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Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen
Department of English Studies



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„Viewpoints and
Perspectives in FLT“



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PREFACE

The sixth issue of SILC “Viewpoints and perspectives in FLT” is comprised of seven papers, which reflect a wide variety of issues in the field of second language acquisition and teacher development and certification. It also offers a book review of a recent publication in the field of contemporary education.

In the opening paper of the issue, “An ecocritical reading of representations of nature in modern Turkish novel”, Berrin Aksoy pays special attention to the relationship between humans and nature as a main metaphor and motif in the novels *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (*Yusuf from Kuyucak*) by Sabahattin Ali, and *Ortadirek* (*The wind from the plain*) by Yaşar Kemal. The author argues that both novels “manifest the strong argument of Turkish authors in their endeavor to reflect how they oppose the anthropocentric view which undermines nature’s singularity and which relegates it to an inferior place in the context of man’s superiority and wellbeing.” (Aksoy, 2019, p. 7).

Some of the papers present different aspects of teaching, learning and teacher development. In a paper entitled “An integrated approach to teaching/ studying postcolonial poetry” by N. Belgin Elbir the focus is on meeting students’ academic and occupational needs by applying an integrated approach which would foster their language and literary competence (see Elbir, 2019, p. 18) through the use of literary texts. The analysis is based on texts by two Caribbean poets: Grace Nichols and John Agard.

Another paper by Irina Ivanova entitled “Strengthening teacher identity and professionalism as a way to increase the appeal and status of teaching profession” is a state-of-the art review which presents several definitions of identity and its interpretations backed with the most recent findings in the field of identity studies. An aspect which is presented in detail is professionalism and its links to certification in the context of “the need for fairer and more rigorous assessment” (Ivanova, 2019, p. 33) of teaching professionals. The conclusion reached is that sponsored professionalism is linked to the recent call for measurable accountability in education worldwide and in Bulgarian higher education.

A group of academics provide a typology of e-learning tools for FLT. Dana Bartosh, Natalia Galskova, Maria Kharlamova and Elena Stoyanova claim that “The use of computer-aided learning tools in language education, taking into account their typological characteristics and in accordance with specific educational tasks, allows for a full realization of their specific linguistic and didactic functions” (Bartosh, Galskova, Kharlamova, & Stoyanova, 2019, p.

48). To this end they review various tools, classifying them according to two main criteria, i.e. function and specific nature. They claim that expertise along with the appropriate materials can ensure better integration of e-learning tools in the classroom which in its turn can improve foreign language teaching and learning.

“International students’ perceptions of communication challenges in English as a medium of instruction” by Nedka Dimitrova presents a corpus-based study on the communication challenges experienced by “international students of business management in the context of using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in a non-English speaking country” (Dimitrova, 2019, p. 60). Some of her conclusions show difficulties resulting from self-awareness of the problem. The author argues that such issues are experienced to a greater extent by students from higher context cultures.

There is a paper which concerns teaching and learning grammar through the application of the cognitive approach as put forward by Jean Piaget. In her paper “Beyond L2 Grammar Instruction”, Miroslava Tsvetkova (2019, p. 79) reports the results of a case study conducted among BA students and concludes that this kind of approach helps teachers and facilitates more efficient and effective ways of presenting the material.

The issue is rounded off by a review on a contemporary writer that enjoyed the international premiere of her latest book on May 1, 2019. The review provided by Desislava Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva on Esther Wojcicki’s *How to raise successful people: Simple lessons for radical results* (2019) gives an insight into the teaching and parenting methods employed by a journalist in her family and in her classroom and the results obtained, i.e. creating empowered and independent individuals bound to success simply through the application of five principles abbreviated as TRICK (trust, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and kindness).

AN ECOCRITICAL READING OF REPRESENTATIONS OF NATURE IN MODERN TURKISH NOVEL

N. Berrin Aksoy¹

Abstract: *Modern Turkish novel developed in the 19th century, greatly inspired by the translations of foreign models. Since then, it has undergone a gradual transformation in terms of style, subject matter and innovative genres and modes of expression thanks to the potentials provided by local cultural and traditional literary sources. Of those, people's ballads, court poetry and folkstories and songs which have celebrated the geographical, regional and natural characteristics of the homeland and which portrayed the forms of a relationship between the human and nature lie deep in the cultural memory and consciousness of the people. Such a literary climate enables novelists to weave several representations of this relationship between human and nature as a dominating metaphor or motif in their work. In this paper, I will trace the manifestations of this relationship and their artistic and literary functions in the novel Kuyucaklı Yusuf (Yusuf from Kuyucak) by Sabahattin Ali, and Ortadirek (The Wind from the Plain) by Yaşar Kemal.*

Key words: *ecocriticism, Kuyucaklı Yusuf, Ortadirek, modern Turkish novel, human and nature*

Although ecocriticism first appeared in 1978 in William Rueckert's essay "Literature and Ecology: An experiment in Ecocriticism", it had to wait for the 1990s to be taken up as a separate discipline in literary studies. Actually, ecocriticism is a very inclusive term under which multiple concepts and studies cluster, ranging from biology, geology, science, psychology, linguistics, and literature which contribute to the definition and practice of this relatively new discipline. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm are the first researchers who came up with a substantial definition for ecocriticism in 1996 in the words: "simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (p. xviii). According to Glotfelty, ecocriticism is an "earth-centered approach", the complex intersections between environment and culture, believing that "human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it" (1996, p. xix). Historically speaking, nature-human relation has been taken up philosophically for many ages, emphasized by Descartes as a dualism of soul and the body, where animals, unlike humans do not possess soul or spirit and

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are inferior as opposed to a man. These views, known as anthropocentric view, put man in the center of the universe and as superior to all other natural and inanimate objects and thus have a claim on them to use them for man's own needs and good. The unprecedented technological developments and the proliferation of innovation and mass production due to the globalization of learning and sciences have unfortunately aggravated the depletion and exploitation of nature and everything that are related to it. The resulting environmental crisis in today's world and the irresponsible consumption of nature and natural resources in all geographies to the degree of devastation have led thinkers, and scientists alike to raise awareness of the imminent threat posed to the very existence of the universe with all its living and non-living things. Today, the approach to ecocriticism has invented ways to question the concepts of human and the non-human, nature, and non-nature so as to frame the environmental crisis by way of challenging these long-standing concepts as appropriated in literature. These attempts led to a redefinition of the terms environment, landscape, and nature. Now environment suggests not only the natural environment but also the urban environment in which all the human and non-human live and are affected by the conditions they live in and sustain their existence. Hence, ecocritical reading of a literary text is an attempt to discover the relation between human and the non-human within the specter of nature and the environment and how this relationship manifests itself as an interconnectedness between all these species as dealt with in literature. It is an initiative that shows how this interconnectedness is depicted in literature by way of not merely displaying natural descriptions in texts, but by also focusing on the shaping influence that characterization, focalization, genre, and narrative and sentence structure have on representations of nature-man interconnectedness (Bracke, 2019, p.1).

Consequently, this paper will develop around the exploration of how nature-man, human-nonhuman dichotomy is displayed from an ecocritical prism in the modern Turkish novel by performing an ecocritical reading and interpretation of two distinguished Turkish authors, namely Yaşar Kemal and Sabahattin Ali. The novels to be studied are *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (Yusuf of Kuyucaklı) by Sabahattin Ali and *Ortadirek* (The Wind from the Plain) by Yaşar Kemal, respectively.

Environmental topics appeared in Turkish literature as early as the beginning of the 20th century with the development of the realistic wave in modern Turkish literature. Initially, these topics were concerned with provincial and pastoral elements as literary motifs or as village novels and stories depicting the life of the peasants in villages and small towns, their hardships, problems and the challenges they faced as opposed to the more developed regions and towns. The authors at this stage were concerned with the social and economic problems that came into being as a result of urbanization, political developments, and societal mobility. Hence the authors such as Sabahattin Ali, the poet Nazım Hikmet, Yaşar Kemal and many others begun to use the novel and the short story genre

to criticize and to point out the unfavorable aspects of the society and social order the Anatolian people were living in. Sabahattin Ali, in that sense, is the forerunner of Anatolian novel school not only because of his subject matter but because of his ability to employ Anatolian people's folk stories and motifs in his novels.

Kuyucaklı Yusuf is Sabahattin Ali's the best-known novel of his lifetime which was relatively short. The subject-matter of this novel is the conflict between the corrupt administrators sided with the notables, and the townspeople who are exposed to their ill-treatment and injustice. The novel was published in 1937, and although the events in the novel take place in the last two decades of the Ottoman Empire, the structure of the society when the book was written was still more or less similar.

The novel *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* deals with the subject of nature on two planes, since they both are thematically central in the story instead of only being an accessory of the subject-matter. First of all, the hero Yusuf himself is an image of a man ill-treated by other people's inconsiderate attitudes and intentional and egoistic and even murderous intentions. Yusuf, surrounded by such an environment can not feel himself at ease with his surroundings, adopted family and peers. "Indeed, whatever he did whoever he befriends with, he could not adapt himself to these townspeople at all" (Ali, 2019, p. 26, trans. mine). The theme of alienation and isolation in the midst of the material life that Yusuf experiences are felt and expressed by Yusuf only when he finds himself in nature:

Yusuf stared into the night while he leaned his back to the big oak tree. The trees standing on both banks of the stream, the muddy path with the shining puddles, leading to the town, the darkening and ascending and clearing and descending clouds entangled and entwined, looked overcast and lost in each other. It was if there existed nothing by itself in nature at that point in time. Yusuf felt glued to this immense and uniform night and he shuddered....He was all alone in this spreading immense night that emerged from the stars above to the pebbles at the bottom of the stream, from the clouds that rolled over from the east to the sea on the west.... (Ali, 2019, p. 87, trans. mine).

Yusuf's self-realization that takes place in nature, seeking and finding solace in nature and the natural, has been interpreted as a romantic trait in his character. Similarly, Selahattin Bey, Yusuf's adopted father, another important figure in the story resigns to nature amid the suffocating and corrupt relations in the town and among townspeople: "The suffocating stillness and the meaninglessness of the house, Yusuf's unconvincing and evading attitude, Muazzez's increasing languish and finally, Şahinde's relentless nagging choked him. After having his lunch at home, he threw himself out. He went for a walk towards the north of town" (Ali, 2019, p. 179, trans. mine).

Selahattin Bey leaves the suffocating air of home and the feeling of remorse and injustice he feels towards the events that took place in the courthouse that day to relax, to unwind and to find peace. He particularly looks for a small spring which he has heard of but does not know where it is. According to Vernon Gras, scholars and academics who discuss ecological approaches in literature all agree that a new paradigm has to be ecocentric, and anthropocentric. “We need a holistic totalized vision that subordinates man to nature. Nature is viewed as a diverse living network functioning as a huge global organism becomes the ultimate value... A belief in a divine unity with which humans can identify becomes the basis for a more inclusive ethic or way of life that extends to non-human and non-living things” (Gras, 2001, p. 66). The description of Selahattin Bey’s mood and the calming and restful atmosphere of nature where he eventually leads himself to, foregrounds the connection he yearns for in order to nourish his body and his mind, in whose absence, he is afraid he will soon wither away and perish. This manifestation of the nature-man dichotomy in the narration undermines an anthropocentric view and moves toward the idea of man-nature interconnectedness and wholeness as presented in the passage below:

Selahattin Bey felt that a rejuvenating and strengthening fluid was flowing to his heart from all over his body. He took in a very deep breath and thought that he was going through a process of rebirth along with nature. Everything around him was coming to life once more: grass was springing out from the dead and muddy earth which was shaded by the deep dark leaves of olive branches, the barren and thin twigs of willows was turning into green and the scarce buds were promising leaves that would soon to cover these thin twigs...at that moment he had his hands scratched by the needles of the blackberries. He felt that the poison which gnawed him inside for so many years disappeared into thin air with the blood that appeared like a thin line which was to dry soon on his purple-veined hand that had a few light-brown hairs. He was so very much fresher and light-hearted at this moment. (Ali, 2019, p. 118, trans. mine)

As for Yusuf, he has one passion in life: his enduring love for Muazzez, his adopted sister. This love seems to be the only favorable thing in Yusuf’s life. His character traits which can remind similar patterns of natural events such as his outbursts of fury, his impromptu actions when Muazzez is involved have led the critics to draw similarities with the Romantic concept of “the noble savage” (cited in Moran, 2001, p. 18). “The author tries to create a balance between the material surrounding and life as a background exterior to the novel, and the characters, outside to this background, as adventurous characters in romances” (ibid.). The attributes of Yusuf that make him the noble savage are elements which give access to the ecocritical reading of the novel along with the artificiality of town life with its corrupt people as opposed to the misfit Yusuf

as wild and unruly as the nature itself possessing the innate innocence that looks so incongruous to the material background of the novel.

According to Moran, Yusuf's personality and character traits along with the structure of the novel which displays a romantic worldview are not contrary to the realistic depiction of small-town life and the conflict it brings about between the classes that inhabit it. Indeed, Moran claims that the author Ali adopts a romantic point of view even when he so realistically writes about small-town life in Anatolia. He goes on to say that the romantic love between Yusuf and Muazzez and the harsh realities of smalltown life create the opposing spaces in the story (2001, p. 18-19, trans. mine). Indeed, similar to this opposition, the theme of man/nature, natural man/material man, urban/ rural contrasts are juxtaposed in the structure of the novel to welcome ecocritical readings and interpretations by and large (Moran, 2001, p. 19, trans. mine).

Sabahattin Ali treats *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* novel as a realistic novel consisting of themes of small-town life styles and townspeople of mean intentions and limited worldviews. This aspect of the novel comes along with another aspect: the depiction of nature and the people that are connected to nature such as Selahattin bey and Yusuf himself as in the above excerpt from the novel. The contrast between nature and the townspeople appear as Ali's own outlook to the endangered and threatened, even destroyed naturalness and the natural environment due to the anthropocentric (man-centered) approach to the world and to humans who inhabit it. Selahattin bey and Yusuf react similarly to nature and the natural environment. In the scenes when Selahattin bey escapes to nature, nature is humanized in a way that provides solace to him, a human that Selahattin bey can connect with, but the town and the townspeople are as threatening to Selahattin Bey as they are to nature: "Selahattin Bey felt dizzy. He seemed to be lost amid the beautiful, warm and embracing nature. While looking around again, he saw the town below the hill which was beginning to be covered with purple smoke and he shuddered. He felt a sharp pain at the feeling of having to go there and be buried in that small ditch. But he refrained himself from pondering on that and hurried down the slope" (Ali, 2019, p. 119, trans. mine).

Similarly, the depiction of Yusuf's connection to nature displays parallel ecological thinking, which portrays nature as superior to other creatures in Yusuf's environment. Nature shares with Yusuf the Noble Savage, the same experience of pureness and freshness which are impossible to be shared with the other, with the other figures that belong to the town's population. In a passage that metaphorically portrays a shared experience between Yusuf and nature, the idea is better clarified:

Soon the moon was rising and lightening the ears of the animals at the front which were being fed. The bridge further away, the woods behind it and

the sea stretching at a distance suddenly came to life, the dull white light suddenly gave a new life to everything around... Nature expanding around under the scorching sun, which could only show a sign of living by means of light, transformed into a new spirit during a half-hour dark. This time it was manifesting signs of life by means of small movements and a tulle-like, all-encompassing breath of life... (Ali, 2019, p. 149, trans. mine)

W.J. Meeker defines the term literary ecology as “the study of biological themes and relationships which appear in literary works. It is simultaneously an attempt to discover what roles have been played by literature in the ecology of human species” (qtd. in Heidari, 2016, p. 63). In *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, Sabahattin Ali portrays the mean and narrow-minded townspeople as equally destructive to humans and to ecological environment to the degree that ends in the devastation of some of the characters, as in the murder of Ali by the bully Şakir, or the death of Muazzez and the beginning of Yusuf’s self-exile at the end of the novel.

Sabahattin Ali’s ecological consciousness is displayed as an opposition between nature as the habitat of the natural, pureness and innocence and the town life as the habitat that breeds corruption in small-town people when they value materialistic things and economic comfort and capitalist pursuits. Hence, they are disconnected from nature, and from the order found in nature. In ecological criticism, nature is taken up with human attributes as opposed to the Anthropocene approach to nature which adopts a materialistic and egotistic worldview of nature. As mentioned by Heidari, “there is a symbiotic relationship between man and nature along with everything else in it, which flourishes and secures when man identifies the environmental issues and amend them for the sake of nature” (Heidari, 2016, p. 63). In *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, environmental issues are forsaken by the townspeople for the benefit of satisfying their pleasures and greed, and those people like Yusuf and Selahattin Bey who are the odd ones out, cut themselves off from the society to the extent that the characters are overwhelmed by the desire of totally returning to nature and becoming the noble savage in opposition to the insensitivity towards nature as well as its dehumanization in attitude and in practice. At the end of the story, Yusuf, after a series of conflicts and criminal confrontations, and having buried his dead wife under a tree in the open space, rides his horse towards the mountains to start a new life: “After turning to look back at the town where he spent the worst years of his life and threateningly shaking his fist at it, he rode his horse forward, to the mountains ahead...” (Ali, 2019, p. 254, trans. mine).

As pointed out earlier in this paper, the portrayal of the relation between ecology, ecological concerns and literature has long been implanted into modern Turkish literature as early as in the 1930s in the form of regional topics and rural stories depicting the opposition between the rural peasant and the urban man in the face of modernization. In many of those works, what is voiced in terms of ecology

is the depiction of nature as another burden on the rural man, distracting and wasting him away in his struggles to make a living and to improve his lifestyle. This totally Anthropocene view of nature gradually begun to be challenged by ecosensitive authors such as Sabahattin Ali, and Yaşar Kemal as the most prominent representatives.

Nature and man's place in nature and his interaction with it is Yaşar Kemal's central concern in his novels and short stories. As in James Joyce's *Dublin*, Çukurova, an agricultural southern plain in Turkey, may as well be named as the cartographic focus in all his writings. In *Ortadirek*, (the Wind from the Plain) the first book of the *Dağın Öte Yüzü* (The Other Face of the Mountain) trilogy, Çukurova is the space for "the intellectual and emotional content of the narrative" (Tally, 2014, p. 1). In Yaşar Kemal, natural landscape and the narrative is so intertwined that landscape or the ecological environment becomes central to the effects and style of the narration. Ecological description and the narration are melted in one pot to create the impression that Kemal is not only dealing with the topics that concern man, but also with topics that specifically concern nature and its place in man's spiritual and physical journey. In his own words: "I believe in two things, the eternal force of two things, the infinite creativity, infinite change of two things: People and nature" (Özdemir, p. 3, trans. mine).

Ortadirek stands out as a fully ecologically sensitive novel comprising all the qualities that make a text available for an ecological reading. Starting by the title *Ortadirek* which means a pole or supporting column is actually a cultural object in Turkish. It is generally used by nomads when setting up a tent, but culturally it also stands for the father, or the head of a family who supports and protects his folks, represented by Uzun Ali, (tall Ali) in the novel. The novel, briefly stating, depicts a nomadic family's exodus from their village to find work, or in other words, to work as cotton workers in the plains of Çukurova. The journey is extremely challenging and trying in ruthless and harsh geography where nature is equipped with humanistic qualities of harshness, ruthlessness as well as beauty, naturalness, and innocence. The environment in the story creates the bulk of the plot in which characters act, live or disappear mentally or in blood and flesh, in relation to, or contrary to nature and the landscape that surrounds them. In Yaşar Kemal's own words, the influence of nature on mankind is explained as such: "I insist on integrating the setting within nature in my work because I am convinced that one can only attain truth by placing man in his primordial frame of reference" (in Kemal, 1999, p. 129).

Yaşar Kemal believes that there is a very strong primordial connection between man and nature which is actually inseparable, but, which also displays fury and anger at the instances when this bond, connection is under threat. The influence of the landscape and the ecological environment on man in Yaşar Kemal is vocalized by the Turkish author İlyaz Bingül in the following manner:

The interconnectedness of man and nature is a striking quality of Yaşar Kemal's novel. Man is a part of nature and in turn, nature is a prerequisite of the novel. We are encountering a novelistic quality which is not seen in any European novel. Man is inside nature; he acts not in the novel, but in nature. There is no paradox between what is 'human' and what is 'natural', nature is a unity comprised of a variety of plants, animals, humans, rivers that connect plains and mountains; and shapes of the earth. (İlyaz, 2005, trans. mine)

Indeed all his stories are shaped by the forces of nature and people, in a constant flux of conflict, harmony, placement, temporariness, safety, and unpredictability. Emin Özdemir writes the following about his focus on nature and the natural environment as dealt with in Yaşar Kemal's style:

Yaşar Kemal's literary creation is shaped by these forces. Their realism, the impact is driven from that, too. No matter how often it is said, it may as well be repeated once more; narrative creations which are not fed with the real and the reality can not be convincing, can not achieve artistic merit; because aren't all artistic creations whatever the genre may be, is an attempt at reshaping the truth, attaching new meanings to it? When evaluating YK's work from this angle we see that his work is fictionalized and produced in the bountiful earth of reality; and also that the reality of nature and the reality of humans are intertwined and transformed into the narrative reality. Briefly, in his creative universe nature is humanized and human has become an inseparable part of nature. Indeed mountains, stones, rocks, valleys, hills, downhill, insects, bugs, wolves birds enter the realm of narration like its internal elements; they assume the role of reflecting the emotional world of the characters... (Özdemir, 2019, p. 3-4, trans. mine)

These qualities that are mentioned in Özdemir are manifested in Kemal's narrative as such:

Now, rain must come. Just like then. Floods had taken over the pavilions. Somewhere there in the cotton field, further away, there was a wood of poplar trees. It was God's gift. Such woods, ten times the size of pine woods of Toros mountains. You will stand in front of it and say, there are three things in this Chukurova. A flat, straight meadow. Place an egg on this end, watch it on the other end. And a sea, which turns into purple, orange, turning into all colours, endless, vast, unidentified, unknown. Also this poplar tree woods. It is said that there is a stream behind it. Mighty. It is said that there are villages, dams, forests, fields, orangeries there. Vast. One can think the whole world is poplar tree woods, all the way to the sea, to the Toros mountains behind. You would say the whole world is poplar tree woods. Snakes, turtles in it. Hyenas, long-tailed wolves, coyotes with devil eyes. Unknown, invisible creatures... Fairies, spirits... (Kemal, 2004, p. 155, trans. mine)

The interconnectedness of the material and spiritual environment in the story with that of the human characters is displayed symbolically in the walnut tree metaphor in *Ortadirek*. Actually, the tree motif is a recurring device in Yaşar Kemal's fiction as a tool to explore and visualize his ecological stance and concerns. The walnut tree is symbolically an epitome of human being's spiritual and mental constitution such as his joy his agony, his longings, and yearnings. The narration and the figures of speech glorify this connection as seen in the passage below:

I was passing under this holywalnut tree one night, pitch dark, bulletproof night. Its branches were shuffling. They were like dark water. The walnut had invaded the whole sky. Suddenly something cracked. I turned around to look, a ball of light from the earth was flowing towards the walnut, while doing so the branches were lightning, bathing in light, soaking in light. I was frozen then and there. I kept praying. Soon the twigs of the walnut, its leaves, its trunk, the whole tree were struck by light as if carving the night thru. Then with the branches, with its trunk, the walnut spread towards the sky, expanded against the mountains opposite. The whole world lightened up, like day break. The darkness of the mountains cleared, the darkness of the night lifted. (Kemal, 2004, p. 111, trans. mine)

In this passage above, Uzun Ali, the main character and the father of the family is soliloquizing. He encounters a magical moment in the deepest moment of the night when he feels the loneliest and the most desperate in the course of the events confronted in the devastating journey in the Toros (Taurus) mountains. The 'light' motif which turns the experience into a cosmic one moves beyond the material environment and mixes with the spiritual and imaginative landscape of man.

Nature is endowed with human qualities and is held responsible for the sufferings and misery of man and also for his joy and happiness. Another major character in the novel, Meryemce, Uzun Ali's mother who displays a perseverant and resilient front against the hardships amid the poverty and mishaps in the family's life pours her heart out to the woods around her:

Woods, hey woods she began. Happy woods, a hundred thousand trees you are, you cannot move, you cannot separate. You thunder all together, you fall your leaves altogether, you root down to the earth altogether. You stand to blossom altogether, you froze altogether. Same rain falls on you, same day shines on you. The same scent you smell, same fire knocks you down. I address you, only you, be grateful that you are not human. Be grateful, although you can not sing, sleep, wake up, nor kiss or cuddle but all the same, be grateful. (Kemal, 2004, p. 245, trans. mine)

Another instance is when she is glorifying nature and its nurturing and accommodating force and cursing her bad fate for being created as a human being:

Hey you tiniest of stars above me. Whose star are you? Who knows where your master is. In which plain, in which meadow or mountain he is. Or maybe asleep in his warm bed, devoid of trouble or worries. Or maybe he is wide awake, deep in thousands of troubles, pain, wounds and scars, wriggling and moaning. I know, when he dies, you will fall off the sky... your heart is big, you are as cool as valleys, all creations find happiness in you, find shelter in you, trees stuck your bosom, waters carve you through, thunder finds you, all sorts of untold misfortunes befall on you, but all the same, be grateful that you are not man. (Kemal, 2004, p. 245, trans. mine)

Nature in Yaşar Kemal's *Ortadirek* is also a metaphorical touchstone in humans' character traits and the constitution are tested against. The hill, in the novel that the characters Ali, Meryemce, Elif and the children keep climbing is personified with adverse qualities that put obstacles in their toilsome journey towards Çukurova plains. Hence, nature and the ecological environment, as seen in Sabahattin Ali's *Kuyucaklı*, becomes another character in the story with human qualities and which enable the action to be dramatized and developed. The excerpt below clarifies this point:

Elif woke up first. ... She kept thinking. Thinking and watching the unfathomable hill. The face of the hill was crumbly. It had a purplish colour. It had green patches scattered around, turning into red and light blue. A path of thin line coiling around like a white line was going upwards, withering away in the blueness of the sky.

It was a dark purple in the dusk. Then the sun came out. Colours emerged. The hill sunk in the light.

There was no way but to stay there. Ali could never climb this hill with Meryemce on his back. Neither could Meryemce spare even one step. Maybe she was dead...

The bird with its wings, the snake with its back no matter what could not climb this hill. And when exhausted, nobody could climb it. She could not take her eyes off the hill. She stood just like that watching the hill. What to do? How to do? If only there was no hill, then all their misery and pain on the road would not have been in vain. Goddamn hill. Did you have to be there? Just when the road had finished and they were about to reach Çukurova...

She counted her fingers. Closed her eyes. Her arms dropped to her sides in great despair. She sat down on a rock nearabouts. The hill began to get lost in a haze. It grew. This hill can never be overtaken... (Kemal, 2004, p. 322-323, trans. mine)

As it is seen in the examples above, nature and the environment described so warmly and dramatically, are embedded in the novel not as an assortment or an element where the action takes place but as an active participant that comes to

life as the other characters. In Özdemir's words, "Yaşar Kemal is the mouthpiece of nature and the human heart" (2019, p. 14-15, trans. mine).

In the two novels discussed in this paper nature and the ecological environment are humanized and become the mental landscapes in which the human spirit is challenged, confronted, or finds solace and peace. Nature is in binding interaction with the humans in the novels and displays a connection between humans and itself. The contextualization of nature in the plots creates the mental landscapes of the characters as well. The characters exist, always and at all instances in these novels, so far as they interact with nature favorably or unfavorably. Thus, both *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* and *Ortadirek* manifest the strong argument of Turkish authors in their endeavor to reflect how they oppose the anthropocentric view which undermines nature's singularity and which relegates it to an inferior place in the context of man's superiority and wellbeing.

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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TEACHING/ STUDYING POSTCOLONIAL POETRY

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Abstract: *This article presents a discussion on teaching/studying postcolonial poetry in English as part of a course on modern and contemporary poetry in a foreign language literature classroom at university level. The argument in the article is based on ways and benefits of using an integrated approach that pays attention to, and puts emphasis on, fostering students' literary and language competence to meet their academic and occupational needs. The particular poems chosen to illustrate the argument are by Grace Nichols and John Agard, two contemporary immigrant poets from the Caribbean, whose work can be regarded as highly representative of the characteristic features and major concerns of much postcolonial poetry produced in Britain by poets from former colonies.*

Keywords: *Foreign language literature, an integrated approach, postcolonial poetry, Grace Nichols, John Agard*

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to discuss ways of teaching and studying postcolonial poetry in a course that Turkish students take as part of their undergraduate studies in the Department of English Language and Literature at Atılım University. The course in question is Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Poetry, and is one of the compulsory courses that fourth-year students take. The aim of the course is to make students acquainted with the major trends, movements and developments in modern British poetry, and to improve their ability to read and appreciate poetry. Modern poetry is characterized by diversity and plurality of voices, and poetry by immigrant poets from former colonies of Britain have become an important part of the literary landscape. This is, as R. P. Draper (1999) puts it, “the poetry of English-speaking – or perhaps one should say ‘Anglophone’ – writers who are embraced (sometimes reluctantly) within the UK, and of former members of the British Empire” (p. 9), and has become a significant field of study in twentieth-century poetry in English. It is within this particular framework that postcolonial poetry is studied in the course. Since the students are studying toward a degree in both English language and literature, the main objective of our program is to help them acquire both linguistic and literary competence that is essential in meeting their scholarly, academic and

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professional needs. Their professional needs following graduation will involve skills that they can only develop through their competence in the English language and literature. Most of them become teachers of English in schools and universities, some continue their academic studies and obtain positions as academics in English language and literature departments at universities, others work in the private and public sector, in jobs where they need to use advanced language skills. The program is, therefore, designed to foster a high level of language and literary competence that will enable students to understand how language creates meaning, to appreciate literature and its cultural significance, and to express their understanding and appreciation of literary, and also non-literary texts. As language skills are an inseparable part of literary competence, an approach that integrates them in the classroom is best suited to our goals.

A relevant and useful distinction, at this point, in relation to our poetry course is that we are focusing on these texts as literature, not as examples of language use. This is a distinction that refers to the way we describe and distinguish between the aims and content of ‘language’ courses and ‘literature’ courses, a distinction between the study of literature and the use of literary texts as resource for foreign language teaching/learning. As Gillian Lazar (1993) points out, the study of literature makes literary texts themselves the content or subject of the course, while the use of literature draws on literature as one source among many other kinds of texts for presenting useful language activities (pp. 13-14). However, language is an integral part of our literature classroom, and one of our main objectives is to have our students understand that it is through language that literary texts create their functional effects and construct their social and cultural meanings. As Ronald Carter and Paul Simpson (1989), who advocate using an approach that integrates literary and language study, state, “language is the literary medium, the more that students are able to understand and describe effects produced by language, the stronger the position they will be in when attempting to account systematically for their intuitions, and to build a base for a fuller interpretation of the text” (p. 18). Carter and Simpson (1989) also emphasize the benefits of using an integrated approach that pays attention to the “existence of an extra-textual world of social, political, psychological, or historical forces” (p. 17), in other words, the contextual properties of texts that affect the way they are interpreted, as well as the “ways in which texts create contexts” (p. 14). This is an approach that regards literature as social discourse, and as literary discourse analysis, seeks to “demonstrate the determining positions available within texts, and show how ‘meanings’ and ‘interpretations of meanings’ are always and inevitably discursively produced” (Carter and Simpson, 1989, p. 17).

In postcolonial poetry, where language itself, and the way it is used is made part of the theme and content as being a topic of contention and a means of stressing difference and identity, and functioning as a basis for responding to a particular

context and forming a social and personal challenge to the conditions of this context, such an integrated approach becomes crucial. In fact, what Carter and Simpson (1989) state about the function of language is highly relevant to the way postcolonial poets use language: “The language we use does not reflect; it refracts a world which we are in but which we can contest and change” (p. 17). Hence in this paper I argue that postcolonial poems present possibilities for integrated language and literature work that will contribute to increasing our students’ critical and analytical capacities and prove to be of pedagogical benefit. The particular poems chosen to illustrate the argument are by John Agard and Grace Nichols, two immigrant poets from the Caribbean, whose work can be regarded as highly representative of the characteristic features and major concerns of much postcolonial poetry. The poems are Agard’s (2006) “Listen Mr Oxford don” and Nichols’s (2012) “Wherever I Hang”.

2. Discussion

In terms of classroom practice, our goals are best served and the kind of integrated approach described above works to the utmost advantage if it is designed to suit the students’ skills and knowledge, and to meet their needs within the objectives of the course. In fact, as Ronald Carter (2007) stated in a relatively recent review of literature and language teaching, the field of literature study and teaching and its place in language education in both theory and practice has developed toward the view that “there is no single ‘correct’ way of analysing and interpreting the text, nor any single correct approach” (p. 10). The appropriate method is “very much a hands-on approach taking each text on its own merits, using what the reader knows, what the reader is aiming for in his or her learning context, and employing all of the available tools, both in terms of language knowledge and methodological approaches” (Carter, 2007, p. 10). This is a methodology which will hopefully encourage students, as Carter (2007) puts it, “to be active participants in and explorers of linguistic and cultural processes both with an awareness of and an interest in the process itself” (p. 10). In line with Carter’s (2007) observations, my guiding principle in this particular course is to take the poems to be studied in class on their “merits”, that is, to draw students’ attention to the properties and characteristic aspects of the poems that have a role in creating meaning, especially those that the poet has foregrounded; in other words, items, or, “determining positions”, by which the poet seems to have made a deliberate choice to create certain effects. To help students to become “active participants” and attentive readers, it is important to make sure that they are engaged with the poems directly, and one effective way of doing this is, doubtless, through class discussion. Discussion is a way of developing and expressing ideas about literature and its effects, it is also a very useful and active way of developing language skills. By the time our students take this fourth-year course, they are fairly confident of their linguistic and literary skills; however,

since they are non-native students of literature, I strongly believe that, in order to generate discussion, it is necessary to provide questions to draw attention to important aspects of the texts, so as to prevent them from making, what Christopher Brumfit (1986) described as “an inappropriate response through a misunderstanding of the codes being operated” (p. 185). One important point about these questions is the need to structure them in such a way so as to get students to support their ideas, arguments and comments with specific textual references to the poems themselves instead of general information and summaries of poems that they can readily access nowadays.

In order to examine the poems chosen to illustrate some of the main features of postcolonial poetry by immigrant poets, our students need information about the history of colonization and socio-cultural knowledge of the postcolonial Britain where these poets live and produce their work. From a class perspective, it is apparent that this body of information concerning the particular context from which these poets are writing, could be of use in the interpretation of their poems which very often contain references, implicit or explicit, to the historical context as a history and experience of colonization and decolonization, as well as to the social context of the present in terms of both the poets’ country of origin and their adopted country, Britain. Therefore, students need to be aware of the various and complex associations created by these references, and to learn about the cultural, socio-historical, political and literary contexts within which these poems are written, published and received. Their knowledge of the historical context will, to a great extent, determine the way they read and respond to the work of postcolonial poets. With postcolonial literature, awareness of this “extra-textual” world is even more significant because for Turkish students who are “outsiders” in that they can identify directly with neither the colonizer British or more widely, the west European, nor the people from former colonies, a knowledge of the postcolonial situation and its pressing issues is essential. This position, on the other hand, could turn out to be an advantage for our students since it can make them more willing to open themselves to what C. L. Innes (2007) argues to be a characteristic quality of postcolonial texts, namely, the “creative and ironic interplay between observer and observed, between insider and outsider” (p. 208).

Such an “openness” necessitates that students become familiar with terms and concepts such as black culture, immigration laws, racial prejudices, political riots and the use of Creole or nation language. One useful essay that students can be assigned to read before starting to study the poems is, Kamau (Edward) Brathwaite’s “Nation Language”, where Brathwaite (2012) presents a succinct account of the relationship between the history and practice of colonization and language, and discusses the validity and function of using nation language, a term he uses to refer specifically to the West Indian creole English “influenced

very strongly by the African model, the African aspect of [the] New World/Caribbean heritage” (p. 2732). Students also need to be informed about the mass postcolonial migrations to Britain after the Second World War. As Jahan Ramazani (2007) writes, poetry has been one of the means by which immigrants have told their history since 21 June, 1948, when the arrival of 492 West Indians at Tilbury Docks, near London, began large-scale immigration by peoples of African, and later Asian descent into Britain. By 1970, nearly half a million West Indians had come to Britain (p. 201). By the 1970s and 1980s, after British politicians had, in the words of Ramazani (2007), “fomented white racism” (p. 208), and after black Britons had been inspired by decolonisation and the civil rights movement, poets of African descent in England started to reimagine the colonial metropolis more assertively (Ramazani, 2007, p. 208). John Agard (2006) and Grace Nichols (2012) are doing this act of reimagining assertively in their poems. They are two of the “diasporic and black British poets with African-Caribbean and African backgrounds, who have played a crucial role in the early and sustained blackening of British poetry” (Ramazani, 2007, p. 201), black British poets whose poems gave voice to the Caribbean people within the English literary tradition. As Innes (2007) remarks, “for many of these poets who came to Britain, there was also a sense of adventure and glamour in the possibility of living in England, and becoming acquainted with the scenes and the culture which had formed the substance of their education” (p. 178). Thus, it can be said that this English literary tradition is part of a “shared culture” (Innes, 2007, p. 178) between the colonizer and the colonized, and as such, a tradition with which the immigrant poet from the Caribbean is also familiar. However, at the same time, the immigrant poets’ relation to the British culture is a complex one, fraught with social, political and personal issues such as citizenship, nationality, race, racial prejudice and racial discrimination, all of which are closely bound up with the notion and sense of identity. In much postcolonial poetry, especially that of immigrant poets, identity is a central issue and concern and these poems very often portray characters who express this concern. In other words, “Anglophone” poetry can be defined as “the re-shaping of poetry to express a new conception of identity, or with the purpose of trying to create that identity” (Draper, 1999, p. 9). This “created” identity is not only personal; it acquires symbolic significance in its capacity to represent the community of black immigrants as well. According to Innes (2007), immigrant poets from the Caribbean, like Agard and Nichols, created and reinforced a sense of communal identity and their work “both celebrated and authenticated the presence of Caribbean-inflected voices, and hence, bodies, in Britain” (Innes, 2007, p. 184). “Listen Mr Oxford don” and “Wherever I Hang” have London as their setting; yet they are also, as Ramazani (2007) points out, “‘translocal’, in that they see the metropolis afresh through the lenses of non-metropolitan history, language and power, and shuttle across and unsettle imperial hierarchies” (p. 202).

Ramazani's (2007) description of the work of immigrant poets as a "poetry of geographic and cultural displacement" (p. 200) is valid for both poems.

As a first step to class work, it is of great importance to identify the "determining positions" available within the poems, that can form a starting point for productive class work and discussion. In the selected poems, it is mainly by means of the speakers' construction of their self-image and position that the overall effects are achieved. Both poems feature a single, first-person speaker. Both poems progress discursively, and move toward a state of self-affirmation. In other words, both poems construct a poetic persona, or, a self, whose words reveal a dramatization of what he or she is experiencing in a particular place and at a particular historical moment. Therefore, it is important for students to pay attention to these characters and the way they are presented. This will involve examining the linguistic processes employed in their construction. In the two poems chosen to be studied in class, since the first-person speakers determine the conditions and terms of the poems' discourse, it is of great importance to examine them. In both poems, the speakers are deliberately made visible by what they say and how, which indicates that any interpretation of the poems needs to take into consideration their active presence. In other words, the foregrounding of this particular feature is deliberate, and as such, a central element in the creation of the effects and meaning(s) produced by the poems. Linguistic variation between standard and non-standard forms of English in the speakers' discourse is a common characteristic of these poems, and students would probably notice it at their first reading. They need to respond to this variation in style for it is an important element in the construction and dramatization of the speaker's identity. In both poems, linguistic variation usually occurs in the form of deviation from expected usage, and the use of Creole English together with standard English creates a text that linguistically corresponds to the indeterminacy that characterises the position of the postcolonial subject. In studying postcolonial poetry, these linguistic deviations can, I believe, provide the teacher with a starting point in motivating students to examine the text closely. One way of initiating this activity is to ask them to reflect on the effects produced by the poets' suspension and disruption of certain rules of grammar. Both Agard and Nichols make use of Creole words and syntactical patterns to construct what can be described as a linguistic resistance and challenge that is, at the same time, politically significant. They are skilful poets and they break the rules deliberately and consciously for "the attack on the empire's literary, grammatical and orthographic norms is central to black British poetry's effort to reconfigure the politics of race in 1970s and 1980s Britain" (Ramazani, 2007, p. 208). I would like to add here that while studying postcolonial poems in the classroom, especially poems like Agard's and Nichols's that engage with notions of language, reading aloud and listening to recorded readings of the poems can help students to come to a realization of the oral properties of the

poems, and the use and function of Creole in creating the speaking voice. In terms of class work, this realization could lead to a consideration of how the poets' use of Creole along with standard English creates possibilities for rhythm and rhyme that can have a great impact on the way readers "hear" the speaking voice. Since Agard's (2006) "Listen Mr Oxford don" was first published in 1985, earlier than Nichols's poem which was published in 1989, it is a good idea to start by examining it before moving on to "Wherever I Hang".

Following are suggestions for points to be emphasized in order to elicit comments and to develop a productive discussion on the poems in the classroom:

"Listen Mr Oxford don" is designed to present an imagined situation in which an immigrant speaker encounters and addresses an Oxford don. The class discussion can initially focus on what assumptions it is possible to make about the speaker and the don within this imagined encounter. The speaker is the 'me' and 'I' of the poem. The addressee of the title, "Mr Oxford don" is a source of authority over linguistic and cultural conventions. The speaker is, as his descriptions of his activity reveal, a poet; "the Oxford don" and "dem" in the poem represent the ruling class, the administrators; and the poem shows that there is a struggle between the "I", and the "Oxford don" and "dem". The analysis of the patterns of interaction between the speaker and the silent "Oxford don" is of crucial importance in the interpretation of the poem for it is within this interaction that the speaker's identity, position and attitude are formed. At the beginning of the poem the speaker positions himself as different and inferior to the don:

Me not no Oxford don
me a simple immigrant
from Clapham Common
I didn't graduate
I immigrate (Agard, 2006, p. 2542)

Yet this positioning is changed immediately in the second verse where a context of conflict is introduced:

But listen Mr Oxford don
I'm a man on the run
and a man on the run
is a dangerous one (Agard, 2006, p. 2542)

The don's power is challenged by the use of "But" and the imperative form "listen", and also by the speaker's declaration of himself as "dangerous". The third and fourth verses begin to clarify the terms of the speaker's challenge:

I ent have no gun
I ent have no knife

but mugging the Queen's English
is the story of my life (Agard, 2006, p. 2542)

The speaker's challenge is rendered more effective through the intensity and urgency of the speaking voice. The identity of the speaker and the force of his speaking voice provide excellent opportunities for classwork. How is the speaker's identity constructed and revealed? What stylistic choices are involved in the dramatization of the terms of his challenge to the don? Questions such as these can be expected to motivate students to engage with the poem closely. They can be asked to point out the instances of non-standard English in the poem, and to comment on the function of these deviations from the norm. Their attention can be drawn to rhetorical devices such as the frequent use of the enjambment, the use of imperatives, the elliptical phrases and repetitions. Another striking feature of the poem, which students are likely to notice, is the absence of punctuation. Once students have become aware of this, they can be asked to concentrate on it in terms of its contribution to the effect of representing "spoken" language.

The immigrant is someone, as the poem shows, who breaks rules of English grammar and syntax. He portrays himself as a criminal but his crime is not physical violence since he does not have a "gun" or a "knife". He reveals himself to be a "mugger", somebody who attacks with the intention of robbery; however, it is the linguistic norms that he attacks. What enables him to perform this act of "mugging" is ironically indicated by the Oxford dictionary on which, he says in the sixth stanza, "Dem accuse me of assault" (Agard, 2006, p. 2542). Another meaning of the verb "to mug" apart from "to attack" is given in the Oxford Dictionary as to "become familiar with sth on which one is to be tested" (Hornby, 1974, p. 564). In other words, it is the immigrant speaker's study and familiarity with the standard English that makes him a "mugger". In the entire poem, words such as "gun", "knife", "assault", "riot", "dangerous" and "mugging" are used to suggest the prejudiced notion of the black man as a criminal, and at the same time to subvert this notion by demonstrating that his criminality consists of disrupting the accepted linguistic patterns of the Queen's English to construct a poetic discourse that asserts his identity as a black poet. The lines "to split/up yu syntax", "to mash/ up yu grammar" (Agard, 2006, p. 2542), and "I slashing suffix in self-defence" (Agard, 2006, p. 2543) in the poem can be taken as evidence of his mastery of the English syntax, grammar and suffixes.

For the students, specific background information is necessary to understand the nature of Agard's protest and skill as a poet. As Fred d'Aguiar (1993), himself a postcolonial writer and poet, writes, the year 1981 saw the first of the big riots, centred around the black communities, that would characterise the early to mid-eighties. In January 1981 the New Cross Massacre took place,

and thirteen black youths died by fire under suspicious circumstances. March saw the biggest demonstration held by black people in Britain. A generation of British-born blacks who had come of age realized with dismay that Britishness did not include them. They could not find jobs and were discriminated against at school. There was also an increase in racist violence. This bleak situation led artists and poets to find ways of expressing their protest through their art. Therefore, in D'Aguiar's (1993) opinion, the riots by black people cannot be viewed simply as destructiveness by mindless young people but need to be seen as a form of protest (D'Aguiar, 1993, p. 58-59). Agard's reference to these riots in his "dem want me serve time / for inciting rhyme to riot" (2006, p. 2542) acquires importance as a metaphor that subverts the meaning and implications of the word "riot" within this particular context of a crisis in British politics of race. As Draper (1999) comments, "the question of victimisation is of importance to the Anglophone West Indian writer" (p. 204), "for the black poet (male or female) racial prejudice is an inescapable context" (p. 213). Agard's speaker is apparently someone facing racial prejudice; someone regarded as an outsider and a criminal. It should be noted here that the speaker is actually creating end rhymes as the above lines are followed by "but I tekking it quiet / down here in Clapham Common" (Agard, 2006, p. 2542), for the words "riot" and "quiet" are end rhymes. Thus, rhyme is made to "riot", yet it is only by the act of "inciting riot" that rhyme, a frequent feature of the art of poetry, is achieved. This example will enable students to agree with D'Aguiar's comment that "perhaps the don would give him full marks for his use of metaphor" (1993, p. 62), a comment stressing the speaker's skill as a poet in using figurative language to convey meaning.

The 'I' is challenging and defying the don in an aggressive manner, but also complaining to him and forcing him to pay attention to the unjust accusations by the authorities who are represented in the poem by "dem". In that sense, it can be said that the speaker's address is an appeal, as well as a defiance; an appeal to be heard and understood as a human being, that forms a part of the challenge presented by the immigrant speaker to the powerful Oxford don. Kamau Brathwaite's (2012) description of "nation language" as being "an English which is like a howl, or a shout" (2733) points to the function of using Creole in representing the cry of a person in pain. It is a long and painful cry of resentment and defiance, also a cry of pain that Agard, through his poet-speaker's voice, is able to articulate in the form of a poem forcing all his readers as well as the Oxford don to pay attention. To do that he is presenting the Oxford don's English as the official language of the ruler, the colonizer, of the written and formal culture, against which he places the informal language of the colonized people, the language of a culture that belongs, to a great extent, within an oral tradition that depends for its effects on the power of the "human breath" as the speaker states with confidence towards the end of the poem:

I'm not a violent man Mr Oxford don
 I only armed wit mih human breath
 but human breath
 is a dangerous weapon (Agard, 2006, p. 2543)

The expression “human breath” refers to the power of the spoken word to effect political and cultural change by challenging the hegemony of the present authority, and serves to imply that he is going to continue to speak up. It would be useful here to examine how the speaker refers to the future, particularly when he explicitly declares at the very end, “I bashin future wit present tense / and if necessary / I making the Queen’s English accessory/to my offence” (Agard, 2006, p. 2543). At this stage, referring students to Brathwaite’s statement in “Nation Language” that it is, after all, “not language, but people, who make revolutions” (2012, p. 2733) could very well lead to a debate on the question of human agency and the role of language as an agent in bringing about change.

To wrap up the discussion, it is worth emphasizing that by means of his skill to fashion a poem, making use of a number of poetic devices such as stanzas, lines, rhythm and rhyme, while at the same time disrupting the rules of standard English through his use of Creole, the speaker is showing that Creole is suitable for poetry and can be employed creatively to produce poetry that expresses urgent issues of public and personal significance in British culture. He is asserting his presence and his being culturally at home, because it is a shared literary tradition that he is drawing upon. His ability to devise an attack on language depends on his knowledge of the linguistic order of that language, which is a sign of his complex relation to British culture and the Queen’s English, and the reason for his demand to be recognized as a human being in this culture.

“Wherever I Hang” differs from “Listen Mr Oxford don” in the absence of an identifiable addressee whom the speaker imagines to be encountering. Another difference lies in the nature of the conflict dramatized by the speaker. Nichols’s (2012) poem is in the form of a soliloquy, portraying a speaker who, through her presence, voice and memory, is able to present and explore her personal thoughts and feelings on various aspects of her experiences as an immigrant postcolonial subject in postcolonial Britain, specifically in London. The conflict is mainly within herself. It is an internal debate, rather than an address that poses an explicit challenge to authority as in Agard’s (2006). Memory becomes part of the identity of Nichols’s speaker as her past and present interact. Memories of the past and awareness of the present signified by the changing scenes from the Caribbean, her former home, and England, her new country, come to stand for the speaker’s sense of being torn between her old and new selves. This feeling of in-betweenness is an important element in the poem, that can be developed in class towards a sound interpretation. Specific questions would assist students in their analysis: How does the poem suggest a feeling of in-betweenness? What

are some of the signs of Britishness in the poem? How does the style of the poem contribute to the way this feeling is created? Why and how does the speaker refer to English social customs and habits? In what way are these customs and habits different from the speaker's former ways? How can we describe her reaction to these signs of Britishness? Does she feel nostalgic, lost, alienated, or confused? Could she be experiencing all of these feelings? Can she find a solution to her dilemma?

At the beginning of the poem the speaker recalls how she left her home and came to live in England:

I leave me people, me land, me home
For reasons, I not too sure
I forsake de sun
And de humming-bird splendour
Had big rats in de floorboard
So I pick up me new-world-self
And come, to this place call England (Nichols, 2012, p. 2752)

Students would certainly notice in the above-cited lines the deviations from linguistic norms such as “me”, “I not too sure”, “de” and “this place call England”. They would be prepared to discuss the implications of this feature of style in the way the speaker's identity is constructed. Her reference to “me new-world-self” designates a “me old-world-self”. The style attests to the fact that the old self is part of the speaker's identity. It can be useful at this point to ask students to read Nichols's “Epilogue”, a very short poem that she placed at the end of her collection *The Fat Black Woman's Poems* published in 1984. “Epilogue” expresses the black woman's new identity in terms of her new language: “I have crossed an ocean / I have lost my tongue”, yet “from the root of the old one / a new one has sprung” (2012, p. 2751).

In “Wherever I Hang”, as the speaker's memories of her former home are juxtaposed with images of her present place of living, where she cannot feel truly at home, her sense of self and being in-between, continue to be indicated by the shifts of language between Creole and standard English, the language of the colonizer, which she shows herself to be perfectly capable of using. As in the poem by Agard (2006), Nichols's (2012) switches between Creole and standard English manifest the presence of a tension, experienced by the speaker, between the Caribbean and the British, in other words, between her old-world and new-world selves. She is very much aware of a physical environment which is greatly different to her native country. She is also aware of her history as a member of a colonized country. The lines “And when I look up to de sky / I see Lord Nelson high – too high to lie” (Nichols, 2012, p.2752) place the statue of the British Admiral Nelson who spent time in the Caribbean, as a representative figure of British imperial and colonial power, to evoke the history of colonization. As the

poem progresses, the speaker shows herself as adopting the ways of her new country:

And is so, little by little
I begin to change my calypso ways
Never visiting nobody
Before giving them clear warning
And waiting me turn in queue (Nichols, 2012, p. 2754)

She says she gives up her calypso ways, gets used to behaving the way the English people do. When considered from the perspective of the connotations of the word calypso, that is to say, its reference to Caribbean traditions and to “calypso’s carnivalesque inversion of power structures” (Ramazani, 2007, p. 205), this statement can imply an acceptance on the part of the speaker. Yet it is a stoic acceptance, complicated by the speaker’s declarations towards the end of the poem:

But I still miss back-home side
To tell you de truth
I don’t know really where I belong

Yes, divided to de ocean
Divided to de bone

Wherever I hang me knickers – that’s my home (Nichols, 2012, p. 2754)

The double spaces that position the lines “Yes, divided to de ocean / Divided to de bone” as separate from the ones coming before and after draw attention to themselves as stylistic devices that enact pauses in the speaker’s reflections. The word “yes” confirms, within her inner debate, her sense of divided and conflicting loyalties after she has “confessed” that she is still missing her home in the Caribbean. Her final declaration at the end of the poem, after another pause, becomes a means of coping with the challenges and difficulties of her “new- world-self” in the new world; it can be regarded as a means of survival, if not here somewhere else, wherever she hangs her knickers. Students should be alerted to the significance of the clause “wherever I hang my knickers” as providing a particular condition which is a prerequisite, something indispensable, if the speaker is going to make England her home. It is important to get them to see the function of “wherever”, an adverb that refers to any place, not to a specific one. When the speaker’s immigrant status is considered, this adverb acquires further significance as hinting at the possibility of moving or immigrating to another place, which is a sign of instability and uncertainty. The final declarative sentence “that’s my home” thus affirms the speaker’s determination to find a home, a centre of permanence, within the instability that “wherever” emphasizes. The speaker’s use of the demonstrative pronoun “that” is an element of style that renders the declaration so emphatic. The statement

“Wherever I hang my knickers - that’s my home” is, at the same time, unexpected and ironic. The act of hanging her knickers is a trivial one connected with domestic chores, and hence contrasts with the image of the speaker as someone preoccupied with reflections upon important issues such as identity and divided loyalties. From this perspective, the act of doing her laundry provides a sense of humour that can be regarded as a strategy for, in the words of Ramazani (2007), “creolising the heart of the empire” (p. 209). Humour can prevent the speaker from becoming overwhelmed by her reflections. Another equally valid way of looking at the effect produced by this particular act could be to see it as part of the challenge the speaker presents as a black female immigrant. The item she hangs is a very personal and intimate piece of clothing which gains symbolic significance in relation to the female body and its freedom to assert itself. She is making a declaration, declaring her determination to make a home for herself. The fact that she makes this declaration by switching to standard English, specifically from “me” to “my”, can be regarded as an association of this “home” with not “anywhere” but England, at least for as long as she can “hang [her] knickers”. At the end of the poem, by switching to “my”, the speaker adopts the linguistic formula that is suitable for her “new-world-self”; in other words, the self that has come to live in England. Nichols is here making use of the conventional notions of the word home as a place that provides security, protection and privacy, and subverting the notion of home in the very English and well-known saying “an Englishman’s home is his castle” to refer to the Caribbean immigrant woman’s home where she can hang her underwear. This last image thus serves to emphasize the difference between the playful Caribbean woman and the reserved and disciplined English people, or, more specifically, the English men. The issue of race and nationality intersects with the issue of gender, adding another dimension to the speaker’s reflections on her identity and position. Students might be encouraged to discuss how and why the speaker expresses her engagement with this issue of gender in her argument. The last line of the poem, “Wherever I hang me knickers – that’s my home” is, in fact, two lines brought together by means of indentation, to enact and to reinforce the mental process of thinking and coming to the final decision that she will have her home wherever she can assert her identity, in spite of the sense of dividedness she feels and has already recorded. The poem ends as a personal and moving account of a person’s efforts to make for herself a new home in a new country to which she feels related in a number of complicated and troubling ways.

3. Conclusion

At the end of our study of the selected poems, within the overall aims of the course, it is expected that students will have an informed idea of how poems can become sites of social and cultural transformation, of anxieties and tensions,

where matters of deep significance and urgency can be articulated and explored. They will have an understanding of postcolonial poetry as offering, in the words of Draper (1999), “sharply particularized, idiosyncratic styles which, though they may create difficulties (linguistic and otherwise) for outside readers, have unique energy and expressiveness” (p. 163). They will be able to appreciate that poetry has been a powerful resource through which immigrant black poets, as literary artists and non-English speakers of English, have expressed their identity and their place in modern British culture in ways that have contributed greatly to the richness of modern poetry in English. Furthermore, students’ appreciation of these poems will, hopefully, help them in their reading and study of other poems by postcolonial poets, and motivate them to further reading and study.

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STRENGTHENING TEACHER IDENTITY AND PROFESSIONALISM AS A WAY TO INCREASE THE APPEAL AND STATUS OF TEACHING PROFESSION

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Abstract: *Improving the status of the teaching profession is seen as an important prerequisite for increasing its appeal for both practicing teachers and university graduates who have obtained a teaching qualification. This state-of-the-art review looks into recent research in the field of creating and maintaining teacher identity and a sense of belonging to the profession of teaching in general, and foreign language teaching in particular. It provides a commentary on a number of issues related to the role of identity in conceptualising professionalism in the field of language teaching. Current research views teacher identity as a multifaceted, dynamic, and context-bound phenomenon, which is closely related to defining and negotiating one's self, and managing the affective domain. Different interpretations of professionalism are discussed, starting from the externally imposed form, sponsored and delineated by policy-makers, to its independent variety, stemming from individual teachers' views and reflections on their own beliefs and actions. Sponsored professionalism is linked to the recent call for measurable accountability in education worldwide and in Bulgarian higher education.*

Key words: *teacher identity, professionalism, foreign language teaching*

1. Introduction

Recent research on teachers' job satisfaction and general well-being shows a special interest in the concept of identity as a critical component in the sociocultural and sociopolitical landscape of the L2 classroom and in L2 teachers' professional development (Burns & Richards, 2009; Johnson, 2003; Singh & Richards, 2006; Varghese, 2006; Tsui, 2007). In general, teacher identity is viewed as relational, discursively constructed and context bound, and formed in the process of enacting one's role (Burns & Richards, 2009; Tsui, 2007). However, despite the significance of identity and its nature and development, it remains a widely disputed topic, and "researchers are still in the early stages of understanding how teacher identities are formed, the factors that influence changes of identities, and the role these identities play in students' and teachers' motivation and learning" (Schultz, Hong & Francis, 2018, p. 3).

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Closely linked to and dependent on the concept of identity, the notion of professionalism is of primary importance in the current educational climate of accountability, managerialism, and demand for quality teaching. Helsby (1999) links professionalism to having personal and behavioural characteristics of dedication, commitment and highly skilled practice, qualities which are part of one's personal identity as well. Therefore, modern teacher education should aim at strengthening teacher identity, an integral part of teacher professionalism, as a way of increasing the status of teaching and its appeal to prospective teachers.

2. Defining teacher identity

The concept of teacher identity first emerged as a separate research area in 1970s within the more general prototype of 'educator' (Beijaard et al., 2004). Bucholtz & Hall (2005) define identity as the way in which one sees his/ her role as a teacher as being important, attractive and in harmony with the other roles the person has, while Chong et al. (2011) view it as an individual's set of internalized expectancies regarding one's professional role.

Summarising current research, Rus et al. (2012) state that research history in the area shows a variety of meanings, and an absence of widely accepted definition, much in line with Beijaard et al. (2004, p. 108), who argue that identity is not "a fixed attribute of a person, but a relational phenomenon". Schultz, Hong & Francis (2018, p. 4) also point out that the field of identity research has been growing "without adequately addressing differences and similarities among diverse approaches, discerning strengths and weaknesses, and evaluating effectiveness, applicability, and the value of various frameworks".

Research on identity requires a multi-disciplinary approach which employs diverse research paradigms and methodologies, such as Philosophy and Psychology of Education, Teacher Education, Multicultural Education, Cultural Studies, Psychoanalysis, Phenomenology, Post-structuralism, Post-positivism, Race theories and Gender studies. Researchers can make use of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods tools so as to reveal the multifaceted nature and complexity of the studied phenomenon.

3. Identity as belonging

According to Wenger's social theory of identity, identities are formed as a result of the "tension between our investment in the various forms of belonging, and our ability to negotiate the meanings that matter in those contexts" (Wenger, 1998, p. 188). Wenger differentiates between three modes of belonging as sources of identification: engagement, imagination, and alignment. Engagement involves investing ourselves in what we do, as well as in our relations with other members of the community, which gives us a sense of who we are. Imagination

is the process of relating ourselves to the world beyond the community of practice in which we are engaged and seeing our experience as located in the broader context. Alignment is a process in which participants in a community become connected by bringing their actions and practices in line with a broader enterprise, e.g. the identity of an institution becomes the identity of its participants. According to Wenger, alignment which is achieved purely through coercion and oppression might lead to dissociation and alienation. This means that the community's core practice can shape teachers' identities, and teachers can develop different identities in different schools depending on the extent to which opportunities are provided to them to participate in core activities (Tsui & Edwards, 2009).

Identity has been described as the factor which influences teachers' behaviour at work, their general well-being and work effectiveness (Abednia, 2012; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Recent studies have focused on the link between teachers' identity and their status as native or non-native speakers of the language they teach, with results pointing towards the fact that non-native speakers' identity might be characterised by conflict and struggle (Varghese et al., 2005). These conflicts can either lead to new forms of engagement and new relations with the community members, or they could lead to identities of marginality, disengagement, and nonparticipation (Tsui, 2007). In a similar vein, Day (2018) conceptualises the constraints of policies on teacher identity, which he sees as a blend of the personal and professional selves, emerging during transactions among workplace structures and cultures.

4. Identity as a personal investment

The findings of case studies of teacher trainees, conducted and described by Calderhead and Shorrock (1997, p. 200) show that being a teacher and performing one's duties involves "a personal investment, a feeling of being at ease in the role of a teacher, an acceptance of teaching as being part of one's identity, being able to reconcile one's own values with those of the institution and the colleagues with whom one works". This is what researchers call 'agency' and describe as a key basic psychological need for an active pursuit of one's goals, and the self-efficacy to achieve those goals (see Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Huta & Deci, 2008). Agency involves managing one's learning and development actively and intentionally. Schultz, Hong and Francis (2018, p. 245) similarly define it as a "key construct in teachers' pathways to authoring their professional identities".

5. Professional identity through culturally imbedded roles

Teacher's professional identity is closely linked to developing relationships with students and fellow-teachers, establishing a rapport with others involved in the

education process, and contributing to its success through one's own personal efforts and qualities. Professional identity affects the roles teachers perform as experts in their subject; as facilitators of students' learning; as motivators and sources of inspiration for other teachers and students. These roles and the ways they are perceived by society are culturally embedded and differ depending on a variety of factors, such as the type of school management system in the country, and the degree of responsibility and freedom teachers have. What is more, professional identity is a continuous process of interpretation and reinterpretation prompted by professional experiences and contextual factors (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), whose dominance might change over time. There are both core and peripheral features comprising identity, which can assume different significance depending on a number of contextual factors. Rus et al. (2012), for example, studied these features in a survey with 80 Romanian teachers tracing short and long-term changes in their identity depending on the context variables and the length of teachers' professional experience.

6. Current areas of research on identity

Currently, the general topic of teacher identity is subdivided into several areas of research interest: defining and re-defining the scope and nature of identity; tracing its formation and development, and looking for context and culture-specific manifestations of identity. In addition, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) emphasised the place of the self in the concept of identity, and the role of emotion, personal narrative, and reflection on experience. The process of defining and negotiating one's self is seen as crucial in developing teacher identity (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018). Researchers also aim to trace the key processes involved in identity development, such as agency, resilience, efficacy, attributions, and the need for vulnerability (Schultz, Hong & Francis, 2018, p. 4). They believe that teacher identity is strengthened and reinforced by overcoming challenges and conflicts in enacting authority while experiencing vulnerability (Alsup, 2018). Another prism, through which researchers view identity, is its close link and dependence on the affective domain, and more specifically, handling emotions. The way teachers reflect on and describe emotions is thought to be related to critical events in their practice, which might serve as identity-generating pathways (Schutz, Nichols & Schwenke, 2018).

A large number of current studies trace the formation of teacher identity in the process of teacher education and training, when trainees encounter theories and ideas which either support or contradict existing views and expectations based on their own experience as students. Identity formation is also seen as a result of interactions between trainees and their mentors and supervisors in the process of their professional preparation (Isadinia, 2018; van Rijswijk et al., 2018). As Velikova (2019, p. 15) points out, "a major concern in initial teacher education

today is how to support student teachers during their identity transition from students being taught to teachers who teach students”. Discussing identity formation in the context of teacher training, Velikova (ibid, p. 32) argues for a ‘pedagogy of becoming’, which draws on candidate “teachers’ views of education and of themselves as a foundation of meaning-making and professional learning”.

Furthermore, it is important to trace the processes of integration into the professional communities of practice (Pennington & Richards, 2016) which support teachers’ further development and professional growth. Collaboration is an essential part of teacher development as it empowers teachers to generate knowledge and understanding together, thus helping them develop collegiality and sense of belonging. As Ivanova (2017, p. 45) points out, “it conceptualises teacher development as necessarily social and advocates investing in collegial relationships to enhance teachers’ capacity building”.

Another perspective on studying identity and its repercussions in the context of education is presented in research which focuses on the intersection of identity, race and gender (Jackson, 2018; Journell, 2018), and identity and politics (Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018). While these aspects of identity are thoroughly researched in Bulgarian media discourse in comparison with the British (see Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva, 2018; Todorova & Todorov, 2015), such issues remain underresearched in the Bulgarian educational context. An attempt to bridge this gap is the inclusion in the teaching curriculum of courses which raise future teachers’ awareness of the close links between identity and ethnicity (Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva, 2013).

All these seemingly diverse views on teacher identity are nevertheless united by an overarching holistic approach, which emphasises individual meaning making and self-bound conceptualisation of identity. This approach allows us to view identity as multifaceted and dynamic, and it is these two features that can be used to outline and summarise the current situation in the field of teacher identity research.

7. The nature of professionalism

There is no single definition of professionalism, and it is difficult to discuss it in isolation from a specific context (see Fox, 1992; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). The conceptualisation of professionalism is in a state of constant flux, and as Helsby (1999, p. 93) points out, “it is constantly changing and constantly being redefined in different ways and at different times to serve different interests”. In an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of a strict definition, Troman (1996, p. 476) describes professionalism as “a socially constructed, contextually variable and contested concept defined by management and expressed in its expectations

of workers and the stipulation of tasks they will perform”. In its most general interpretation, the concept of professionalism refers to practitioners’ knowledge, skills, and conduct.

Professionalism, as a collective notion, is sometimes differentiated from professionalism (Evans, 2002, 2008; Hoyle, 1975), which is defined as “an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice” (Evans, 2002, p. 6). Frequently, professionalism is interpreted as relating to quality, in the sense of “enhancement of the quality of service rather than enhancement of status” (Hoyle, 2001, p. 148). This conceptualisation, sometimes referred to as ‘new professionalism’ is linked to a focus on practitioner control and proactivity, mainly in terms of professional development initiative.

Ur (2002, p. 389) links professionalism to “preparing oneself to do a competent job through learning which continues throughout the professional’s working life”. She draws attention to the professional’s responsibility in trying out new things not because they are fashionable or fun, but because they are confident that they will benefit students’ learning. In doing so, the teacher as a professional brings about real-world change. Another interpretation links professionalism to professional culture, defined as “a configuration of beliefs, practices, relationships, language and symbols distinctive to a particular social unit” (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005, p. 103).

8. Sponsored and independent professionalism

There are two opposing interpretations of professionalism: externally imposed, sponsored and delineated by policy-makers in the respective field, on the one hand, and independent professionalism, stemming from individual teachers’ views and reflections on their own beliefs and action, on the other (see Leung, 2009). The so-called ‘sponsored’ professionalism is linked to the recent call for measurable accountability in public service, including education.

Market forces and competition internationally lead to a curtailment of professional autonomy, and a reduction of independent professional decision making outside the prescribed criteria. In this context, a successful professional is someone “who works efficiently and effectively in meeting the standardised criteria set for the accomplishment of both students and teachers, as well as contributing to the school’s formal accountability processes” (Sachs, 1999, p. 3).

Criteria for professionalism differ worldwide, depending on the governmental or local policies. Thus, in the United States individual states have different frameworks for qualifying English language teachers who work in the publicly

funded school systems, whereas in England, since the early 1990s, the education authorities have provided no public funding for full-time initial schoolteacher preparation for English Language teachers (see Leung, 2009).

9. Professionalism in the field of English language teaching

In the modern globalised world, sponsored professionalism in the field of English language teaching is closely bound with the status of English as a language of science, trade and a means of communication. There are a number of issues in ELT related to its status as a lingua franca, such as changed perspectives on learners' needs, communication skills and literacies. The reconceptualisation of the role of native speaker norms, and the recent developments in the field of digital literacies have also had their impact on the idea of professionalism. These changes also necessitate constant engagement of policy makers and teachers with the emerging social, political, and technological realities.

In addition to belonging to a community which shares common professional culture, teachers engage with the established norms of professionalism on a personal level as well. This happens through critical reflective examination of the 'sponsored' models, regulatory requirements and their associated values, and questioning their educational, pedagogic, and social validity. In this way, teachers develop "a sense of independent professionalism" (Leung, 2009), and become more open to alternative perspectives on routinised practice, which are compatible with their developing views. However, both sponsored and independent professionalism remain a hypothetical concept unless they are implemented in teachers' everyday practice.

In the field of foreign language teaching Richards (2011) defines competence and professionalism in terms of 10 qualities or characteristics of exemplary language teachers. These characteristics involve:

1. A threshold language proficiency level, i.e. language-specific competencies, defined as "the ability to provide good language models, to maintain use of the target language in the classroom, to give correct feedback on learner language, and to provide input at an appropriate level of difficulty" (Richards, 2011, p. 3);
2. Content knowledge, consisting of disciplinary knowledge (e.g. history of language teaching methods, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, phonology and syntax, discourse analysis, theories of language, critical applied linguistics, etc.), and pedagogical content knowledge (e.g. study of language teaching and language learning), including curriculum planning, assessment, reflective teaching, classroom management, teaching children, teaching the four skills, and so on);

3. Teaching skills, such as a repertoire of techniques and routines, including routines and procedures for such things as opening the lesson, introducing and explaining tasks, setting up learning arrangements, checking students' understanding, guiding student practice, making transitions from one task to another, and ending the lesson. Skills also involve: engaging in sophisticated processes of observation, reflection, assessment, and making on-line decisions;
4. Contextual knowledge, related to understanding the dynamics and relationships within the classroom and the rules and behaviours specific to a particular setting, as well as socialisation into a school professional culture with its own goals, shared values, and norms of conduct;
5. Language teacher's identity, or the differing social and cultural roles teacher-learners enact through their interactions with their students during the process of learning (Miller, 2009);
6. Learner-focussed teaching, meaning that the input from learners defines the shape and direction of the lesson, the quantity of student participation and interaction that occurs, the ability of the teacher to present subject matter from a learners perspective, so that it reflects learners' needs and preferences;
7. Pedagogical reasoning skills, i.e. the special skills that enable English teachers to analyse potential lesson content and identify ways in which it could be used as a teaching resource; to identify specific linguistic goals that could be developed from the chosen content; to anticipate any problems that might occur, and the ways of resolving them, to make appropriate decisions about time, sequencing, and grouping arrangements;
8. Theorising from practice, i.e. the development of a personal system of knowledge, beliefs and understandings drawn from the practical experience of teaching;
9. Membership of a community of practice, which provides opportunities for teachers to work and learn together through participation in group-oriented activities with shared goals and responsibilities, involving joint problem solving;
10. Professionalism, where membership is based on entry requirements and standards, and which has two dimensions – institutionally prescribed professionalism, and independent professionalism.

Burns and Richards (2009, p. 3) claim that "there is a much higher level of professionalism in ELT today than existed previously". This can be seen in the fact that ELT as a career requires a specialised knowledge base obtained through both academic study and practical experience. Moreover, the career status is based on entry requirements and performance standards.

10. Professionalism and teacher certification

The trend toward professionalisation of teaching has raised the importance of certification as a guarantee that an individual meets the minimum standards of competence in a profession. Certification as a legal proof that someone is qualified to exercise a profession is closely linked to meeting professional standards in a given area. Among the variety of ELT qualifications worldwide, the Bachelor's degree is the usual qualification required, and yet in certain contexts, in order to teach, "it may be sufficient to have passed certain English language exams, or to have attended a few workshops, or even just to be a native speaker with or without qualification or experience" (Barduhn & Johnson 2009, p. 61). Pennington (1992), however, considers the Master's degree as the most basic qualification and feels that the desired level of qualification for all teachers is a PhD. These two levels of qualification are usually required, but might not be sufficient for teaching English in higher education.

One of the most widely known initial qualifications for ELT teachers is the Cambridge University Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults – CELTA, with 10,000 candidates completing it each year in training centres in 135 countries, 118 of which are in the UK (see Senior, 2006). Teachers with at least two years of experience can upgrade their qualifications and do the Diploma in English Language Teaching for Adults (DELTA). They can also take the Cambridge Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT), which is a series of internationally recognised modular teaching qualifications, which test knowledge in a specific area of English language teaching. Other internationally recognised initial qualifications are the Trinity Certificate, TESOL (offered by Trinity College, London), and the SIT TESOL (awarded by the SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont, USA). The courses to obtain these certificates are usually intensive 4-week courses with at least 6 hours of teaching practice (Riddell, 2010). In Bulgaria, CELTA, DELTA and TKT training and certification is provided by AVO Centre in Sofia.

The majority of English language teachers, however, especially the non-native speakers in countries, where English is not an official language, receive their initial training from universities or teacher training colleges. In Bulgaria there are 7 state universities (in Sofia, Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo, Shumen, Burgas, Blagoevgrad, and Ruse) and 2 private higher education institutions (New Bulgarian University and Burgas Free University), which provide initial English language teacher preparation. These institutions offer various programmes for both pre-service and in-service teacher training and development opportunities, the most popular of which are English Studies with an optional teacher qualification (Bachelor and Master); Primary School Education with English Language (Bachelor); Pre-school Education with English language (Bachelor);

English and Bulgarian Languages (Bachelor); English and History (Bachelor), etc.

The possession of a teaching certificate is not a guarantee of a teacher's effectiveness and professionalism. It is only the first step in the process of continuing development, in which subject knowledge interacts with practical experience, and the teachers, while doing their job are learning about teaching from their own experience. There are a number of issues with teacher training courses in terms of their adequacy, complexity, practicality, reliability of assessment procedures and the appropriateness for the range of jobs they cover (see Eraut, 1994).

Nowadays, there is a fast-growing industry which offers teacher training and qualification adapted to the needs of various national and vocational contexts. Teachers and researchers have easy access to a vast number of professional journals and teacher magazines, conferences, conventions, seminars, webinars and membership in professional organizations. On the other hand, there are continuous attempts to create, develop or update standards for English language teaching and for English language teachers. Non-native speaker English teachers are required to demonstrate their level of proficiency in English as a component of their certification (Kamhi-Stein, 2009); while native speaker teachers have to have appropriate teaching qualifications.

11. Teacher appraisal and quality assurance in Bulgaria

Sponsored professionalism in the field of education in Bulgaria is closely linked to the idea of accountability, and the attestation or appraisal of teachers and other educational staff. It requires an ongoing assessment of individual educational practitioners' performance by authorities or stakeholders. According to the recent regulations in Bulgaria, the appraisal process is based on the principles of objectivity, fairness and transparency. The Strategy for Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the 2014-2020 period identified some major issues and weaknesses in the system of higher education (HE), which prevents it from functioning properly and achieving the desired results. According to the Strategy, the main problems in higher education in the country are related to:

1. the difficult access to HE for some social groups, and the lowshare of higher education graduates among the people of working age;
2. the quality and compatibility of Bulgarian higher education with European HE systems;
3. the fact that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) do not meet the needs of businesses and public institutions;

4. the poor link between training and research;
5. the poor quality of HEIs' management system and the HEIs network within the country;
6. the lack of transparency and public control of the current funding model of HEIs;
7. the need for attracting and ensuring career advancement for HEI lecturers;
8. inadequate opportunities for lifelong learning.

In an attempt to overcome the last problem, in most of the HEIs there are units for continuous, ongoing or post-graduate training and career development centres, which aim to strengthen the links between the universities and the labour market. However, a lot of the programmes they offer lack flexibility, are not innovative, or do not meet the needs of the trainees. To overcome these difficulties Bulgaria adopted a National Strategy for Lifelong Learning for the period 2014-2020, which foresees strengthening the role of HEIs as institutions for lifelong learning, and stimulating trainees for further training within the higher education system in accordance with the needs and demands of the labour market. One of the ways to achieve this is the development and promotion of flexible electronic forms for distance learning.

The issue of quality assurance and control in HE was addressed with the creation of the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, which is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA). At a local level, each HEI has its own internal system for quality evaluation and maintenance, which monitors the quality of the education process through different evaluation tools and mechanisms, including student opinion surveys. At a national level, HEIs are evaluated by the Bulgarian University Ranking System, established in 2010, based on a set of unified criteria and indicators. In addition, the transparency and accountability of HE are ensured by the Ministry of Education information system which hosts registers of higher education institutions, their academic staff, and graduate and postgraduate students.

12. Conclusion

The overview of the issues related to strengthening teacher identity and professionalism in the field of foreign language teaching has identified some common topics and trends which researchers and educators need to take into consideration. For example, at a global level, Barduhn and Johnson (2009, pp. 63-64) have identified some issues which undermine the reliability of certified teacher qualifications and are thus detrimental to the idea of professionalism. This is, in the first place, the need for acquiring higher language proficiency before non-native speaker teachers are allowed into teaching programmes.

Unfortunately, this is still a serious problem in Bulgarian universities where school graduates with low language proficiency are admitted to teacher training programmes.

Second is the need for fairer and more rigorous assessment. At present, in-service training is not followed by any form of control to check if and to what extent teachers implement the ideas presented in the training events, and whether there are any consequences or improvements in the quality of teaching. As a result, there is no adequate feedback to educators and teacher trainers about the effect of the training on improving the quality of teaching and students' results.

Researchers recommend improved curriculum content that leads further toward practical rather than academic syllabi which take psychological aspects of learning into account. They also suggest retraining of lecturers and more partnership schemes between national bodies and teacher-training institutes. More exchange programmes, funding and scholarships for teachers and better access to courses, qualification exams, and opportunities for further development are also necessary as part of teaching profession internationalisation. All these measures will increase teachers' opportunities for employment, the appeal of the teaching profession, and the respect it deserves in society.

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TYOLOGY OF E-LEARNING TOOLS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES LEARNING

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Abstract: *The paper is devoted to the issue of typologisation of e-learning tools for educational purposes in the sphere of foreign languages learning. The analysis of the previous research in the field leads to the conclusion that all digital tools in the learning environment can be subdivided according to their nature and the function they perform in the process of foreign languages learning.*

Analysis reveals that all e-learning tools are based on information and communication technology used for transmission of information and organization of communication. Modern computer tools and software can significantly intensify the learning and teaching process. The use of computer-aided learning tools in language education, taking into account their typological characteristics and in accordance with specific educational tasks, allows for a full realization of their specific linguistic and didactic functions.

Keywords: *e-learning, foreign language, technology of foreign languages e-learning, e-learning tool, language education*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the system of language education actively explores methodological issues of the use of new multimedia and hypermedia technologies, develops various aspects of Internet resources use in order to develop foreign communicative competence of students, builds educational systems for foreign languages, based on information and communication and/or network technologies in the system of secondary and higher schools. Despite the fact of having a wide range of studies and great attention paid to the didactic possibilities of modern

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e-learning tools, methods of foreign languages learning are still lacking in their reasonable classification, taking into account the specifics of the subject “foreign language” relating to the tasks set by the state educational standards for the system of language teaching. This situation often prevents teachers from making the right choice of e-learning technology, which, of course, does not contribute to the effectiveness of linguistic and cultural training of students.

The aim of this article is to systematize e-learning tools currently applied in language teaching and define their typological characteristics.

Nowadays no one objects to the fact that any e-learning tool should be used only in cases where the learning process is not effective enough without this tool. Therefore, it is so important to identify the linguistic and didactic potential of each typological group of these tools. This will contribute to teachers’ understanding of what each computer-mediated learning tool can bring to the learning process and how it should be used in this process.

2. Previous research in the field

The analysis of the literature allows considering e-learning of foreign languages as a certain form of organization of the educational process and control, i.e. “the way, the nature of interaction between the teacher and students, between students, and between students and the material under study” (Zagvyazinsky, 2001, p. 81). So, e-learning tools, performing primarily the supporting role, are a set of didactic materials/manuals/tasks and technical devices, the use of which is designed to optimize, as far as possible, foreign language learning and manage the activities of students to master the language. And from this point of view, information and communication technologies that are understood as “news channels, and software tools for the creation, collection, storage, transfer, handling, use of information” (Sysoev, 2012, p. 32-33), and e-learning tools can be seen as synonyms.

Computerization, as a feature of modern language education, explains the rising interest of scientists and practitioners in the problems of computer-mediated teaching disciplines, including foreign languages. As the result of this interest there are a lot of conceptions of ICT implementation, particularly of Internet resources in teaching\learning a foreign language. A large number of special studies are devoted to the analysis of the process of computerization in education and the didactic properties of digital learning tools in school, and in teacher training (Babkina, 2017; Baur, 1999; Kochenderfer, 2013; Koshelaeva, 2010; Martiny, 2009; Moser, 2001, 2003; Paveleva, 2010; Petrisheva, 2011; Platten, 2003; Robert, 2005; Schäfner, 2009; Stöcklin, 2012; Sysoev, 2013; Urban-Woldron, 2008; Zaec, 2017).

Achievement of educational results based on using of electronic training technologies is proved by experts by providing evidence. One of them is the

great importance that digital tools and technologies have in the life of a modern student (Zaets, 2017). “The future belongs to young people and we cannot ignore their reality, which is saturated with electronic technologies” (Stöcklin, 2012). In didactics, the term “digital natives”, meaning “electronic/digital native speakers”, has long been used to refer to today’s young people. “Our students have changed radically. [...] They spend their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. [...] as a result of this ubiquitous environment and the sheer volume of their interaction with it, today’s students think and process information in a fundamentally different way from their predecessors” (Prensky, 2001).

The next argument in favor of the use of ICT in the educational process is the possibility of creating conditions for personal development using these technologies in four important areas: valuable meanings, self-identification, competence and personal qualities (Bartosh, 2017, pp. 13-19). Electronic technologies provide multimedia and interactive learning environments, contribute to the development of independent and autonomous activities (Schäfner, 2009), help students to achieve their full development potential” (Kathleen, 2003), provide access to relevant authentic information directly from the country of the language under study (Platten, 2003, p. 175). They support authentic communication in chats and forums, which contributes to the development of communication skills more effectively than role-playing “as if-situations” (Martiny, 2009). They create unique conditions for familiarizing students with the cultural diversity of the communities of the foreign countries of the language under study (Koshelyaeva, 2010; Paveleva, 2010; Petrishcheva, 2011, etc.).

Taking into account all the information mentioned above, the appeal to e-learning in foreign languages has a great motivating effect for students. And educational motivation, in turn, causes the emergence of such constructs as self-effectiveness, self-assessment, self-regulation, self-perception, setting goals and objectives in the context of educational activities (Helmke & Weinert, 1997). Based on our own study (in particular, on the analytical IMST project) and some other researchers (Urban-Woldron, 2008) it is possible to draw a conclusion that computer training under certain conditions can increase the motivation to learn the subject through interactive activity with educational material, and also provide opportunity of individual learning.

Thus, e-learning can now be considered an integral part of the learning process of any subject, including a foreign language.

However, an analysis of the available work in the field of interest shows that most of the research is devoted to the use of information and communication

technologies in higher education, and that there is no common understanding among researchers of a number of issues, for example:

- What is meant by e-learning technologies?
- What is their didactic resource and under what conditions the resource can be implemented in school?
- What e-learning technologies can fully implement the requirements of state educational standards for the quality of language education?
- How does the educational environment change through the use of e-learning technologies for foreign languages?

There are a large number of unresolved issues, because the topic under consideration is extremely complex: on the one hand, the multidimensional nature of the communication space created with the help of computer technologies, and, on the other, the multidimensional nature of the educational space where these technologies are actively implemented. At the same time, the use of these technologies implies not only the existence of the appropriate base, but also the profound knowledge of computer programs, components of the Internet by teacher and students and their understanding of what each component can bring to the learning process, and how it should be used in the learning process.

3. Materials and methods

Research done by the authors of the article on the issue of introduction into the educational space of modern school tools of e-learning in order to improve the effectiveness of the educational process in foreign languages was carried out by taking into account different perspectives:

- 1) in the context of certain linguistic and cultures situation and the tasks of the society;
- 2) from the point of view of the requirements of Federal state educational standards of school education to the quality of language education;
- 3) based on the latest results of methodological science, including methodological concepts of e-learning;
- 4) taking into account the linguistic and didactic specifics of modern computer multimedia technologies and their potential as a means of improving the effectiveness of the educational process in foreign languages.

During the research period, the authors of the article analyzed some theoretical and practical works of modern Russian and foreign experts, dedicated to exploring the use of information and communication technologies in teaching foreign languages, the conditions of their effective use, and didactic properties

of these technologies (Babkin 2017; Baur, 1999; Ezhikov, 2013; Hughes, 2005; Kerres, 2013; Kochenderfer, 2013; Koshelaeva 2010, 2009; Martiny, 2009; Moser 2001, 2003; Ovchinnikova, 2010; Pavelyev & Petrisheva, 2011; Platten & Schäfner, 2009; Robert, 2005; Stöcklin, 2012; Sysoev, 2013; Urban-Woldron, 2008; Zayets, 2017). On this basis, the use of systematic typological approaches helped to identify, compare and generalize the linguistic and didactic possibilities of various e-learning tools, and carry out their classification according to their typological characteristics.

4. Data Analysis

All e-learning tools (multimedia, including interactive whiteboard, computer training programs, electronic textbooks, Internet resources, computer telecommunications, etc.) can be typologized based on two features. The first one is the functions performed by electronic tools in the educational process, the second one – the nature of the digital tool. Each classification group has its own didactic resource that provides the tools and technologies of foreign language e-learning with their characteristics. One should notice that in certain circumstances the same learning tool may belong to different groups.

In the first classification group, based on the functional load, all e-learning tools can be divided into three types: 1) demonstration; 2) information; 3) providing communication.

The first type, **demonstration**, is represented by such technological tools as computer presentations and interactive whiteboard. In the educational process of foreign language learning, they provide the audio-visual presentation of learning content, for example, due to the demonstration of linguistic units and the context of their use, illustrate the regional geographic information, etc. The use of these e-learning tools contributes to the visualization of information, and, as a result, shift “of focus from the illustrative functions” to the development of students’ cognitive abilities and critical thinking, creation of mental images in the human mind in the process of semantic processing of the received information (Babkina, 2017, p. 16). The interactive whiteboard helps to implement not only the principle of clarity, but to intensify language learning by facilitating access to information and increasing the speed of its flow, touch control (time saving, easy to use), record, select, and edit in real time, a combination of features of the tool and the data carrier. Due to modern technological solutions of computer presentations and interactive whiteboard, one can acquire a high degree of interactivity and multimedia, in particular, when installing the LP Suite tools in the form of add-ins for PowerPoint.

As for **information** e-learning tools which belong to second type, they include authentic (for example, websites of Newspapers, magazines, museums, cities,

individuals, etc.) and learning (resources created directly for learning purposes) Internet resources. Regardless of their nature, this type of resources is designed (if they are properly implemented in foreign language learning) to form students' individual style of activity, a culture of self-determination, to stimulate their personal enhancement. Work with Internet resources helps the user to form the ability to find, summarize, and critically evaluate information, to interpret it according to given task, to develop skills of reading, listening based on authentic audio texts, monologue and dialogue utterance on the basis of problem discussion of Internet data, as well as enrichment of their lexicon with new lexis that is found in authentic texts on the Internet, to familiarize with the socio-cultural aspect of the language. The use of the Internet expands the range of authentic communicative situations in the language under study, increases the motivation to learn a foreign language, and provides each student with the opportunity to independently choose an individual plan for language learning, perform creative, project tasks. With the help of Internet resources, one can implement a variety of educational technologies or Internet technologies. These include, for example, distance learning, online support for a traditional course, online support of the project and research activities etc.

As for learning Internet resources, they can be subdivided into:

- “Text, audio-visual materials on various topics aimed at forming of foreign language communicative competence and developing communicative and cognitive skills of students to search, select, classify, analyze and summarize information” (Sysoev, 2010, p. 42). These are authentic resources that are selected and didactically “interpreted” by the teacher: hotlist or a list of links to text Internet resources that should be studied; multimedia scrapbook or a list of links to multimedia resources: text sites, photos, audio files and video clips, graphic information and virtual tours; treasure hunt, i.e., a list of links to various sites on the topic under study, equipped with questions; subject sampler - a list of links to text and multimedia materials on the Internet, having studied which, the students need to answer questions, express and back up their own opinion on the subject under study; web quest or a list of links to multimedia and text resources, formulated questions by sections, the task of forming their own opinions and a general question of argumentative nature, organization of projects with involvement of all students and using Internet resources (Sysoev, 2010, pp. 42-44).
- Resources that are created by the teacher, such as personal websites or online courses. The websites created by the teacher can be very useful in their work, because the information they contain is structured according to their educational needs and their style of teaching, students' characteristics, and program requirements. Same as above, the pages of the website can be hotlists, web quests and other educational Internet resources, as well

as links to pages that allow you to assess the level of students' language proficiency (language tests), textbooks and audiovisual applications, various presentations, etc.

As for networking online courses, they can include all the materials that are essential for teaching, and can be both autonomous, used for distance learning, and integrated into the face-to-face learning process, for example, the materials of separate modules (sections) of the course, used for training certain aspects of the language and types of speech activity or having a complex nature, as is the role-play (Ovchinnikova & Akimova, 2009).

- Finally, the third type of e-learning tools includes the ones which provide communication on the web in a foreign language and are part of the tools based on their purpose of use. These include tools for synchronous and asynchronous communication. The first suggest the instant response of the partner user, the second-delayed one. One should notice, however, that modern messaging programs (messengers) often combine the capabilities of these two types of communication.

Taking into account the focus of the subject "foreign language" on the formation of students' ability to show a certain level of communication in a foreign language, the use of messengers in the educational process (for example, WhatsApp, Viber, Skype, etc.), chats, forums, means of Internet video communication, blogs, wiki, podcasts, YouTube, etc. seems very logical. The use of these tools allows the learner to develop skills in all types of speech activities, such as reading, writing (reading and commenting on records, wiki), listening (watching videos, audio podcasts), writing and speaking (creating your own videos, filling out blog pages or commenting on other people's work, etc.). In the system of teaching/learning foreign languages, this virtual communication means the interaction of subjects of the educational process with their partners at a distance, for example, interaction on joint projects, including telecommunications, exchange of educational information (between the teacher and students, between students or groups of students), quick access to electronic resources, etc.

The second classification group of e-learning tools is allocated in terms of the nature/specifics of the technical tools used. These are the so-called multimedia and information and communication tools (ICTs). One should notice that in literature, multimedia and information and communication tools are often inter-substituting concepts. We can partially agree on that, but there are also differences. If multimedia is computer tools (means) which, in addition to text way of presenting information, allow the user to get information through all possible channels of information perception: audio, video, animation, 3D image, etc., then ICT refers to "information channels and software for creation,

collection, storage, transfer, handling, use of information” (Sysoev, 2012, pp. 32-33).

5. Results and Key Findings

ICT is synonymous with the concept of “electronic technology”, since we are talking about technical possibilities to perform wireless communication, develop interfaces, visualize, convert, organize, and update information, to perform interaction of users (Robert, 2005). At the same time, the term “information technology” is broader than “computer technology”, and the inclusion of such a communication component in the name of ICT is due to a change in the evolutionary stage in the development of the information society and the expansion of the use of the Internet network not only for finding the necessary information, but also for communication in the virtual world. At the same time, if we are talking about a certain set of ways and methods of using, for example, multimedia, in this case we can refer to multimedia technologies.

The very name of each considered type of electronic means (tools) includes linguistic and didactic sense. Thus, working with multimedia makes it possible to perceive information while using several organs of sense at the same time, to receive integrated presentation of any audiovisual information on the computer screen and implement interactive cooperation of user with the computer system. At the same time, multimedia, through the integration of text, sound, and image, provides a complex effect on the student and contributes to his virtual immersion into the language environment. This significantly changes the way of assimilating and assigning information: the rejection of linear perception in favor of greater “freedom of movement” in the information space where media resources are usually connected.

Among the media an important place is occupied by multimedia programs (Kochenderfer, 2013), “a synchronous online video communication” (Ezhikov, 2013), various simulating programs based on the logic of quests, etc. These tools have a high linguistic and didactic potential, according to which they, by creating an authentic language environment and offering a variety of authentic material, contribute to the development of students’ socio-cultural competence, provide an opportunity to develop different types of foreign language activities, and have a positive impact on the emotional sphere of students.

The proposed classification of e-learning tools should help the teacher to make the right choice of e-learning technology, taking into account its educational objectives and characteristics of the group of students. Systematization of computer learning tools, describing their typological characteristics, makes the whole spectrum of modern electronic technologies and their capabilities to improve the effectiveness of linguistic and cultural training of students more evident for teachers. At the same time, there is a problem – the readiness and

ability of modern teachers to use these technologies. Thus, the J. Hughes (2005) denotes three possible functions of computer in the classroom: substitution, amplification, transformation. If electronic tools are used to replace something, in his opinion, neither educational activity nor educational purpose changes. Learning will take place in a standard way, including instructions and subsequent reproduction, but with a slight difference that the role of the teacher will be performed by the computer. When using electronic technology for enhancement, certain tasks can be performed faster and more efficiently. If the electronic tools are used for transformation, they can contribute to changing the educational process and its modernization: can change educational content, forms of work, the role of the teacher, and ways to solve the problems of students. (Hughes, 2005, pp. 280-281).

The essence of the transformation process was accurately expressed by German researcher H. Schelhowe (2009). He describes 4 forms of the educational process when working with media mediated information. The first concerns a simple reference to individual news and knowledge. The second involves studying by students of more complex issues on the basis of didactic material and thus familiarizing with a certain culture. In the third form of the educational process involves socialization and enculturation of the user, in the fourth – the development of personality and identity takes place (Schelhowe, 2009, p. 13). If we talk about the process of development of student's personality, namely value meanings, self-identification, competencies and personal qualities, the mentioned above by H. Schelhowe first and second forms of the learning process are insufficient. It is a question of professional multimedia language competence of a foreign language teacher as their ability and readiness for successful professional activity on teaching a foreign language with the use of ICT and multimedia technology. Based on the analysis of numerous studies, it was proved that the success or failure of the lesson does not depend on the use of a computer or other electronic tools, but on the didactic concept, on how the potential of electronic means was used in relation to a particular lesson. Electronic means alone cannot be well or poorly suited for learning, only their preparation and appropriate use can contribute to the achievement of the required effect (Kerres, 2013, p. 585). This point of view is shared by many researchers: "the lesson with using a computer is not good only because new technologies have been used" (Bauer, 1999, p. 15), "didactic efficiency is achieved only when new technologies create something more and different from what is in ordinary lessons with traditional means of learning" (Moser, 2001, p. 420). Thus, the teacher remains one of the central figures of the educational process, which reveals the possibility and potential of electronic means of education, but on the other hand it puts in special requirements on the teacher. Teachers should be central participants in and builders of the future of technology in education, not solely the recipients of decisions made by others, either in the area of training or

in tool design. Specifically, they should be supported and encouraged to adapt computers to their own and their students' purposes, to explore the ways in which technologies can alter what happens in the classroom, and to share what they do and what "works" with other teachers (Sheingold & Endreweit, 1987, p. 79).

6. Conclusion

The research provides some clarifications on the conceptual and terminological apparatus of the theory of e-learning and classifying the technology of foreign languages e-learning in accordance with their functions and nature. The division of technologies by functions and specific features of their use reflects the linguistic and didactic potential of these technologies in terms of the effectiveness of the educational process, as well as their compliance with the requirements of modern standards. The specifics of each technology's group in relation to the field of teaching\learning foreign languages at school, describes their place and role in the overall focus on the creation of a special information and communication learning environment as a holistic, open, accessible, multifunctional and interactive system.

The authors consistently support the understanding of the e-learning technology as a certain set of methods and methodologies of teaching a foreign language, implemented with the help of computer tools and ICT. In the offered classification all e-learning tools belong to additional or supporting educational materials that in turn actualize a question of teacher's competence in using e-learning technologies for the purpose of creation of the computer-mediated educational environment.

Thus, the appropriate material, technical and methodological basis, as well as the ability to use it, can ensure the effective integration of e-learning technologies into the educational process of foreign languages learning and contribute to improving the quality of language education in general.

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: *The main research objective of this corpus-based study is to identify communication challenges faced by international students of business management in the context of using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in a non-English speaking country. It attempts to gain an insight on learners' perceptions of intercultural communication (ICC) barriers, associated with their native language and cultural background in the process of developing academic and cultural competences. Quantitative data was derived through a small specialised corpus, comprising of 13,896 words, constructed from 47 students' reflective essays. The research assumptions and analysis of discourse were based on the model of the six Stumbling Blocks in Intercultural Communication developed by LaRay M. Barna (1994). The evidence from the study suggests that differences in verbal and non-verbal language expressions are perceived as a more significant communication block, due to the fact that they seem to be attributed with clear self-awareness of the problem. The results also indicate that language differences and cultural ambiguity are more significantly expressed by students raised and educated in higher context cultures, sharing more collectivist values. To handle these issues in EMI, an approach to self-conscious actions and efforts is needed from all participants in the process to develop linguistic and intercultural communication competence (ICCC).*

Keywords: *intercultural communication, English as a Medium of Instruction, academic discourse, corpus linguistics, stumbling blocks*

1. Introduction

The objective of this corpus-based research is to identify linguistic patterns associated with some potential expectations and perceptions of intercultural communication barriers which international students of business management may hold in the context of using English as a main language of study in an Anglophone university based in South East Europe. A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches are used in the analysis of data in an attempt to provide a comprehensive review of particular features of discourse systems which influence classroom interaction through EMI.

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Along with the fast acceleration of EMI, there emerges the question of how the global ‘language of higher education’ (Coleman, 2006) affects communication process and the expected student’s behaviour in academic environment with regard to the context of debates and common concerns about national identity, access to education and significantly differentiating factors related to the cultural, political and economic impact of the phenomenon. Promoting communicative competence should be seen as a primary concern in the challenging context of EMI and the main prerequisite for learning success, hence focusing attention on international undergraduates’ expectations and perceptions of communication challenges can raise not only educators’ awareness of students’ communication needs and appropriate communication strategies for syllabus design but also of their own communicative competence as an essential skill needed to encourage and engage learners. Adopting a communicative approach in teaching and learning should be considered an indispensable condition for blending the main components of communicative competence, including *grammatical* accuracy, *sociolinguistic* knowledge of rules functioning in language use and discourse, and *strategic* competence associated with the communicative performance of verbal and non-verbal compensatory mechanisms used in a case of grammatical or sociolinguistic failure (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 27). Along with Canale and Swain’s concept of communicative competence, there has been an increasing concern over metacognitive strategies and the ability used to facilitate the interplay between the knowledge of language and the perceptual functions of language use (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). Celce, Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1995) continued the debate about communicative competence, highlighting the role of discourse competence within the framework of assessment criteria for language proficiency and suggesting several important components forming sociocultural competence, including social contextual factors, stylistic appropriateness, cultural factors and non-verbal communicative factors (p.24). The complex nexus of sociocultural differences and diversity of identities in Anglophone universities suggest a critical need for strategic and discourse competences, however these could not be based on the milestone of a native speaker model after the global spread of English as a lingua franca in the beginning of the new century. The acquisition of knowledge and information through English requires a shift to a more culturally aware approach towards critical thinking needed to elicit and interpret information in the complex context of EMI. ICC skills, related to “identity-sensitive knowledge, ethnorelative attitudes and adaptive interaction skills” (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2019, p. 4) could facilitate the process of adjusting to other participants’ verbal or non-verbal behaviour and appropriately encode and decode messages transmitted during exchange of information for mutual understanding and successful communication outcome. Quite recently the strategic role of English as a global language has drawn the attention of corpus linguists, who are interested in examining various aspects

of the context (Biber, 2006; Björkman 2017; Chang, 2010; Coleman, 2006; Evans, & Morrison, 2011; Jensen, Denver, Mees & Werther, 2013; Wilkinson, 2013) with a focus on specific research questions related to discursive markers, practices and principles of bilingualism. Differences in classroom discourse features reflect cultural variations of values and norms influencing the process of learning and perceptions of education practices, therefore comparing cross-cultural corpora provides reliable information about the impact of particular factors on participants' behaviour and performance in EMI (Moreno, 2008).

2. Previous research

According to Handford (2015), corpus linguistics (CL) could be defined as a methodology in the field of discourse analysis, which relies on qualitative and quantitative approaches to study various language aspects through the means of computer software. McEnery and Hardie (2012), Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones (2008), and Gee and Handford (2012) have sought to address new ways and approaches with a focus on the social context in transaction of information and making meaning. In the same vein, intercultural and cross-cultural communication have been an object of research in CL by Biber, Conrad & Reppen (1998); O'Keeffe & Adolphs (2008) and Handford (2014), exploring the concept of cultural identity as a fixed parameter rather than elicited from discourse. Handford draws on Collier and Thomas's (1988) interpretation of managing multiple cultural identities which are negotiated in ICC, to study discursive questions related to cultural identities and communication through a purposeful application of corpus methods relying on *ethnographically informed*, smaller size specialised corpora. Seidlhofer, Breiteneder & Pitzl (2006) suggest that L2 speakers of English are likely to transfer their previous experience in the process of language production, thus avoiding the use of idiomatic expressions. Similarly, a corpus-based study by Todorova (2017) exploring the metaphoric transfer of advertising printed messages, has argued that receivers who lack awareness of the intended cultural meaning are likely to misunderstand the main idea or even to develop negative attitudes to the product in question. A multimodal analysis of media headlines by Nedelcheva (2017) has shown that sharing information within a particular society involves references of common cultural knowledge associated with recurring linguistic patterns which ensue specific expectations and interpretations of the messages.

Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2019, p. 22) define ICC as "The symbolic exchange process whereby individuals from two (or more) different cultural communities attempt to negotiate shared meanings in an interactive situation and in a larger sociocultural-macro environment", in which sharing of meaning is influenced by individual expectations based on cultural perceptions. Communication perception as a process of quick identification of symbols arranged in a specific

structure is interpreted according to people's expectations (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012) and can cause communication failure due to problems in use of language, different styles of expression and different values, hence negotiation of meaning should involve clarification of identity, content and relationship which happens in a specific physical and psychological socio-cultural context of interaction in an Anglophone university. It can therefore be assumed that Dearden's (2014, p. 2) definition of EMI as "The use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English" would call into question its effectiveness, drawing attention to the communication challenges it imposes to students and educators. In this respect, Hofstede's (1986, p. 316) understanding of *language (as) an obstinate vehicle of culture* suggests that words should fit in a cultural framework in order to prevent from loss of meaning. In the light of Hofstede's cultural classification typology (1980) and his concept of the degree to which societies tolerate social injustice, depend on the group and strive for achievement, it can be assumed that a significant barrier of communication in EMI can arise from students' expectations and the linguistic low-context nature of the English language associated with more individualist, inductive thinking and experimentation, which contrasts with the culturally adopted deductive and more reflective thinking of students from collectivist cultures. Hall's (1966, 1977) classic theory of high and low context helps further to elucidate differences in language expression of cultural values and behavioural patterns of international students in HE through the concept of high-context culture messages which tend to be transmitted in a context reflecting the individual sense of tight group belonging, characterised with physical symbols, lots of metaphor and nonverbals. In contrast, low-context culture messages seem more concise with a focus on the verbal rather than on the nonverbal part, ruled by more open relationships and flexible group belonging. Following this, it can be assumed that the low-context nature of English as a medium of learning and socialisation in EMI, might raise controversial interpretations of its functionality in non-English speaking environment and a threatening means to exert cultural influence. To understand the various perceptions of communication challenges that exist among international student, we can take an account of LaRay Barna's model of six stumbling blocks (1994) which points to communication challenges facing people in international settings and the potential rejection they might experience as a result from failure in the exchange of ideas and information. *Western trappings*, according to Barna, are hidden below the superficial similarity in the style of dress, greeting rituals and use of English for socialising, "Without being alert to possible underlying differences and the need to learn new rules for functioning, persons going from one city to the other will be in immediate trouble even when taking on such simple roles as pedestrian or driver" (p. 338), that is to say, lack of sociolinguistic and

strategic competence in English language can lead to misunderstanding and frustration on the ICC stage as a result from withdrawal and defensiveness in the process of communication, related to higher levels of anxiety and stress. Barna suggests the possibility that assumptions of similarity, language differences, nonverbal misinterpretations, stereotypes, tendency to evaluate and high levels of anxiety to blend in a cultural shock, and thus to cause misinterpretation of the seemingly threatening environment (p. 343). Those negative physiological and psychological effects could be handled in EMI through self-conscious actions and efforts from all participants in the process to develop linguistic and socio-cultural knowledge, in order to enhance their communicative and intercultural communication competence (ICCC). Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001, p.7) have argued that developing intercultural skills and knowledge should be built over the values people possess as a result from their belonging to various social groups, without changing their values but making “them explicit and conscious in any evaluative response to others”. This complex character of the global context of EMI forces the need to discuss the phenomenon not only as a key tool of teaching and learning but also as an indispensable ICC driver, enabling students’ cognitive, affective and behavioural skills.

2.1. Research questions

Taking into account the limitations of the early stage of intercultural experience and development of ICC skills and competence of the informants, this research will seek to address the following questions:

- What are the most common international students’ perceptions of intercultural communication barriers in multicultural learning environment?
- What are the consequences of communication issues on international students’ academic performance?
- What educational implications could be made for developing strategic competence of international students?

2.2. Research hypotheses

Drawing upon Barna’s model of the Six Stumbling Blocks and assuming that making meaning in EMI is established through English as a secondary system of communication, it can be supposed that differences in perceptions of lexicogrammatical features of the language will be identified as the most important communication block by the students, due to the fact that they seem to be attributed with clear self-awareness. In particular, the hypotheses which will be tested are that:

Hypothesis 1: Language differences in lexico-grammatical features of the language will be centrally focused and perceived as the main communication barrier by international students in intercultural learning environments.

Hypothesis 2: Barriers associated with the unconscious assumption of similarity, stereotyping, tendency to evaluate and cultural shock will have a less significant effect on students' perceptions of communication barriers.

Based on Hall's theory of high and low context, it can be assumed that adjustment and learning in a new academic discourse system of EMI would be more problematic for international students whose identities confront to a greater degree with the elements of the new discourse transmitted through the means of English as a main language of communication. It is possible, therefore, to make the following hypothetical statement:

Hypothesis 3: Perceptions of language differences and cultural ambiguity and associated expectations for communication barriers will be more significantly expressed by students raised and educated in higher context cultures sharing values of collectivism and hierarchical relationships.

3. Research methodology

To identify the most common barriers in the interdiscourses of ICC and EMI, the current research applies a combination of corpus-based approach and discourse analysis, which help to investigate the imprinted language stance projecting students' expectations and perceptions in the process of learning. This *situated meaning* approach to discourse analysis suggested by Gee 2010 (p. 151) facilitates the differentiation between the general and the specific meanings of words in the given context based on previous experience and shared knowledge of the students. Searching for correlations (or collocations) of linguistic patterns is essential to understand the mix of social identities enacted in particular messages.

3.1. Research procedure

A collection of students' handwritten work was converted into computer-readable format and uploaded to the Sketch Engine system (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/>) in order to build a language corpus for the purposes of the current research. To answer our first research question and to test Hypotheses 1 and Hypothesis 2, word-sense lexical categories, such as *language* and *culture*, were identified through key words and frequency profiling. With the aim of representativeness, the English Web Corpus (en Ten Ten 2013) was used as a normative corpus of reference. Four smaller subcorpora were created further to make differentiation between cultural groups in order to find evidence of significantly different frequency of features supporting Hypothesis 3. The collocational behaviour of

the most frequent lexical units was explored through the Word Sketch function which was used to discover their collocates in the context, to trace concordance lines providing information for qualitative analysis of situated meaning through semantic prosody and to make inferences associated with specific positive or negative meanings. A qualitative approach based on the corpus findings was used consequently to interpret the information and to answer questions 2 and 3.

3.2. Source of data

The primary data was collected in December, 2018, from 47 first-year undergraduates' short reflective essays, written in a formal classroom environment as one of three compulsory tasks in a course portfolio, intended for summative assessment of students' communication skills and knowledge of the discipline at the end of an obligatory course in Business communication.

3.3. Demographic profile of the informants

Of the 47 informants, 22 male and 25 female students from 20 countries, with an age range from 18 to 24 contributed to the collection of written material for building the corpus. Only two Erasmus+ students had previously attended a Business communication course in their home universities and 45 undergraduates were receiving the course for the first time. The 27 international Erasmus+ exchange students and 20 regularly enrolled students had been attending a business or a hospitality management degree programme in an Anglophone business school in Eastern Europe for three months. The programmes of study conducted in a partnership with a British university were following specific curriculum requirements and standards, including English as the only medium of formal instruction. The informants were divided into four groups based on the mapping of cultural distance between geographical regions and their orientation to specific cultural values as defined by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman and Gupta (2004). The data was collected from representatives of 8 cultural clusters on the map, which were further grouped into East Europe, West Europe, Africa and Middle East, and Confucian and Southern Asia. Out of the 47 students, 5 were bilingual and only 3 were using a version of English as their native language (Zimbabwean and Nigerian English).

3.4. Type and size of corpus

A collection of 47 non-English speaking undergraduates' reflective essays was compiled to create a purpose-built specialised mini corpus of 13,896 words, addressing the questions of the study. The essay of 200 to 300 word-length was assigned as a written task in a final Business communication course portfolio, following the conventions of academic writing in English and the

genre associated with business communication as a subject field. To facilitate automatic retrieval of information and to ensure readability of specific linguistic and grammatical features needed for text analysis, the corpus data was tagged for parts of speech and lemmatised by the default English Tree Tagger part-of-speech (PoS) tagset available in English corpora on Sketch Engine with some modifications (Marcus, Santorini & Marcinkiewicz, 1993).

4. Findings

To test Hypothesis 1, it was considered that quantitative measures of key word and term frequency would usefully supplement and extend the content analysis through processing of PoS tagged and lemmatised tokens in order to model the topic and to identify the most common instances of words and phrases indicating students' perceptions of intercultural communication barriers.

4.1. Frequency and keyword profile

To ensure representativeness and test reliability of comparison, we referred to a larger corpus, the English Web 2013, in order to provide a text norm for frequency and key word profiling of the specialised sample corpus through a 19-million word collection of various types of internet texts, accessed through the Sketch Engine query system. The exploration of the unique features of the learners' perceptions of ICC barriers in the focus corpus showed that verbal and non-verbal language barriers were centrally focused and perceived as the main communication barrier. Pinpointing single and multiword key items revealed a trend towards a higher frequency of key words and multiword expressions of language barriers matching the target topic of communication in EMI (Table 1 & Table 2).

Table 1.

The Most Frequent Key Words

Table 2.

The Most Frequent Key Terms

	Keywords	Keyness Score	Freq	Ref freq		Key terms	Keyness Score	Freq	Ref freq
1	I	2.990	353	174439711	1	body language	235.950	12	550
2	we	3.790	208	81207116	2	university group	714.010	11	1
3	not	2.050	192	138463385	3	language barrier	475.060	11	121
4	barrier	392.510	157	568973	4	english proficiency	429.510	9	87
5	different	19.890	145	10764033	5	group work	299.100	8	177
6	other	4.730	126	39362901	6	different culture	336.440	7	85
7	communication	83.340	120	2107307	7	different level	266.210	7	170
8	group	18.490	115	9179578	8	communication barrier	372.830	6	12

	Keywords	Keyness Score	Freq	Ref freq	Key terms	Keyness Score	Freq	Ref freq
9	do	1.570	107	100641209	9 native language	188.840	6	255
10	language	50.460	98	2850634	10 english language	60.950	5	1035
11	but	1.880	93	73021662	11 level of english proficiency	260.270	4	1
12	they	1.820	89	72475819	12 other barrier	255.940	4	5
13	English	47.590	70	2153547	13 different style	164.450	4	140
14	culture	39.500	66	2449121	14 same language	151.310	4	173
15	speak	17.680	58	4829660	15 own language	139.070	4	209
16	problem	8.780	58	9754330	16 different pronunciation	195.450	3	1
17	their	1.410	53	55459061	17 cultural barrier	189.970	3	8
18	understand	10.670	45	6215980	18 non-verbal communication	167.440	3	41
19	time	1.530	45	43395654	19 communication style	160.460	3	53
20	country	7.410	41	8169730	20 group member	153.190	3	67
21	if	1.080	41	55924531	21 cultural background	146.880	3	80
22	difference	16.530	35	3109618	22 bad mood	142.410	3	90
23	think	2.240	33	21745437	23 big problem	57.330	3	576
24	like	1.330	32	35700205	24 other person	27.420	3	1463

Data retrieved and adapted from Sketch Engine Keywords and term extraction tool. Available at <https://app.sketchengine.eu/>. Keyness score of keywords and key terms is determined through a simple maths method using normalized frequencies per million in the sample and in the reference corpora.

4.2. Collocation patterns

The collocation behaviour of the topic words related to perceptions of *culture* and *language* barriers in the sample corpus was explored through the Word sketch difference tool for contrasting frequency and score information. The significance test based on the likelihood function measures the co-occurrence typicality (LogDice) of the collocates and the node word based on their frequencies, as well as on the frequency of the collocation as a whole unit. Considering that a G^2 higher than 6.6 is significant at $p < 0.01$ and the higher it is the stronger the collocation, it can be concluded that the Word sketch difference data resulted in a stable trend of higher values and stronger *language* collocations, such as *speak a language* ($G^2=12.9$), *language is a barrier* ($G=12.8$), *body language* ($G=12.3$), *use a language* ($G=11.9$), *native language* ($G=11.6$). Further analysis of *culture* collocations showed a relatively smaller number of the following items with high collocational strength: *culture is a fact* ($G=14$), *culture and/or language* (11.4), *cultural shock* ($G=11.1$), *cultural contact* ($G=11.1$). A higher co-

occurrence typicality range was observed between the same collocate (*different, own, other*) and each of the nodes such as, *culture is different* (G=12.2) and *language is different* (G=11.0), *own culture* (G=9.1) and *own language* (G=11.2), *other culture* (G=10.4) and *other language* (G= 8.2).

4.3. Corpora comparison

In order to test Hypothesis 3, the Sketch Engine Compare Corpora tool was used to differentiate between the four sample subcorpora of West Europe (WE), East Europe (EE), Africa and Middle East (AME) and Confucian and Southern Asia (CSA), and two native English corpora, the British Academic Written English Corpus (BAWE) and the English Web Corpus (en Ten Ten 2013). The comparison of data showed the most significant difference between the two subcorpora of AME and CSA (7.13), followed by a difference of 6.80 between CSA and WE, and 6.52 between CSA and EE. Not surprisingly, an anticipated finding suggested a greater difference between CSA and BAWE (6.18), CSA and enTenTen13 (5.48) and BAWE and AME (5.68). Contrary to our expectations, there was a noticeable differentiation of 5.42 between BAWE and WE and a similar value of 5.23 between WE and enTenTen13. The smallest degree of contrast was seen in the results of EE and enTenTen13 (4.78), EE and BAWE (5.06), and between EE and WE (5.00). In general, CSA demonstrated the most persistent trend towards dissimilarity of all corpora, hence the observed difference between the results provided further support for our Hypothesis 3.

4.4. Differences in collocation patterns

For a more elaborate commentary, information about collocation patterns of *language/culture* was derived from the specialised BAWE corpus, with an absolute frequency of 4,283 and 3,193 of each lemma. The pinpointed examples from academic written texts produced evidence of categories relating *culture* to *society, language, religion, gender, politics, tradition, present, different, organisational, material, Western, shock* and *status*. *Language* was most commonly associated with *discourse, dialect, spoken, body, English, native, programming, acquisition, learning, use, ability, barrier, speak, learn*. Some highlights of a more explicit way of expression within the Western group with lower-context traits were found in the association with the process of communication which was seen as *transmission* of knowledge and information, task orientation was implied through action verbs, including *use, control* and *speak*. Decoding of messages seemed more dependent on *behaviour* and *values* by the representatives of the Eastern European group with an obvious contrast between *own* and *his* culture (only the masculine form was pinpointed) and *our* and *their* language with an assumption that *different Western habits* may affect relationships. A more implicit and formally expressed style of communication

was demonstrated by participants from Africa and the Middle East groups, associating culture with *tradition, nationality, country* and *value*, and a strong awareness of *my* culture, which was opposed to *their* language. Confucian and South Asia group demonstrated the strongest high-context orientation to *attitude*, reflective *thinking* and *appreciation* for achievement through *studies*. The concept of being humble and preserving face implied a more avoiding approach to interaction with other cultures.

4.5. Discourse prosody

To provide additional evidence with respect to emotional expression in the discourse, we chose to inspect the semantic prosody of the verb *feel*, a lexical item with a lower frequency score in the sample corpus, however, intriguing enough to be favourable for a much deeper understanding of the affective aspects of communication challenges. *Feel* appeared 21 times per million words in the sample corpus, collocating with positive and negative terms, mentioned by total of 17 informants. The sample concordance lines shown in Table 3 indicated a trend to a more neutral discourse prosody with a bigger range of negatively characterised items and fewer co-occurrences bearing positive connotation, nevertheless the overall profile of “feel” as a node word displayed a rather balanced projection of emotional wording in a slightly more positive prosodic direction, due to the higher co-occurrence typicality scores (LogDice) of the positive collocates. The strongest language collocations with the highest log likelihood ratio were “comfortable” (G2=12); “free” (G=11.30); “better (English)” (G=10.75), and “safe” (G=10.54). Ambiguity and stress indicators were found in “afraid” (G=10.91); “disconnected”, “lazy”, “insulted” and “unconfident” (G=10.54); “confused” and “ignored” (G=10.48); “shy” and “excluded” (G=10.42); not well (G=9.79).

Table 3. Concordances for “Feel” in the Sample Corpus

			GDEX*
And it helps me because I am	feeling	that my English is better and better every day.	0.900
At the beginning of my new life here I	felt	a little bit uncomfortable .	0.900
So they do not pay attention on you and you	feel	yourself ignored .	0.449
I do not know if they	feel	disconnected but they seem like they are.	0.449
Well, at first I came to the VUM. I	felt	a little bit afraid of communicating with other	0.449
I	feel	unconfident to speak in English.	0.425
problem with self-study in the dorm I am	feeling	very lazy and sleepy.	0.400

			GDEX*
my worse level of English makes me	feel	myself shy .	0.400
It will create a conflict if I	feel	that you are ignorant in how you view Africa	0.400
I am talking with the guy from Egypt I am	feeling	confused . He is talking really fast.	0.375
I have experienced that as I	feel	comfortable to speak about new things that	0.361
Working with teachers is nice but I	feel	comfortable only in Business communication	0.350
everyone spoke fluent English and I	felt	not really well in the beginning because I did	0.337
they do not care that others may	feel	uncomfortable in such situation.	0.319
instead of using English so others can	feel	excluded from the connection.	0.259
sometimes our foreign colleagues	feel	insulted because the body signs have different	0.254
more than two-month studying in VUM I	feel	the barriers and differences of communication.	0.149
I am open to new friendships, but I	feel	more comfortable , talking to the people with similar	0.129
overcome in an easy way because people	feel	safe when they trust somebody, except if they do	0
we all transmitted our thoughts and ideas	feeling	free to share them with the group and the leader	0

*GDEX score exhibits frequent and well-dispersed patterns of use with the highest density in the context (Kilgarriff, A., Husák, M., McAdam, K., Rundell M. & Rychlý P., 2008). Data retrieved and adapted from Sketch Engine <https://app.sketchengine.eu/>

5. Discussion

The quantitative tests results and their analysis provided a significant evidence of a perception trend towards differences in verbal and non-verbal aspects of language, in which language was seen as an important barrier associated with English as a means of communication. Being able to express oneself freely in multicultural environment puts the speaker in control of the communication process and helps to build a positive self-concept (Rubio, 2007), conversely, the lack of adequate language skills can make the speaker feel helpless and endangered, therefore, appropriate use of English as an important ability to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts becomes an instrument for imposing power and self-assertion within the group, hence explanation of the present results seems consistent with Barna's model of stumbling blocks in ICC. Differences in language, expressed through vocabulary, idiomatic concepts and pronunciation, in this case, are identified as the second communication

block by Barna, which in contrast to the unconscious assumption of similarity for example, seems to be attributed with clear self-awareness of the problem and its consequences on mutual understanding. It should be here emphasised that language barrier, according to Barna, tends to be centrally focused and perceived as the main communication barrier by communication participants in intercultural environment, especially in the early stage of intercultural encounters, as is the case of the present research. It is important to note that body language was perceived as the most frequent term related to misunderstanding in comparison to language and perceptions of culturally different identities. The latter appeared less differentiated than the perceptions of language differences with some lower indication of awareness of time, religion and otherness. However, as argued by Barna, cultural background affects in different ways people's perception of the surrounding world, thus influencing their nonverbal reference to what is being seen, felt, smelt or heard, so the nonverbal misinterpretation block seems to be as significant as language differences, which was also proved by the present experimental evidence. Despite the limited period of intercultural exchange, the students had obviously managed to develop some sensitivity to more subtle cues in the environment, likely due to the informal communication outside the classroom and the content integrated class activities. Overcoming the observed lack of awareness of subtle barriers associated with the expression of concepts of space, stereotyping, prejudice and tendency to evaluate requires a more informal learning environment, according to Barna, therefore, it could be conceivably suggested that there should be raised a concern over nonverbal misinterpretations in the Westernised education environment of EMI, especially when provided in non-native English speaking countries, where traditionally a more formal style of communication is established. Some important conclusions emerged from corpora comparison with BAWE, which suggested that similarity of perceptions between native speakers and non-native speakers of English can be sought in the attitudes to the *differences in the use of language, speaking skills, body language, avoiding direct conflict, association with the group* and more *conservative traditions*. On the other hand, several considerable differences were revealed between the two corpora, mainly in terms of *social, gender, political* and *organisational attitudes* which were not detected in the sample corpus. It is noteworthy to mention here that English as a tool for socialisation, according to Scollon, Scollon, and Jones (2012, p. 17) carries in itself "Western patterns of discourse, which ultimately lead to confusion or to misinterpretation in intercultural discourse ... transmitted through the process of the teaching and learning of English". Furthermore, there has been an established media trend towards inflicting European identities as a *white norm* associated with perceptions of dominance, as argued by Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva (2018, p. 43). In other words, it seems that these may imply a contradicting viewpoint of English as a means of communication and learning, and at the same time as a

means of exerting cultural influence through its low-context Western patterns of discourse.

Comparison of the subcorpora with BAWE and to each other illustrated significant communication challenges for the CSA group, which demonstrated strongest high-context orientation and conformity to group values and group appreciation, followed by the AME group with strong family attachment and group belonging. The Eastern European group results suggested more similarity with BAWE rather than with the Western European group, which may refer to the observed differences in the higher level of their proficiency in written English. Taken together, the overall profile of the discourse participants is family and group oriented, with different degree of unequally distributed power in their society and fixed social roles, functioning in a south-east European physical environment which is intolerant to changes and innovation and using a communication tool, belonging to a more gender equality and less power hierarchy social system. Such a complicated interdiscourse communication system suggests a process of interaction between members of different groups which often involves conflicting expressions of multiple identities leading to miscommunication. An intriguing interdiscourse aspect discussed by Scollon et al. (2012) takes into account the ambiguous nature of language, spoken or written, which makes people speculate about the real meaning of messages. Speculation is based on the source language and personal views of reality, and understanding does not depend on knowledge of grammar or vocabulary but on inherent presumptions fixed in established discourse systems. Generally speaking, it is not the incorrect grammar or mispronunciation which distort communication but differences in discourse patterns. Being deeply rooted in the culture, preconceptions and stereotypes tend to influence our perceptions, acting as stumbling blocks which can distort communication in the classroom. The tendency to evaluate and make emotional judgements about what is right or wrong affects fair and unbiased comprehension in interaction with people in an unfamiliar multicultural environment, which increases the associated feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, affecting in turns cognitive functions and academic performance.

6. Conclusions

In response to the first research question, this study has found that communication challenges in the multicultural classroom are most commonly perceived by the international students as *different levels of English proficiency, pronunciation, native language, language misunderstanding, cultural background and communication styles*. The quantitative and qualitative analyses supported the three hypothetical statements made by the author. The results provided evidence of an unanticipated finding indicating that body language had a slightly more significant impact on the undergraduates' perceptions than verbal

language. These results can be explained through the understanding that both verbal and non-verbal language seem to be attributed with clear self-awareness of the problems and their consequences on communication outcomes. Another explanation could be linked to the cognitive load associated with learning through EMI which in previous research was found to add a further linguistic challenge, tension and negative impact on self-confidence. This study also confirmed that perceptions of barriers associated with assumption of similarity, stereotyping, tendency to evaluate and cultural shock have a less significant effect on students' perceptions of communication barriers due to their unconscious nature and lower degree of critical cultural awareness. Perceptions of language differences and cultural ambiguity and expectations for communication barriers were found to be most significantly expressed by international students from Confucian and Southern Asia raised and educated in higher context cultures sharing values of collectivism, hierarchical relationships and maintaining face. In response to the second research question of this study, it can be concluded that the individualistic Western patterns of discourse carried in English, are likely to be in contrast with students' expectations for more formal expression of the Self and distribution of educational roles in all the subgroups of the sample. The emerging consequences of communication issues on academic performance seem to be associated with a various degree of negative impact on relationships between students and teachers, students' expectations for group work, approach to independent study, perceptions of time and practical approach to classroom activities. The current study was limited by the smaller size of the corpus collected from student's essays written in formal environment and within a limited time. Another limitation was related to the unequal number of informants in the four subcorpora, due to the fewer number of representatives from some nationalities. As students from higher-context societies might have restrained from expressing potential negative emotions, a further study could attempt at assessing the association of Uncertainty avoidance with levels of anxiety and stress in EMI. It would be also interesting to compare levels of intercultural communication competence between students from different cultural groups.

7. Implications for practice

An important implication is that feelings of uncertainty and anxiety are more likely to arise from miscommunication due to differentiation in international students' perceptions of language expression through phonology, meaning of words, relationship between students and teachers, expected formality, self-expression and learning priority, different concept of time and expectations for more controlled or independent learning (Witsel, 2003). Contrasting perceptions of achievement orientation, belonging to a group and work regulation can also have a strong negative impact on the verbal and non-verbal communication process,

consequently building communication barriers in educational environment (Thomas, 1995). Therefore, an apparent answer to our third research question and another important implication which could be made for developing strategic competence in international students is that professionals involved in teaching and learning in EMI should accept language as a culture code and a biologically innate means of communication (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952) with the purpose of developing awareness and understanding of English as a significant reason for communication failure caused by hindrances arising from more demanding areas of academic studies, which require active verbal expression, critical thinking, practical training, use of technology, group presentation and discussions, academic writing, problem solving and following task instructions. A communicative approach for developing ICCC through “Knowledge, motivation and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures” (Wiseman, 2002, p. 208) should be adopted by educators to facilitate a learning environment encouraging active participation in class communication and allowing students to coordinate their verbal and non-verbal expression in order to achieve particular social and personal communication goals, in compliance with the situational norms. Since uncertainty is considered a fundamental cognitive category, it can negatively affect one’s ability to predict and explain different types of behaviours which leads to anxiety. Mindful efforts to understand others will help to maintain an optimum level of uncertainty and anxiety in order to establish effective communication (Gudykunst, 2005). To promote ICCC, Anglophone universities should integrate intentional pedagogical approaches facilitating the ICCC skills and knowledge building through self-reflection, experiential learning, anthropological research and visualisation, relevant theoretical courses, in-class activities encouraging reflective and critical thinking, adequate teacher training and active teachers’ engagement in tailoring and applying the learning and teaching practice as well as adequate evaluation and assessment (Leavitt, Wisdom, & Leavitt, 2017).

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BEYOND L2 GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

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Abstract: *Language acquisition is an ontogenetic, hierarchical, and complex process. In 1957, the psychologist B. F. Skinner, as a pioneer of behaviourism, described linguistics through human behavior in his book Verbal Behaviour and explained the learning of a language. Two years later, in 1959, Noam Chomsky criticized his proposal and the learnability of a language. He believed that language is an innate ability and for this reason he established the term “acquisition” to substitute “learning”. The constructivists, on the other hand, suggested that children were sensitive to patterns in the target language which enabled the acquisition process.*

Recent language acquisition trends include the cognitive approach that can foster grammar acquisition. The article has tutorial nature, addressing recent advances in cognitive perception. The analysis of Bulgarian students’ questionnaires reveals the tendency in the students’ expectations to shift language acquisition to the cognitive constructivist approach, based on the work of Jean Piaget (2001) who argues that cognitive development precedes language. The article aims at investigating the barriers the students face while acquiring second language grammar structures rather than studying what they will learn. Besides their cognitive perception, students rely on their internal constructions of knowledge. They themselves construct their knowledge through experience as well as through communication. As Vygotsky (1978) states thought and language become linked through communication.

Key words: *acquisition, learning, cognition, cognitive constructivist approach*

1. Introduction

Two main positions can be distinguished when talking about the acquisition of language. On one hand, some argue (Chomsky, 1959; Skinner, 1957) that children are born with an innate ability to learn languages. Chomsky (2012) believes that language acquisition is a gradual build-up of knowledge that increases competence within the language. According to the same author, the cognitive approach allows the student to make mistakes and study from them.

On the other hand, other linguists believe that children construct their language depending on the input (Scheffler, 2015). Piaget (2001) believes that learners construct their language through experience. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky (1978) believed that children construct their knowledge through social interaction,

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“learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function” (1978, p. 90).

Both Piaget (2001) and Vygotsky’s (1978) theories of learning have been used to explain the methods that are regularly used in learning a language at an early age. When we compare and contrast them, we can easily see their understanding of cognitive development. The difference between them is that Piaget believes independent self-learning is essential while Vygotsky argues that learning should be directed by a teacher. When both theories are used together, there is a great opportunity to help children develop critical thinking skills and cognitive awareness.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between language and thought, expressed in the theories of different researchers. The language determines what we can see. The language is also our “mental organ”. Thus, learning a second language can broaden our view of the world.

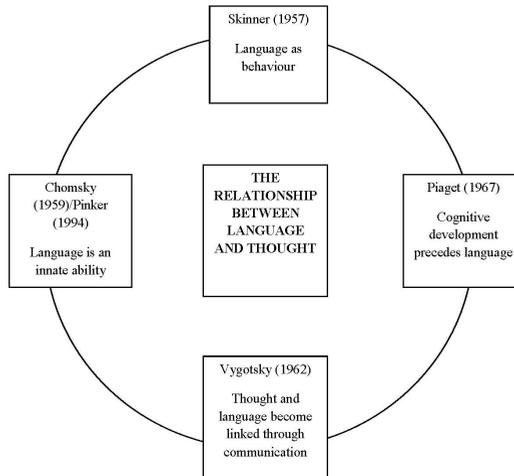


Figure 1. The relationship between language and thought.

According to Boers and Lindstromberg (2008), the cognitive approach emphasizes the constructing of linguistic knowledge and rules.

The article argues that the relationship between the psycholinguistic reality of language and the student’s production of the target language can foster students’ efficient learning and their ability to use the foreign language.

2. Aim and research questions

The aim of the paper is to explore the possibilities of the cognitive approach to foster EFL teaching and learning and investigate the barriers primary education

students face while acquiring second language grammar structures. As a result, the following research questions arose:

- Can the cognitive EFL model of teaching foster the learning of a foreign language?
- Is practice necessary to grasp the grammar of a language?

3. Methodology

The learning environment

With respect to the EFL university context, the cognitive approach tends to resolve the linguistic knowledge gaps. That is why, the deductive way of teaching was well supplemented.

The teacher structured the lessons according to the cognitive dimensions in learning foreign languages focusing on metalinguistic awareness, cognitive competence, and knowledge structuring skills to develop students' target knowledge and skills.

Students were exposed to English as the target language and as a result this provided a source of modelling in regards to the production of the language.

Research design

The experimental learning was implemented for 6 weeks (6 sessions), from November 2018 till December 2018, at the Faculty of Education, Konstantin Preslavsky University in Shumen, Bulgaria. The teaching model included 1 initial lesson, 4 study lessons, and 1 test per group. The classes were held twice a week and the overall number of academic hours per group was 12. Data were collected with the help of a pre-test, a post-test, and a questionnaire in both groups involved in the study.

Participants

The focus group included 16 students, taking their second and third year at the university. The participants were divided into a control group (CG) and an experimental group (EG). The learners from both the control and the experimental groups took a basic course of training within the university's Bachelor program, Primary school education with a foreign language (English).

Description of the teaching framework

The study aimed at improving students' linguistic competence and overcoming the barriers they face while acquiring second language grammar structures by means of the cognitive approach. The sessions included a variety of activities with collaborative (peer-to-peer or in larger groups) and independent learning to obtain a set of skills or knowledge.

The teaching of both groups dealt with the same grammar units, skills, and learning materials but they were taught in different models.

In the traditional teaching model the focus was on language acquisition through the inductive way of language and grammar presentation. Thus, in teaching the control group the traditional methodology was used in conducting the drills, translation in the classroom was allowed, and written language was developed. The students used mainly textbooks and workbooks in their work – Straightforward Intermediate Student's Book/Workbook and Straightforward Upper-Intermediate Student's Book/Workbook respectively for the third- and fourth-year students.

The cognitive teaching model, on the other hand, also contained elements of the traditional teaching model but the important part was the cognitive-based strategy. It followed Kecskes' conceptual fluency framework (Kecskes & Papp, 2000) which focused on meaningful learning and practice. The activities aimed at developing cognitive drills to master the acquired knowledge.

In the experimental group the additional cognitive-based tasks included comprehending linguistic concepts and deriving rules, inference of knowledge, structuring, and applying the new grammar units. Spoken target language (English) was used in the classroom.

The activities which the students of the experimental group completed were designed to stimulate substitution, mutation, and transformation drills.

Using mutation drills students had to change the form of words using the inflections of verbs and nouns. The agreement between the constituent parts in a sentence was also practised in this type of activities.

Transformation drills involved learners in consciously manipulating language patterns, which raised their awareness of structure. Students had to change the word order, add or delete grammatical constituents, change sentences from affirmative to negative, from active to passive voice, from indicative to interrogative, imperative, or subjunctive mood, and from simple to compound or complex sentences.

Data collection and data presentation

The aim of the study is to find the way to organize learning to foster the development of cognitive skills in EFL students. Quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through communication activities during the experiment and survey questionnaires. The analyses for this study compare outcomes for students in the experimental group with their counterparts in the control group at the beginning and immediately after the experimental learning.

Data presentation included questions, suggesting either a multiple choice or a free answer, which the students completed.

Discussion

The use of grammar was assessed in CG and EG. The number of the acquired grammar units at the end of the sessions in CG was 3, while in EG it was 8. The results show higher gain in EG by 5. The difference between the number of the acquired units in each group at the beginning and the end of the experimental learning was also significant: for CG it was 2, whereas for EG it was 7, which proves the greater impact of the cognitive teaching model on the learners' language acquisition.

The majority of students, both from the CG and the EG, pointed out in the questionnaires negative factors, which, however, are due to the educational conditions, while the positive changes in the EG could be assigned to the use of the cognitive teaching model.

Here are some questions that were asked:

Are you satisfied with what you have learned?

Did you enjoy your learning?

What was difficult for you?

What kind of activities did you like?

The students from EG said that they liked speaking in the target language when assisting each other on issues they did not understand, when asking the teacher for some explanation, and when completing a task. Five students from CG preferred speaking in the mother tongue because they did not want to make mistakes. They were afraid of misunderstanding the instructions.

Most students from EG indicated that they faced challenges with grammar while others pointed out that they struggled with parts of speech. Three students from CG mentioned that they had problems with grammar, especially passive voice, reported speech, and use of tenses. Two students from the same group said they needed more help in constructing conditional sentences, as well as they had difficulties with subject and verb agreement. Three students from EG said they did not encounter any problems.

Traditional exercises, such as gap-filling, multiple choice, and open the brackets, were used in the control group. Generally, there are numerous barriers to learning a second language, such as environment, age, motivation, or exposure to English. But the most important aspect in CG was the mother tongue, which affected second language learning, especially grammar, negatively.

In the experimental group the traditional exercises were replaced by substitution, mutation, and transformation drills, which required a certain amount of thinking. Morphemes and syntax were the main barriers the students from EG had to overcome in learning English as a second language. However, the present study

did not look at morphemes and syntax as linguistic components on their own, rather at whether students lack the skills to apply them in writing and speaking in English or not.

The results show that the acquisition of the target knowledge in EG can improve students' linguistic competence.

Students needed to learn how to ask questions and listen carefully when a person replied. The teacher had to bring students out of themselves by creating a supportive environment. Role-play was used in the classroom in activities such as conversations with friends, talking on the telephone at work or asking for help in dangerous situations.

Understanding the cognitive processes involved in L2 production is a key factor for determining if teaching is adequate to the psycholinguistic reality of language processing in production. In order to understand how L2 production works, we first need to understand how L1 operates. In this way, we can easily explain the negative transfer from the mother tongue. The present article follows Willem Levelt's model of L1 production (Levelt, 1993) which describes the process of speaking from intention to articulation.

There are two reasons for choosing Levelt's model. Firstly, it has been the most influential model in L2 production research. Therefore, it permits comparisons with explanations and findings made in other studies. Secondly, Levelt's production model is relevant to this study because it complements the explanation of other processes which mediate language processing such as attention and memory.

Levelt's model (1993) consists of a number of components which are responsible for different aspects of speech production. It starts with the conceptualizer. It is responsible for generating the communicative intention. The declarative knowledge is used to encode it in what is about to be said.

Later on, in the formulator, the process of grammatical encoding begins with the retrieval of lexical items from the mental lexicon. Lexical items are retrieved with the information that is relevant for the construction of the syntactic environment of the word. The second step of formulating is morphological and phonological encoding.

In the articulator the phonetic and articulatory plan is executed. The product of articulation is overt speech.

Levelt's model reveals a number of incongruities with the dominant teaching paradigm. First, as the model demonstrates, lexis and grammar represent an inseparable unity. Moreover, speech is lexically driven in that lexical components precede syntactic processing. In the meantime, most of the foreign language textbooks treat grammar and lexis separately and fail to reflect this crucial

characteristic of speech production. Second, in Levelt's model, grammar is tied to individual words, i.e. it is stored in lexical entries and constitutes part of the speaker's lexical knowledge. This seems to run counter to the commonplace practice of using generalized rules in instruction: learners are usually provided with the rules that apply to a group of words. Thus, the explicit knowledge of generalized rules will be applied to specific language and will become implicit through practice (Ellis, 1993).

4. Conclusion and implications

Levelt's model points to the critical role of cognition but although most aspects of L2 production can be explained by models of L1 production, we have to explain some peculiarities of L2 speech as well.

In the meantime, the emphasis on the cognitive aspect of language learning encourages students to create the language while applying the rules at the same time. The above incongruities may be attributed to the fact that the dominant teaching paradigm relies on Generative (Chomskyan) Linguistics (Ellis, 2001). According to Generative Linguistics, the mind has a module for language acquisition – language acquisition device (LAD) – that is unique and separate from the rest of cognition. Knowledge about language, according to this view, is “competence grammar”, a complex set of rules and constraints that allows people to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences (Ellis, 1998).

The study tried to determine how the activities and approaches to learning English can overcome the barriers to improve language skills.

As a result, at the end of the sessions, students spoke with enthusiasm, their accent and pronunciation were not affected by their mother tongue. The grammar they used was satisfactory although there were still some mistakes.

The cognitive constructivist framework provided a variety of activities to challenge students, enhance their learning, help them to discover new ideas and construct their own knowledge. It is the researcher's opinion that lots of issues need to be considered in the process of learning – the purpose, time, syllabi, teaching and learning methods.

As the experimental study demonstrated, traditional instruction needs much time to explain the meaning of new language items, as it is based on using only the target language in the classroom. The cognitive approach, on the other hand, permits using the mother tongue, eliminating obstacles for students' efficient and successful experience. The topic, learning materials and the set of activities in both teaching models created a challenging and motivating learning environment for widening students' linguistic knowledge, but the cognitive-based model helped the teacher to provide a more efficient and rich context in

which students can exchange ideas and investigate problems. Thus, the designed cognitive model of teaching created opportunities to enhance EFL teaching.

Implications for EFL methodology from this study suggest that cognitive-based approach to teaching can be used effectively in designing a motivating, enjoyable and effective learning environment.

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**BOOK REVIEW: WOJCICKI, E. (2019).
HOW TO RAISE SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE:
SIMPLE LESSONS FOR RADICAL RESULTS.
BOSTON, NEW YORK:
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT**

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Following its international premiere on May 1, 2019, the book written by Esther Wojcicki is now available on the Bulgarian market under the title *Как да отгледаме успешни личности – 5 принципа за възпитание на целеустремени деца от „Кръстницата“ на Силициевата долина* (literal translation: *How to raise successful people – 5 principles how to educate driven children by the “Godmother” of the Silicon Valley*) thanks to the Publishing House of *Assenevtsi Trade*.

Although the book sounds like yet another piece on parenting or like one of the so-called self-help books, it is far from that. The fact that it is written by one of the first women journalists in the US, a teacher with work experience of more than 40 years, and a mother of three successful women, predetermines its value. For those interested in social networks and video sharing platforms the name Wojcicki might sound familiar, as Esther is the mother of Susan Wojcicki, the co-founder of Google and CEO of YouTube. The other two Wojcicki daughters have also managed to find their own path and be successful in male-dominated spheres: Janet Wojcicki is a professor of pediatrics at the University of California-San Francisco, and Anne Wojcicki is founder and CEO of 23andMe, a genetic company which strives to empower patients so they receive transparent information on their health. All three Wojcicki daughters have grown to be the individuals they are today as a result of the way they were brought up and educated.

As Esther herself states, there should be Nobel Prizes on parenting and education as “They are the two most important things we do in our society. How we raise and educate our children determines not only the people they become but the society we create” (Wojcicki, 2019, p. xix). Using her own life and work experience, Esther Wojcicki describes her philosophy of parenting

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and successful education as built around the development of skills and values defined as TRICK (Trust, Respect, Independence, Collaboration, and Kindness). Esther views these values as fundamental for the development of children able to thrive in this fast and competitive world.

The book is logically built around these five values and each one of them is duly explained and backed up with examples from Esther Wojcicki's personal and professional life. As Wojcicki herself states, the problem of today's education is that it does not allow students to think independently and outside the box. Instead, it postulates that teachers are the "omniscient" authorities who are infallible and right in everything they teach and that children do not have a say in what gets taught in school; both teachers and children follow a curriculum that allows little room for creativity and students simply have to rote learn things they do not fully understand and things they are not interested in. This is one of the major issues Wojcicki tries to provide a working solution for in her book. Using her own experience gained from her classes in Journalism, Grammar and English, Esther Wojcicki shows that teachers can be creative in the ways they teach and at the same time they can gain respect and recognition based on their professionalism, rather than on authority, which is of great importance as the identity of the teacher can influence positively and motivate students' learning ability (see also Ivanova, 2019). Discussing the identity of the teacher further, Wojcicki also states that looking back at one's childhood and analysing the experiences people have gone through as children helps them make sense of some of their individual traits³ and at the same time makes them understand better the challenges students face. Thus teachers can relate better to their students and try to see the process of education from their perspective. Wojcicki (2019) is convinced that showing trust, being respectful, innovative, understanding and kind to one's students gains their respect and motivates them to learn and achieve their goals.

Teaching results prove to be higher when students find themselves in a trusting environment where they feel valued as people and when they are interested in the things they do⁴. As Esther herself states "Whenever kids can be experts in something, they feel good about themselves. They can be experts in Minecraft or in insects or whatever they want. It doesn't matter. They just need to be experts." (Wojcicki, 2019, p. 77). This gives students better self-esteem and they participate actively in their own education. When children find their calling

3. Here Esther Wojcicki closely resembles Maria Montessori's philosophy that the child is the man of tomorrow, or put in a different way, that childhood predetermines one's adulthood. That is why it is very important that children from a very young age should be educated (or prepared) for life but this should happen following their natural processes of growth (see Montessori, 1946).

4. This idea very closely resembles Montessori's who using Herbart's methodology postulates that interest is the factor that "keeps the mind amused [...] plunged in the idea" (Montessori, 2016, p. 34).

they can develop and prosper. However, if they follow somebody else's dream of what they should be, they do not develop their full potential because they simply do not feel the other person's ideas as their own and they cannot find the necessary motivation⁵.

Furthermore, Wojcicki claims that in order for TRICK to be effective the teachers/ parents should model the values they are trying to promote and teach – a fact supported by research in the field of neuroscience (see Gunn, 2018). Just like a parent preparing her/ his children for life, Esther has been preparing her students for the profession of journalists, giving them enough freedom to make their own educated decisions working on the school newspaper: the students choose their own editors, topics that get published, ways to research the issues at hand, and means to obtain funding, to mention but a few.

In addition, although not defined as such, Wojcicki's philosophy closely resembles the research carried out on social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools which includes "values development, conflict resolution, anger management, self-esteem enhancement, peer mediation, and several classroom-based interventions within subject area teaching" (Martin, 2012, p. 1469; see also Weissberg, 2016; Gun, 2018; CASEL, 2019). Moreover, Goleman (n.d.) claims that SEL programs occurred as a "war on..." a particular problem and they "also taught children specific social-emotional skills like self-awareness, self-management, empathy, perspective taking, and cooperation. In short, they were lessons in emotional intelligence" which ultimately help them face the challenges in their lives – the things Esther Wojcicki has managed to achieve through the implementation of the values of TRICK.

Thus, rather than being simply a book on parenting, Esther Wojcicki's *How to raise successful people* (2019), provides guidance into new and successful methods of education which are not only theoretical but prepare students for real life and develop them as trustworthy, reliable, independent, cooperative and kind individuals.

5. Schunk (2012, p. 346) states that when students are motivated to learn they follow what has been taught in class, linking the new information with the old and finding other ways to complete projects and acquire additional knowledge. "They choose to work on tasks when they are not required to do so; in their spare time they read books on topics of interest, solve problems and puzzles, and work on computer projects. In short, motivation engages students in activities that facilitate learning." (ibid.) and this is what has been observed in Wojcicki's classes on Journalism and during production week when the school journal *Campanile* is published.

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