item no. 5 in this survey resides in the way non-native speaker teachers' language competence has been perceived in the last decades in the context of teaching foreign languages. A number of 10 respondents claim that there is no difference between NS and NNS in the context of ICT and that they don't feel uncomfortable, intimidated or stressed about their language competence in an online teaching environment. Still, 4 respondents answered that they were concerned about making grammar mistakes or not being able to master different language registers. A number of 3 respondents suggested that they prefer face-to-face teaching to online teaching and to the use of ICT tools.

Conclusions

Most of the respondents are motivated and willing to use the ICT tools in their teaching activities. Still, many of them need to develop their social and cultural competencies. In the qualitative section of the research respondents

demonstrated a reflexive attitude. They were able to provide many details about their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the teaching practice they have experienced so far. All in all, the students enrolled in the pre-service teacher training programme at the Faculty of Letters demonstrate that they are aware of the changing roles and responsibilities of teachers in the Digital Age.

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LA CULTURA EN CLASE DE E/LE

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ABSTRACT. *Culture in Spanish as a Foreign Language Classes.* This article pleads for the use of cultural elements in Spanish as a foreign language classes due to the close connection between the different components of an efficient communication: language, social, cultural, discursive, strategic skills, that are involved when interacting with native speakers in concrete, real contexts. Teaching and learning cultural elements contribute to the acquisition of knowledge, improve communication skills, open windows to a new world and create values and expectations, which is one of the objectives of education.

Key words: *teaching / learning languages, culture, skills, communication*

REZUMAT. *Cultura la orele de limbă spaniolă ca limbă străină.* În acest articol vom pleda pentru introducerea de elemente culturale la ora de limbă spaniolă ca limbă străină, dată fiind strânsa legătură care există între diferitele componente ale unei comunicări eficiente: competențe lingvistice, sociale, culturale, discursive, strategice, care intră în joc în momentul interacțiunii cu vorbitori nativi în context concret, real. Predarea-învățarea elementelor culturale contribuie la dobândirea de noi cunoștințe, îmbunătățește competențele de comunicare, deschide ferestre spre o lume nouă și creează valori și expectative, ceea ce reprezintă unul din obiectivele educației.

Cuvinte cheie: *predarea/învățarea limbilor străine, cultură, competențe, comunicare*

Las nuevas tendencias en didáctica de lenguas extranjeras exigen al docente re-pensar, re-estructurar, re-diseñar los cursos de lengua y dar a lo cultural el lugar debido. Enseñar una lengua no se reduce a un simple hecho de

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transmitir o transferir palabras o elementos lingüísticos (gramática, léxico) de una lengua a otra, sino que supone la introducción de elementos funcionales, pragmáticos, socioculturales, por lo cual el proceso de adquisición de una lengua nueva es muy complejo. La correlación entre estos componentes garantiza el desarrollo de competencias y destrezas de comprensión, de comunicación y de interacción, necesarias para el uso eficaz de una lengua. Entre la lengua y la cultura hay una relación de interdependencia, puesto que el conocimiento sociocultural forma parte del conocimiento del mundo, como lo señala también el *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación*, según el cual: “el conocimiento de la sociedad y de la cultura de la comunidad o comunidades en las que se habla el idioma es un aspecto del conocimiento del mundo. Sin embargo, tiene la importancia suficiente como para merecer la atención del alumno, sobre todo porque, al contrario que muchos otros aspectos del conocimiento, es probable que no se encuentre en su experiencia previa, y puede que esté distorsionado por los estereotipos.”² No queremos transformar la clase de E/LE en clase de cultura y de civilización españolas, pero es preciso introducir elementos culturales en clase de lengua y/o dedicar de vez en cuando unas secuencias didácticas a la cultura española, ya que las informaciones nuevas que se comunican en la lengua meta contribuyen al desarrollo de las destrezas lingüísticas, a un mejor rendimiento comunicativo. Todo esto incluso en el caso de los alumnos principiantes, puesto que para los niveles avanzados, la literatura, el arte, los textos de difusión de la ciencia ya se utilizan para el mejoramiento de los conocimientos y para la adquisición de nuevos conocimientos lingüísticos, socioculturales, técnicos, etc. Tanto el docente como el alumno deben comprender la relación entre la cultura y la lengua. Esta última, lejos de ser un conjunto cerrado de elementos lingüísticos (léxicos y gramaticales), se encuentra en un permanente cambio, adaptándose al ritmo de evolución de la sociedad, por lo cual de la cultura tan compleja y cambiante, cuya influencia en la lengua es evidente e incontestable. Por consiguiente, a la hora de diseñar un curso de lengua española se deben incluir obligatoriamente elementos de cultura hispana, pero no como una parte separada, agregada, sino como una parte integrante del curso de lengua, realizando una correlación armoniosa entre las partes.

² *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación*, Consejo de Europa, 2002, el Instituto Cervantes para la traducción al español: http://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca_ele/marco/cvc_mer.pdf, fecha de consulta: el 25 de noviembre de 2014, p. 100.

¿Qué comprendemos por enseñar cultura hispana? Es decir transmitir conocimientos relacionados con las características geográficas, medioambientales³, modos de vida y costumbres (gustos, preferencias, hábitos, etiqueta social, jerarquía social, etc.) del mundo hispano, con lo específico desde varios puntos de vista como: artístico, económico, social, político, científico, de España y de otros países de habla hispana, formas y expresiones de una sociedad determinada, características distintivas que resulten útiles para las futuras relaciones personales y profesionales con habitantes de tales zonas. La cultura se asocia con la civilización, con el progreso. Como tal, la cultura no se debe imaginar como un todo que se pueda transmitir, aprender y enseñar en clase de E/LE, sino como una realidad fragmentada, una selección de contenidos culturales⁴. Ni siquiera un nativo puede abarcar todo lo que significa cultura hispana⁵.

¿Por qué enseñar cultura en clase de E/LE? Porque el deseo de aprender una lengua extranjera, en este caso del español, está directamente relacionado con el deseo de interactuar con personas de otra cultura, lo que supone que el alumno conozca la cultura del país en cuestión, que la comprenda y la acepte para poder participar en las relaciones sociales.

Objetivos de la clase

El docente debe proporcionar una enseñanza pertinente para distintos contextos, sociales, culturales, que permitan al alumno desenvolverse con éxito en situaciones concretas, de la vida que supongan el uso de la lengua extranjera aprendida. El aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero conlleva la adquisición de conocimientos relacionados con otra cultura, que condicionan, enriquecen o matizan el proceso de comunicación, la lengua siendo un vehículo necesario para realizar tareas en contextos reales. Al ofrecer contextos concretos para el uso de

³ Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación, *Op.cit.*, p. 100.

⁴ Ver también C. Solís, Litz, *La enseñanza de la competencia intercultural en el aula de E/LE, Consideraciones didácticas para programas de inmersión lingüístico-cultural (PILC)*, Revista Nebrija de lingüística aplicada a la enseñanza de las lenguas, N°11, artículo consultado en: <http://www.nebrija.com/revista-linguistica/la-ense%C3%B1anza-de-la-competencia-intercultural-en-el-aula-de-e-le>, fecha de consulta: el 15 de noviembre de 2014.

⁵ Cf. Nauta, Jan Peter, *¿Qué cosas y con qué palabras? En busca de una competencia comunicativa*, Cable, núm. 10, 1992, pág. 10: "Si la cultura española es el conjunto de todo lo que los españoles han producido en el transcurso de los tiempos, está claro que ningún español posee la cultura española, ni puede poseerla. Cada español posee una parcela de esa cultura, una identidad social que varía según la edad, el sexo, el estado civil, la clase social, la región, la profesión u ocupación, y gran cantidad de otros factores. Podemos hablar entonces de muchas culturas parciales o subculturas [...] que, como totalidad, constituye la cultura española".

los elementos culturales y al relacionarlos con los objetivos lingüísticos, se alcanza un mejor aprovechamiento de la enseñanza/ del aprendizaje. Este tipo de tareas aumenta la motivación, fomenta el desarrollo de estrategias de aprendizaje y de resolución de problemas, favorece el trabajo cooperativo, pero también el trabajo en autonomía, brevemente potencia la competencia comunicativa, la competencia pragmática y la competencia cultural e intercultural.

Los objetivos de la enseñanza de elementos culturales en la clase de E/LE son variados y deben adaptarse al grupo de estudiantes. Estos pueden adquirir o mejorar las competencias necesarias para desempeñar un papel social, para integrarse en el mercado laboral, donde la diversidad cultural es evidente debido a la gran movilización de personas con el propósito de encontrar trabajo. A pesar de la política de globalización mundial, la cultura permanece una clave en el esfuerzo de los países de mantenerse como identidad nacional. Cuando los alumnos topan con una información que contradice sus ideas preconcebidas es posible que aparezca el fenómeno llamado “choque cultural” que puede entorpecer el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la lengua meta si no se resuelve mediante actividades de carácter interactivo, que propician la expresión libre de las opiniones, las cuales facilitan la familiarización con la nueva perspectiva, que fomentan una actitud positiva, de aceptación, de tolerancia, de respeto, desarrollando la empatía para entender la alteridad. Por lo tanto, el alumno debe aprender a aceptar las diferencias culturales, a integrarse de modo activo y eficaz en una sociedad multicultural que exige comunicación, intercambio, convivencia en la diferencia. Para cumplir este papel el alumno debe construirse una percepción sobre la otra comunidad, tener una imagen más o menos general acerca de una sociedad distinta, de otra cultura, con tal de rentabilizar los conocimientos lingüísticos y crear “espacios de inmersión socio-cultural que permitan a los aprendientes de lenguas y culturas extranjeras participar en intercambios comunicativos naturales y genuinos con los miembros de la cultura meta”⁶. El alumno debe llegar a valorar la visión del mundo de la nueva cultura desde el punto de vista de la lengua adquirida y no de su propia lengua. Presentar la lengua en un contexto social capacita a los alumnos para reconocer, comparar, aceptar diferentes visiones sobre el mundo y les motiva para comunicarse con más soltura.

Así pues, un enfoque pluridisciplinar e interdisciplinar abordado en clase de E/LE ayuda al alumno a hacer correlaciones entre los diversos conocimientos, a simplificar el análisis de las informaciones dadas y facilita la toma de decisiones, evaluando y valorizando los diferentes aspectos, realizando la elección entre las

⁶ C. Solís, Litza, *Op.cit.*, artículo consultado en: <http://www.nebrija.com/revista-linguistica/la-ense%C3%B1anza-de-la-competencia-intercultural-en-el-aula-de-e-le>, fecha de consulta: el 15 de noviembre de 2014.

diferentes opciones para resolver de modo apropiado una situación conflictiva del entorno familiar, profesional, etc. Este planteamiento fomenta la interpretación, mayor facilidad en el análisis, ilustración, estructuración de los conocimientos, la curiosidad, la innovación, la creatividad, la conciencia de sus propias capacidades intelectuales, el desarrollo del espíritu crítico, mayor capacidad para adaptarse a situaciones nuevas y discontinuas, menos previsibles, que se pueden resolver con la ayuda de cierto bagaje cultural.

¿Pero cómo se evalúan todas estas variables? El profesor se confronta con una dificultad más a la hora de evaluar la actuación de un alumno. ¿Qué hay que evaluar: la competencia lingüística, la competencia pragmática y/ o sociocultural? Si un discurso construido correctamente desde punto de vista de la gramática, de la semántica, carece de carácter sociocultural, se penaliza ya que los conocimientos generales deben englobar también normas y referentes socioculturales apropiados en relación con el contexto en que se produce.

Para comunicarse con éxito el alumno necesita ciertas destrezas y habilidades interculturales. Según el *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación*, estas son:

- “La capacidad de relacionar entre sí la cultura de origen y la cultura extranjera.
- La sensibilidad cultural y la capacidad de identificar y utilizar una variedad de estrategias para establecer contacto con personas de otras culturas.
- La capacidad de cumplir el papel de intermediario cultural entre la cultura propia y la cultura extranjera, y de abordar con eficacia los malentendidos interculturales y las situaciones conflictivas.
- La capacidad de superar relaciones estereotipadas.”⁷

Estas destrezas y habilidades interculturales se adquieren paulatinamente, al vincular los elementos lingüísticos a los elementos culturales/ socioculturales, utilizando los materiales didácticos adecuados, atentamente seleccionados e integrados en clase de E/LE.

Materiales utilizados en la clase

Queda un verdadero reto para el profesor hacer una elección en cuanto se refiere a los contenidos culturales para presentarlos en clase de E/LE. Los materiales que facilitan la labor del profesor y que fomentan la motivación de los estudiantes son múltiples. Es muy importante que el docente haga una selección en función del

⁷ *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación*, Op.cit., p. 102.

nivel (es decir de los conocimientos anteriores, del grado de complejidad, de la nivel de abstracción), de las necesidades y de los objetivos de los estudiantes, abarcando varios temas relacionados con la historia, la geografía, la literatura, el arte, la gastronomía, etc. A veces, para explicar un sintagma, una expresión, un refrán, el docente debe hacer referencia al hecho cultural (histórico, literario, etc.) que justifica el uso y el contexto en que se puede utilizar de modo pertinente, puesto que el sentido lingüístico no es siempre suficiente para comprender totalmente un mensaje. Al tener un bagaje cultural se pueden evitar malentendidos, conflictos en la comunicación en contextos sociales, cuyas reglas se deben conocer.

Los documentos auténticos, como por ejemplo artículos de prensa, revistas, artículos de diseminación de la cultura y de la ciencia, informes públicos de varios dominios, publicidad, manuales de instrucciones, impresos, folletos, documentales, películas, series, programas de radio y televisión, telediarios, menús, etc., son una muestra de lenguaje «auténtico», en un contexto concreto.

Los materiales audiovisuales tienen el mayor impacto gracias a la combinación de imágenes, sonido, informaciones vinculadas que se completan y favorecen la comprensión. En este sentido, los medios de comunicación (Internet, prensa, televisión, cine), cuyos contenidos culturales se pueden explotar desde punto de vista didáctico, representan unos instrumentos muy útiles. Es cierto que los medios de comunicación ofrecen formas lingüísticas coloquiales, pero pueden resultar un buen pretexto para enseñar a la vez la lengua hablada. Vinculan también usos incorrectos de la lengua, pero pueden ser utilizados como ejemplos de mal uso y ser punto de partida para un ejercicio de corrección, por lo tanto de reflexión sobre el uso de la lengua.

El uso de Internet, de la televisión, del magnetoscopio, de la radio es esencial en clase de E/LE para la introducción de imágenes que presentan gente, objetos, situaciones, gestos que los alumnos deben descodificar y compararlos con los de su cultura. De tal modo se sensibilizan los alumnos para hacer un análisis lingüístico, sociocultural, poniendo en juego destrezas de comprensión oral y/o escrita, expresión oral y/o escrita y de interacción.

La letra de una canción, un texto literario, un cómic son manifestaciones culturales que contribuyen al enriquecimiento de la imagen que uno tiene acerca de otra cultura o a la creación de una imagen nueva. Mediante ellos se puede trabajar la expresión de los sentimientos, por ejemplo, dado que el componente cultural aspira también a crear actitudes nuevas.

Mediante el uso de documentos con componente cultural se mejoran las competencias lingüísticas: comprender con mayor facilidad textos escritos y/u orales, que contienen informaciones explícitas e implícitas sobre la cultura de otro país, interpretar los diferentes puntos de vista, evaluarlos, destacar lo esencial, es decir los mecanismos de funcionamiento de una sociedad, hablar con fluidez

sobre el tema, proporcionando informaciones pertinentes, redactar una presentación de lo expuesto en el documento inicial, comparar con las costumbres de su país, destacando las diferencias y/o las similitudes, caso en que inciden factores cognitivos, afectivos, de actitud, de personalidad, hasta se puede hablar de una “personalidad intercultural”⁸ educada.

Para educarla, el profesor puede hacer uso de una variedad de ejercicios a partir del material elegido.

Tipos de ejercicios/ actividades

El tipo de ejercicio que se va a utilizar en clase de E/LE se puede negociar con los alumnos con tal de crear una atmósfera propicia para el trabajo, para motivar a los alumnos para que se impliquen de modo activo en las actividades garantizando de esta forma una mejor adquisición de nuevos conocimientos, el fortalecimiento de los conocimientos ya adquiridos mediante la utilización de la lengua en contextos nuevos, el uso correcto de los conocimientos previos. El papel del profesor es, en este caso, mediar, supervisar, enmendar los posibles errores, guiar a los alumnos.

Entre las actividades que se pueden proponer para vincular lo lingüístico a lo cultural, mencionamos: describir, comentar una foto, una secuencia de audio y/ o de vídeo expresando sus percepciones, sus creencias, sus ideas; reconocer, analizar, interpretar una situación cuyo contenido cultural es explícito o implícito; contar un hecho, imaginar una historia desde varias perspectivas (la perspectiva de un nativo/ de un extranjero que entra en contacto con una sociedad y una cultura diferentes de la suya), cambiando de registro o de tipo de texto, ofreciendo variantes de una historia con un fondo cultural evidente; imaginar el desenlace de una historia/ película/ un texto literario; buscar similitudes y diferencias culturales a partir de las informaciones provistas por medio de un documento auténtico; plantear, hablar y escribir sobre temas específicos de la cultura hispana; investigar y profundizar un significado (una fiesta, una costumbre), un símbolo (religioso, por ejemplo) específico de la cultura hispana; reformular, parafrasear un texto o escrito; debatir un tema actual, dar argumentos a favor y/o en contra; visitar virtualmente un museo, una ciudad, un país de habla hispana, y la lista puede continuar. Le toca al profesor elegir las actividades que favorezcan el alcance del objetivo propuesto, teniendo en cuenta que un simple elemento cultural puede activar, dinamizar la clase de E/LE, dándole un enfoque actual, pragmático, por lo cual se fomenta la participación activa en las actividades, garantizando la adquisición exitosa de los

⁸ Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación, *Op.cit.*, p. 104.

contenidos vinculados. De esta forma se adquiere o se mejora la competencia lingüística y, paralelamente, otras competencias: social, cultural, discursiva, estratégica.

Conclusión

El desarrollo personal, profesional implica también el desarrollo cultural, por lo tanto la enseñanza de la cultura en clase de E/LE contribuye altamente al perfeccionamiento de cada persona. El planteamiento integrador de conocimientos lingüísticos y culturales a la vez asegura un mejor rendimiento en la enseñanza/ el aprendizaje de E/LE. Enseñar cultura no solamente fomenta la adquisición de informaciones nuevas, sino también el desarrollo de habilidades, como la capacidad de reflexión sobre sí mismo y sobre el mundo, la capacidad de discernir valores y buscar nuevas significaciones⁹. A veces no es suficiente alcanzar una buena competencia lingüística, sin competencias socioculturales, para poder interactuar y llevar a cabo una conversación con un nativo.

En conclusión, la enseñanza/ el aprendizaje de la cultura en clase de E/ELE, además de mejorar las competencias de comunicación en la lengua meta, abre ventanas sobre el mundo (entorno, relaciones, medios) y crea valores y expectativas, lo que representa uno de los principales objetivos de la educación.

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STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS COMMUNICATION SKILLS

ADRIANA CRISTIAN¹

ABSTRACT. *Strategies for Enhancing Geography Students Communication Skills.* In an era of technology and globalization, communication plays a major role. We may say that helping students to develop their communication skills in English is the need of the hour. On the other hand, selecting the most effective strategies and the most appropriate pedagogies to enable students to enhance their communication abilities is a real challenge for every ESP teacher. The main advantage of an ESP teacher is the fact that their learners are adults who are interested in their subject-matter field which provides them the meaningful context. Therefore, it is easier to motivate and help them, through various strategies, to become confident and proficient speakers of English. In communicative language teaching, there are various techniques used on a large scale in the classroom to achieve this goal: pair and group work, role-play, task and fluency-based activities etc. The aim of this paper is to present some strategies, adapted to Geography students' needs, I use in my ESP classes. These 'methods' are meant to help learners to expand vocabulary, to improve fluency, to exhibit confidence and enthusiasm while using the English language, in other words, to communicate better.

Keywords: *communication skills, communicative strategies, CLT (communicative language teaching), task-based activities, pair-work, group work, role-play, simulation, motivation, ESP (English for Specific Purposes)*

REZUMAT. *Strategii de îmbunătățire a abilităților de comunicare ale studenților geografici.* În era tehnologiei și a globalizării, comunicarea joacă un rol important. Putem afirma că dezvoltarea abilităților de comunicare în limba engleză este o problemă de maximă actualitate. Selectarea unor strategii și metode didactice dintre cele mai eficiente pentru a ajuta studenții să-și dezvolte abilitățile de comunicare este o adevărată provocare pentru toți profesorii de engleză specializată.

Cuvinte cheie: *abilități de comunicare, abordare comunicativă, motivare, simulare, ESP.*

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Introduction

In an era of technology and globalization spoken and written communication skills in English are of great importance in people's professional and personal lives. A good communicator has to have a variety of skills, linguistic and non-linguistic as well, and to be able to adapt easily to a variety of communicative situations. Due to the fact that the communicative process is a very complex one, a skilled communicator is a long life learner, constantly striving to acquire and develop new techniques, his ultimate goal being effectiveness.

A valuable teaching approach should satisfy our ESP students' "needs as learners as well as their needs as potential target users of the language (...) they should get satisfaction from the actual experience of learning, not just from the prospect of eventually using what they have learnt." (Hutchinson, Waters 1991: 48) In order to help students to learn effectively and also pleasantly, the teacher should, among other things, use a wide variety of strategies, activities and materials. Moreover, the teacher has to devise the English course in a way that enables students to develop all four language skills. Developing students' communicative ability is the aim of every English teacher and also the main challenge.

The Communicative Approach

In the 1970s and 1980s due to many disparate developments in Europe and the United States communicative language teaching (CLT) started being used on a large scale. The American linguist and anthropologist Dell Hymes coined the term 'communicative competence' and underlined the idea that learners have to be able to use the language in an appropriate way in different social situations. The change in the approach on language teaching was a result of a series of changes, the most important of them from the point of view of linguistic consequences was the advent of the European Common Market. This new reality determined a massive wave of immigrants who needed to learn a foreign language for work or personal reasons. Nowadays, the European Union faces the same problems at least from a linguistic point of view. In other words language teaching pedagogy is predominantly oriented towards practical aspects.

In the seventies "the attention was switched from teaching the language system to teaching the language as communication" (Howatt, 1984: 277). One of the most remarkable linguists who lay the theoretical foundation of the communicative approach was H.G. Widdowson who placed a considerable emphasis on the coherence

of discourse as communication. “The focus shifts away from the language and towards the user, emphasizing the effectiveness with which the communication takes place and the skills the user can muster in order to maintain and promote it” (Howatt: 279). So, the language is seen from a wider perspective, not only as a structure, but also “in terms of communicative function that it performs” (Littlewood, 2002: X). In other words, language is acquired through communication. This idea is considered by several linguists as being the basis of the communicative approach. Active learning is more effective than passive learning and in order to encourage students to become actively involved in the communicative process, new activities were devised. For example, John Sinclair and his team of specialists elaborated a set of problem solving tasks in which students, for communicative purposes, had to use concrete information about space relations, size, direction, shape and so on.

Sinclair was also interested in the teaching of academic skills for advanced overseas students, preparing for the university courses. His book, *Skills for Learning* (1980), was designed to meet this category of learners’ needs and, by its contents and style, managed to “breathe communicative life into a bookish knowledge of English” (Howatt: 280).

To sum up, we may say that thank to the communicative approach, “the learners’ ability to take part in the process of communicating through language” was stimulated (Littlewood: XI). While the traditional language teaching pedagogy emphasized the importance of “activating an existing but inert knowledge of language”, the new orientation focused on “the development of the language system itself”, from “learning to use English” to “using English to learn it” (Howatt: 279). The students’ communicative performance may be enhanced by the help of this approach only if they have some prior knowledge of English, but, at the same time, by using their communicative capacities, they learn the new language better and easier. This is why, after almost fifty years, CLT, due to some additional developments and improvements, is still a valuable and widely used method.

General Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

In 1991 David Nunan established “one of the most recognized” lists of general principles of CLT:

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language (in our case English)
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation (this aspect is particularly relevant while devising ESP syllabuses)

- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language, but also on the learning process itself
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning (this is also a very important thing in ESP, because it enables teachers to exploit learners' prior specialized knowledge, facilitating the development of their language skills)
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom (en.wikipedia.org)

CLT is closer to the needs and desires of our students than the traditional approaches to the language teaching and if we include communicative activities into our classroom practice, ESP courses will be more beneficial, attractive and motivating for them. Many useful traditional methods and tasks should not be excluded from the teaching-learning process, especially when we have to clarify more or less difficult grammatical aspects. According to Nunan and Littlewood, "there is value in classroom tasks which require learners to focus on form" and "grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively" (Nunan: 13). Harmer also considers that "...communicative activities and task-based teaching offer real learning benefits, though neither tasks nor communicative activities on their own are sufficient for a whole language programme" (Harmer: 96)

Task-Based Learning (TBL)

TBL was popularized by N. Prahbu and its basic idea is that "students were just as likely to learn language if they were thinking about a non-linguistic problem as when they were concentrating on particular language forms" (Harmer: 86). So, the students are given a task or a problem they have to solve and, while trying to accomplish this goal, they are communicating in English. Some preliminary work/pre-task activities should be done in order to provide students with useful pieces of vocabulary or relevant "chunks of language".

As we are going to see in the section of this paper dedicated to examples of materials used in classroom, a task-based activity usually incorporates not only one skill (speaking), but two, three or even all four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

The Willis TBL framework comprises three stages:

1. PRE-TASK

Introduction to topic and task

At this stage the teacher discusses the topic with the class and may draw the students' attention to useful words and phrases. The teacher also helps them to understand the task instructions.

2. TASK CYCLE

Task

Planning

Report

Students perform the task in pairs or groups and the teacher monitors from a distance without interfering, but offering his help if needed. Usually the teacher is a consultant, providing students with useful vocabulary or structures. The teacher may discretely listen to the groups' conversations without correcting mistakes, but writing down the ones that are repeatedly made.

The students plan the ways they are going to report their work. This may take the oral or the written form and the notes may be compared and discussed.

3. LANGUAGE FOCUS

Analysis

Practice

At this stage, the learners analyze and talk about a text or a listening they performed the task on. The teacher, on the other hand, draws their students attention to the most frequent errors and writes the correct words, phrases or sentences on the board, emphasizing the importance of "the language accuracy in a constructive way" (Dagarin 2004: 128), without giving names or criticizing anyone. Thus, even the weakest students will not be embarrassed or ashamed.

Classroom strategies and activities to encourage communication

Task-based activities

My work as an ESP teacher is often rewarding due to the fact that, in most of the cases, students are interested in their field of study, Geography, so it is relatively easy to attract their attention with interesting materials related to continents, countries, natural phenomena etc. It goes without saying that the preparation of adequate materials requires many hours of work, searching the net, selecting the most appropriate topics, adapting texts and activities etc.

In order to make our teaching effective, there are three rules "to help teachers avoid becoming discouraged when using new strategies with their students:

1. what students are learning is more important than which strategy is used" (Buehl 2003: 7).

Teachers have to establish their goals accurately and then adopt the most efficient strategy in order to achieve them. This can be a long and difficult process, implying many aspects: observing, evaluating, testing, making statistics etc.

2. "it is the students' thinking (and linguistic performance, in our case – A. C.) that counts, not the specific classroom strategy"

3. "tailor what you are doing to match your students and your goals" (Buehl: 7).

In other words, teachers must be flexible and think of using only those strategies that are fit to their goals. Taking this into consideration, I think that the communicative approach is the best solution for my students, the main goal being their preparation for the final examination, where all four skills are tested.

Generally following the above mentioned framework, I devised several communicative activities:

ANTARCTICA

The goals of this activity are:

- a. to activate prior knowledge
- b. to help students learn specialized vocabulary
- c. to stimulate their thinking
- d. to develop their communication and writing skills (a report)

Time: 40-50 minutes

Level: advanced

Pair work or small groups

Pair work and group work are used to solve some of the problems that may occur during speaking activities (e.g. some students are too shy to speak, they are intimidated by their colleagues, who are more proficient etc.). The main advantages of this method are the following: it increases the amount of students' talk and lowers the inhibition of learners. (Urr, 2009: 120)

1. PRE-TASK:

Introduction to topic and task: the teacher asks students a question about the frozen continent and writes on the board the word "Antarctica", allowing students two minutes to list on the paper their associations for the 'cue' word.

rise in temperature environment melting ice-sheets resources

ANTARCTICA

pollution

global warming

Relevant vocabulary: disturbance, marine pollution, environmental awareness, voyage, land-bound glaciers, fragile ecosystem, krill, food chain.

Task instructions: while reading the following text

- complete the specialized vocabulary list
- identify the main threats for the environment

2. TASK CYCLE

Task: students read the text:

ANTARCTICA SURROUNDED BY THREATS

Antarctica and its surrounding waters are under pressure from a variety of forces that are already transforming the area, scientists warn.

The most immediate threats are regional warming, ocean acidification and loss of sea ice, all linked to global levels of carbon dioxide. Sea ice cover, crucial to the survival of virtually every animal that lives on and near the continent, already has been reduced by warming, according to a new study published in the July 13 issue of the journal *Science*. Visits by tourists, researchers and other people also threaten to change Antarctica, as does the harvesting of animals like krill that are key to the Antarctic food chain.

The continent is governed by the Antarctic Treaty System, a series of international agreements that regulates research and tourism. So far the treaty has done a good job of conserving Antarctica's environment and resources, said a researcher at Colorado State University. But changes are happening so fast that they need extra attention.

Melting ice

The Antarctic Peninsula, only a few days' sea voyage from South America, is changing particularly quickly. The area surrounding the peninsula's Palmer Station, run by U.S. researchers, is experiencing the fastest winter warming of any place on Earth, and 87 percent of the peninsula's land-bound glaciers are in retreat, according to research cited on the station's website.

In some areas of the Antarctic Ocean, sea ice is absent three months longer than it was a few decades ago. The whole ecosystem is threatened. For example, loss of sea ice has hurt the Adelie penguin, which lives on the ice; its populations have decreased by 80 percent since 1975. Krill in the area (a primary food source for Adelies) also have decreased by 80 percent since 1991, according to a 2011 study in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Krill feed on Antarctic phytoplankton, microscopic organisms that use photosynthesis and provide the basis for the whole ecosystem. Loss of ice changes the abundance, timing and location of phytoplankton blooms, and not for the better. Krill larvae feed beneath ice sheets, so loss of ice means fewer krill, scientists say.

More people

While there is less ice, there are more people. Last year nearly 20,000 tourists visited the Antarctic Peninsula, according to the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators. There are also more researchers, and there is more exploration for minerals and other resources.

An increase in visitors means more disturbances to the fragile ecosystem, more pollution and more opportunities to bring organisms onto the continent from elsewhere in the world. (Adapted from <http://www.livescience.com/21557-antarctica-warming-threats.html>)

While reading, students perform the task in pairs or small groups, then PLAN and REPORT to the class their findings (the group representatives are invited to talk about their work).

Variants for the task cycle:

1. *advanced*

a. you are a group of environmental activists. Think of solutions to save the Arctic. Students make a plan and give a speech to the class.

b. imagine that you are working for Healthy Planet and your boss asked you to write a report about Antarctica and its ecological problems, suggesting solutions to save it.

This task can be given as homework because students can use the vocabulary and their own notes. Also, by working on this report at home they recycle words and information about Antarctica.

2. *intermediate*

a. write 6 sentences, using the words and phrases from the specialized vocabulary list.

b. use your list of reasons to give a speech to the class.

3. LANGUAGE FOCUS

In this section we may use different types of activities which reinforce or recycle vocabulary related to environmental issues. Gap-fill and multiple choice exercises are very suitable for this purpose.

Picture descriptions can also be used successfully to stimulate students' communicative abilities. Five or six pictures related to the environmental issues are projected on the screen and the teacher asks some questions (e.g. *Which of the environmental problems can you see in the pictures?, Which one are you most concerned about?*). Working in pairs or in small groups, the students discuss and choose the most relevant of them. While deciding, they exchange opinions, bring arguments, try to convince their partners, thus communicating in English.

We have already mentioned that a communicative activity may include several skills. This is the case of the communicative activity I did with my Geography students about the Earth's atmosphere. Instead of reading the text, they had to listen to it, make a list with relevant pieces of information they managed to remember and then answer a multiple-choice set of questions.

Simulation and role-play

Students enjoy these types of activities very much for several reasons, first of all because it is fun. Secondly, they feel free and behave naturally. If they are good performers and their level of English is high enough, these activities will be extremely beneficial for them. Beginners and intermediate learners like being involved in such activities as well and usually improve their general oral fluency very much. Simulation and role-play can be used "to train students for specific situations especially where they are studying ESP" (Harmer, 2001: 274).

As a rule, simulation activities are more complex from the structural point of view than role-play ones and "contain more diverse elements in their contents and procedure" (Klippel, F., (1991): 121). It is well known that simulations develop all four skills. Students involved in simulation activities must be given background information and materials to work from.

Role-plays are less complex and usually consist of short scenes either realistic or pure fantasy. They make use of role cards and cue cards: the former give the players 'the script' in detail while the latter leave students free to use the language without restrictions in other words, cue cards may be open ended, "so that different people have different views of what the outcome should be, and a consensus has to be reached" (Harmer: 275). Students are very motivated when they are involved in such games, because the class becomes a very dynamic environment and everybody feels the need to speak.

Games have been often disregarded and considered being an amusing activity both by theorists and practitioners, but they should be "an integral part of the language syllabus" because games "provide, in many cases, as much concentrated practice as a traditional drill and, more importantly, they provide an opportunity for real communication (...) and thus constitute a bridge between the classroom and the real world" (Hadfield, 1996: III).

Examples:

These simulation activities usually involve two students, A and B.

1. Student A is a tourist who spent a night in a four star hotel, but unfortunately the Air Conditioner was too noisy and blew directly at bed. He/she complained to the hotel owner. Student A has to think about his/her complaints.

Student B is the hotel owner and h/she has to cope with tourist’s complaints.

Procedure: students are given about five or more minutes to think of their tasks. They may take notes and exchange opinions. Then they discuss the problem and try to solve it by reaching an agreement. If they want, they perform in front of the whole class.

2. Procedure: each pair of students receive a card, containing the title and the sentence to begin with. They discuss together the topic and then try to come up with as many ideas as possible. They write down or bear in mind two variants each and then give a speech to the class, if they wish.

Topic	Sentence to begin with
Weather and moods	When it is raining I cannot learn or work. Then I ...
Description of an ideal holiday spot	If I were rich I would spend my holidays in ... because ...
Recently taken trips	Last week I was in ... It was ... The weather was ... etc.
Global concerns	If I were an influential person, I would do everything in my power to protect the environment: I would ...
Geographical features of a country	... is located in ..., is bordered by... in the north, etc. The land forms are: ..., the climate is ..., the big cities are ... the capital city is ..., etc.

This activity can be played as a team contest and it is valuable for revising the topics that have been dealt with in the class. It is also an effective way to revise some of the topics for the exam.

In this context it is interesting to mention that “games can also serve as a diagnostic tool for the teacher, who can note areas of difficulty and take appropriate remedial action” (Hadfield: III).

Conclusions

Obviously, “it is extremely difficult to come to conclusions about which approaches and methods are best (...) for our own teaching situations” (Harmer: 96).

1. Although the communicative approach is a relatively old finding, its main principles are still valid.

Its judicious use enabled a large majority of learners to become efficient and confident communicators in English around the world. These remarkable results were achieved, at all levels of instruction, by highly motivated students and extremely dedicated teachers. And this is also true as far as Romania is concerned (if we take into consideration, for example, the statistics mentioning the very good results Romanian students obtained at Cambridge Examinations in the last twenty years).

2. The basis of the CLT is exposure to language, thus helping students to acquire not only isolated vocabulary, but also whole sentences/ “chunks of language”.

3. Communicative activities and task-based teaching are beneficial not only for the students’ speaking skills, they are valuable for writing too both for teachers and students.

Co-operative writing provided teachers with opportunities to “give more detailed and constructive feedback” and students’ “research was broader than an individual’s normally was” (Harmer: 260).

4. Finally, the last but not least, the communicative approach, through its extreme variety of enjoyable activities, enhances students’ as well as teachers’ motivation for, “anxiety needs to be lowered for learning to take place” (Harmer: 96) and the ‘players’ capabilities to be at their maximum due to positive thinking and mutual praise.

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LE TANDEM EN TANT QUE STRATEGIE MOTIVATIONNELLE DANS L'APPRENTISSAGE DES LANGUES

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ABSTRACT. *Tandem as a Motivational Strategy in foreign Language Learning.*

The following article is based on the analysis of the accounts given by a group of students Francophone and Romanian students who have participated in the Tandem project implemented at the Medicine and Pharmacy in Cluj in collaboration with the Babes-Bolyai University, in 2013 and 2014. The students' answers show that the intercultural exchange with a native speaker facilitated a clearer point of view on the respective country and culture. It led to bonding and to an increased motivation in second language learning. The authors' conclusion is that tandem learning, seen as complementary to the traditional language class, is an innovative and efficient motivational strategy.

Key words: *integrative motivation, motivational strategy, language learning in tandem, native speaker, intercultural communication*

REZUMAT. *Tandemul ca strategie motivațională în învățarea limbilor străine.*

Articolul se bazează pe analiza răspunsurilor date de un grup de studenți români și francofoni cu privire la beneficiile lingvistice și culturale obținute în urma participării la proiectul Tandem, desfășurat la Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie din Cluj în colaborare cu Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, în perioada 2013-2014. Răspunsurile studenților au pus în evidență că schimbul intercultural cu vorbitorul nativ nu a facilitat numai o perspectivă mai clară asupra țării și culturii țintă, ci și crearea de legături afective, o mai bună integrare și, implicit un plus de motivație pentru învățarea limbii străine. Concluzia autoarelor acestui studiu este că tandemul lingvistic, văzut ca o activitate complementară cursului tradițional de limbă, reprezintă o strategie motivațională inovativă și eficientă.

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Cuvinte cheie: motivație integrativă, strategie motivațională, tandem lingvistic, locutor nativ, comunicare interculturală

Introduction

Développer ses compétences communicatives dans une langue étrangère grâce à des contacts privilégiés avec un locuteur dont la langue maternelle est celle dans laquelle on souhaite se perfectionner représente une expérience d'apprentissage authentique. La pratique du tandem linguistique franco-roumain à Cluj-Napoca, dans le contexte universitaire et avec un encadrement assuré par des enseignants de l'Université de Médecine et Pharmacie Iuliu Hatieganu et de l'Université Babes-Bolyai, ouvre la perspective sur la motivation des étudiants pour la pratique et le perfectionnement de la langue seconde.

Dans un premier temps nous présenterons le contexte dans lequel le projet « Tandem » a été mis en place ainsi que le public cible, sur le feedback duquel se fonde notre analyse. Dans un deuxième temps nous essayerons de cerner le concept de motivation, avec ses définitions, ses typologies, les facteurs qui l'influencent ainsi que les stratégies qui en découlent. Enfin, par le biais de l'analyse d'un corpus comprenant des carnets de bords des apprenants, des questionnaires et des entretiens enregistrés, nous considérerons les différentes composantes motivationnelles liées à l'apprentissage linguistique en tandem et de mesurer leur impact sur l'intérêt pour la découverte du pays de l'autre, de la langue, du langage de spécialité.

L'apprentissage en tandem franco-roumain à l'université

Même avant l'émergence de ces pratiques sur l'internet, le tandem linguistique a fait l'objet des études et des mises en pratique. Nous pouvons en mentionner l'expérimentation de Bochum en Allemagne, aux États-Unis, au Canada. En ce qui concerne l'apprentissage du français, nous notons l'institution en 1966 des ateliers linguistiques franco-allemands pour des jeunes. De nombreuses expériences ont eu lieu dans d'autres contextes multiculturels ou internationaux, dont des projets de jumelage ou de correspondance, de tandem électronique en plusieurs langues, des cours en immersion dans les écoles maternelles et primaires en Allemagne, Autriche et Suisse, aussi qu'à d'autres niveaux d'apprentissage. Un exemple de longue date est représenté par le projet européen de e-tandem entre plusieurs pays européens³.

³ Site plurilingue du projet sur <http://www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/etandem/etindex-fr.html>.

En ce qui concerne l'enseignement à l'université, c'est surtout l'immersion sous la forme des tandems linguistiques qui a été favorisée. Pour ne citer que quelques exemples parmi tant d'autres, l'Université de Bologne offre sur son site internet une page destinée à la recherche d'un interlocuteur/enseignant natif ; l'Université de Grenoble propose même une assistance à ce genre de rencontres ; un programme complexe de pratique et recherche sur la didactique du tandem est mis en place à l'Université de Bruxelles et au sein du département anglophone de l'Université Paris 3. Afin de diversifier et d'améliorer l'expérience, des projets de *tridem* ont été mis en place en collaboration entre plusieurs universités, tandis que d'autres universités introduisent dans le curriculum les cours d'apprentissage en autonomie (l'Université de Fribourg, l'Université de British Columbia).

Dans le contexte actuel de l'Université de Médecine et Pharmacie « Iuliu Hațieganu » de Cluj-Napoca (Roumanie), où de nombreux étudiants roumains qui apprennent le français effectuent des stages et mobilités de recherche dans des universités françaises, tandis que des étudiants francophones, qui suivent leur formation médicale en Roumanie, étudient le roumain, l'apprentissage des langues à l'aide des locuteurs natifs joue un rôle de plus en plus important. Les francophones participent à plusieurs cours et travaux pratiques dispensés en roumain et doivent communiquer avec le personnel médical et les patients dans la langue du pays d'accueil, tout comme les étudiants roumanophones, en situation de mobilité universitaire ou de stage professionnel dans des pays francophones. Ces apprenants représentent un public à forte motivation, à la fois intégrative (desir de s'intégrer à la communauté qui parle la langue seconde et d'établir des contacts avec les gens et la culture) et instrumentale (réussir leurs études et expériences professionnelles). En vue de l'insertion dans le cadre universitaire ainsi que dans le milieu socioculturel du pays d'accueil, les futurs professionnels de la santé doivent connaître non seulement la terminologie française/roumaine de leur domaine, mais aussi les actes de parole de la vie quotidienne.

C'est pourquoi, parallèlement aux cours de langue, auxquels les uns et les autres participent, les étudiants francophones et roumanophones des universités clujeoises ont l'opportunité de communiquer en langue étrangère avec des locuteurs natifs, dans le cadre d'un projet d'immersion bilingue réciproque, intitulé « Tandem, bilinguisme et construction des savoirs disciplinaires : une approche du FLE/FOS en contact avec les langues de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale » et coordonné par Aurora Bagiag. Soutenu par l'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie et promu par l'Université de Médecine et Pharmacie, à laquelle s'associe quelques universités partenaires, dont l'Université Babes-Bolyai, le projet « Tandem » met en place un dispositif pédagogique à trois volets : des séances

bilingues en immersion réciproque (destinées à des groupes mixtes d'apprenants roumanophones et francophones, avec la participation d'un enseignant spécialiste des deux langues), des tandems linguistiques (libres ou dirigés, ces derniers étant appelés cours-tandem) et une immersion de type « Emmental » qui encourage les apprenants à participer à des cours de spécialité dispensés en langue cible et destinés au groupe étudiant dont on apprend la langue.

Notre étude focalisera sur les cours-tandem qui ont réuni pendant deux années (2013-2014) des étudiants francophones et roumanophones de l'Université de Médecine et Pharmacie et des étudiants roumanophones non spécialistes de la langue de l'Université Babes-Bolyai. A la différence du tandem libre, qui laisse aux apprenants la possibilité de décider eux-mêmes de leur emploi du temps ainsi que du déroulement de la séance, les cours-tandem organisés et animés par les enseignants ont permis aux binômes de travailler dans le cadre universitaire (emploi du temps et thématique imposés) tout en bénéficiant d'un suivi synchrone.

Une centaine de participants ont suivi un ou plusieurs modules tandem, comprenant chacun une dizaine de séances de deux heures chacune, déroulées pendant un semestre. Afin d'analyser le feedback fourni par les étudiants, en fonction de plusieurs variables telles que la langue maternelle/la langue cible entre partenaires du même domaine d'études/de domaines différents, nous avons divisé l'ensemble en deux grands groupes. Le premier groupe, totalisant 55 personnes dont 31 roumanophones et 24 francophones, est constitué exclusivement de partenaires du même domaine d'étude, la médecine. Le second groupe, comprenant 46 étudiants, dont 24 francophones et 22 roumanophones, est formé de partenaires provenant de domaines d'études rapprochés, tels que Médecine et Chimie/Biologie, ou, au contraire, de domaines très distincts : Médecine et Histoire/Philosophie/Tourisme/Sociologie/Journalisme.

Notre étude s'intéresse au retour d'expérience écrit et oral fourni par les apprenants à la fin du (premier) module de cours-tandem, afin d'en dégager plusieurs composantes motivationnelles. Celles-ci pourraient par la suite être décortiquées et envisagées dans la perspective des stratégies motivationnelles utilisées par les enseignants pour l'apprentissage des langues. Notre corpus comprend d'un côté le carnet de bord de l'apprentissage en tandem, rempli par les participants au début, au cours de et à la fin du module, et de l'autre côté les entretiens individuels réalisés par les enseignants avec les apprenants désirant faire le point sur leur expérience en tandem. Les réponses au questionnaire inclus dans le carnet de bord ainsi que les témoignages spontanés des enregistrements se sont avérés des sources complémentaires, très riches en éléments motivationnels.

Motivation. Cadre théorique

Au centre de notre démarche se trouve un questionnement sur l'influence des activités en tandem sur la motivation des étudiants pour l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère, en l'occurrence le roumain et le français. Le concept de motivation, assez difficile à cerner, a des acceptions dans l'usage linguistique commun (Dörnyei, 2001 : 6) et a été sujet à des diverses théories⁴. Dans les paragraphes suivants, nous présenterons quelques aspects théoriques concernant la motivation en général et appliquée au cas spécifique de l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère en tandem. Un premier plan sur lequel nous devons échelonner cette notion est celui de la recherche en psychologie, et dans ce domaine, nous souscrivons à l'idée de la motivation en tant que processus, par lequel « les pensées et les croyances sont transformées en action » et qui régit et soutient une « activité dirigée vers un but » (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996 : 4, n. tr. apud Dörnyei, 1998 : 118). Dörnyei reprend l'idée de processus motivationnel de Pintrich et Schunk pour en donner sa propre définition : « [...] process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminate action, or until the planned outcome has been reached. (Dörnyei, 1998: 118). Les mots-clés dans cette définition sont « *instigation force* » et « *goal* », la force qui agit sur la motivation et le but, les deux venant de l'extérieur ou de l'intérieur, étant par conséquent intrinsèque ou extrinsèque.

Nous n'occultons pas un choix de termes différent, comme celui du psychologue belge Joseph Nuttin qui parle de motivation en tant que variable d'un modèle relationnel, à l'intérieur duquel elle représente « [...] l'orientation dynamique continue qui règle le fonctionnement, également continu, de l'individu en interaction avec son milieu » (Nuttin, 1996, *apud* Dreyer, 2009 : 39). Mais nous remarquons que le terme central d'orientation donne lieu, tout comme l'idée de processus, à une intervention et que la motivation n'est pas une donnée fixe, mais une variable sur laquelle il est possible d'agir, d'où l'importance du contexte d'apprentissage.

En tant qu'indicateur sur le comportement des personnes, la motivation est à la base de diverses théories, dont certaines traitent la problématique soit strictement de la perspective de l'individu (la motivation puise dans les ressources psychologiques intérieures de la personne), soit de la perspective sociale (le moteur se trouve dans les relations avec les autres et dans les attitudes sur ces relations) (Dörnyei, 1998 : 118-121).

⁴ Pour une image d'ensemble de la recherche sur la motivation v. *Traité de psychologie de la motivation*, sous la direction de Philippe Carré et Fenouillet (2009).

Motivation et apprentissage d'une langue seconde

Parmi les autres domaines d'études, les langues étrangères détiennent un statut spécial. La langue représente un code de communication, mais aussi une manière d'exprimer sa personnalité et surtout un moyen de communiquer typique pour une société. L'acquisition d'une langue suppose par conséquent plus que l'enregistrement de nouvelles informations, elle implique des adaptations, voire la création d'une identité en langue seconde. (Dörnyei, 1998 : 118, 122).

Dans la direction de recherche ouverte par la psychologie sociale, Robert Gardner se distingue pour avoir proposé et vérifié par d'amples données statistiques un modèle d'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère qui tient notamment compte des attitudes de l'apprenant sur la langue cible. Gardner définit, en fait, la motivation d'apprendre une L2 comme « *the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity* » (Gardner, 1985: 10). Son modèle socio-éducatif se fonde sur une analyse des effets que cinq variables peuvent produire sur le processus d'apprentissage : les attitudes envers l'apprentissage, l'intégrativité (*integrativeness*), la motivation proprement dite et les orientations intégrative et instrumentale. L'intégrativité est définie comme une disponibilité vers l'identification avec une autre communauté linguistique, et qui est censée augmenter la motivation d'apprendre la langue de cette communauté. L'orientation intégrative est liée à l'intérêt de l'apprenant, à ses buts concernant l'interaction et la socialisation avec des membres de l'autre communauté, et agit aussi sur l'intégrativité. Les attitudes de l'apprenant envers la langue seconde consistent pratiquement dans la perception du contexte d'apprentissage au sens le plus large. Dans le modèle de Gardner, la motivation comporte une série de comportements adjacents aux buts et aspirations des apprenants ainsi que des stratégies utilisées pour atteindre les buts de l'apprentissage. Le complexe formé par ces trois dernières variables représente la motivation intégrative, qui s'oppose à l'orientation instrumentale, notion qui décrit les raisons pratiques, liées aux résultats pragmatiques, et qui ne reflète pas nécessairement la motivation. Ces variables peuvent évidemment s'influencer réciproquement. Gardner et d'autres chercheurs ont mis en évidence surtout le rapport positif entre des variables telles que l'intégrativité, les attitudes et les résultats obtenus. De même, les recherches de Gardner et de ses collaborateurs prouvent que l'orientation intégrative a un impact plus important que l'orientation instrumentale sur les résultats des apprenants testés (Gardner & Masgoret, 2003 : 124-129).

Dans le cas de notre groupe cible, le but déclaré est l'apprentissage de la langue seconde dans une perspective actionnelle, qui met l'accent autant sur les connaissances linguistiques que sur les acquis interculturels du tandem. Tout en étant conscientes que la motivation est influencée par la personnalité et les croyances individuelles de chacun, nous considérons que la participation au tandem agit, par le

contact direct avec le natif de la langue cible et par le fait que les partenaires de tandem établissent des relations relativement proches, sur l'orientation intégrative autant que sur la motivation d'apprendre la langue étrangère.

Les approches théoriques portant sur la motivation dans le cas du tandem linguistique sont relativement rares. Nous mentionnons le travail d'Ema Ushioda sur la motivation en tandem par email (2000), un type d'interaction soumis pourtant à des contraintes différentes par rapport au tandem dirigé en face à face, tel qu'il a été expérimenté par nos étudiants. Le e-tandem fonctionne par le biais de l'expression écrite et de la communication asynchrone, et non par le contact direct et le dialogue en présentiel, deux aspects que nous considérons essentiels pour ce type d'échanges interculturels (v. aussi Aleksandrowicz-Pędich, 2009). Nous mentionnons aussi les recherches récemment publiées dans la thèse de Robert Ryan qui vient soutenir l'applicabilité du modèle socio-éducatif à la motivation des participants aux formes mixtes de tandem de l'Université de British Columbia (Ryan, 2014).

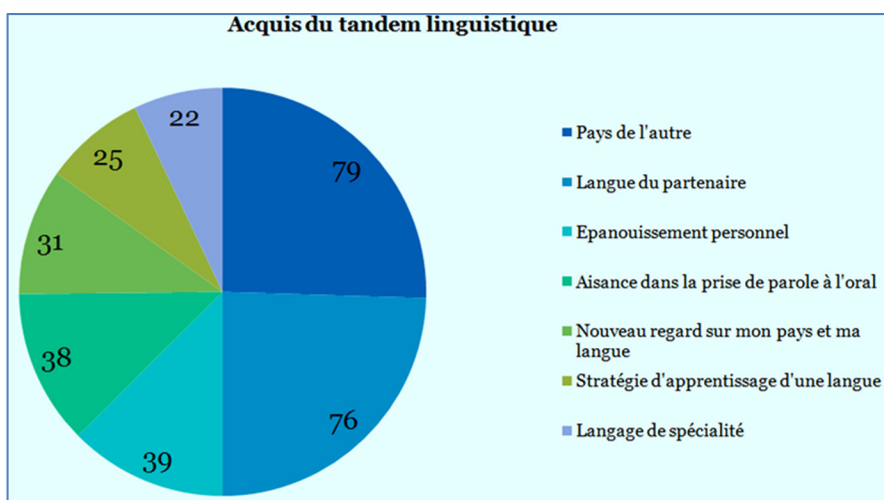
La classification de Gardner ne reste pas sans critiques. Dörnyei (2001) propose en effet une taxinomie des types de motivation à partir du moment de l'apprentissage et un tout autre modèle, *the motivational self-system*, à partir du concept d'intégrativité de Gardner (Dörnyei, Ushioda, 2011). Parmi les ouvrages du chercheur hongrois, nous nous rapportons principalement à son travail sur les stratégies motivationnelles (Dörnyei, 2001, Cheng & Dörnyei, 1998). Nous considérons le tandem dirigé comme faisant partie d'un des moyens par lesquels l'enseignant est capable d'influencer indirectement l'attitude de l'apprenant sur l'apprentissage de la langue, tout en promouvant l'autonomie de l'apprenant et sa confiance en soi, ainsi que par la présentation des tâches nouvelles et stimulantes.

Nous mentionnons également la proposition, pertinente pour notre recherche, de Serge Dreyer de compléter les types de motivation identifiés par Gardner avec une motivation « existentielle », applicable aux apprenants qui manifestent un intérêt réduit pour l'intégration dans la communauté linguistique de l'interlocuteur, mais sont motivés plutôt par une image idéalisée du pays, de la langue et la culture qu'ils étudient. Ce type de motivation représente, selon nous, surtout un processus réflexif, qui invite à une réactualisation des idées antérieures à la formation linguistique en tandem. Nous avons ainsi adapté la notion de motivation existentielle à des buts d'apprentissage qui vont en même temps au-delà des aspects intégratifs et instrumentaux (le fonctionnement de la langue, le questionnement et la comparaison de la culture cible et de sa propre culture).

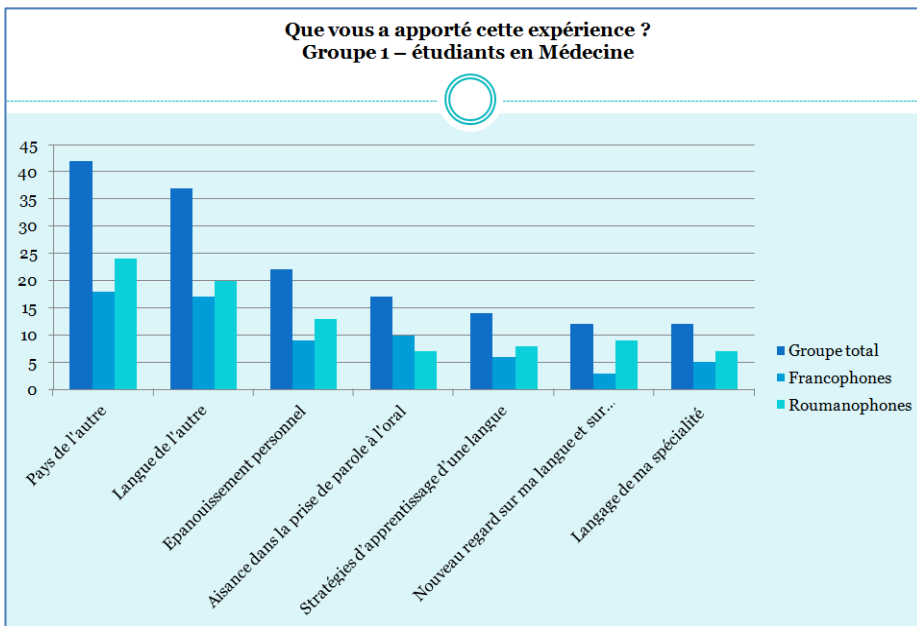
Rôle de la composante interculturelle dans la motivation intégrative

Un facteur essentiel associé à l'intégrabilité est le fait que l'apprentissage des langues en tandem avec des locuteurs natifs sollicite les apprenants à s'engager constamment dans des échanges interculturels. Le questionnaire inclus dans le carnet

de bord consacré à l'expérience en tandem fournit des informations particulièrement intéressantes quand aux acquis rapportés par les participants, acquis ayant une incidence directe sur leur motivation à continuer le module de tandem dirigé. Les réponses des 91 participants francophones et roumanophones répertoriées à la question « Que vous a apporté cette expérience [avec des locuteurs natifs] ? » permettent de hiérarchiser les différents bénéfices estimés par le programme « Tandem ». Ainsi 79% des répondants, ayant comme langue maternelle le français ou le roumain, déclarent que l'acquis principal de l'expérience en tandem a été la découverte du pays de l'autre (société, traditions, culture, mentalités, etc.). 76 % des apprenants sont convaincus que l'apprentissage de la langue en collaboration avec un pair locuteur natif les a aidés à mieux connaître la langue du partenaire. Les échanges avec des natifs dans des situations de communication authentique ont engendré un épanouissement personnel et plus d'aisance dans les relations sociales et professionnelles pour 39% des participants, ont encouragé les apprenants à s'exprimer oralement, les aidant ainsi à acquérir une plus d'aisance de la prise de parole à l'oral (38% des répondants). Le contact culturel et linguistique et implicitement le besoin d'expliquer au partenaire des aspects liés au fonctionnement de la langue ou de présenter des éléments socioculturels ont occasionné un retour réflexif sur l'univers d'appartenance de chacun, un nouveau regard sur son propre pays et sur sa langue maternelle pour 31% des participants. Obligeant les partenaires à assumer successivement le rôle de tuteur et celui d'apprenant, le travail en tandem a également stimulé la réflexion métalinguistique, débouchant sur une prise de conscience des stratégies d'apprentissage utilisées par les deux partenaires dans 25% des cas répertoriés. Enfin, le partage de connaissances au niveau du langage de spécialité a représenté un ultime acquis pour 22% des participants au module « Tandem » (voir la représentation graphique en secteurs ci-dessous).

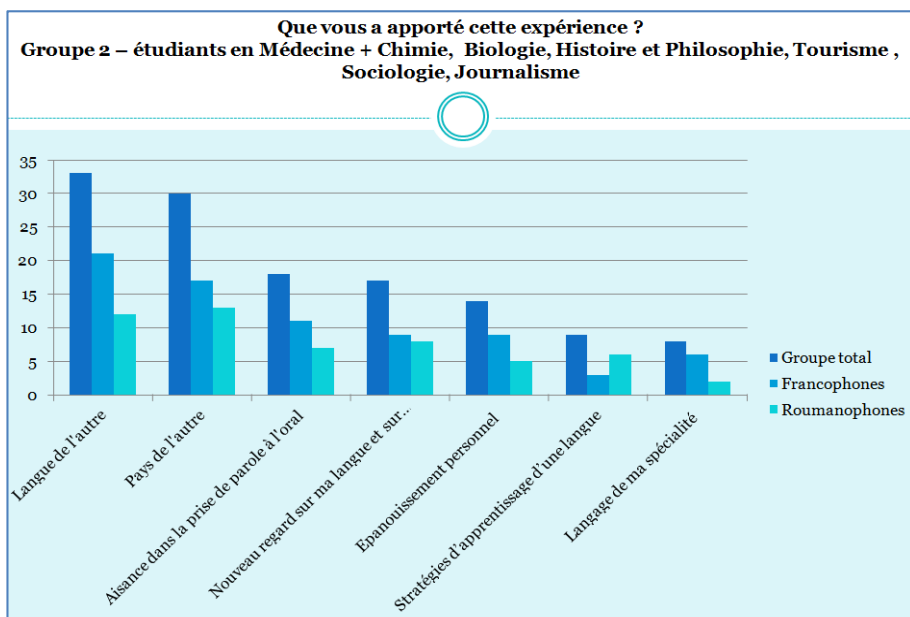


Tenant compte de la composition homogène ou au contraire hétérogène de nos deux groupes, du point de vue du domaine d'études, nous avons également considéré la hiérarchisation des acquis du tandem linguistique au sein de chaque groupe. Nous avons pu constater ainsi que dans le premier groupe franco-roumain, comprenant exclusivement d'étudiants en Médecine, 42 sur les 49 répondants ont apprécié qu'une meilleure connaissance du pays du partenaire représente l'aspect le plus important de cette expérience (18 Fr et 24 Ro). La deuxième place revient au développement des compétences linguistiques dans la langue seconde pour 37 participants (17 Fr et 20 Ro). En troisième lieu ce sont l'épanouissement personnel et l'aisance dans les relations socioprofessionnelles qui apparaissent chez 22 apprenants (9 Fr et 13 Ro). Les quatre dernières places sont réservées à l'aisance de la prise de parole à l'oral (17 répondants dont 10 Fr et 7 Ro), à l'acquisition de certaines stratégies pédagogiques, transférables à d'autres contextes d'apprentissage (14 répondants dont 6 Fr et 8 Ro) et enfin, à égalité, au changement de la perspective sur sa propre langue et sur son pays (12 répondants dont 3 Fr et 9 Ro) et à un certain progrès dans le langage de spécialité, en l'occurrence le français et le roumain médical (12 répondants dont 5 Fr et 7 Ro) (voir échelle ci-dessous).



Les réponses du second groupe, constitué de 24 francophones (étudiants en médecine) et 22 roumanophones (étudiants en sciences et sciences humaines), totalisant 46 étudiants dont 42 ont répondu au questionnaire, sont similaires. Ainsi 33 apprenants (21 Fr et 12 Ro) considèrent que le travail en tandem les

a aidés à développer leurs connaissances en langue cible et 30 répondants (17 Fr et 13 Ro) apprécient l'impact du tandem en termes de découverte socioculturelle (du pays de l'autre). La connaissance du pays d'origine du partenaire arrive certes en deuxième place, mais à seulement 3 points distances par rapport à l'acquis principal de l'expérience avec les locuteurs natifs. Le paramètre de l'aisance de la prise de parole à l'oral occupe lui aussi une place similaire par rapport au premier groupe : troisième place (18 répondants dont 11 Fr et 7 Ro). Il s'ensuit un nouveau regard sur sa propre langue et sur son pays (17 répondants dont 9 Fr et 8 Ro), suivi par l'épanouissement personnel et dans les interactions socioprofessionnelles (14 répondants dont 9 Fr et 5 Ro), les stratégies d'apprentissage (9 répondants dont 3 Fr et 6 Ro) et enfin, comme dans le cas du groupe précédent, une meilleure connaissance du langage de spécialité (8 répondants dont 6 Fr et 2 Ro) (voir échelle ci-dessous).



Nous pouvons constater que le facteur de l'homogénéité professionnelle des binômes ne semble pas avoir influencé la perception des participants sur la communication en cours-tandem : la langue et la culture représentent constamment les deux leviers des échanges entre locuteurs natifs, suivis par l'épanouissement personnel et l'aisance de l'expression orale en général et dans l'interaction socioprofessionnelle en particulier. Cela témoigne de la prévalence d'une orientation intégrative, qui se décline en désir de s'intégrer dans la communauté linguistique du pays d'accueil, dans le milieu universitaire, dans le groupe social, etc.

Les témoignages des étudiants, enregistrés lors des entretiens organisés en fin de module, confirment cette tendance. Ainsi la réflexion sur les différences socioculturelles revient constamment dans le bilan que les apprenants font de leur expérience en cours-tandem, indiquant une forte curiosité par rapport aux comportements culturels. Le progrès linguistique s'appuie en premier lieu sur la découverte du pays d'accueil : « [le tandem] permet déjà de rencontrer une personne roumaine qui parle la langue, donc, d'avoir un peu plus d'idées par rapport au fonctionnement de la culture, de comment vivent les gens ici. Moi c'est quelque chose qui m'a beaucoup plu, qui m'a aussi permis de progresser à l'oral », précise Baptiste, étudiant français en médecine.

La comparaison des deux systèmes socioculturels et le retour implicite sur son univers de référence est récurrente, qu'il s'agisse de la condition de la femme, de la dynamique des relations de couple ou des comportements liés à la pratique religieuse : « [Le tandem] a permis de m'apporter beaucoup de choses sur la culture roumaine, qui est quand même très différente de la culture française, qui est basée sur beaucoup de traditions qu'on commence à perdre en France, donc c'est quand même important de savoir qu'il y a encore des personnes qui sont très attachées aux traditions et en même temps ça permet de voir qu'il y a quand même encore beaucoup de différences entre les Français et les Roumains surtout d'un point de vue de la condition de la femme. Rien que par rapport à la religion, les femmes ont une place très inférieure à celle des hommes et ne peuvent pas s'asseoir n'importe où, ne peuvent pas être n'importe où dans l'église, elles doivent être à gauche et les hommes à droite. Et d'un certain côté c'est très intéressant parce que les hommes sont encore très attentionnés et... par rapport à leur épouse, mais d'un autre point de vue la femme reste, en fin, c'est ce que j'ai vu, assez inférieure à l'homme et il y a encore beaucoup de choses à faire », constate Marjorie, étudiante française en médecine.

Quant aux particularités gastronomiques, Céline, étudiante française en médecine, présente un exemple de transposition du travail en tandem dans la cuisine, qui permet non seulement d'acquérir du vocabulaire spécifique tout en préparant un plat roumain, mais aussi de réfléchir sur les habitudes alimentaires des deux pays : « J'ai donc fait ce tandem avec Mara durant deux semestres, nous sommes donc très bien entendues, nous avons fait une fiche sur la cuisine, nous avons préparé des *sarmale* donc qui est un plat typiquement roumain. Mara a ainsi pu me parler de sa culture, donc j'ai appris des mots nouveaux en ce qui concerne donc les ustensiles de cuisine, la façon également de préparer les aliments en Roumanie, qui n'est pas tout à fait la même qu'en France. Par exemple, j'ai l'impression que les plats sont un petit peu plus copieux, elle m'a justement expliqué qu'il fallait mettre une viande grasse pour que ce soit plus savoureux, en fin mélanger une viande plus maigre apparemment avec beaucoup de... pas mal

d'huile quand même ... ça a l'air d'être assez consistant comme plat. Et puis...elle m'a expliqué que chez elle on mangeait beaucoup justement pour bien tenir la journée, même les petits déjeuners me semblent assez différents. »

La participation à des activités complémentaires au cours-tandem indique la volonté des apprenants à faire évoluer les relations de travail vers des liens d'amitié. La flexibilité de l'approche semble offrir à un certain nombre de binômes un cadre plus motivant, leur donnant accès à la vie privée de l'autre (des rencontres ont eu lieu dans des endroits publics fréquentés par les partenaires ou chez l'un des partenaires). La connivence avec son binôme a souvent été évoquée, en tant que raison importante de continuer à s'impliquer dans l'apprentissage de la langue cible. Stéphane (Fr, médecine), ayant travaillé en tandem avec Alexandru, les deux passionnés d'escalade, précise : « Grâce à ce trekking j'ai appris beaucoup de mots de vocabulaire nouveaux, beaucoup d'expressions roumaines, plus précisément de Transylvanie et c'est une expérience qui est très enrichissante pour moi [...]. Grâce maintenant au tandem j'ai un ami qui est Roumain ». Célia (Fr, médecine) évoque une expérience similaire, conjuguant la pratique de la langue et l'interaction sociale : « J'ai une partenaire de tandem avec qui je m'entends très bien, qui est très cultivée, donc elle m'apprend beaucoup de choses sur la Roumanie. [...] On s'est également vu pour d'autres ... des séances qui ne sont pas dans les fiches de tandem, on s'est retrouvé dans une librairie avec beaucoup d'étudiants étrangers pour participer à un atelier de caricature et de danse qui s'est déroulé en langue roumaine et donc l'atelier caricature était animé par deux artistes qui ont fait des caricatures à partir des mots qu'on écrivait sur des papiers et qu'on devait deviner ».

Enfin, l'apprentissage de la langue en situation de communication authentique est reconnu comme exercice essentiel et indispensable pour acquérir une certaine aisance de la prise de parole à l'oral : « je pense que c'est la seule manière d'apprendre le roumain, c'est d'essayer. C'est pas forcément évident de ..., il faut se lancer, c'est pas forcément évident, mais c'est la seule manière d'y arriver » (Charles, Fr, médecine). L'incompréhension est souvent évoquée en tant que moteur de l'échange avec les natifs, qui oblige à se concentrer et à faire des efforts afin de comprendre et de se faire comprendre. Par exemple, Sara (Fr, médecine) considère que l'incompréhension due à une situation de communication authentique, non didactisée, active l'attention et la volonté de comprendre : « Je pense que cette expérience doit être faite par tout le monde parce qu'en dehors des cours, enfin, quand on parle à une personne, une vraie Roumaine, c'est pas pareil qu'en cours. On apprend vraiment à parler, à comprendre, parce que forcément la personne parfois elle ne fait pas tellement d'efforts pour qu'on puisse la comprendre vu qu'elle parle sa langue maternelle, des fois elle parle très vite et nous, ça nous oblige à nous concentrer et à essayer de comprendre ce que l'autre a essayé de dire. » Gil (Fr, médecine) focalise lui aussi sur l'incompréhension, mais en choisissant la position du tuteur, de celui qui « enseigne » sa langue maternelle à son partenaire et se sent ainsi responsable de

varier ses stratégies pédagogiques afin de se faire comprendre : « ça nous permet de gagner en confiance surtout sur le fait que ... on parle à quelqu'un qui ne va pas forcément comprendre ce qu'on va lui dire, donc il faut de temps en temps réexpliquer ce qu'on vient de dire, le dire d'une autre manière, et à force d'utiliser beaucoup le roumain, on finit par, ça finit par devenir une habitude, on prend l'habitude, on prend des initiatives, surtout quand il y a une situation où on ne se comprend pas, tout de suite essayer de réexpliquer, oh, si t'as pas compris, on va essayer de se comprendre... ».

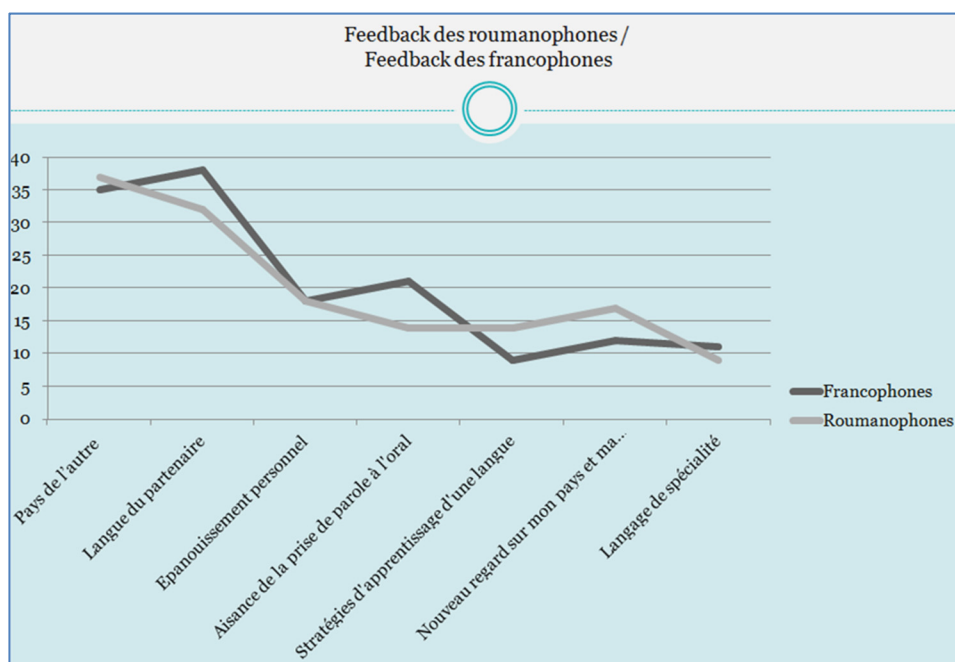
Orientation instrumentale et motivation FOS

Parallèlement, la situation des acquis dans le domaine du FOS (même entre partenaires de la même faculté) indique une valeur inférieure de la motivation instrumentale dans le groupe total d'apprenants. Or, apprendre la langue pour mieux réussir ses études semblait s'imposer d'emblée comme l'un des facteurs principaux de motivation. Rappelons qu'un certain nombre d'étudiants roumains qui apprennent le français effectuent par la suite des stages et mobilités de recherche dans des universités françaises, tandis que les étudiants francophones, qui suivent leur formation médicale en Roumanie, participent dans les années cliniques à des cours et travaux pratiques dispensés en roumain et sont tenus de communiquer en roumain dans le milieu hospitalier. Ces apprenants représenteraient par conséquent un public à forte motivation instrumentale, orientée à la fois sur les études et les stages professionnels.

Cependant, les conclusions établies sur la base du feedback étudiant permettent de nuancer ces hypothèses de départ. Par l'analyse croisée des réponses des deux groupes linguistiques, les francophones et les roumanophones, au questionnaire mentionné, nous avons pu constater que les deux points principaux sur lesquels ils se rejoignent approximativement à égalité demeurent la découverte du pays de l'autre (35 Fr et 37 Ro) et l'épanouissement personnel, accompagné d'une meilleure interaction sur le plan socioprofessionnel (18 Fr et 18 Ro). Un certain nombre de différences entre francophones et roumanophones sont pourtant observables : les francophones devancent les roumanophones en ce qui concerne l'importance accordée aux acquis linguistiques (38 Fr et 32 Ro), à l'aisance de la prise de parole à l'oral (21 Fr et 14 Ro) et à une meilleure connaissance du langage de spécialité (11 Fr et 9 Ro). La prévalence de ces trois aspects dans le cas du groupe francophone, qui se trouve en situation de mobilité à long terme dans le pays d'accueil, nous encourage à reconnaître une approche centrée davantage sur l'action et s'appuyant sur une motivation à dominante instrumentale de la langue cible. Les témoignages des étudiants interviewés confirment cette observation. La communication dans le milieu médical apparaît rarement dans le bilan des

apprenants. Un seul étudiant, Harold (Fr, médecine), énonce explicitement l'utilité du tandem pour la pratique du roumain en vue de la communication avec les patients : « Le tandem, ça nous aide dans la vie de tous les jours, pour simplement faire les courses, mais plus tard ça va nous aider en quatrième année quand on va devoir parler couramment roumain avec les patients. C'est utile dans le sens où on a une approche pratique, ce qui change du cours théorique ».

En revanche, chez le groupe roumanophone, ce sont les nouvelles stratégies d'apprentissage du français, qui pourraient être exportées à d'autres contextes d'apprentissage linguistique (14 Ro et 9 Fr), ainsi qu'un nouveau regard sur leur propre langue et sur leur pays (17 Ro et 12 Fr) qui semblent les préoccuper plus que leurs partenaires francophones. Ce témoignage indique une attitude plutôt réflexive face à la langue et renvoie d'une part au développement de la conscience métalinguistique et de l'autre à un questionnement identitaire inspiré par le contact entre les deux langues-cultures.



Sur les traces de Williams, nous pouvons confirmer que « the learning of a foreign language involves far more than simply learning skills, or a system of rules, or a grammar; it involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social

and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has a significant impact on the social nature of the learner » (Williams, 1994: 77). La motivation des participants au tandem, et en particulier celle des roumanophones, sortirait, elle, des cadres habituels de la motivation instrumentale et intégrative, glissant vers une dimension sociale, où la langue apparaît en tant que facteur identitaire. Cela rejoint les théories de Gardner et de Dörnyei, selon lesquelles « knowing an L2 also involves the development of some sort of 'L2 identity' and the incorporation of elements from the L2 culture (cf. Gardner, 1985); thus, in addition to the environmental and cognitive factors normally associated with learning in current educational psychology, L2 motivation also contains featured personality and social dimensions » (Dörnyei, 1998:118).

Conclusion

L'analyse des réponses des étudiants ayant travaillé en tandem montre que le principal bénéfice de l'interaction avec le locuteur natif a été une meilleure connaissance du pays de l'autre, réponse que nous avons associée à un indice accru d'intégrativité. Le rapport positif entre cette variable et l'orientation intégrative, tel que prouvé par Gardner et les chercheurs associés (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003 : 130-132), crée les prémisses pour une motivation plus forte des étudiants participants en ce qui concerne leur apprentissage futur. Un argument supplémentaire qui renforce notre conclusion consiste dans la réponse à la dernière question du carnet de bord « Seriez-vous disposé à continuer ces cours tandem l'année prochaine ? ». Les apprenants y ont répondu affirmativement et de façon presque unanime, ce qui montre la réussite de l'approche tandem.

Enfin, les résultats de notre analyse nous déterminent à considérer le tandem plus qu'une modalité d'apprentissage et de le classer parmi les stratégies motivationnelles efficaces, qui peuvent être utilisées par l'enseignant afin d'accroître l'intérêt pour la langue seconde. Au-delà d'une quantification des progrès linguistique des participants, le cours tandem en tant qu'activité complémentaire à un cours traditionnel de langue étrangère, reste une expérience d'apprentissage authentique, qui développe l'autonomie et la confiance en soi, facilitant en même temps l'intégration sociale et culturelle dans le pays cible.

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TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS ENGLISH (BE) – A FOUR-YEAR PROJECT

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ABSTRACT. *Technology-Enhanced Communication in Business English (BE) – A Four-Year Project.* The study presents the results of using integrated blog-writing for four years with the aim of extending BE students' productive and receptive skills. The online component provided opportunities for collaboration, increased visibility of student feed-back and consideration of individual learning styles. Content analysis of blog posts, comments, reflections and interviews demonstrate that technology-enhanced learning was the preferred learning style and increased the quantity and quality of language learning, student motivation and satisfaction.

Key words: *Business English, technology-enhanced learning, blog.*

REZUMAT. *Optimizarea comunicării în engleza pentru afaceri – patru ani de experiență în utilizarea noilor tehnologii.* Studiul prezintă rezultatele utilizării blogului pe parcursul a patru ani în predarea limbii engleze pentru afaceri în vederea optimizării deprinderilor productive (scriere) și receptive (citire, ascultare). Componenta online oferă posibilități de colaborare, vizibilitate, precum și luarea în considerare a stilului personal de învățare. Analiza de conținut a subiectelor postate, a comentariilor, reflecțiilor și interviurilor, demonstrează că acest stil de învățare este preferat și că poate conduce la optimizarea cantității și calității învățării, a motivației și satisfacției studenților.

Cuvinte cheie: *Engleza pentru afaceri, învățare cu ajutorul tehnologiei, blog.*

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1. Thesis

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is being currently redefined through the application of technology. More and more EFL trainers have included technology-based teaching in their practices in order to facilitate learning, foster communication, extend the time their students spend in the foreign language environment, nurture engagement, oral² and written production³, peer collaboration, ESP learning and proficiency.

In artificial environments such as the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context, the only opportunity for students to practice the language is in class. Students are not exposed to the target language on a day-to-day basis, nor do they have contact with situations likely to enhance their communication ability in a professional context. From the pedagogical point of view, teaching in large groups does not offer opportunities for all the students to contribute, let alone adult students, who already have a perfect communication tool in their own mother tongue and fear face loss in oral communication situations, whenever they interact with more proficient peers.

The current paper will reflect on how integrated blog-writing was used with first and second year General and Business English (BE) adult students of “Dimitrie Cantemir” University of Tirgu Mures, with the aim of extending and enhancing productive (writing) and receptive skills (reading, listening) in order to make them more confident, motivated and satisfied language users.

2. Technology-enhanced Learning (TEL) Project

Our project started in 2010 as a technology-enhanced EFL learning (TEL) enterprise and progress studies on its development with partial outcomes have been published in the literature⁴. “Blogger” was selected as the springboard for non-mandatory out-of-class activities and was meant to complement the two hours/week of English (two semesters) and Business English curriculum (one semester) in order to facilitate, extend and enhance EFL/BE learning in an authentic, motivating and field-relevant way.

² Swanson, P.B., Nolde P. R., Assessing student oral language proficiency: const-conscious tools, practices and outcomes, 2011, *The IALLT Journal*, vol 41 (2), p.72-88.

³ Chikamatsu, N., The effects of computer use on L2 Japanese writing, 2003, *Foreign Language Annals*, 36 (1), p.114.

⁴ Pop, A., Tomuletiu, E.A., David, D., EFL Speaking Communication with Asynchronous Voice Tools for Adult Students, 2011, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 15, p.1203.

The subjects are four generations of first and second year students (N = 150) of “Dimitrie Cantemir” University of Tirgu Mures studying English in a Business context, participants in the blog-integrated writing project. Students were of mixed ability, ranging from beginners to lower and upper-intermediate levels.

We will reflect on the process of designing integrated activities, monitoring student work, envisaged skills and sub-skills, outcomes, feedback and challenges of EFL/BE learning for the period October 2010 – May 2014.

The hypothesis of this project is that blog integrated writing has a positive impact on EFL/BE learning as far as language quantity, quality, motivation and satisfaction are concerned. The *project objectives* were to extend the students’ exposure and production of English in order to consolidate and develop listening as well as reading and writing fluency through a variety of resources, all vital in the case of large, mixed ability groups having limited or no other contact with the language.

3 Project Statistics

3.1 Designing Integrated Activities

This section will focus on the TEL project statistics including resources, integrated tools, establishing global connections and intercultural communication, types of content (i.e. customization according to language proficiency and learning style), envisaged skills and sub-skills, and challenges of post design.

The TEL blog project (<http://www.English4usdc10.blogspot.ro>) is based on customized and authentic language and business materials from various online resources: Yahoo News, Yahoo Finance, The Economist, The Telegraph, Tutor2You, Real English, YouTube, EnglishwithSound and Light, BBC Learning English.

The following *Web 2.0 tools* were integrated:

speaking: Vocaroo, VoiceThread and Audioboo; quiz makers: PhotoPeach, ESL video; writing: Wallwisher; GoAnimate video maker.

The project included collaboration and exchanges on intercultural aspects with international students from:

- a) Grenoble Institute (France),
- b) Erasmus students (Turkey).

Although there were blog posts to which the four successive generations of students returned, creation of topical and field-relevant activities each year, remained a constant target.

Types of content. The blog contained a total number of 100 posts, simple (e.g.: reading), or integrated (e.g. reading and listening) (mean: 25/year, see Table 1 below):

Table 1.

Statistics of designed activities/year

Year	Posts
2010	15
2011	25
2012	37
2013	16
2014	7

According to content and skills, topics ranged from field-specific, to general lower and intermediate language level, integrating two or even three language skills:

- **Business:**
 1. integration of three skills (reading, listening, writing) e.g.: *Job responsibilities, The driver's market;*
 2. integration of listening and writing, e.g.: *Jobless, Doing business in Moscow, Wage equality, Business ideas, building a tourist facility on top of a mountain, Advertising, Travelling by air, Company presentation;*
 3. integration of reading and writing, e.g.: *Consumer behavior, Corporate NOs, First impressions: how important are they in business? Rules for the workplace, Behavioural economics;*
 4. integration of listening and speaking, e.g.: *A day in the life of a company; Your first day at work, etc.;*
 5. integration of listening and vocabulary quiz, e.g.: *Advertising, etc.*
- **Personalizing and sharing experiences**, e.g.: *My favourite word; Favourite shopping place; Retelling a movie; An experience that changed my life, etc.;*
- **Writing competitions**, e.g.: *Crime story, etc.;*
- **Webquests** on e.g.: consumer behavior, touristic information;
- **Other:** News, interesting facts (e.g. on salaries, degrees), challenges (guess the place, peer error correction, local information), rewards and prizes, evaluation of peers' contributions.

Speaking activities were based on exploitation of Vocaroo, Voice Thread and Audioboo asynchronous speaking tools, each activity constituting a sub-project in itself, students reading, listening and recording comments on a series of topics:

- Vocaroo – Ranking competition (favorite topic in the curriculum);
- VoiceThread:

1. Speaking for Tourism (topics e.g.: Trends in tourism, Flying experiences, Travlogue, Romanian tourism, Promoting a local place through legends and myths, Preparing a touristic product: The communist tour of our town)

2. A Voiced Guide to Erasmus students (e.g.: Places to visit, souvenirs to buy, how to travel in Romania/town, teaching basic Romanian vocabulary, shopping, student life, etc.)

3. The Interview: communicative grammar practice - asking and answering Wh- and Yes/No questions (<https://voicethread.com/myvoice/#u621787>).

- **Audioboo:**

1. Why do you like working and living in our town/country

(<http://audioboo.fm/boos/788597-why-do-you-like-living-and-working-in-your-town-country>)

2. My first day at work: <http://audioboo.fm/boos/689017-speaking-about-your-first-day-at-work>; A day in the life of a company:

<http://audioboo.fm/boos/688966-instructions-for-blog-post-speaking-a-day-in-the-life-of-a-company>

Types of sub-skills:

- **Writing**: comparing and contrasting, describing, creative dialogue writing (writing a screen play:

<http://www.english4usdc10.blogspot.ro/search?updated-min=2011-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&updated-max=2012-01-01T00:00:00-08:00&max-results=25>); evaluating, writing a collective poem; biography;

- **Listening**: expressing opinion about news (*Einstein may be wrong*), summarizing (Steve Jobs speech), listening for gist and screening for detail;

- **Speaking**: interviewing a colleague, friend, family (Audioboo: “How many hours a week do you work?”);

- **Reading**: for gist, detail and vocabulary learning in a business context.

According to level, **beginners’ posts** were modeled by the teacher and included:

- patterned sentences (e.g.: *I like..., Three things about me, I used to.....*); spotting differences in pictures or between cultures; expressing opinions on animal life, university, town and everyday routine; recycling grammar tenses and question formation in context (e.g. ask/answer the question.

For the teacher, the following represented **challenges in post design**:

- finding topics that support multiple points of view and encourage original comments;
- maintaining content over the years: different tools and YouTube video clips may have been discontinued by the owner and are no longer visible on the blog.

3.2. Content Analysis of the Digital Portfolio

The content analysis of the four-year digital portfolio of students' written and spoken production as well as their underlying reading, listening and search work demonstrate that the project increased the quantity and quality of language learning in a BE context:

- More students had the opportunity to contribute than would have happened in class, although there were students who opted not to engage in the project;
- Oral and written language production significantly increased (see Table 2 below). Moreover, for each task, students read more than they would have read during a typical class reading activity, including the blog post, blog task description, and all previous peer responses;
- There was a progressive increase in the oral comments during the second year of the project as students became more used to asynchronous speaking, but a decrease in student comments during the latter part of the project (2013, 2014) due to the decrease in student numbers, when only the reading and writing activities were delegated to the online project;

Table 2.

Blog statistics

	Written comments (N)	Oral comments (N)	Contributing students (N)	Blog Visitors (N)
2010	430	47	150	11,628 (as of August 2014)
2011	538	76		
2012	351	259		
2013	176	-		
2014	222	-		

- Statistics show that students' optional, out-of-class effort and creativity increased and they became more independent language learners. Although it is difficult to estimate the amount of class interaction on a 28-week English course,

after analysing the writing in 2011 (538 written comments/academic year) and speaking contributions in 2012 (259/academic year), it is evident that students made tremendous efforts beyond just the class activity;

- In terms of authenticity of tasks and audience, the blog's visitor-monitoring application made students aware they were reading and writing for a purpose and their audiences were real (see „blog visitors” in Table 2 above);

- Although most of the students were responding to the teacher's original post, there was significant student-student interaction;

- The TEL project constitutes a community of EFL/BE discourse and knowledge: with it, English language learning continued beyond the class for many students while for others, it represented the way of staying in touch with colleagues and target language.

Difficulties:

- Significant commitment is necessary to create, monitor, respond, and assess students' online work beside regular class activity.

- Although fluency and production increased, accuracy in writing is still an issue when working online since, due to the influence of other social media, students tend to view blog writing as a less formal type.

- Language quality (grammar and spelling) were difficult to control in asynchrony with large groups, mainly due to the fact that most students contributed around the exam periods and only some of them revisited the teacher's challenges for error correction.

4. Student Feed-back on TEL

Data collection on TEL project activity included a) students' oral interviews and b) their written reflections on the class blog. Student perceptions were surveyed for their degree of satisfaction with the blog-enhanced language learning, self evaluation, satisfaction with the method and material quality, and attractiveness of the technology-enhanced project versus traditional class activities.

a) End-of-the-year oral interviews

Most students enjoyed the blog activities although they had different opinions about its benefits. Students felt they:

- improved their reading skill, learnt new vocabulary and grammar structures,

- had more time to think, prepare and participate and could use the dictionary and other resources,

- did not feel the pressure of face-to-face communication,

- were able to adapt to individual working pace and style (e.g. reproductive, creative, etc.),
- felt they stayed in touch with colleagues and content.

Students' feedback was considered a precious tool for measuring and further improving the quality of the blog posts. Based on interview feedback, additional scaffolding for beginner posts and for students with low-confidence in speaking was considered. Likewise, topical, more business-oriented themes were designed in order to challenge advanced second year students.

Students enjoyed reading, contributing and collaborating on the class blog. Over 90% of the students who effectively participated in the project indicated they were in favor of technology-enhanced learning because it offered them something novel, interesting and especially available whenever and from wherever they had the time to participate. Some students responded that they engaged more or exclusively in the online project activities due to family and work commitments, which prevented them from attending classes. Even so, they did not totally give up traditional learning for reasons of contact with peers and socializing.

b) *Written reflections on the blog* - for the 4th generation of students (2013-2014 academic year), increased visibility of feedback regarding their degree of satisfaction with the designed materials and the new learning method was provided. A very simple 6-item open-ended questionnaire evaluated their perceptions of technology-enhanced learning:

1. Have you used technology in other subjects so far? If yes, where? (except for IT/computer classes)
2. What was easy to do?
3. What was difficult?
4. What did you like most?
5. Why did you choose to work on the project?
6. In the future, how would you like to study English: a) only in class; b) only online c) a combination of a and b.

Students' responses in narrative form were recorded as blog comments: technology-enhanced learning was their preferred learning style, and they were motivated and satisfied with the quality of the method and materials, even though students had not been previously involved in other such types of EFL learning:

"I chose to work on it because it is more convenient and today almost everything is based on technology" (C. Burian)

"It's more comfortable to work from home and easier" (B. Puni)

"I chose to work online because it's a different way of learning English, because I worked from home and I could use the dictionary and see the posts from my colleagues" (R. Anca)

“It was a new and interesting teaching method and evaluation”. (Suci D.)

“I think that we really need to stay connected with technology especially in Business English...and it is simpler to work in this way”. (Borbely R.)

“I have chosen to work on it because for me it was a challenge to discuss and understand subjects which are in English, a thing that normally, except for movies, I don't do, even If I have an English degree from HighSchool”. (Pescari D.)

In item 6) of the blog survey, some answers varied between “I like to study English in class” versus “I'd like to study only online”. The fact that TEL was the preferred learning style for most students indicates that reliance on the teacher as facilitator is still expected and they prefer a more controlled level of autonomy.

Conclusion

This exploratory study implemented TEL in EFL/BE learning for four years as a complement to the formal curriculum, in order to facilitate, extend and enhance EFL/BE learning in an authentic, motivating and field-relevant way.

Although the gap between the expected and real English language proficiency remains⁵ and the quality of written language (grammar and spelling) were difficult to control in asynchrony, technology-enhanced learning proved to have manifold benefits in supporting EFL learning. As our project demonstrates, TEL helped students to develop a positive attitude towards English language communication, enabling them to become more fluent and confident language users.

EFL teachers can experiment with TEL blog portfolios in their teaching in order to provide new, authentic and engaging communication opportunities and at the same time to document student language learning progress, attitudes and experiences.

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PRESERVING AND TRANSCENDING ETHNIC IDENTITY AS A MEANS OF PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT

ROXANA MIHELE¹

ABSTRACT. *Preserving and Transcending Ethnic Identity as a Means of Personal and Collective Empowerment.* Considering that most societies nowadays live under the sign of globalization and wide-spread consumerism, one may justly wonder whether the distinct ethnic and/or national identities will retain their importance in the years to come, whether people will still look to their old language, religion, traditions, and myths for guidance. I believe that these elements are still strong enough to generate a sense of kinship, empowerment and comfort given by common identity, which may help each person find the values, he/she needs to confront an impersonal bureaucratic, money-driven, shallow society.

Key words: *(symbolic) ethnicity, ethnic groups, multiculturalism, identity, the postethnic perspective, tradition*

REZUMAT. *Conservarea și transgresarea identității etnice ca mijloc de emancipare personală și colectivă.* Considerând că în zilele noastre majoritatea țărilor trăiesc sub semnul globalizării și al consumismului larg răspândit, ne putem întreba dacă diferitele identități etnice și naționale își vor menține importanța în anii ce vor veni, dacă oamenii vor mai prețui vechile lor limbi, religii, tradiții și mituri. Eu consider că aceste elemente sunt încă destul de puternice pentru a genera un sentiment de afiliere, emancipare și confort dat de o identitate comună care să ajute individul să-și găsească valorile de care are nevoie într-o lume birocratică, impersonală și superficială.

Cuvinte cheie: *etnicitate (simbolică), grupuri etnice, multiculturalism, perspectiva postetnică, tradiție*

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Upon hearing the term “ethnicity” or “ethnic group” most people would think immediately about the latest news seen on TV or read in the newspaper or the Internet about some usually bloody conflict in more or less remote parts of the world where various groups fight for land, political power, social and economic dominance over other groups. Thus these concepts are mentally assigned with negative connotations suggestive of clashes, struggles, destruction and human tragedies on a smaller or larger scale. Without denying the reality of such aspects, one can notice that nevertheless few individuals have in mind the veritable force of creation and improvement that the mixture of cultures, traditions, languages, religions and historical evolutions can have in building new(er) nations like the U.S.A. for example, most commonly thought of as a “melting pot” of ethnic groups, or in reinforcing old states in a new supranational structure, like the E.U., which is supposed to bring prosperity, cooperation and avoid armed conflicts at all cost. Surely this path is sprinkled with numerous difficulties and perils mostly arising from the fear of meeting, accepting and even incorporating the Other, the difference, or from the easily understandable reluctance to give up a hegemonic status or embracing change for that matter.

Some researchers have noticed that for immigrants or their descendants, for people belonging to formerly oppressed groups, the preservation of their ethnic identity under one form or another may become an instrument for political pressure and rectification of historical wrongs. This may be one reason why we witness the rise of so many ethnically based conflicts and wars. Yet other researchers underline the force and the speed with which information, consumer goods and new, foreign traditions spread nowadays, the extent to which people travel, change and adapt their habits, even language and customs which obviously leads to the erasure of differences and ultimately brings about the adoption of a new common culture most often built on the civic identity provided by most democratic societies.

Given the duality of perception that specialists can employ to study these terms, I believe that I should start by presenting one of the most commonly accepted definitions for them and see what they entail. According to Richard Schermerhorn *an ethnic group* is seen as:

A collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of peoplehood. Examples of such symbolic elements are: kinship patterns, physical contiguity [...], religious affiliation, language or dialect forms, tribal affiliation, nationality, phenotypical features, or any combination of these. A necessary accompaniment is some consciousness of kind among members of the group. (Schermerhorn, 16)

From the very beginning it can be noted that if common characteristics like the ones mentioned above are absolutely necessary to make up the cohesion of the group, they are also the lines along which the idea of *otherness* is created since in most societies the dominant group, usually the majority, does not view itself as “ethnic”. If the dominant group is considered as having authority and control over various political, economic and value systems, the minority or subordinate groups are considered as the intruders, the strangers, those who do not belong or are at best the tolerated or the assimilated ones. This is a phenomenon which can/ could be found even in nations built upon migration, like the U.S.A., where almost everybody was at one time or another a newcomer, a mere member of one ethnic group or another looking to be accepted in the new society. The analysis presented by Werner Sollors to the etymology of the term “ethnicity” is thus eloquent:

Ethnicity is, of course, derived from the older adjective and noun, “ethnic”, which in turn goes back to a Greek root comprising the word field “nation” and “heathen”. The word *ethnikos* was thus used in the Greek Bible to render the Hebrew *goyim* (non-Israelites, Gentiles). In the Christianized context of the English language, the word “ethnic” [...] recurred, from the 14th to the 19th centuries, in the sense of “pagan, heathen, non-Christian”. Only in the mid-19th century did the more familiar meaning of “ethnic” as peculiar to a race or nation” reemerge. However, the English language has retained the memory of “ethnic” as “heathen”, often secularized in the sense of ethnic as the “other” or “non-standard” or, in the United States, as somehow “un-American”. This connotation gives the opposition “ethnic” and “American” the additional religious dimension of the contrast between “heathens” and “chosen people”. [...] “Ethnics” – originally just “people” – are etymologically the “others”, “they” as opposed to “us”. Ethnicity as “otherness” refers to self-definitions of one group of people through an opposition against other groups: we are not like them, they are not like us. (Sollors, 648)

However, it is to be noted that the author argues in his article “Literature and Ethnicity” that it is wrong to think that American culture was/is unique and distinct because it reflected just one type of historical heritage; on the contrary it was and is constantly enriched by each new culture and ethnic group it encompasses. That is why the very distinction between “American” and “ethnic” is flawed, because many of the so called “ethnic” characteristics are not culture specific, but only become so in the confrontation with the larger American mosaic.

In the treatment of ethnicity some researchers adhere to the “*primordialist*” approach by viewing it as static, naturalistic, where people preserve their personal, linguistic, religious, cultural bonds that tie them to their group; while other researchers favor the “*instrumentalist*” approach in which ethnicity is more of a

social, political and cultural tool for various interest and status groups to promote their ideals. The latter group insists on the socially-constructed nature of ethnicity in which individuals or groups are not fixed to their biological line of descent, to the group or identity they have inherited from their parents, but on the contrary, they can adopt a new identity, join a new group (usually by means of intermarriage or conversion), they can take some elements pertaining to one identity and mix them to characteristics of another group in order to forge their own destiny and not follow blindly the path of their ancestors.²

The crucial role of tradition in maintaining ethnic identity especially in “old” societies where migration was not instrumental in building the nation or the state (like those in Europe or Asia) is depicted by Manning Nash in the following terms which illustrate the primordialist view:

Tradition is the past of a culture, as that past is thought to have continuity, a presence, and a future. These features of tradition bestow upon the past a weight of authority; the very fact of survival, pastness, and continuity give an aura of authority, legitimacy and rightness to cultural beliefs and practices. [...] That things and practices have traditional warrant makes for linkage over generations, thus bestowing upon even the most humble member of a group a pedigree, allowing him to identify with heroic times, great deeds, and a genealogy to the beginning of things human, cultural and spiritual. [...] Tradition, while chiefly concerned with the past and hence backward looking, has a forward, future dimension. [...] The group has strength from the evident fact of its survival, and that strength is augmented if individual survival is but a link in group survival”. (Nash, 27)

On the contrary, the instrumentalist view can be easily associated with the postethnic perspective proposed by David Hollinger when discussing the evolution of the American identity, a particular case of a “new” society, nation/state built upon migration, from the mixture of numerous ethnic groups. He uses the “postethnic” concept, initially coined by Werner Sollors, to argue that if America is to survive the divergence of its contrasting multicultural present, one has to admit that the identity of an individual is given not only by his descent, by his ancestry, but also by the affiliation that he/she makes during the lifetime.

It is common knowledge that the U.S.A. was and to some extent still is considered, especially by the larger public, a *melting-pot* society based on citizenship by volitional allegiance modeled upon the consent principle where the immigrants shed their Old World identity and adopt a new, American one having

²For more details regarding these approaches see the “Introduction” to *Oxford Readers: Ethnicity*; Eds. John Hutchinson and Antony D. Smith; Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. 3-14.

a civic rather than ethnic content, or at least mold their identity to the values of the perceived WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) “majority”. Yet this approach to American identity soon gave way to the theories of *cultural pluralism* and later on *multiculturalism* which both opposed the idea of a core culture and emphasized the value of cultural difference among various ethnic groups and the necessity for cultural parity among them.

But this need for the preservation of difference and the rejection of assimilation into a common culture also entailed several fears. On the one hand, it was thought that “the center will not hold” since the unifying qualities of multiculturalism are too vague; and on the other hand multiculturalism needed to see categories like race or ethnicity as cultural constructs created by individuals or groups rather than static, almost biological entities which emphasized that the Americans are nothing more than their parents were. Especially in a society like the American one where intermarriage is a common occurrence, there is no monolithic identity and the individual must be free in choosing which ethnic identity, values, culture, traditions, etc. to follow or even mix parts of them taken from different groups. These aspects were concentrated by David Hollinger in the definition he gave to “postethnicity”:

Postethnicity prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiple identities, pushes for communities of wider scope, recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups, and accepts the formation of new groups as part of the normal life of a democratic society. [...] A postethnic perspective recognizes that choices are made in specific, limiting circumstances, some of which are ancestral. [...] A postethnic perspective denies neither history nor biology – nor the need for affiliations – but it does deny that history and biology provide a set of clear orders for the affiliations we are to make. (Hollinger, 116, 117, 119)

This particular approach of viewing ethnicity as a flexible entity at the choice of the individual certainly fits another concept that has been associated mostly with interpretations of American identity, namely the *symbolic ethnicity*. Considering that in the U.S.A the immigrants have different ways of embracing and proclaiming their ethnic identity according to the generation they belong to, this symbolical attachment to one’s roots is mostly the realm of the 3rd generation immigrants and those succeeding them.

If the 1st generation usually is still very much connected to the old country, language, customs and traditions and has small chances of becoming fully integrated; the 2nd generation is considerably adapted to its new environment and society. These people cherish the old cultural values only at home, being somewhat ashamed of their dual hyphenated identity (e.g. Italian-American, Irish-American) and seek total integration. In contrast to these generations, the 3rd one

has little connection to their grandparents' ethnic heritage because these individuals are fully integrated and cherish only symbolically the ethnic identity of their ancestors, showing interest for it only superficially. In other words, the members of this 3rd generation may theoretically show appreciation for their ancestors' culture as long as they do not have to actually practice it with all its norms perceived mostly as restrictions for those already accustomed to another way of life and other values.

As Herbert J. Gans noted, they would normally find their ethnic roots in celebrating holidays or various rites of passage which are ceremonial and thus symbolic enough not to take too much time or disrupt the normal daily routine, they would turn to consumer goods like ethnic food or media productions, films with ethnic characters, or even support national politicians concerned with international issues related to their ancestors' old country or show a lot of interest in the history of their ancestors like in the case of the Jewish-American population's interest in the Holocaust.

Symbolic ethnicity [...] is characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love or pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behavior. [...] People may even sincerely desire to "return" to these imagined pasts, which are conveniently cleansed of the complexities that accompanied them in the real past, but while they may soon realize they cannot go back, they may not surrender the wish. Or else they displace that wish on churches, schools, and the mass media, asking them to recreate a tradition, or rather, a symbolic tradition, even while their familial, occupational, religious and political lives are pragmatic responses to the imperatives of their roles and positions in local and national hierarchical social structures. (Gans, 146)

The scholar (Gans, 152) underlines that in the U.S.A. there were several conditions present which allowed for the development of such a type of ethnicity, i.e. the freedom of ethnic expression which stimulated "both ethnic diversity, and the right to find one's own way of being ethnic [...] and the awareness [...] that neither the practice of ethnic culture nor participation in ethnic organizations were essential to being or feeling ethnic".

Despite the fact that some people might see this stress on symbolism as leading to a dilution of identity and loss of values, people nonetheless still feel the need to establish differences from each other and offer allegiance to various ethnic groups that can compensate for the disillusion individuals feel in the wake of several social, economic and political turbulences which threaten other social identifications they might look for as citizens of a particular state. In the end it is a strategic choice meant to bring power and privilege both on an individual and collective level.

On the other hand, as Daniel Bell has noticed, this capacity of empowerment that ethnicity has may also lead in the political arena to inflamed emotions ready to burst into open conflict or to the manipulation of masses by less scrupulous politicians gathered under the flag of nationalism.

Politics is also the arena of passions, where emotions can be readily mobilized behind one's own flag, and against another group. The 'risks' of such inflamed political competition is that issues may not be negotiable [...] but become 'causes' that invite violent conflict and even civil war. [...] Nationalism joins culture and politics in a common purpose. It brings together the high-born and the low and gives those, even of the meanest circumstance, a pride in being able to feel at one with the highest classes in the country, and in a common culture and history. Nationalism has the appeal of unifying a country behind a common loyalty, of focusing emotional aggression against an outside neighbor. For this obvious reason, where there has been a strong, aggressive nationalism, class and ethnic rivalries have been subdued or muted. (Bell, 140).

I agree with these comments except the last one. Ethnic rivalries *can* be exacerbated by nationalism as the history of Europe has provided numerous examples so far of countries with multiple ethnic groups divided by the nationalism promulgated usually by the majority's politicians or countries with rather monolithic ethnic groups at war with each/one other for territory. Perhaps the great exceptions would be represented by the New World emigrant societies where the umbrella of nationalism would include all ethnic groups, merged together in the new nation-state which is seen as opposing external enemies. According to the author, domestic political, economic, social or ethnic/racial conflicts can be postponed if the whole society is mobilized against a foreign threat like the case of the United States during the 1950s facing the Korean war and the communist menace. When the ideological threat was somewhat dissipated, the inner social and racial conflicts erupted again.

Given all these aspects of how ethnicity can give an individual a tremendously powerful sense of identity and connection to other peers or provide for whole groups a way of gaining more influence and power usually manifested on the political and economic scene, it is undeniable that this concept will still retain its importance even in a global society that shares much more than consumer goods; it also shares, by means of borrowing and lending, traditions, languages, cultural norms. Nevertheless, the sense of being different from the other, of having your own identity, therefore your own value and importance is as old as history itself; and the need to belong to a group that can offer you that difference and value is certainly translated in the wish for affiliation to an ethnic identity, regardless of how it is defined.

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THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SELF IN ELIZA HAYWOOD'S *ADVENTURES OF EOVAAI*

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ABSTRACT. *The Complexity of the Self in Eliza Haywood's Adventures of Eovaaï.* The aim of the present paper is to examine several facets of feminine and masculine identity in Eliza Haywood's novel *Adventures of Eovaaï*, and to demonstrate that, in the woman writer's view, the complexity of the self, of personal identity is ensured by the body/mind/soul triad.

Key words: *religiosity, identity, self, body, mind, soul*

REZUMAT. *Complexitatea sinelui în Aventurile lui Eovaaï de Eliza Haywood.* Scopul prezentei lucrări este de a examina câteva fațete ale identității feminine și masculine în romanul *Aventurile lui Eovaaï* de Eliza Haywood, și de a demonstra că, în opinia scriitoarei, complexitatea sinelui, a identității personale este asigurată de triada corp/minte/suflet.

Cuvinte cheie: *identitate, sine, corp, minte, suflet*

Eliza Haywood's *Adventures of Eovaaï, Princess of Ijaveo. A Pre-Adamitical History* was published anonymously in 1736, a time when several other works were satirizing Robert Walpole, the stained Whig Prime Minister. As the British society had already embraced John Locke's principles of government based on moral standards to which all men, including governors, should subscribe, it came as no surprise that the press, the political opponents, and even the ordinary citizens were really concerned about the arbitrary power the corrupted Prime Minister exercised. Although they were not organized in an opposition party, there existed a group of independent thinkers and writers, known as the Patriots, who rallied around Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke. They raised their voices

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against the crooked minister. As Walpole was extremely sensitive to any sort of criticism, politicians, journalists, novelists, or playwrights had to be cautious that everything, from press articles to plays and fiction, be carefully veiled under disguises of oriental stories, fairy tales, or allegories. Many of the productions were anonymous or signed under pseudonyms. It is also the case of Eliza Haywood's novel which was promoted as a translation of a 'pre-Adamitical history'. The 1736 title page includes several details that were meant both to disguise and to reveal the message of the book. It speaks of remarkable past events and great men of state, of the religion of those pre-Adamitical times, as well as of the original language of the book, the Language of Nature. However, that language became inaccessible to people. Consequently, at the request of an Emperor, the book was translated into Chinese by a Cabal of seventy philosophers, being "retranslated into English, by the Son of a Mandarin, residing in London" (41), in 1736. As it is easy to guess, the Chinese translator of the book is the disguised authoress, Eliza Haywood.

The Adventure of Eovaa'i's polymorphous aspect, the odd blend of genres, "a satirical-allegorical-Bolingbrokean-romantic oriental tale" (King, 73), has attracted various critical approaches, most of them concerned with the satirical attack on Walpole. However, although the title page announces that the book is concerned also "with some account of the religion, laws, customs, and politics of those times" (41), religiosity and religious identity have not been previously investigated in Haywood's novel.

During my research on Eliza Haywood, I observed that, in all her works, the soul claimed a special attention and the body/mind/soul triad, which I envision rather as a body-mind-soul-continuum, has an active role in the construction of the self. Consequently, among the important aspects that I consider in my investigation is also the religious identity of the characters and, implicitly, Eliza Haywood's religiosity.

Conceived as an Oriental fantasy, tailored on the Chinese box within a box, or the *Arabian Nights* story within a story pattern, *Adventures of Eovaa'i* has all the necessary ingredients of a mythological narrative. Everything is magic, fantastic, fabulous, and almost paradisiacal, the land is rich, the people are prosperous and the name they have are all of them charged with a special significance. They echo mythical, primordial times. The heroines and heroes make initiation travels, experience supernatural encounters, and even marry and live happily ever after. The kingdom of Ijaveo, meaning Opulent and Magnanimous, is located somewhere near the South Pole, which "must be, within a few Degrees, the Antipodes of England" (52, n.1). This land is governed by the illustrious King Eojaeu (Father of the People) who was perfectly skilled in the science of good magic and could foresee the future. He had a very beautiful daughter and, as the Princess was his only child, she was to become the King's successor to the throne.

To become a suitable monarch for her nation, the Princess, naturally endowed with a multitude of talents in the performing arts, was deemed by her father as not to require any peculiar training of the body. She received an education that focused solely on her mind:

...but there was nothing of which he so much endeavour'd to keep her in Ignorance as her own Charms. To this end, he suffer'd her to converse but little with her *own Sex*, and strictly forbid those of the *other*, to mention Beauty, or any Endowment of the *Body*, as things deserving Praise; the Virtues of the *Mind* were what he labour'd to inculcate, and therefore took all possible care to render amiable to her. (53)

With a discourse that echoes John Locke's *Second Treatise on Civil Government* but also the great thinker's idea that the body did not play a very important role in education, Eojaeu instructs his daughter how to govern the kingdom. She is taught to detest pride, avarice, arbitrary power, nepotism, or injustice and cultivate the freedom and prosperity of her people, equality in lawful rights and obligations, honour and virtue. Drawing her attention towards the proper means of gaining authentic knowledge, he demands her to use her senses to gather information and her mind to process it and make rational judgements. Furthermore, to consolidate her moral principles and "render her Reign *glorious* for *herself*, and *fortunate* for her *Subjects*", the King was concerned with her instruction "in the Mysteries of *Religion* and *Philosophy*" (54).

At a close inspection of the paragraph I have, once more, perceived the faithful Haywood who, transiently but concisely, exposes her religious belief in good and evil, in paradise and the inferno, in the ephemerality of earthly life and the eternity of heavenly afterlife. It is interesting how this aspect, noticeable in many of her novels, in several of her characters, and ultimately being a facet of Haywood's identity, has not been much investigated by other scholars before. Maybe Haywood's received label of an infamous scribbling dame has made impossible or improbable, her association with a religious, moral woman.

That Haywood liked to shock her reading public and invert established social, political and, definitely, gender values or positions is certain and very much in her personal style. After providing all the details of this man-like monarch education the princess had been given, she informs the readers that the princess was named Eovaai which, in an English translation signifies *The Delight of Eyes*. The implicit tremendous beauty that resides in her name, but which was forbidden by her father to be mentioned, would obliquely imply a more corporeal education in the fashion of her time. However, contrary to the public expectation, only the accomplishments of her mind had been refined. Undoubtedly, the author's message has a clear connotation: women should also benefit, very

much like men, of the education of the mind and become as Eovaaï, a "Prodigy of Wit and Learning" (55). At this point, Haywood clearly announces Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

Still, the knowledge of the feminine mind must be supported by an informed awareness of her female body and an attentive cultivation of the soul. Eovaaï was only fifteen when her father "found himself summon'd, by a Power whose Calls no Mortals can resist" (55). Prior to leaving this world, the loving father, in a scene which combines tender awe and submission, entrusts his daughter to the divine powers that have been protecting their nation and transmits to her not only the monarchic power, but also a shielding jewel made by Aiou, the most powerful of the Genii, the patron of their family. In order to be defended against dangers, the jewel must be preserved entire and pure:

In speaking these Words, he took off a Carcanet, which he had constantly worn upon his Breast, and put it upon her's. Let neither Force nor Fraud, resumed he, deprive you of this sacred Treasure: Remember that what ought to be infinitely dearer to you than your Life, your eternal Fame, and the Happiness of all the Millions you are born to rule, depend on the Conservation of it. (55-56)

A careful reading of this paragraph reveals that Eliza Haywood hints at several implications when talking about this jewel being passed from father to daughter. The transfer of the carcanet (an ornamental necklace) from one breast to another refers, undoubtedly, to the soul and the spiritual values transmitted from one generation to another through love. In this noble, but obliging gesture, the father gives his daughter his heart, his essence which she will have to responsibly guard and use. Haywood infers that virtue resides in the soul and, as long as it is not perverted, or by any means distorted, honour can be preserved. Sadly, in her society this precept seemed to be applicable only to men. Paradoxically, as the ironic narrator informs, Eovaaï has not received any training of the body. How was she to guard herself against 'force or fraud', or both? Was the mind enough to acknowledge the body? To what extent did the corporeal passions blur reason? Wouldn't a blended, balanced instruction of the soul, the mind and the body, more precisely the sexual body, have been rather suitable? Haywood's answer to this question was always in the affirmative and, just as much as her previous novels were the advocates of women's complex education, so is *Adventures of Eovaaï*. Although virtue (the precious stone) has a spiritual value, Eovaaï has to carry the jewel on, or rather within her body. The author's subtle point is that double standard has always been employed, even in those pre-Adamitical times. If men were held responsible mainly for their moral, spiritual virtue, women had to endeavour to preserve their mind uncorrupted, their soul

un-perverted, and their body unpolluted. What Haywood infers is that a complex personal identity resides in the equilibrium of all its constituent elements, the *body-mind-soul-continuum* of a complete healthy self. At this point, Eliza Haywood distances from Locke's definition of identity. If the latter almost ignored the role of the body, excluded the soul, and credited the mind as the most important component of the self, Haywood acknowledges all these three elements as important in the construction of personal identity.

For several months nothing seemed to trouble the happiness, accomplishments, and balance of the Queen. Until one day, when "sitting alone in her Garden, ruminating on the last Words of her Father ... Emotions, to which hitherto she had been a Stranger, began to diffuse themselves throughout her Mind" (57). In a posture that evokes Eve in the Garden of Eden, Eovaa, stirred by curiosity, takes the Carcanet from her breast and examines the mystic characters engraved behind the stone in order to comprehend their meaning. To her amazement, all of a sudden the "Jewel drop'd from the cemented Gold" (57) and despite her effort to take it up and replace it, a bird snatched it and flew away with the sacred prize. As the passage bears close resemblance to Haywood's previous descriptions of her female characters' loss of virginity, the "analogy between Eovaa's jewel and her chastity" (58, n.1) is evident. Once more women are reminded that they cannot fail. A woman who has lost her virginity is repudiated from society and is banned from having a social identity. Similarly, when the accidental loss of the jewel is made public, Eovaa is confronted with discontent and resentment. Secluded and abandoned by her people and even by the Princes who had tried to win her heart while she was enjoying a flourishing status, Eovaa grew depressive and desperate, tormented often by suicidal thoughts. However, one of her former pretenders who "was call'd Ochihatou, and had for many Years, ruled every thing in Hypotofa, tho' Oeros, the King thereof, was living" (61), did not give up the thought of making Eovaa his, one day. In the person of "[t]his great Man ... born of a mean Extraction, and so deformed ... that not even his own Parents cou'd look on him with Satisfaction" (62), the eighteenth-century readers could easily identify the English Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole.

Haywood is careful to depict him right from the start in the gloomiest and most wicked terms, so that all his twisted, deceitful actions can be properly deciphered by the reading public. She describes him as an archenemy of everything that is sacred, of religion and spirituality. To better secure his position, "this execrable Statesman ... took Measures also to corrupt their Morals, and to render all kinds of Vice so universal, that his own might pass unremark'd" (66). Most certainly what Haywood aimed at was, on the one hand, Ochihatou/Walpole's amorous inclinations. On the other hand the fragment reads a sound

critique against the secularization of society and the replacement of traditional religious values with the more modern religion of reason, even if described somehow exaggeratedly. The reference Haywood makes to the “Chief Priests, out of different Sectaries” who were sent among the people of Hypotofa to hold “publick Disputations concerning some nice Points in Divinity” (67), tempts me to read this passage as an anti-Protestantism plea. Whether it was truly intended in support of Catholicism is, indeed, very debatable, and the scarcity of information connected to Haywood’s personal life makes it even more a matter of speculation, but my contention is that the author’s religiosity surfaces once more in this excerpt:

... and each exclaiming virulently against the Tenets of the other, so puzzled the Understanding of the weaker sort, that many of them began to think, there was no Necessity of observing any Rules of Devotion, and that all Religion was an Artifice, invented only by a Set of Men, to hold an Authority over the Soul. This brought every thing sacred into Contempt; Men openly despis’d Gods, laugh’d at the Influence of the Genii, and no longer invoc’d the Protection of the Celestial World. (66)

Lacking moral values and respect for the divine laws, people are more likely to commit crimes and the human propensity to do evil becomes greater. Once the regulator of the soul is altered, the balance of the three basic components of the self is destroyed and the entire self is corrupted. Ochihatou has a crooked soul, a deformed body and a twisted mind and his delusional ability and power imperils and corrupts the integrity of all that comes in touch with him, but the greatest danger resides in human ignorance, in people’s inability or lack of will to recognize fraud.

Unfortunately, Eovaaï is also confronted with Ochihatou’s fraudulent discourse and the first moment when the fragile balance of her *body-mind-soul-continuum* begins to shatter is when she becomes conscious of her body. Until now, Eovaaï has been unaware of the charms of her body and nobody has ever taken care to make her understand the role female corporeality plays in the construction of feminine identity. Unfortunately, the way in which she is made to discover her body and its outward perception is aimed at cultivating lust. Little by little, Eovaaï is seduced by the luxury that surrounds her, the magnificent buildings decorated in the most extravagant style, and the various scents from the air. All her senses are charmed, her reason is silenced. All the education she has received from her father is wiped away and replaced by feelings she did not experience before: self-love, vanity and haughtiness. All the values, once cultivated in her mind and soul, seem discarded in favour of the anti-values promoted by Ochihatou, as “his Artifices debilitated her Reason, and lull’d asleep

all Principles of Virtue in her Mind” (76). Her youth, lack of experience, rejection of morals, and “those tender Languishments” that now possessed her entirely transform Eovaaï in an easy target.

But the omniscient narrator has other plans for her heroine. She wants to restore the balance of the elements of the self and, consequently, prevents the completion of her ruin. The “unhappy and perverted Princess” (78), who “has been turned away from the truth to the wicked error” (78, n. 2), needs to be restored to the moral virtues of her ancestors. She has to regain the balance of her *body-mind-soul continuum* so that she can defeat the *Great Man*.

Left to herself in the grotto, the Princess of Ijaveo has time to meditate, an essential aspect in the process of self-acknowledgement and thus in the construction of personal identity. As she reflects, the words of Eojaeu come to her mind. She tries to repress and even discard them as useless, replacing the precepts of patience and resolution with the blissful thoughts of all the pleasures that charm the senses: homage, wealth and adoration. As she was more and more engrossed in these emotions and her ruin seemed closer than ever to its completion, the narrator infuses the plot with an astonishing episode that announces not only an alteration in Eovaaï’s previous perverted feelings, but also its unusual dimension, in words such as: “sudden gloom”, “a hollow rustling Wind”, “solemn Horror”, or “unusual Chillness” (93). The occurrence is indeed remarkable and the passage deserves a lengthy quotation as well as examination:

[A] Stream of Light succeeded, not less glorious, but more moderate than the great Orb of Day, and presented to her amazed Eyes, a form altogether new, yet such as excited more of Admiration than Affright. It seemed a Woman, but of a Stature far exceeding every thing in human Nature ... a flowing Robe, which seemed borrowed from the Firmament, when no ascending Vapours sully the azure Tincture, being all that mantled any Part ... Millions of glittering Atoms, such as appear, when the in vain excluded Sun, thro’ some round Crevice, darts his Radiance, form’d a kind of Wreath, on which the heavenly Vision seemed to stand, about some five Foot elevated from Earth. (93)

In my opinion, the divine vision that identifies itself, in a soft, harmonious voice, as Halafamai, unmistakably resembles the apparition of Virgin Mary. Several elements support my contention. Virgin Mary is, after God (manifest as the Holy Trinity), the second mostly venerated by the faithful of Catholic, Anglican, and Orthodox Churches. Although a woman, Virgin Mary is greater than human nature; all visuals depicting Virgin Mary indicate her mantle as blue. The radiant wreath Eovaaï sees, suggests the halo of divinity. All the apparition reports describe Virgin Mary as elevated from the ground. The next information that hints at the Halafamai/Virgin Mary equation is the translator’s observation:

“By this name is signified Truth, according to the Cabal; but both the Commentator and Hahehihotu are of opinion, that Mercy is more agreeable to the original” (93, n.1). Later in the text, Ochihatou himself describes Halafamai “as the most cruel Enemy of [his] Happiness” (134). Virgin Mary is, after all, the greatest enemy of the evil, the one who crushed the serpent’s head. Mother of Mercy, Advocate of Eve/**E(o)va(ai)** are only a few of the names by which Virgin Mary is recognized by the faithful. That the translator’s remark is pertinent, is visible also in the heavenly vision’s maternal merciful gesture of rising Eovaaï from her kneeled, silenced, and humble posture. Halafamai reassures the Princess that she, who was sent by Aiou (the *Mediatrix*) to save Eovaaï from herself and from “those detestable Ypres who have ensnared [her] Virtue” (93), can help her regain her verticality.

However, to be able to see clearly, she has to take distance, to be above the situation. This is marked by Haywood in Eovaaï’s ascension to the sky with Halafamai. Endowed with a sacred telescope, the lens of reality, of the objective view, Eovaaï sees Ochihatou as he truly is: “crooked, deformed, distorted in every Limb and Feature, but also encompassed with a thousand hideous Forms, which sat upon his Shoulders, clung round his Hands, his Legs, and seem’d to dictate all his Words and Gestures” (94). The eyes of the mind, constantly supported by the true values of the soul will enable the bodily eyes to “distinguish the Hypocrite from the Saint, the Betrayer of this Country from the Patriot, the Fool from the Politician, the Libertine from the Priest, the Coward from the Brave, or the Foe from the pretended Friend” (94-95). The education she receives from Halafamai reveals some crucial aspects in the formation of women’s identity. First of all, women are in great need of an educated mother-figure to support them and teach them how to process the knowledge they access and gain through their senses. Secondly, gaze has to be practised as a form of detached observation and as a way of experiencing life through imagination. Since in a patriarchal order women’s corporeality is more subject to social inscription than that of men, imagination, a safe rehearsal of reality, enables them to acknowledge and comprehend human nature. In the absence of a natural mother, women can either return to religion and follow the role model of The Mother of Mercy or identify in the woman writer of fiction for women, their mother-like instructor.

Learned and experienced, Eovaaï becomes able to fight back Ochihatou and “the Instrument of his Mischiefs” (151) and break it into pieces. The allusion to Ochihatou’s impotence in the absence of his magic wand is evident in the narrator’s ironic commentary, “he saw himself undone, before he had the least Thought of being so” (151). Deserted by the Ypres, enraged that he became unable to support his living or obtain what he mostly desired from Eovaaï, he decides to torture her to death. As she was hanging, tied by her hair on the branch of a tree and Ochihatou was preparing “to scourge and tear her tender Flesh” (152) with prickly thorns, a young man appeared in time to save Eovaaï.

However, Eovaai's peace and happiness seem shadowed once more. Returned to Ijaveo to regain her throne she presumes that her nation has already found a king in the person of her rescuer who proves to be a true hero as he had saved the kingdom from a terrible monster that used to devour the people. Furthermore, his wisdom, prudence and justice reconciled the conflicting parties and restored harmony in the kingdom. Tormented by contradictory feelings of love and hatred for her saviour and her supposed usurper, ironically conflated in the same person, she is unable to think reasonably. Then she is informed that he is only the protector of the kingdom of Ijaveo: "to find, in the Preserver of her Life, the Preserver of her whole People also, to have such infinite reason to love the Man, whom she cou'd not have avoided loving, had it been otherwise, was such a Surcharge of Felicity, as Sense could hardly bear" (156).

Slowly, the balance necessary to a healthy identity is restored. In a typical Haywood style, the two experience that magical *emotion-in-the-double* that ensures the durability of a love relation: "The Meeting of this illustrious Pair had something in it very peculiar: They stood for some moments gazing at each other at a distance; then bow'd and approach'd, but without speaking; the extraordinary Emotions which hurried thro' their Souls, (as they afterwards confess'd) kept both in a profound Silence" (156-157). Words are but unnecessary, their eyes speak of their love. Determined to offer him both her crown and her person as a reward for everything he had done for her and the people of Ijaveo, she aimed also "to gratify the Passion she was enflamed with for him" (158). The novel ends with "The history of Adelhu, only Son of Oeros, and Heir apparent to the Crown of Hypotofa" and through this story not only the readers, but also Eovaai is made familiar with the true identity of her rescuer. As Adelhu unfolds his story, Haywood crafts his identity. He is an honourable, generous, virtuous prince. During his initiation travel he had endeavoured to help another prince in distress, Yamatalalabec, and had preserved the kingdom of Ijaveo. Moreover, he had been entrusted by divinity with the preservation of the jewel Eovaai had lost. One interesting aspect to be noted at this point is Adelhu's obedience to divinity. Haywood simply loved to blur gender differences and play with role reversal. Not only must Adelhu take care of the precious stone, but he has to preserve himself for the possessor of the carcanet:

But beware how you cast your Eyes on Beauty, till your propitious Stars shall bring you to the Owner of that Gem. – 'Tis she alone is destin'd to make your Happiness, and that of Thousands yet unborn. – Fame, Honour, Glory, Peace, and Everlasting Bliss, will be the Consequences of your Union; but if you seek to anticipate your Lot, and give your Heart to any other, Shame, Disgrace, Discord and Contempt, must be your Portion here, and keen Remorse dwell with you to Eternity. (164)

Eovaai already knows that the stone he described is the gem she had lost, but curiosity stirs her to enquire whether the perfect balance of her body-mind-soul-continuum can be restored. The avalanche of questions she fires, an interrogatory that astonishes Adelhu, points at the parallel I have drawn at the beginning of my analysis between Eojaeu's heart and the precious jewel. The words of her dying father whose demand was to preserve the stone "entire, and in its present Purity and Brightness" (55) are now Eovaai's words with regards to Adelhu's heart: "Is it yet entire and pure from any Impression?" (164).

As it can be observed, the lovers' perfect match is paired by the exact fitting of the stone into its shell. Eovaai "untied the Ribband from her Neck, and putting the Stone into the Socket from whence it had drop'd, he saw that they not only were exactly fitted to each other, but also that moment they were join'd, the Cement closed upon the Jewel, as it never had been loosened" (165).

Adventures of Eovaai is the story of a motherless young princess who has to learn how to become a respectable monarch and stay a respectable woman. It accounts the feminine struggles for political and social authority in a patriarchal order, and it stands for a feminist manifesto that claims a balanced female education. *Adventures of Eovaai* is the satirical fiction of a fraudulent minister whose lust for power corrupted and impoverished an entire nation, as much as it stands for the narrative of the encounter with the Other, whether that Other represents a celestial being like Halafamai, another species like Atamadoul, the monkey woman, an old republican in the kingdom of impartiality, or why not the Chinese translator of the book present in the footnotes of the novel. It tells the tale of an unhappy couple, separated by political and sexual machinations and conflicts, but also of a couple who lived happily ever after. *Adventures of Eovaai*, this blend of romance, Oriental tale, and political satire "imagines in compelling detail an order in which a woman can enter into the political life in a way that does not deny the world of corporeal necessity, but rather affirms the body and the sexual passions even as it endorses the female life of the mind" (King, 94), an order in which the *body-mind-soul-continuum* ensures a sane, complex and balanced feminine identity.

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IMAGES AND PLACES OF MEMORY IN HERTA MÜLLER'S PROSE

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ABSTRACT. *Images and Places of Memory in Herta Müller's Prose.* The current paper applies the concept of *transfer-images* and seeks to determine the role they take on in a memory discourse. *Transfer-images* become, in the case of authors who transit several spaces and languages, mobile archives of individual and European memory (see Assmann, 2006). In short, *transfer-images* are narrative vehicles that contain and retain, metaphorically, the characters' mental and physical relocation. *Transfer-images* transport the traumatic dimension of such an experience, by configuring the latter spatially and temporally. *Transfer-images* can signalize, on a textual level, other traumas as they are mechanisms that coagulate and display traumatic experiences. The way in which historical and political tensions (in this case Romanian communism) reflect on language and on the hybrid imaginary of authors that relocate, like Herta Müller, can only be traced by discussing a fundamental issue at hand: such authors write and construct places that do not exist in the language they write.

Keywords: *memory, transfer-images, totalitarian places, Herta Müller.*

REZUMAT. *Imagini și spații ale memoriei în proza Hertei Müller.* Acest studiu își propune să aplice conceptul de *image-transfer* și să determine rolul acestora în discursul memoriei. Imaginile-transfer, în cazul autorilor care tranzitează spații, devin arhive mobile care înregistrează atât o memorie individuală cât și una europeană (v. Assmann, 2006). Pe scurt, *imaginile-transfer* sunt vehicule narative care metaforizează deplasarea fizică și mentală a personajelor, transportând dimensiunea traumatică a acestora și configurând-o spațial și temporal. La rândul lor, imaginile-transfer pot semnala textual alte traume, fiind mecanisme care coagulează imaginarul marcat de experiențe-limită. Felul în care tensiunile istorice și politice se reflectă în limbajul și în imaginarul hibrid al autorilor care se

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deplasează dintr-un spațiu în altul, cum este cazul Hertei Müller, poate fi retrasat prin examinarea unui aspect fundamental: autori, precum Herta Müller, reconstruiesc spații și locuri inexistente în limba de creație.

Cuvinte cheie: *memorie, imagini-transfer, spații totalitare, Herta Müller.*

Memory and traumatic events

How is the past remembered? What mechanisms interact in such an effort? How do societies and individuals cope with disjunctive memories of traumatic events? Such questions have animated the European discourse for the past twenty years and seem to elaborate on a common European thread of memory. As before, when the European continent sought peace and a common spirit of existence at the end of the Second World War, the claim to a common past and the cohabitation of victims and perpetrators² fuel the understanding of a reunited Europe. The effort to define European memory coincides with commemorating a common past and, thus, determining proper places for remembrance. Unfortunately revealing places to commemorate tragedies have ignited numerous controversies. One controversy, raised by a work of art, has been the starting point of Aleida Assmann's book *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit* (*The Long Shadow of the Past*). Assmann describes how in 1997 an artist created, in order to commemorate Auschwitz and its victims, an installation that projected upon the Brandenburger Tor the entry gate into the concentration camp at Auschwitz. The image merged a national symbol with the symbol of force and death. Such an intertwining opens new questions concerning the "when, if and how individual memory is translated into a conveyable collective memory and what issues arise through such a transfer of memory"³. Other controversies, this time much closer to the Eastern part of Europe, in Romania, regard the image and perception of Communism in current times and focus on the absence of any real process of understanding. I would rather say that the transfer from individual memory to a conveyable collective one has been hijacked by the absence of dialogue, trials and transparency in investigating the crimes of the Romanian

² Assmann, Aleida, "Europe: A Community of Memory? Twentieth Annual Lecture of the GHI, November 16, 2006", in *GHI Bulletin*, nr. 40/2007.

³ Assmann, Aleida, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik*, München, C.H. Beck, p. 16: „ob und wenn und wie sich individuelle Erinnerung in ein kollektives Gedächtnis übersetzen lässt, dass eine tradierbare Form annimmt, und welche Probleme bei einem solchen Transfer der Erinnerung entstehen.“

totalitarian regime. Secondly, by the beginning of 1990 the Communist Nomenclature had taken power, hence, there was no desire or even the possibility to bring to justice accomplices of the Ceausescu regime. The trauma surrounding Communist torture and, at the same time, resistance have found places, especially in major cities, and proper settings of commemoration⁴, but nevertheless the Communist period seems to be partially idealized as many sociological studies show⁵. The interpretations of sociological measurements are not necessarily the object of interest in this current paper, as they rather serve to display signs of disjunctive personal and collective memories regarding Communism in Romania. What common ground is there to be found in these two examples? What contradictions arise in the attempt to reconcile individual and collective memories regarding a traumatic event? One possible answer can be found in the effort to transfer a common image of trauma triggered by the Romanian totalitarian regime into personal but also collective memory. In this case any sort of *Verkörperung* (embodiment) of trauma escapes articulation. It is probably a sign of a general PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder) present in societies that have failed to reveal or open multiple ways of investigating and understanding Communism⁶, therefore even its crimes seem to become obsolete. Cathy Caruth underlines in her introduction to *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* that:

PTSD must be understood as a pathological symptom, then it is not so much a symptom of the unconscious, as it is of history. The traumatized, we might say, carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess.⁷

For the purpose of this chapter I shall limit myself to the link between memory and trauma, in order to retrace what symptoms and fragments of memory resist in time and especially any sort of relocation. As stated before “memory theory distinguishes between personal and collective memory; within collective memory, we differentiate between three major aspects which we propose to designate as communicative, cultural and political”⁸. Citing Aleida Assmann, Jan Assmann continues with inner distinctions regarding collective memory and adds

⁴ Major cities that have set up major sights that commemorate the victims of the 1989 Revolution are Bucharest, Timisoara and Cluj-Napoca.

⁵ http://www.iiccr.ro/ro/sondaje_iiccr_csop/ (last access 27.12.2014).

⁶ Preda, Radu, *Comunismul. O modernitate eşuată*, Cluj-Napoca, Eikon, 2009, p. 16.

⁷ Caruth, Cathy (ed.), *Trauma. Explorations in memory*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

⁸ Assmann, Jan, “Globalization, Universalism and the Erosion of Cultural Memory”, in Assman, Aleida; Conrad, Sebastian (ed.), *Memory in a Global Age. Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 122.

to all three dimensions (communicative, cultural and political) the time and identity equation, in order to extrapolate mechanisms that link two or three generations to a collective trauma. Nevertheless, such an effort has highlighted how the inheritance of Nazi Germany has shaped and forged so many pre- and postwar generations.⁹

In this paper I will understand memory in its functional and transferring role in the aftermath of traumatic events. Moreover, if memory takes on a transferring role, then instead of the time dimension we can take a closer look at the space equation, in order to negotiate to what extent individual and collective memory cease to function separately. By this I mean what Jan Assmann states on the concept of global memory:

Memory functions in the direction of identity, which in all its fuzziness, always implies a notion of difference. Globalization, on the other hand, works in the direction of diffusion, blurring all boundaries, and bridging all differences. Since something like a global identity cannot exist, the concept of global memory is a paradoxical notion.¹⁰

If personal memory is linked to identity and the way we stand out in the face of Otherness, then collective memory turns into a time capsule that holds on to the notion of past and all of its happenings. But what about when boundaries are crossed and memory reconstructs the bits and pieces of traumatic through places non-existent in the language of creation? Is this a form of mobile archive that is charged with disjunctive personal and collective memories? In order to answer such questions one can look at the literary creations of authors that transit spaces and languages, but also move inside multiple personal and collective memories. Before attempting to investigate the link between memory and mobile archive, I will shortly discuss the notion of the latter.

Archives are gateways to the past and store, nevertheless, actions and consequences of the past they uphold, but they do not store a guidebook for their representation: "It is difficult to install and to prop up a new vision of the past in states where the archives are sealed or in a post-dictatorship countries where the material traces of state crimes have been destroyed"¹¹. If this particular aspect

⁹ The effort to understand and overcome such a trauma in West Germany (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung* – mastering the past, term used by Jie-Hyun Lim) was initiated by the last generation of war children, a generation that turned out to be the cultural elite of the 50ies and 60ies in order to recreate and revise a shattered society. One film that depicts this effort is "Die Flackhelfer", 2013, directed by A. Assmann.

¹⁰ Assmann, Jan, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

¹¹ Assmann, Aleida; Shortt, Linda, "Memory and Political Change. Introduction", in Assmann, Aleida; Linda Shortt (eds.), *Memory and Political Change*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp.9-10.

refers to the destiny of Romania and all those partially succeeded undertakings to open the archives of the Securitate, archives in general find their own place in museums and, why not, in (virtual) spaces of remembrance¹². How do they become mobile? Does mobility equal transfer into collective or individual memory? In order to answer such a question we must take a closer look at the connection between space and memory in the aftermath of traumatic events.

Memory and space: Transfer-images.

Memory and space intertwine, in this case, through authors that transit spaces and languages. Hence, most of the times, they write about spaces that do not exist in the language of creation. One author that stands out is the Romanian-born German author Herta Müller. After constant harassment from the Romanian secret police, Müller, together with her then husband, writer and dissident Richard Wagner, leave a desolated Socialist Romania in 1987 for West Germany. The psychological pressure from the secret police, after one of her books will appear in West Germany, is recorded in most of her writings. What stands out, in Herta Müller's case, is her drive to capture the totality of human destruction and desolation in a totalitarian regime. She does that, not only in her novels and short stories (*Niederungen*, *Schon damals war der Fuchs der Jäger*, *Heute wär ich mir lieber nicht begegnet*, *Herztier*, *Atemschaukel*), but also in her essays and poems (*Hunger und Seide*, *Der König verneigt sich und tötet* etc.). Moreover, Müller's work and rather critical and acid commentaries have contributed to her (in)famous image. The Nobel Prize 2009 went to Herta Müller and propelled her on best-seller lists, but also fired up further discussions on her incapacity to write about anything else but Communist Romania and the usage of a rather enciphered language¹³.

Because the answer to the question what do we mean by space, as Bertrand Westphal has put it, is closer to a Sisyphus work than anything else, I will refrain to showcase the "characteristic element of contemporary space: its capacity for mobility and movement"¹⁴. To be precise I will not offer an exhaustive interpretation of space, but I will try to link the term mobile archive to space and, in this case, its derivate, traumatic experience. This is the turning point, when it comes to Herta Müller's writings, as the space she desires to depict is nothing but

¹² Museums such as Pier 21, dedicated to the migration into Canada and Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation in California, USA have set up not only virtual visits of the establishments, but also have special sections on their websites, where online testimonies can be submitted.

¹³ <http://www.zeit.de/2009/35/L-B-Mueller-Pro> (last access 12.10.2014).

¹⁴ Bertrand, Westphal, *Geocriticism. Real and Fictional Spaces*, translated by Robert T. Tally Jr., New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 6.

subject to representation: "Space is now dedicated to heterogeneity. This is the opinion of nearly all postcolonial critics, for whom space is subject to conflicting tensions that arise from incompatible systems of representations"¹⁵. Hence, such incompatibilities turn, in the case of migrant and border-crossing authors like Müller, into tensions visible on language and upon the effort to reconstruct space. Moreover, in the attempt to go back and revisit a shattered and an abusive totalitarian universe, memory takes on a rather interesting role. It stops being diachronic and an identity index¹⁶ to favor experience of the totalitarian place. By this it becomes a minimized heterotopia "where the sphere of intimacy [...] resists codification and that each individual tries to expand at leisure"¹⁷. In other words, in the process of remembrance there are elements apparently incremental, untranslatable, incommunicable and personal. Even if Westphal will turn to linking space to human body and how the latter confers consistency to spatial experiences, I would like to identify what resists codification in the aftermath of traumatic events.

As I stated at the beginning of my endeavor, traumatic events scourge the memory path and inscribe the act of narration or commemoration with disjunctions and tensions raised through clashes between collective and personal memories. In the case of Herta Müller, such tensions turn out to be centripetal for evoking in her prose, essays or poetry traumas caused by totalitarian regimes. In my book *Photographs and carcasses of death in Herta Müller's prose* I turned to the "remains" of psychological shocks, elements that enter narration and deploy images that are subtle and complex, due to the implosion of language, caused by a narrative voice that dismantles and reframes traumatic experiences. I called these images *transfer-images* and defined them as *narrative vehicles that contain and retain, metaphorically, the characters' mental and physical relocation. Transfer-images transport the traumatic dimension of such an experience, by configuring the latter spatially and temporally. Transfer-images can signalize, on a textual level, other traumas as they are mechanisms that coagulate and display traumatic experiences.* The way in which they are constructed depends on the nature and the structure of the prose at hand, but also on the imaginary that can dynamize and energize them.

Many researchers have interpreted Müller's work extensively and have turned to the concept of trauma in order to analyse echoes in the representation of the individual's decay under a totalitarian regime. Beverly Driver Eddy identifies in *Herztier (The Land of the Green Plums)* the main character's childhood traumas

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 40.

¹⁶ Assmann, Jan, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

¹⁷ Westphal, Bertrand, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

that will configure and multiply, in a analogous manner, the destinies of all other characters in the novel¹⁸. On the other hand, Ralph Köhnen takes on an interesting approach by investigating in Müller's short-stories through the imaginary of resistance and opposition. Köhnen reveals how such divergences turn into images of a bestiary¹⁹ that will provide the link between real life (the totalitarian state) and the imaginary. Lyn Marven, in her study *Body and Narrative in Contemporary Literatures in German. Herta Müller, Libuše Moníková, and Kerstin Hansel*, will turn to the images of the body, which appear outside the narrator's voice. Hence, for Marven, these images signalize the lack of human form and, implicitly, of the human body²⁰. Such efforts to interpret Herta Müller's imaginary have revealed on the one hand, how her works register tensions between individuality and the political, on the other hand some researchers have attempted to make use of toolkits closer to literary and linguistic theories²¹. Moreover, Müller herself questions the impact of her own traumatic experiences and the impact they had on her language. As she stated in an interview with Michael Lentz, three weeks after receiving the Nobel prize in literature:

I can't really judge how the daily strifes sunk into my sentences [...] But the long and everpresent fear in one's mind changes the acuteness of language and the way sentences are cut, all of which one can call style. The daily life has determined the topics, but these topics already have a style, as they look for the style they need to be expressed.²²

Herta Müller explains, throughout the interview, how external pressures encountered in places like Communist Romania or the concentration camp (referring to Oskar Pastior) create inner halts for the imagination and a way to escape outer

¹⁸ Beverley Eddy Driver, "Testimony and Trauma in Herta Müller's *Herztier*", in *German Life and Letters*, Nr. 53, vol. 1, 2000, p. 62.

¹⁹ Ralph Köhnen, "«Terror und Spiel». Der autofiktionale Impuls in frühen Texten Herta Müllers", in Heinz Ludwig Arnold (ed.), *Text+Kritik: Herta Müller*, nr. 155, München, Boorberg, 2002, p. 29.

²⁰ Lyn Marven, *Body and narrative in Contemporary Literatures in German. Herta Müller, Libuše Moníková, and Kerstin Hansel*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

²¹ One of the most relevant study belongs to Nikoletta Enzmann. Her unpublished dissertation discusses Müller's essays by examining the author's critique on the incapacity of language to depict the concomitancy between words and thoughts. Enzmann manages to underline the link between Müller's prose and essays.

²² Müller, Herta, *Lebensangst und Worthunger*. Im Gespräch mit Michael Lentz. Leipziger Poetikvorlesung, München, Suhrkamp, 2009, p. 14: „Ich kann also schwer beurteilen, wie das Gezerre der Tage in die Sätze gesickert sind [...] Aber die lange, immer in einem sitzende Angst verändert alles, wahrscheinlich auch die Dringlichkeit der Sprache, den Schnitt im Satz, also das, was man Stil nennen könnte. Der Alltag hat die Inhalte bestimmt, und die Inhalte enthalten doch den Stil. Sie suchen den Stil den sie brauchen“.

flagellations. This inner shell comes very close to Westphal's minimized heterotopia and seems to store, what I previously called transfer-images. In Herta Müller's prose totalitarian places, as the Communist city, the immoral village life, interrogation rooms and the concentration camp, sever and dismantle the link between thoughts and their means of expression, consisting of words. To better understand what consequences such actions have on her writings, I plan to investigate what exactly *transfer-images* transfer in a memory context. For this, we need to discuss images and myths regarding Romanian communism and take a closer look at their translatable and transferable forms. Without being able to tackle all relevant definitions of images and myths, I will refrain at stating that, in this particular case, we are dealing with "not only myth and metaphor but in a strong sense an accurate description of features of a world we are not altogether comfortable living in"²³. Herta Müller not only manages to describe and verbalize these dissonant features of totalitarian regimes, but also captures the coordinates of places removed and left behind, through movement, that do not fade, erode or dissipate²⁴. Therefore, images of Communism will not disengage with the past, but rather find constant forms of reemergence in fictional or non-fictional narrations. This will be the conjunction between collective and personal memory regarding images of totalitarian threats. Moreover, in this particular case, transfer-images provide subtle imaginary lenses that transfer incorporations of Communism into a memory discourse. Even if the broad term of memory discourse appears to indicate a common remembrance and narration of particular past events, I will refer to a Romanian memory discourse on Communism due to one single fact: its absence from the public sphere and induced taboo form²⁵.

Returning to Herta Müller's usage of myths and images, as defined above, one novel stands out. *Herztier* (*The Land of the Green Plums*) is the epiphany of a violent circle, drawn through living under totalitarian regimes. The narrator and her three college friends engage in readings and critical discussions against the Ceausescu regime. Soon they find themselves bashed and harassed by the secret police, through Major Pjele. The novel not only depicts individual and personal tragedies, but retains, through the act of narration, a language that can express and convert the Communist terror:

²³ Scott, Niall (ed.): *Monsters and the Monstrous. Myths and Metaphors of Enduring Evil*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2007, p. 5.

²⁴ Ben Barootes in the volume edited by Niall Scott discusses Ernst Cassirer' concept of *absolute past*, stating that mythic beings belong and interact with an absolute past, but they will also never disengage from it, as they are perpetuated and incremental in a present.

²⁵ My comments refer to a general socio-political incapacity, outside the academic milieu, to reveal and authenticate victims and perpetrators of the Communist regime.

Als der Winter vorbei war, sagte Tereza, gingen viele Leute in der ersten Sonne in die Stadt spazieren. Als sie so spazierten, sahen sie ein fremdes Tier langsam in die Stadt kommen. Es kam zu Fuß, obwohl es hätte fliegen können [...] Als das fremde Tier auf dem großen Platz mitten in der Stadt war, schlug es mit den Flügeln, sagte Tereza. Die Menschen fingen an zu schreien und flüchteten vor Angst in fremden Häuser. Nur zwei Menschen blieben auf der Straße. Sie kannten sich nicht [...] Die beiden sahen [...] ihr ganzes Leben. Als das fremde Tier wieder mit den Flügeln schlug, verließ das Geweih den Balkon [...] Das fremde Tier ging langsam durch die hellen, leeren Straßen aus der Stadt hinaus [...] die Leute [...] gingen wieder ihrem Leben nach [...] Die Leute hatten nie mehr Glück.²⁶

Closely linked to the metaphor of the heart animal or heart beast²⁷ present throughout the novel, this particular beastly appearance is the omen of death, turning the narration into a parable of individual destinies under Communism. In *The Land of the Green Plums* transfer-images construct a topos of trauma, a symbolic *locus coeruleus*²⁸: Communist Romania, an inapt childhood and the universe of the dispossessed, stripped even of the right to choose how one dies. Similar to the images encountered in the novel *The Hunger Angel*, there is a condensed and claustrophobic space and transfer-images, through their recurrence, retrace and return, recreate solely instants of death. The linguistic material, as it is the case in most of Müller's novels, is under an immense pressure due to the violent nature of the imaginary. Transfer-images like „animal heart“, or „the Hunger Angel“, illustrate an oxymoronic texture, being a *coincidentia oppositorum*. They illustrate exactly what escapes the surveillance and control of the malefic eye of power. Hence, all that what cannot be told turns into a concomitance between image, thought and words. The *animal heart* is the image of a primeval form of violence, a metaphorical original sin, something that can only be grasped and embodied through its parts: flesh, kidneys, beastly appearances etc. Moreover, we are dealing with a new *anima corpus*, a sort of amiotical sack for death. In *Herztier (The Land of the Green Plums)* transfer-images fragment and cause the implosion of the real, through spontaneous analogies and reframing primary senses of words. They show violent structures that enable the expression of unmediated perceptions. While they leave reality, these images build deathly hollows and a negative cosmos made out of symbolic instruments needed for human sacrifice: blood, severed limbs, cadavers, disease, insanity, metaphors for expressing death.²⁹

²⁶ Müller, Herta: *Herztier*, Frankfurt, Fischer Verlag, 2007, pp. 124-125.

²⁷ The original title of Müller's book is *Herztier* and possible translations in English would be heart animal or heart beast. This word does not exist in German.

²⁸ The *locus coeruleus* is a part of the brain responsible for physical reactions to intense stress and panic: <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Locus+coeruleus> (last access 24.04.2013).

²⁹ Bizuleanu, Dana, *Fotografii și carcace ale morții în proza Hertei Müller*, București, Tracus Arte, 2014.

The way in which transfer-images appear in the works of Herta Müller reconstruct totalitarian places through a language fueled by the pressure of terror. Müller dismantles myths regarding Communism and reframes traumatic experiences by depicting individual memory through the screening of a collective one, regarding the Communist rule. To be more precise, Müller draws upon personal experience and transfers incremental scenarios and images of Communism that can only find expression through a highly poetic language:

Space becomes human, that is, space is constituted as place, to the extent that it is articulated through narrative; and narrative attains full meaning when it becomes a condition of spatial existence [...] location is to be discovered by the writer [...] but in fact it is to be invented, not *ex nihilo*, of course – nothing ever is – but based upon a combination of personal experience and ambient knowledge.³⁰

Schick's definition of spatial entanglements in the act of narration applies in Müller's writings in the aftermath of trauma and migration. Her writings formulate the shift of perspective, from controller to the controlled, from the inside (thought) to the outside (language) and from personal memory to a collective memory in order to construct totalitarian places and images of Romanian communism.

Conclusion

The most important questions of our time arise from how the past is perceived and remembered in the context of migratory movement. The emergence of what I called *transfer-images* registers, not only the trauma of relocation, but it also describes a link between personal and collective memory. Transfer-images turn into mobile archives as they are conveyable and can be translated from a personal into a collective memory, especially through the act of narration. Herta Müller's prose can be placed at the center of tensions between collective and personal memory and, thus, it can open up further questions regarding what Aleida Assmann, Anne Rigney and Gerd Buelens have called "memories on the move"³¹. Transfer-images in *Herztier (The Land of the Green Plums)* capture and reframe traumatic events and develop images of the Romanian totalitarian regime, but also showcase how such totalitarian places shape the imaginary. Movement supposes

³⁰ Ervin Cemil Schick, *The Erotic Margin: Sexuality and Spatiality in Alterist Discourse*, London, Verso, 1999, pp. 28-29.

³¹ Assmann, Aleida; Conrad, Sebastian (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

transfer of memories and, in Herta Müller's case, memory becomes movement, through the imaginary return to the totalitarian place and the adjacent trauma. This so-called "going back" finds innovative means of expression in Müller's poetic use of language and through the appearance of transfer-images.

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CONDITION FÉMININE ET SEXUALITÉ CHEZ JACQUELINE HARPMAN

VLAD-GEORGIAN MEZEI¹

ABSTRACT. *Women's Condition and Sexuality in Jacqueline Harpman's Work.*

The objective of the present article is to point out the tight relationship between the way in which Jacqueline Harpman's female characters experience their sexuality and their perception of women's condition. First, we discuss certain theoretical aspects in order to show that sexuality is a sociocultural construction to a large extent and that it is an important aspect of women's condition. Then, we prove that sexuality is one of the domains in which the female characters of this writer manifest their revolt against the cultural constraints imposed on women by traditional femininity.

Key words: *sexuality, women's condition, culture, revolt, constraints.*

REZUMAT. *Condiție feminină și sexualitate la Jacqueline Harpman.* Acest

articol își propune să arate că există o legătură strânsă între felul în care personajele feminine ale scriitoarei Jacqueline Harpman trăiesc sexualitatea și percepția lor asupra condiției feminine. Întâi, prin prezentarea unor repere teoretice, se semnaleză faptul că sexualitatea este în mare parte o construcție socioculturală și că ea reprezintă un aspect important al condiției feminine. Apoi, se demonstrează că sexualitatea este unul dintre domeniile în care personajele feminine ale acestei scriitoare își manifestă revolta împotriva constrângerilor culturale impuse femeii de către feminitatea tradițională.

Cuvinte cheie: *sexualitate, condiție feminină, cultură, revoltă, constrângeri.*

Sexualité et condition féminine

La sexualité est un concept à facettes multiples qui réunit des dimensions variées de l'humanité. Sigmund Freud signale cette complexité lorsqu'il examine

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la multitude des significations du mot « sexuel »². Sa première remarque signale l'activité sexuelle comme un interdit d'ordre culturel qu'il faut taire en raison de son incompatibilité avec la bienséance. Dans la deuxième acception considérée, le terme « sexuel » nomme les traits biologiques qui distinguent l'homme de la femme. Sexuel désigne aussi tous les comportements dont le but est l'obtention d'un plaisir par l'accouplement avec le sexe opposé. La dernière observation repose sur la fonction unique attribuée culturellement à la sexualité : la procréation. Freud s'en démarque en reconnaissant la nature sexuelle des actes qui n'ont pas de but procréatif. Ces observations révèlent nettement la diversité des perspectives sur le concept de sexualité.

Le sociologue Michel Bozon souligne également la nature complexe de la sexualité qu'il considère non pas comme une réalité objective, immuable et saisissable immédiatement, mais comme un ensemble de valeurs qui varient en fonction des perspectives scientifiques et des définitions personnelles données par les acteurs sociaux³. Le rapprochement que Bozon établit entre les nombreuses acceptions de la sexualité à des époques diverses chez des peuples différents et l'évolution sociale met en évidence le lien intime entre la sexualité et la dynamique culturelle. Des acquis plutôt que des innés, « les conduites sexuelles et les significations qui leur sont liées ne s'inscrivent pas dans la biologie mais dans l'histoire sociale »⁴. En effet, le sociologue accorde une telle importance à la transformation du biologique en symbolique dans la sexualité qu'il la stipule comme condition sine qua non de l'accomplissement de l'acte sexuel humain. Selon Bozon, le fait que la sexualité humaine n'est pas congénitale mais qu'elle est le résultat d'un processus d'apprentissage pendant lequel l'individu s'approprie la signification de divers comportements corporels, des rituels qui régularisent les interactions interpersonnelles et durant lequel il acquiert un certain système conceptuel prouve que l'activité sexuelle humaine n'est pas déterminée par un mécanisme instinctif de reproduction, mais qu'elle est régie par le symbolisme culturel qui lui est attribué⁵.

Puisque les ressorts du désir sexuel humain sont redevables plutôt à la conscience qu'à l'instinct, il est possible de conclure que la sexualité est plutôt un fait de culture qu'un fait de nature. Elle est le résultat d'une interprétation culturelle de la biologie où fusionnent la spécificité de chaque individu et les attentes somatiques collectives. Le réseau culturel enserre donc dans ses mailles

² Sigmund Freud, *Introduction à la psychanalyse*, traduction de l'allemand par S. Jankélovitch, Paris, Payot et C^{ie}, 1922, p. 326.

³ Cf. Michel Bozon, « Les cadres sociaux de la sexualité », in *Sociétés Contemporaines*, nos 41-42, 2001, p. 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p 7.

⁵ Cf. Michel Bozon, « Les significations sociales des actes sexuelles », in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, vol. 128, juin 1999, p. 3.

la sexualité individuelle. Pour chaque décision que le sujet prend à l'égard de son vécu sexuel, le gisement de représentations culturelles met à sa disposition des catégories toutes faites qui l'aident à insérer ses préférences individuelles dans une trame symbolique commune.

Dans le présent article nous nous intéressons surtout à la symbolique culturelle de l'initiation à l'activité sexuelle adulte et surtout aux facteurs individuels et collectifs qui concourent à la construction du plaisir érotique dans le monde occidental. Notre intérêt particulier pour ces deux aspects de la sexualité se justifie par l'importance que les personnages de Jacqueline Harpman leur accordent.

D'après Michel Bozon, le premier rapport intime joue un rôle capital dans le développement de la personnalité de l'individu⁶. Il n'est pas un passage biologique mais une étape symbolique de transition à la sexualité adulte. La signification de l'événement n'est pas le produit singulier d'une expérience personnelle. Elle est façonnée également, entre autres, par l'appartenance sexuelle et générationnelle. En effet, le contrôle masculin de l'activité sexuelle des femmes et notamment, de leur initiation à la sexualité a longtemps été une caractéristique de la condition féminine. Dans l'Europe d'Ancien Régime, par exemple, le début de la vie sexuelle est régit par le double standard qui permet aux hommes d'avoir des relations sexuelles pré-nuptiales, mais qui interdit aux femmes de perdre leur virginité avant leurs noces⁷. Ce principe met les femmes d'amblée dans une situation d'infériorité et d'illégitimité, malgré les réseaux de solidarité qui fonctionnent à l'intérieur des communautés et qui, dans l'éventualité d'une grossesse pré-nuptiale, autorisent les familles des jeunes, leurs voisins, les officiers de la paroisse ou les magistrats locaux à imposer l'union conjugale. Les domestiques exploitées sexuellement ou les femmes crédules séduites et ensuite abandonnées, celles qui acceptent d'avoir des rapports sexuels avant le mariage courent deux risques : la grossesse illégitime et la pauvreté susceptible de dégénérer en prostitution⁸.

Le double standard reste en vigueur au XIX^e siècle aussi. Selon Alain Corbin⁹, la majorité des hommes fréquentent les prostituées et c'est dans la clandestinité du bordel qu'ils s'initient à l'amour physique. En revanche, le même

⁶ Cf. Michel Bozon, « L'entrée dans la sexualité adulte : le premier rapport et ses suites », in *Population*, 48^e année, n° 5, 1993, pp. 1317-1318.

⁷ Cf. Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, « Corps et sexualité dans l'Europe d'Ancien Régime », in Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, Georges Vigarello (sous la direction de), *Histoire du corps*, vol. 1, *De la Renaissance aux Lumières*, George Vigarello (sous la direction de), Paris, Seuil, coll. « Univers Historique », 2005, p. 184.

⁸ Cf. Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.

⁹ Cf. Alain Corbin, « La rencontre des corps », in Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, Georges Vigarello (sous la direction d'), *Histoire du corps*, vol. 2, *De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, Alain Corbin, (sous la direction d'), Paris, Seuil, coll. « L'univers historique », 2005, p. 186.

discours officiel prescrit aux femmes la continence prénuptiale. Corbin pense¹⁰ qu'il serait impossible de connaître la sexualité féminine d'alors sans comprendre l'importance accordée à l'intégrité de l'hymen. La virginité garantit le salut de l'âme ainsi qu'un mariage heureux et conserve le capital d'honneur intact.

Les mutations sociales du XX^e siècle produisent la dissociation entre le début de la vie sexuelle adulte d'une femme et le mariage. Néanmoins, la libération des mœurs ne s'est faite que progressivement. C'est seulement à partir des années 1960 que l'amour physique est toléré en dehors de tout projet marital. Avant cette époque, les discours et les écrits officiels soutenaient encore en unanimité la virginité féminine prénuptiale et la sexualité conjugale¹¹. L'ordre social traditionnel prescrivait la coïncidence des premiers rapports sexuels avec le mariage.¹² De plus, conformément aux convenances, il fallait que la décision de se marier eût été prise et qu'une période assez longue de fréquentation sans rapports sexuels se fût écoulée. Vers la fin des années 50, la chasteté était encore considérée comme un signe de solidité de la relation et une femme était initiée sexuellement par son mari pendant la nuit des noces ou un peu auparavant¹³. L'importance capitale accordée à la première rencontre sexuelle venait de ce qu'elle était considérée un élément fondateur du ménage.

Tout comme l'initiation à la sexualité, le plaisir érotique est une expérience humaine à significations multiples. Françoise Dolto montre que l'individu peut assigner un essaim de significations à la jouissance orgasmique¹⁴. Les sens que l'on attribue à l'épanouissement sensitif sexuel peuvent être modelés par des principes tels que la légitimité et la beauté. La jouissance est vécue aussi comme une célébration de la conscience d'exister. Elle devient l'expression d'une gratitude à sa propre chair, au corps d'autrui et à la présence au monde. La détente musculaire totale qui accompagne la satisfaction érotique est perçue comme un anéantissement complet de l'angoisse existentielle, du temps et de l'espace. Le relâchement organique opère une résolution des conflits et restitue l'intégrité de l'être humain.

Le contrôle masculin de la sexualité féminine s'est longtemps manifesté aussi sous forme de restrictions imposées au vécu orgasmique des femmes. Tant que l'activité sexuelle a été destinée uniquement à la reproduction, la jouissance

¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

¹¹ Cf. Anne-Marie Sohn, « Le corps sexué », in Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, Georges Vigarello, (sous la direction de), *Histoire du corps*, vol. 3, *Les mutations du regard. Le XX^e siècle*, Jean-Jacques Courtine (sous la direction de), Paris, Seuil, 2006, p. 116.

¹² Cf. Michel Bozon, « La nouvelle place de la sexualité dans la constitution du couple », in *Sciences sociales et Santé*, vol. IX, n° 4, 1991, p. 70.

¹³ Cf. Michel Bozon, Osmo Kontula, « Initiation sexuelle et genre. Comparaison des évolutions de douze pays européens », in *Population*, 52^e année, n°6, 1997, p. 1389.

¹⁴ Cf. Françoise Dolto, *Sexualité féminine. La libido génitale et son destin féminin*, Paris, Gallimard, 1996, pp. 183-184.

sexuelle de la femme n'a pas été considérée nécessaire à toutes les époques. La libération des mœurs du XX^e siècle arrive à la suite d'une longue période pendant laquelle la légitimité du plaisir sexuel a été constamment mise en question. Par exemple, au cours de deux premiers siècles, le monde méditerranéen manifeste une méfiance générale vis-à-vis des plaisirs¹⁵. Le lien matrimonial est le seul à légitimer la volupté physique, mais à condition qu'elle soit accompagnée de la passion amoureuse. La fréquence des rapports conjugaux est dictée par le principe de la modération¹⁶. L'Antiquité grecque et romaine conteste déjà le droit de la femme à jouir sexuellement. On conseille aux maris de ne pas initier leurs femmes à des plaisirs trop intenses car ils risquent de leur donner des leçons dont elles feront mauvais usage. Dans le mariage même, ce n'est pas la recherche du plaisir qui doit motiver les rapports sexuels, mais la procréation. Il ne faut pas donner le plaisir pour fin à un acte que la nature a destiné à la procréation. Si les êtres humains bénéficient des plaisirs sexuels, ce n'est pas pour en jouir, mais pour perpétuer l'espèce¹⁷.

Sous l'Ancien Régime, la restriction des actes sexuels légitimes au cadre marital est toujours en vigueur et la procréation reste le but primaire de l'activité sexuelle des conjoints¹⁸. La permission de jouir au sein du mariage est strictement réglementée par le principe de la modération. Les institutions religieuses et médicales distinguent deux espèces de sexualité en fonction du degré de plaisir recherché : la sexualité conjugale régie par la modération, qui était censée assurer les conditions optimales de procréation, et l'amour passionnel accompagné de plaisir immodéré, qui était jugé comme peu fertile¹⁹. Grâce aux théories médicales qui considèrent l'orgasme féminin comme indispensable à la procréation²⁰, à cette époque la femme peut jouir légitimement durant le rapport sexuel.

Par contre, au XIX^e siècle, la nouvelle biologie réfute l'utilité de l'orgasme féminin²¹. La découverte de l'ovulation spontanée chez la chienne en l'absence de l'accouplement et du plaisir signale que l'ovulation chez la femme se produit indépendamment du coït et de la fécondation. À partir de ce moment, l'orgasme féminin, considéré auparavant essentiel à la procréation, devient inutile. La conception est désormais considérée un processus secret qui ne requiert aucune manifestation extérieure. L'union sexuelle est réduite à un acte physiologique semblable à la miction et à la défécation. L'essence du féminin est dorénavant

¹⁵ Cf. Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, Tome 3, *Le souci de soi*, Paris, Gallimard, coll. « Tel », 1984, p. 55.

¹⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 237.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 238.

¹⁸ Cf. Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, *op. cit.*, pp. 184.

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

²⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²¹ Cf. Alain Corbin, *op. cit.* p. 154.

restreinte aux ovaires. Les manifestations épileptiques de l'orgasme féminin, qui rappellent l'hystérie, provoquent la peur du déchaînement de potentielles forces telluriques. Cette nouvelle conception inquiétante contamine la représentation du féminin de façon que la femme fait naître de l'angoisse chez les hommes. Ce malaise à l'égard de l'intensité du plaisir féminin est tellement profond qu'il entraîne des mesures préventives. C'est à l'homme que revient la responsabilité de protéger la femme contre sa propre nature par l'exercice de la modération.

Au XX^e siècle, la dissociation définitive entre l'activité sexuelle et la procréation²² redéfinit le rapport entre plaisir et sexualité. Quoique les effets de la limitation des naissances commencent déjà à être ressentis en France au XVIII^e siècle, le désir de diminuer le nombre des conceptions ne devient une évidence qu'au XX^e siècle. L'idée est agréée également par les hommes et par les femmes. Les méthodes contraceptives connaissent une grande diversification : le coït interrompu, le préservatif, les douches vaginales, les éponges intra-utérines, les pessaires, les gelées et les crèmes spermicides, la méthode d'Ogino-Knaus. L'apparition de la pilule, marque un moment capital dans la libération du plaisir sexuel, mais aussi du corps féminin. Grâce à la contraception orale, la sexualité féminine peut s'épanouir car elle échappe à la menace constante d'une grossesse indésirable.

L'initiation à la vie sexuelle et la contestation de la légitimité de l'orgasme sont donc deux moyens de contrôle social de la femme en même temps que du corps féminin. La légitimation exclusive de l'activité sexuelle par la conception, le monopole marital des rapports sexuels licites et la mise en question du droit de la femme à la jouissance érotique sont autant d'entraves imposées traditionnellement à l'épanouissement féminin.

Initiation à la sexualité et plaisir sexuel chez le personnage féminin harpmanien

La compréhension de l'importance de la dissociation entre la sexualité, le mariage et la procréation pour la condition féminine facilite l'explication du rôle symbolique que Jacqueline Harpman attribue au dépucelage de ses héroïnes et à leur revendication du droit au plaisir sexuel. Malgré sa non-appartenance à des mouvements militants, l'écrivaine se déclare féministe et affirme son intention de défendre la cause des femmes dans ses écrits²³. Le cliché principal que Jacqueline Harpman démolit dans la construction des ses héroïnes est la faiblesse assignée culturellement au sexe féminin. Cette révolte est évidente dans la réponse qu'elle donne à une question qui porte sur la définition de la femme contemporaine :

²² Cf. Anne-Marie Sohn, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-115.

²³ Cf. Jeannine Paque, « Jacqueline Harpman aujourd'hui », in *Le carnet et les instants*, n° 166, 1^{er} avril-31 mai 2011, p. 19.

Vous parlez à une femme qui est née en 1929, qui a connu l'éducation qu'on donnait aux filles avant la guerre et les modifications d'après la guerre, qui a rencontré au cours de sa vie la pilule qui est quelque chose d'extrêmement important pour toutes les femmes, je crois, et quelques autres modifications fondamentales de la condition féminine. Je crois que justement ce qui est intéressant chez les femmes actuellement, c'est qu'elles commencent à se définir vraiment comme des êtres complets et pas du tout comme ce qu'on m'avait appris à moi, quelqu'un à qui il manque quelque chose. Au début de ma formation psychanalytique, on en était encore à la notion de la femme comme castrée, la femme était quelqu'un qui n'a pas de pénis. Moi, je n'étais absolument pas d'accord avec ça. Maintenant, le problème de la femme en tant que quelqu'un qui n'a pas quelque chose n'existe plus chez les femmes que je vois et que je supervise. [...] L'éducation que les jeunes femmes ont reçue ne leur a pas appris qu'il leur manquait quelque chose, tandis que moi, c'est encore comme ça que j'ai été élevée.²⁴

En parlant de castration féminine, Jacqueline Harpman fait allusion à la vision freudienne de la sexualité. D'après le psychanalyste autrichien, à l'occasion de la découverte des différences anatomiques entre les sexes, la petite fille « considère comme un signe de son infériorité l'absence d'un pénis long et visible »²⁵. La façon dont Freud explique la psychologie féminine est un exemple d'attribution culturelle de signification à l'anatomie. Sous cette optique, le statut social inférieur de la femme au début du XX^e siècle est inscrit aussi dans la structure de son corps. Jacqueline Harpman prouve le mal-fondé de cette perspective sur la féminité en soulignant que la femme contemporaine ne se définit pas en creux, comme jadis, justement parce que l'éducation ne lui a pas appris à se percevoir comme un être incomplet.

La révolte de l'écrivaine contre la féminité envisagée comme manque se propage dans tout son œuvre. Elle explique pourquoi « le type féminin favori de la romancière » est « une fille en colère, indocile, rebelle envers tout ou à peu près : son éducation, sa condition, son rôle, son époque »²⁶. C'est justement par opposition aux valeurs de la condition féminine traditionnelle que Jacqueline Harpman construit ses héroïnes. Dotées d'une volonté implacable, ces femmes sont des rebelles qui luttent pour sortir de leur condition, pour se construire une identité propre, pour assouvir leurs désirs et pour accomplir leurs projets. Elles contestent et subvertissent constamment les conventions culturelles relatives à la féminité.

²⁴ Vlad-Georgian Mezei, « Corps féminin et texte chez Jacqueline Harpman », in *Dialogues francophones*, n° 14, 2008, pp. 220-221.

²⁵ Sigmund Freud, *op. cit.*, p. 341.

²⁶ Jeannine Paque, « Les héros de roman ne meurent jamais », *Le carnet et les instants*, n° 150, 1^{er} février-31 mars 2008, p. 88.

La sexualité est un des domaines où la femme harpmanienne manifeste sa rébellion contre les contraintes. Les personnages féminins de l'écrivaine belge mettent en question la haute valorisation morale de la virginité. Toutes époques historiques confondues, qu'il s'agisse d'Adèle Salazine²⁷ au XVI^e siècle, de Maria Conception²⁸ au XVII^e, de Julie d'Orsel²⁹ au XIX^e, de Mme d'Afflighem³⁰ dans les années 1920, de Catherine³¹ et d'Emilienne³² dans les années 1950, de Clotilde³³ et de Cornélie³⁴ dans les années 1960, d'Orlanda³⁵ à la fin du XX^e siècle, les figures féminines imaginées par Jacqueline Harpman subvertissent l'ordre social. Les héroïnes de l'écrivaine belge ne trouvent pas leur bonheur dans des mariages traditionnels et préfèrent s'engager dans des liens extraconjugaux. De plus, ces femmes ne conçoivent par que l'homme soit le seul à jouir pendant l'accouplement et elles exigent leur droit au plaisir sexuel.

Loin d'être une expérience strictement individuelle, chez l'écrivaine belge, la perte de la virginité dépasse l'histoire unique des personnages et acquiert des significations sociales. La manière dont les femmes harpmaniennes vivent leur défloration est significative de la condition féminine à certaines époques. Par exemple, Adèle Salazine, une fille de seize ans qui vit au XVI^e siècle devient l'épouse d'un homme qu'elle n'aime pas et qui lui a été imposé par ses parents. Comme à l'époque de l'Ancien Régime, les mœurs prescrivaient la coïncidence entre le début de la vie sexuelle féminine et l'entrée en mariage, Adèle attend avec impatience les délices érotiques nuptiaux. Cependant, à la suite d'un acte sexuel nuptial totalement insipide durant lequel le nouveau mari s'intéresse uniquement à la défloration de sa femme, les attentes sensorielles de la jeune épouse sont toujours inassouvies. « J'étais mariée et désillusionnée »³⁶ déclare-t-elle, lorsque son époux s'endort après avoir constaté avec contentement la virginité pré-nuptiale de son épouse. Pour elle, l'introduction à la vie sexuelle adulte n'équivaut pas à l'initiation au plaisir érotique. Cet événement est lourd de signification pour la sexualité féminine dans la société traditionnelle. Il dénonce le contrôle masculin de l'activité sexuelle féminine par son confinement au cadre marital et par la réfutation du droit à la jouissance.

²⁷ Jacqueline Harpman, *Le passage des éphémères*, Paris, Grasset & Fasquelle, 2003.

²⁸ Jacqueline Harpman, *La dormition des amants*, Paris, Grasset & Fasquelle, 2002.

²⁹ Jacqueline Harpman, *Ce que Dominique n'a pas su*, Paris, Grasset & Fasquelle, 2007.

³⁰ Jacqueline Harpman, *Le placard à balais*, Bruxelles, Le Grand Miroir, coll. « La petite littéraire », 2003.

³¹ Jacqueline Harpman, *L'apparition des esprits*, Bruxelles, Ancrage, 1999. [Paris, René Julliard, 1960] et Jacqueline Harpman, *Le véritable amour*, Bruxelles, Ancrage, 2000.

³² Jacqueline Harpman, *La plage d'Ostende*, Paris, Stock, coll. « Bleu », 1991.

³³ Jacqueline Harpman, *Les bons sauvages*, Bruxelles, Labor, coll. « Espace Nord », 1992. [Paris, René Julliard, 1966.]

³⁴ Jacqueline Harpman, *L'orage rompu*, Grasset & Fasquelle, 1998.

³⁵ Jacqueline Harpman, *Orlanda*, Paris, Grasset & Fasquelle, 1996.

³⁶ Jacqueline Harpman, *Le passage des éphémères*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

Les torts causés par le système social traditionnel aux femmes sont dénoncés également par la description de l'acte sexuel nuptial de Madeleine³⁷, une jeune épouse du XIX^e siècle. À comparer le dépucelement d'Adèle Salazine et celui de Madeleine, on se rend compte que les trois cents années qui les séparent n'ont pas apporté de modification notable à la sexualité féminine. La virginité pré-nuptiale est requise toujours et l'indifférence au vécu sensoriel de l'épouse n'a pas disparue. Le contrôle masculin de l'accès de la femme à la sexualité et au plaisir sexuel se perpétue le long du temps. Pourtant, si la consommation du mariage d'Adèle est critiquable surtout à cause du manque de plaisir érotique, le dépucelement brutal de Madeleine, véritable viol conjugal, est répréhensible en raison de la douleur que l'homme en quête de son plaisir exclusif inflige à la femme.

Chez Catherine, Clotilde et Cornélie, qui commencent leur vie sexuelle dans le contexte ambigu des années 1950 et 1960, il y a une constante tension entre le conformisme et l'émancipation. Les réflexions de Cornélie au sujet de la dépréciation de la valeur morale attribuée traditionnellement à la virginité résument la particularité de cette époque transitoire entre une sexualité vécue sous le signe de la coercition et la libéralisation des mœurs sexuelles : « C'était la dernière décennie des vertus, mais nous n'en savions rien. »³⁸ La tendance à commencer la vie sexuelle avant le mariage s'accompagne en permanence des contraintes normatives traditionnelles qui postulent la virginité pré-nuptiale. Le désir d'affranchissement, si ardu qu'il soit chez les cérébrales héroïnes harpmaniennes, se heurte à l'héritage culturel qui inscrit la chasteté à même le corps. Par la présentation du conflit entre la volonté de Catherine, une fille de dix-huit ans qui décide de s'initier à la vie sexuelle en dehors de tout projet marital, et les réactions défensives automatiques de son corps à l'attouchement intime de son partenaire, Jacqueline Harpman montre à quel point les attentes somatiques traditionnelles sont incorporées par les femmes :

Sa main, plus audacieuse qu'elle ne le voulait être, effleura brusquement ces muscles que l'on nomme, en latin, *custodes virginitatis*, et qui réagirent avec une violence propre à convaincre qu'ils sont fort bien nommés. Je tressaillis. [...] je ne pouvais réprimer un petit tremblement. Mon propre effroi m'étonnait. [...] J'étais agacée, je gourmandais mes réflexes, moins hardis que moi, de n'être pas au courant des décisions que j'avais prises. Outre ce que l'on sait, il y a, dans la virginité, une habitude à perdre.³⁹

Afin de maximiser l'expressivité de son discours, par le truchement d'une expansion textuelle, l'écrivaine belge désigne les muscles adducteurs des membres

³⁷ Jacqueline Harpman, *Ce que Dominique n'a pas su*, op. cit.

³⁸ Jacqueline Harpman, *L'orage rompu*, op. cit., p. 25.

³⁹ Jacqueline Harpman, *L'apparition des esprits*, op. cit., p. 108.

inférieurs⁴⁰ par leur nom ancien. Le syntagme latin « custodes virginitatis » qui dénomme les muscles par leur fonction gardienne de la virginité est mieux qualifié à rendre les hésitations corporelles devant le dépuçelage. Cet épisode témoigne du fait que l'initiation à la sexualité n'est pas simplement une transformation biologique et qu'elle a une puissante signification culturelle. Plus que l'altération de l'intégrité de l'hymen, le dépuçelage implique une nouvelle façon de vivre son corps.

À part l'exigence de la libre initiation à la sexualité, la femme harpmanienne se révolte contre les restrictions imposées à la condition féminine traditionnelle par la revendication catégorique du plaisir érotique. Pour les héroïnes de Jacqueline Harpman, priver une femme de jouissance, que ce soit par maladresse ou par déconsidération, équivaut à une faute capitale punissable par la ridiculisation. Dans le texte, le persiflage des maris maladroits ou indifférents aux besoins érotiques de leurs femmes se manifeste sous forme de métalepses qui rendent des actes sexuels déshédonisés. Par « acte sexuel déshédonisé », nous comprenons un rapport intime totalement dépourvu de plaisir qui est l'antithèse parfaite de la richesse sensorielle du vécu orgastique. Chez Jacqueline Harpman, la déshédonisation de l'acte sexuel se produit lorsque l'homme accorde de l'attention exclusivement à la satisfaction de ses propres désirs. Dans des circonstances pareilles, la femme, à qui l'homme refuse le plaisir par l'indifférence qu'il montre à son égard, est paradoxalement contrainte à prêter son concours à la consommation de l'acte car son corps est l'élément même qui garantit l'assouvissement du plaisir masculin.

Le procédé par lequel Jacqueline Harpman rend la façon dont la femme perçoit ce genre de rapport sexuel est le fractionnement de l'acte en une suite d'actions qui perdent toute signification érotique. C'est par la voix d'une prostituée dont le métier est justement de mettre son corps à la disposition d'autrui que l'écrivaine caractérise cette manière de faire l'amour comme « *ce que les femmes doivent subir* »⁴¹. Une autre femme privée complètement par son mari de plaisir érotique décrit l'acte sexuel de la même façon : « Sa mère, avec des paroles voilées, l'avait préparée à ce que les femmes doivent subir, et qu'elle même n'avait plus subi depuis assez longtemps pour oublier qu'elle n'y avait pas trouvé que du désagrément et croire aux légendes plutôt qu'à la lointaine réalité de ses souvenirs. »⁴² De même, dans la nouvelle « L'amour, ma chère, toujours l'amour » une épouse qui suit à la lettre le protocole de la nuit nuptiale et qui fait

⁴⁰ Cf. Michel Dufour et Michel Pillu, *Biomécanique fonctionnelle*, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Éd. Elsevier Masson S.A.S, 2006, p. 125.

⁴¹ Jacqueline Harpman, *Les bons sauvages*, op. cit., p. 106. C'est l'auteur qui souligne.

⁴² Jacqueline Harpman, *Brève Arcadie*, Bruxelles, Labor, « Espace Nord », 2001. [Paris, René Julliard, 1959,] p. 21.

de son mieux pour donner du plaisir à son époux se révolte lorsqu'elle s'aperçoit que, au lieu de produire de la volupté, le comportement de son partenaire transforme l'acte sexuel en une épreuve à subir :

Je passai encore une fois les événements en revue : toutes les règles avaient été observées, pourquoi étais-je si mal récompensée ? Peu à peu, mon ennui tourna mauvaise humeur. On ne condamne pas sans raison une jeune fille bien née, respectueuse de tous ses devoirs, à subir une telle épreuve.⁴³

Conclusion

Les repères théoriques présentés dans la première partie de cet article nous ont aidé à souligner que la sexualité est une construction culturelle qui concerne le corps et l'esprit, l'individu et la collectivité. Le vécu sexuel personnel est largement façonné par la spécificité de l'aire culturelle à laquelle l'individu appartient. Les diverses significations attribuées à l'initiation à la sexualité témoignent de l'existence d'un modelage culturel de la biologie. Les facettes culturelles de la sexualité nous ont permis d'expliquer l'attitude particulière des personnages féminins harpmaniens envers l'expérience sexuelle. Chez elles, le droit à la libre initiation sexuelle et la revendication de la jouissance orgastique sont des formes de révolte contre les contraintes culturelles imposées à la féminité traditionnelle.

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⁴³ Jacqueline Harpman, « L'amour, ma chère, toujours l'amour », in Jacqueline Harpman, *Jusqu'au dernier jour de mes jours*, Bruxelles, Labor, 2004, p. 156.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Dan Douglas, *Assessing Languages for Specific Purposes*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000, XIII + 311 pp.

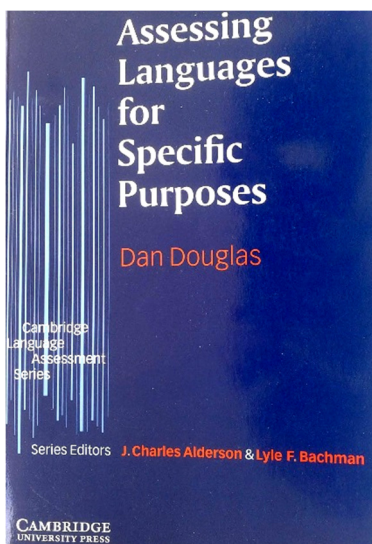
As announced in the title, Dan Douglas's work aims at offering a particular account of how language for specific purposes tests are defined, devised, piloted and implemented. Although the language used is clear and the writing not at all cumbersome, the target readership is easily distinguishable from the first pages. The book addresses teachers, researchers, LSP test developers, being of value to novices in the field of LSP and more experienced professionals alike.

In the first chapter, Douglas bravely argues the necessity of designing tests of language for specific purposes. Starting from a definition of testing LSP and moving to the rationale behind creating and developing tests, he builds his demonstration on counter-arguments of other experts (e.g. Widdowson, Davies), whose claims support the idea that LSP tests are not justified. The two main reasons the author offers in support of his views are that language performances depend on the context in which they take place and that the

purpose of specific language teaching and testing is precise, meaning that it has a specific communicative function. The precision characteristic is aptly exemplified by Douglas in a reference to "legalese" - the terminology used by lawyers to communicate the exact meaning of law. An essential part of the chapter is the emphasis on authenticity and its importance in developing tests of language for specific purposes.

Delving deeper into the subject, the author defines in the second chapter the notion of specific purpose language ability as the primary goal of LSP tests and introduces the relationship between language ability and specific background knowledge.

In taking a stand for this distinction between language ability and background knowledge, the author draws upon Clapham's empirical study based on the reading modules of IELTS. The highlight of this chapter is the Table of components of specific purpose language ability, which expounds in a very clear and organised fashion all the key concepts explained in this



chapter, ranging from a breakdown of language knowledge into grammatical, textual, functional and sociolinguistic and up to strategic competences and background knowledge.

In the following two chapters, the author proposes a framework for describing language context and test developing methods, thus bridging the gap between the internal features presented in the previous chapters (background and language knowledge) and the external feature of context. In building his framework, Douglas explains important concepts such as context, discourse domains, rubric, input data, reactivity. He makes a detailed account of the notion of strategic competence, which he defines as the mediator between the internal components and the external context. A practical application of his framework will be implemented and described at length in chapters 6 and 7.

The apex of Douglas's endeavour appears in the fifth chapter, consisting in the actual delineation of guidelines for constructing LSP test tasks. Nevertheless, the author remarks that "the frameworks do not provide us with an automatic, idiot proof procedure for translating target characteristics into test tasks", as this process still requires the creativity and experience of the LSP test developer.

As mentioned above, chapters 6 and 7 focus mainly on practical examples of the theoretical framework proposed earlier in the book, with the former chapter insisting upon the listening and speaking items of LSP testing and the latter rounding up the four skills set, markedly presenting the reading and writing items. Douglas stops at a number of different examples, offering a comprehensive set of internationally renowned LSP tests.

The final chapter of the book tackles several issues encountered in LSP test development, such as operationalization, validity, reliability, impact, piloting and revising, to name only a few. The book concludes with a number of resources relating to LSP testing discovered by Douglas during his research along with his proposition for the future of LSP.

The aim set by Dan Douglas with this work of linguistics has been successfully attained. He has succeeded in creating a valuable addition from a fresh perspective to the specialised literature of LSP testing. Masterfully combining theoretical frameworks with practical applications, the systematically organised structure of the book has allowed for a straightforward reading, in spite of its scholarly wording, predominantly targeting readers with specialised knowledge in the field. Although it was published in 2000 and could presumptuously be considered outdated, *Assessing Languages for Specific Purposes* remains to this day a cornerstone in its domain, being an invaluable asset to all the readers interested in gaining, improving or deepening the LSP knowledge.

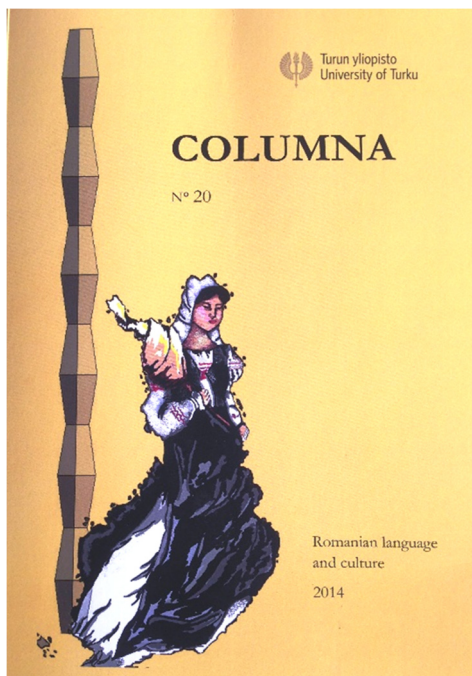
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**COLUMNA, n° 20 / 2014, 113 p., Romanian Language and Culture
University of Turku, Finland**

Columna is a cultural, interdisciplinary publication issued by the Department of Romanian Language and Culture at the University of Turku, Finland, one of the most privileged hubs of Romanian studies during contemporary times and it has the grand merit of being the only publication focusing on Romanian-Finnish cultural interferences; it has, therefore, a high degree of novelty. The very first issue was in 1982, and during the following decades it was published at a rather irregular pace. The main purpose of *Columna* was to reflect Finnish cultural phenomena from Romanian perspective, and the other way round. Thus, during time, were published translations, reviews, interviews, articles; all part of a Romanian-Finnish intercultural trend, encouraged by the lectureship in Turku. *Columna* was edited and supported by the Romanian lecturers in Finland, during the past decades. It made possible, during difficult times, the contact between two cultures that did not know much about each other. Within Finnish society, *Columna* brought forward many relevant landmarks of Romanian culture. Moreover, the students enrolled in Romanian studies in Turku, were always an important part of the endeavour. At the same time, through its pages, both the Romanian diaspora living in Scandinavia and the local academia had access to insights on Romanian culture.

Columna cultural magazine has had a tumultuous history across its 33 years of existence, but has, nevertheless, managed to reach in 2014 an important anniversary with its 20th issue.



A significant change occurred in the 2014 issue is that, unlike the previous issues, *Columna* is nowadays more open to hosting contributions in other languages than Romanian or Finnish. Enlarging the linguistic area will only make the initiative more visible and accessible (Spanish and English were added).

The issue under discussion here (2014) is split into four sections: *Travel Impressions*, *Popular Culture*, *Interviews* and *Scientific Contributions*. The first one is rather transparent, yet it brings surprising view on Romanian society in current days, all

authors being Finnish and disclosing their first encounter with Transylvania, Moldova or Bucharest.

The second section tackles popular culture topics like Romanian film, web comics or culinary art. Written in Finnish and English, the three articles are meant to be an introductory course for the Scandinavian reader.

The third part is focusing on society matters; questions like “What are the fundamental differences between the Romanian and Finnish educational systems?” and “How do Finns picture themselves the idea of Romania?” are addressed here. The answers and the findings are not always comfortable, yet in coherent alignment with nowadays issues related to image capital and branding. Media exposure and social networking are powerful factors in perpetrating more or less accurate images on the *otherness*.

The last part is, in our opinion, the most valuable, as it brings forward two important contributions to the efforts of culturally connecting Finland and Romania. Leena Hofren translates into Finnish language several poems of Denisa Mirena Pişcu, along with a biography, and Pirta Pappinen publishes a short, but unprecedented Finnish-Romanian dictionary of legal terms. Both Mrs Hofren and Ms Pappinen have studied Romanian at the University of Turku and have extensive preoccupation and experience in the field.

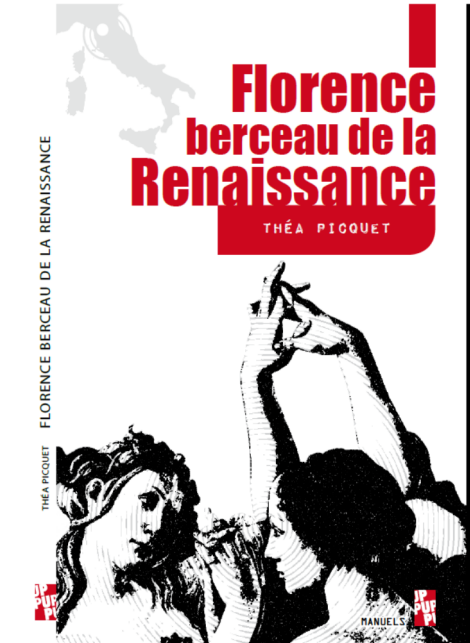
On the cultural side, the same last part of the publication brings forward two historical/cultural/literary items: one article on fashion and clothing in Romanian provinces during the 17th century and a paper in Spanish (authored by Rosario Lucena, from University of Granada) regarding the image of Norman Manea, acclaimed professor and author.

In conclusion, *Columna* is an oasis of Romanian culture in Scandinavia, a unique source of Finnish-Romanian intercultural studies and also a bridge through which Finnish culture may become more familiar to our Balkan mind set.

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Théa Picquet, *Florence, berceau de la Renaissance*, Aix-en-Provence, Presses Universitaires de Provence, 2015, 170 p.

Manuel d'histoire indispensable, consacré à la ville de Florence, creuset de la Renaissance, marquée notamment par la floraison des arts figuratifs et des belles lettres, par la redécouverte des textes et de la pensée antiques, par la philosophie néoplatonicienne, l'ouvrage rédigé par Théa Picquet, professeur de littérature et de civilisation italiennes de la Renaissance à l'Université d'Aix-Marseille, se propose d'appréhender, en sept chapitres (première partie, p. 9-79), suivis d'une riche anthologie de textes en langue italienne (deuxième partie, p. 89-167), la spectaculaire histoire florentine considérée dans la longue durée (entre le XIII^e et le XVI^e siècle), sous des angles différents mais complémentaires (société, politique, économie, culture, littérature, arts) et selon des échelles de valeur variables, prenant en compte le contexte local et régional (les acteurs de la politique, de la société, de l'économie, des arts, de l'humanisme, de la philosophie), ainsi que le contexte international, dominé en Europe par l'empereur et le pape. A ces deux autorités majeures s'ajoutent celles qui émergent et prennent une importance croissante en Italie : les villes qui connaissent un développement économique exceptionnel, les feudataires étant supplantés par l'émergence de villes libres qui revendiquent et défendent leur indépendance face à l'empereur et au pape, même si une telle volonté ne peut se réaliser sans la préalable conclusion de ligues comme c'est le cas entre Florence, Milan ou Plaisance. Cette dualité, où les villes savent profiter de la présence de l'une des deux prestigieuses autorités sur le sol italien, se retrouve à Florence selon des modalités fondées sur les origines de la cité, origines



à la fois mythiques et historiques qui construisent son identité. Dès le XIV^e siècle se diffusent en effet dans les écrits florentins (Dante, Compagni, Villani), d'une part, la légende selon laquelle la ville de Florence a été édifée par les Romains, *Florentia* provenant selon eux du nom du noble consul Florinius, une cité qui prospéra jusqu'à sa destruction par Attila, puis connut un nouvel essor sous Charlemagne; de l'autre, ses origines étrusques qui semblent confirmées au XVI^e siècle par la découverte de ruines, une cité qui fut une colonie militaire romaine vers 50 av. J.-C. Entre réalité historique et mythe des origines, la ville de Florence, notamment, réinvente un passé le plus souvent illustre qui tend à affirmer sa puissance présente. L'humanisme n'est

pas étranger à un tel discours, ni les arts figuratifs, qui font de la cité de l'Arno le creuset de la Renaissance, avant que ne se distinguent d'autres grands centres urbains tels que Rome, Milan et Venise.

Les luttes opposant les groupes dirigeants des villes italiennes, divisées entre le parti des guelfes (du nom des nobles Welf soutenus par la papauté) et celui des gibelins (les nobles Hohenstaufen bénéficiant du soutien de villes de l'Italie septentrionale et de celles qui sont en rivalité avec Florence), dont rend également compte Dante lorsqu'il traite de Farinata degli Uberti, n'épargnent pas la cité de l'Arno qui est guelfe à l'instar de la Sicile. Un tel antagonisme a d'abord caractérisé les Welf et les Hohenstaufen eux-mêmes qui aspirent tous deux au trône impérial, ces divergences ayant ensuite impliqué l'Italie, puisque Rome est la capitale de l'empire et le lieu où se fait couronner l'empereur. Ces conflits se réalisent donc dans l'espace florentin, entre familles rivales, opposées non seulement sur le plan commercial et bancaire, mais aussi sur le plan de la conception du monde et de la philosophie politique. Ainsi les gibelins (composés des nobles et des vassaux de l'empire) se montrent favorables au pouvoir temporel de l'empereur, alors que les guelfes (groupes bourgeois), ayant des intérêts économiques et financiers importants à Rome, acceptent qu'une telle autorité soit attribuée au souverain pontife. Les différends sont marqués par une continuelle alternance politique due à la présence ou à l'absence de l'empereur : lorsque celui-ci est présent en Italie, les gibelins ont la mainmise sur les affaires de la Cité, mais, une fois absent, ce sont les guelfes qui récupèrent la gestion de la vie citadine, une alternance qui caractérise Florence dans la seconde moitié du XIII^e siècle, période au cours de laquelle s'impose une bourgeoisie d'affaires aux dépens des nobles, un *primo popolo* étant ainsi créé en 1250, à la tête duquel figurent un capitaine et douze *Buonumini*, chargés

de défendre les intérêts des groupes bourgeois ; en 1282, apparaît le *secondo popolo* qui introduit les corporations, composées des bourgeois et des artisans, représentées par les Prieurs, au nombre de six, choisis parmi les hommes d'affaires ou les artisans; en 1293, les *magnati* (nobles, vieilles familles bourgeoises) sont évincés au profit des groupes bourgeois les plus dynamiques, notamment grâce à des ordonnances de justice qui empêchent les *magnati*, soumis à un sévère contrôle politique, de participer aux affaires de la cité, quoique cette mesure soit atténuée en 1294, certaines de ces familles ayant obtenu l'autorisation de prendre part à la vie politique à condition d'être inscrites à une corporation. Composée d'une centaine de familles (banquiers, industriels de la laine et de la soie, marchands) qui ont pris le soin d'éliminer du pouvoir la *plebe* et les *Arti minori* (petits artisans), une oligarchie d'affaires gouverne la cité de l'Arno dès le XIV^e siècle et parvient à éviter la mise en place d'un régime seigneurial, tenu à Florence pour tyrannique. Un tel cadre politique est accompagné de la culture qui fleurit et marque la vie florentine : découverte des Grecs et des Arabes, nouvelle conception du monde, développement du système universitaire, place importante détenue par le savant dans la société et la Cité, rôle essentiel assumé par le livre, nouvelles méthodes d'enseignements, rapprochement de la culture antique et de la culture contemporaine, valorisation des idéaux républicains contre la tyrannie personnifiée par les Visconti de Milan, liens établis entre les humanistes et la vie politique, insertion des humanistes dans les familles des marchands, savoir humaniste au service des bourgeois, pédagogie et attention prêtée à la formation, ainsi qu'à l'enfance, rivalités entre savants et monde de l'Eglise, auteurs (Aristote, Averroès) critiqués, thomisme d'abord combattu puis défendu au point de devenir la philosophie officielle de l'Eglise, tout concourt finale-

ment à l'émergence d'un renouveau intellectuel et artistique exceptionnel qui trouve son expression dans l'humanisme et la Renaissance à Florence. Entre 1434 et 1494, la cité de l'Arno, qui est une république mais de type médicéen sous Côme l'Ancien dès 1434 - à la fois mécène et promoteur de l'art florentin en Italie -, connaît la période la plus prestigieuse de son histoire intellectuelle et artistique ; puis, le régime retrouve une configuration républicaine (sans le pouvoir personnalisé des Médicis ...) à partir de la fuite de Pierre II en 1494, connaît les instabilités sociales et politiques dues aux guerres d'Italie, ainsi qu'aux conflits internes ("régime" de Savonarole de 1494 à 1498, république dirigée par Piero Soderini de 1498 à 1512, retour des Médicis à l'automne 1512 et fuite de Piero Soderini ...) qui s'étendent de 1494 à 1530, jusqu'à ce que l'empereur Charles Quint intervienne en faveur des Médicis, mais la République est perdue à jamais : les Médicis ne partagent plus le pouvoir avec leurs pairs, comme au XV^e siècle, mais le détiennent seuls et sont élevés au rang de duc, puis de Grand-duc de Toscane.

Composant la deuxième partie du manuel, l'anthologie contient des textes importants sur la vie florentine dès le XIII^e siècle dus à des auteurs le plus souvent fameux : ceux de Giovanni Villani (1276-1348) et de Dino Compagni (env. 1255-1324) consacrés aux origines de la cité de l'Arno et aux divisions créées par les guelfes et les gibelins ; de Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455), célèbre orfèvre, architecte et sculpteur, auteur de la deuxième porte du Baptistère de Florence, réalisée en 1403-1424 ; de Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli (1371-1444), qui fut membre de la corporation de la laine, prieur en 1427 et Gonfalonier de justice en 1441 ; d'Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi (1407-1471), épouse de Matteo Strozzi qui fut exilé par Côme de Médicis lorsque celui-ci revint à Florence en 1434 ; de Leon Battista Alberti (1404-

1472), humaniste, architecte et mathématicien, entré au service des papes Eugène IV et Nicolas V, et en contact avec les artistes de la cour des Médicis ; de Léonard de Vinci (1452-1519), ingénieur, architecte, peintre, sculpteur et théoricien, qui s'interrogea notamment sur la science authentique qu'il opposa à la science traditionnelle ; de Jérôme Savonarole (1452-1498), fougueux prédicateur dominicain, né à Ferrare, qui parvint à gagner la faveur des Florentins lorsqu'il devint en 1491 prieur du couvent de saint Marc à Florence ; de Lucrezia Tornabuoni (1425-1485), poétesse et épistolière, épouse de Pierre de Médicis et mère de Laurent le Magnifique, qui joua un rôle important à la cour de son fils et encouragea le poète Luigi Pulci à écrire *Morgante* ; de Laurent de Médicis (1449-1492), homme politique, mécène et poète ; d'Ange Politien (1454-1494), éminent helléniste et poète, précepteur des enfants de Laurent le Magnifique et professeur d'éloquence grecque et latine à l'Université de Florence ; de Luigi Pulci (1432-1484), poète qui sollicita, en vain, la faveur des Médicis et se mit finalement au service du condottiere Roberto Sanseverino en 1473 ; de Nicolas Machiavel (1469-1527), secrétaire de la seconde Chancellerie de la République dès 1498, impliqué dans un complot anti-medicéen, qui écrivit durant son exil à San Casciano *Le Prince* (1513), les *Istorie fiorentine*, rédigées avant décembre 1522 (quatre premiers livres) et terminées en mars 1522 (les quatre derniers), et d'autres ouvrages célèbres ; de François Guichardin (1483-1540), homme politique, avocat, historien, auteur des *Considerazioni sui Discorsi del Machiavelli sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (rédigées en 1530), des *Ricordi* (1512-1530), des *Storie fiorentine*, commencées en 1508 mais inachevées, de la *Storia d'Italia*, écrite en 1535 et publiée à titre posthume en 1561 ; de Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571), artiste et écrivain, auteur de la *Vita*, une autobiographie dont l'écriture

commença en 1558 ; de Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), peintre, architecte, écrivain, protégé des Médicis, premier historien de l'art, auteur des *Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, d'abord publiées en 1550, puis augmentées et rééditées en 1568 ; et, finalement, d'Anton Francesco Grazzini, dit Il Lasca (1503-1584), poète et écrivain, qui fonda en 1582 l'*Accademia de La Crusca*, auteur de nouvelles *Le Cene*, dont l'écriture débuta sans doute en 1540.

Précieux manuel d'histoire, synthèse présentée avec sobriété, clarté et précision, destiné aussi bien aux étudiants de licence et de master qu'aux passionnés d'histoire italienne, l'ouvrage de Théa Picquet remet en lumière l'incalculable splendeur artistique, intellectuelle et politique que la République de Florence a connue entre le XIII^e et le XVI^e siècle, malgré les nombreuses incertitudes liées aux conflits et aux guerres (notamment dès la "descente" de Charles VIII en Italie en 1494). Les années 1434-1494 ont été caractérisées par la brillante politique culturelle des Médicis, d'abord par celle con-

duite par Côme l'Ancien, véritable promoteur de l'art florentin, dont témoigne, au milieu du XVI^e siècle, Giorgio Vasari, le premier historien de l'art. Les textes figurant dans l'anthologie, en langue italienne, aident à cerner les passions, les sujets de réflexion, les préoccupations, les inquiétudes des dix-sept auteurs florentins choisis, qu'ils aient été artistes, architectes, poètes, écrivains ou hommes politiques ; qu'ils aient été amenés à pratiquer ou, plus simplement, à s'interroger sur l'activité politique, à comprendre le passé et à le (re-)définir, à justifier des décisions prises, à préconiser des valeurs humanistes, à protéger ses proches, à commenter son existence au nom de la vérité. Leurs propos, leurs difficultés, leurs justifications, leurs espoirs, leurs ambitions ne sont-ils pas ceux de notre temps ?

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