Divided
by a Common Language

**English Across
National, Social,
and Cultural Boundaries**

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and Cultural Boundaries

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Contents

Preface

This monographic volume presents ten selected studies exploring the multiple interrelationships between language and the communities of speakers who sustain it, focusing on the various roles that language plays for its users, both native and non-native. On the empirical side of things, the studies included in this volume focus on the English language and its socio-cultural and educational contexts. The multifarious relationships between language and the communities of its users are addressed here from different perspectives and points of view. All the different threads find their synthesis in the ways in which language, a carrier of culture and marker of national, social and cultural identity, reflects the changes taking place in the communities using it as a tool for interpersonal communication, accumulation, storage and dissemination of information, social interactions, transmission of culture, and many other purposes, which are the focus of this volume. The diverse topics explored by the authors speak to the richness and complexity of the social and cultural meanings of language and the importance of questions of language ownership, language attitudes, and linguistic as well as cultural diversity.

The topics presented here are divided into two broad themes, included in Part 1 and Part 2. The studies assembled in **Part 1** are concerned with the role that language plays in the development and maintenance of social, political and cultural relations between speakers sharing the same language and broad cultural heritage, and yet divided by national, social or ethnic boundaries. They focus on the role that social, historical, political, and aesthetic factors play in the views on language and in the changes in public language and public communication.

Izabela Curyłło-Klag is concerned with the differences in the perspective on language of two important literary figures of the 20th century, George Orwell and James Joyce, both preoccupied with the role that language plays for the communities of its users. While both Orwell and Joyce might have approved of the birth of the internet as a channel for the free expression of individual thought and experience, the picture of the language used on the web, especially the emergence of *Global English* accommodating immense linguistic variation, the birth of new genres and text-types as well as networking, intertextual forms of communication, speak against Orwell's fears of the decline of language liberated from clear rules and forms of expression, and in favor of Joyce's firm beliefs in the creative potential that language affords its users.

Beata Piątek traces the development of the policy of multiculturalism in Great Britain, which until recently used to embody public respect for Britain's diverse cultural groups and was a hallmark of its modernity. The policy has recently come under attack, as a result of which also the word 'multiculturalism', once positive, has gained rather strong, negative connotations. Beata Piątek explains the reasons for the changes in the attitudes to both the term and the concept that it signifies, showing how language embodies different, at times conflicting views of social and political reality.

In a study from which the present volume takes its title, **Christopher Reeves** addresses the question whether a shared language and a similar culture can have a significant impact on the development of a close and strong relationship between two English-speaking countries: Great Britain and the United States of America. The question is studied in relation to the Anglo-American alliance that came into existence during WWII and has since shaped the political ties between the two countries. While the common culture and the common language may well have contributed to the success of the special relationship between Great Britain and the United States of America, there are still clear demarcation lines between the two nations, which aptly demonstrates that a common language can still belong to distinct national communities.

Anna Tereszkiewicz considers the influence that the development of the new means of expression on the web is having on public communication, with web users having been afforded a unique opportunity of contributing information and commenting on it in the sections of user-created content added by many news publishers. However, the platforms are used not only for citizen-journalism, but also, if not mainly, for self-presentation, which is characterized by informality, personalization and subjectivity. As a result, the traditional distinction between dissemination of information and self-expression is becoming blurred in mainstream journalism, and the informal, often affective language and style of user-contributions, is beginning to influence both the content and the style of news reporting. In this way, the new participatory culture of internet users is shaping the public discourse and demonstrating the blurring of the traditional boundaries between forms and styles of communication.

Dorota Tkaczyk looks at the rap sub-culture, focusing on the distinctness of rap lyrics, and demonstrates how it can be traced to the distinctness of the Afro-American Oral Tradition, whose linguistic medium is Afro-American Vernacular English, a variety of American English. The boundaries that separate rap from mainstream American culture are set up by language plays, abuse of language, and narrativizing techniques that draw directly upon the Afro-American Oral Tradition. Violating important standards of mainstream

American culture, rap lyrics clearly speak to the influence that ethnic culture can have on the linguistic behavior and language attitudes of language users and to the clashes that result from different cultural and linguistic standards.

The studies gathered in **Part 2** are concerned with the effects that the growing number of *Learner English* varieties as well as the emergence of new occupational styles of English facilitated by the development of computer-mediated forms of communication are having on problems of the nativeness/non-nativeness distinction, which has featured prominently in applied linguistics, both in translation studies and in studies on bilingualism and EFL methodology.

Agata Hołobut explores the impact of the linguistic and cultural foreignness of non-native characters in selected American comedies on the development of the plot and the comic potential of the films, and shows how these aspects are reflected (or lost) in film translation. At the same time, her study illustrates how the need to represent non-nativeness in translation from English results in creative coinage in the translator's native language.

Maria Jodłowiec takes up the important question of the linguistic norm or standard in EFL theory and practice in the age of global communication, in which the use of English in distant geographical locations and disparate political, economic, social and educational contexts, has given rise to the birth of distinct varieties of English known as *Learner Englishes* characterized by specific linguistic and socio-pragmatic features distinguishing them from the standard varieties used by native speakers of English. Focusing on the *Learner Englishes* spoken in Europe, which can be referred to as the *Euro-English* variety, she warns against the concept of emergent varieties of English as an educational standard, pointing out the dangers of downplaying both the cultural and the linguistic meaning of language in the EFL educational context.

Marcin Kleban examines the lingua franca status of English, focusing on the similarities and differences in the use of English by native and non-native speakers in a synchronous online academic discussion, and argues for the recognition of English as a tool of communication for *communities of practice*, to which both native and non-native speakers of English belong.

Monika Kusiak is concerned with the role of metacognitive and background knowledge in the development of reading skills and the implications that both types of knowledge have for teaching reading in the EFL classroom. An extensive overview of the literature dedicated to the facilitation of reading is offered to validate the argument that activation of background knowledge and metacognitive strategies can have a positive effect if relevant factors, including the linguistic level, age and general intellectual development of the learners, can be controlled.

Finally, **Ewa Pałka** demonstrates the richness and complexity of the concept of culture, discusses the significance of the cultural context for EFL teaching and learning, and overviews some guidelines for effective intercultural communication that have been offered in the EFL literature. As one language can be used across a whole range of disparate cultures, the need for teaching culture that she argues for clearly indicates its importance as a marker of nativeness, alongside the traditionally recognized linguistic dimension of nativeness.

The ideas presented in this volume will hopefully provoke interesting questions and inspire further research.

Ewa Willim

Part 1

Izabela Curyłło-Klag

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Joyce, Orwell and the World Wide Web. *Globish* from a Literary Perspective

Streszczenie

Praca zestawia ze sobą dwóch pisarzy z pierwszej połowy ubiegłego stulecia i porównuje ich diametralnie różne podejścia do języka angielskiego. Orwell, tworzący w konwencji realistycznej, poświęcił wiele tekstów sztuce prostego i przejrzystego pisania, a w licznych esejach wieszczył rychłe zubożenie i zniekształcenie angielszczyzny pod wpływem totalitarnej nowomowy. Przepowiednie te okazały się całkowicie nietrafne w kontekście przemian historycznych, które nastąpiły w drugiej połowie XX wieku, takich jak dekolonizacja, powstanie społeczeństwa wielokulturowego w Wielkiej Brytanii, rozszerzanie się wpływów kultury amerykańskiej, globalna ekspansja języka angielskiego oraz wynalazek internetu. W drugiej części niniejszego studium obawom Orwella przeciwstawione zostaje modernistyczne podejście do tekstu i języka, widoczne w twórczości Joyce'a, a zwłaszcza w jego ostatnim dziele, *Finnegans Wake*. Jako tekst otwarty, pełen wielokulturowych aluzji, nawiązujący do całej historii i doświadczenia ludzkości, a przede wszystkim pisany w eksperymentalnym języku, który wyraża tęsknotę za uniwersalną pra-mową sprzed czasów budowy wieży Babel, utwór Joyce'a antycypuje współczesny rozwój fenomenu pod nazwą 'Globish' oraz nadejście epoki hipertekstu.

1. Introduction: The Orwell Blog

The following essay was prompted by my reading of George Orwell's diary, posted on the Internet in the form of a blog. In 2008 the trustees of the Orwell Prize came up with an ingenious method of introducing this slightly forgotten text to a wider audience. The entries appear a day at a time, under the dates of 70 years ago. By typing on their computers: http://orwelldiaries.wordpress. com/, web users can enjoy the journal piecemeal, in real time, and they are also welcome to post their own comments, which makes the project an intriguing

blend of the old and the new. Given that Orwell started keeping a diary in August 1938, and maintained it on a more or less daily basis till shortly before his death in 1950, the whole enterprise could continue until 2020, though the managers of the project have so far decided to finish the publication on the year 1942, or in fact 2012.

This publicity stunt certainly serves the purpose of maintaining interest in Orwell's work, but it also makes one wonder whether Orwell would have been a blogger if the Internet had existed in his day. The idea was actually debated in the British media after the first entries of Orwell's posthumous blog had been released, and again in 2009 when Britain's most prestigious award for political writing, the Orwell Award, had expanded to include blogs for the first time.[1] The general consensus was that as a champion of democracy and a person concerned about freedom of speech, Orwell would most likely have approved of the web. After all, the web privileges the agency of the individual, and for everyone to have a voice sounds like a fulfillment of the Orwellian dream. Besides, the immediacy of Internet publication would have probably appealed to someone who rarely doubted himself and was almost pathologically productive. The medium would have given Orwell the widest possible audience and the greatest possible impact.

2. Orwellian standards of writing versus the language of the web

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that Orwell would have been appalled by some practices of the blogosphere, especially by the language. We know him as the author of a whole series of diatribes in which he expressed his concern about the quality of written English. What worried him were especially such abuses of language as dead metaphors and obscure grammar, pretentious diction, the use of jargon, lack of precision and transparency, and generally all usages which militate against plain English. He also objected to mental laziness, manifesting itself in appropriating verbal material from other people's language, as well as in a reliance on ready-made phrases, "tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house" (Orwell 1984: 356). The guidelines listed at the end of the famous essay entitled *Politics and the English language* best encapsulate Orwell's idea of what it means to write well:

    i.   Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.

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[1]   See the articles by Agon (2008), Massie (2008) and McCrum (2007). BBC Radio debated the issue on November 17, 2008, and February 06, 2009.

ii. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
iii. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
iv. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
v.   Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
vi. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

(Orwell 1984: 365)

The vast wasteland of verbiage in the Internet is not organized according to these rules, although they are cited approvingly on numerous websites: a Google search for this quote yields 6,050 results. Bloggers in English who reflect on their writing may have encountered Orwell's preaching, but its impact seems still relatively low. "For every carefully crafted, thoughtful expression of opinion, there are a score of half-baked rants, semi-literate and depressing", complains Robert McCrum (2007), an *Observer* columnist and the author of *Globish*, a book about the phenomenon of Global English. The Orwell Award for bloggers may offer some encouragement to improve the quality of Internet writing, but the majority of web users are not likely to attain the Orwellian ideal, nor even to aspire to it.

3. Orwell's unfounded predictions of linguistic decline

The question arises: How relevant are Orwell's jeremiads to contemporary writers in English? Writing from the perspective of the grim 1940s, Orwell prophesized that linguistic decline would be caused by newspeak and political propaganda. Convinced that corrupt language has evil mental and moral consequences, he saw a connection between the distortions of the English of the 1940s and the threat of totalitarian ideologies. He warned against the use of euphemism, inflated diction and vagueness of expression as methods of blunting people's awareness and covering up the brutality of politics. Back then, there were causes for concern: "the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan" (Orwell 1984: 362) might indeed be discussed in terms that Orwell found unacceptable. Yet, as Robert McCrum (2007) rightly points out, in the decades that followed the political jargon of the austerity era quickly became derelict, at least in Britain. The decadence Orwell feared did not materialize; instead, English began developing in ways that were probably not predictable until 1950, the year of Orwell's death.

The 1950s, 60s and 70s brought decolonization and the transition to multicultural society, as well as the arrival of popular culture. English was invigorated by the infusion of Americanisms and new vocabulary transplanted from other languages. The clarity and vigor of demotic speech, which Orwell had always admired, began affecting the language of the elites; the status of "BBC English" was challenged by a growing fashion for regional accents. New generations of writers – Angry Young Men, feminists, postmodernists, postcolonial authors – have all given English impetus for growth. In the early 1990s, when Tim Berners-Lee introduced the world wide web to an international community of users, English received a step-up again, becoming a global language, with limitless possibilities for diversification. According to many linguists, what awaits us now is a bilingual future (Graddol 2000: 4), in which an increasing proportion of the world's population will be fluent in two or more languages, one of which is likely to be English.[2]

4. Here Comes Everybody: the multilingual wealth of *Finnegans Wake*

In this context, another writer comes to mind, who has perhaps more aptly envisaged the direction which English could be taking: James Joyce. The gigantic pun of *Finnegans Wake*, admittedly not an obvious choice of book for most Internauts, was written in a language which perhaps in some ways anticipates the English of the future. Essentially based on English grammar, it contains intrusions from about a hundred languages which, when properly investigated, unfold multiple layers of meaning.[3] The syntax is familiar, but the composite words, neologisms and puns cause Joyce's novel to resemble an extended version of Lewis Carroll's poem "*Jabberwocky*",[4] except that *Finnegans Wake* is not a nonsensical text; rather, its language is overcharged with too many, often contradictory meanings. Joyce created it to suit the purposes of his novel, which opens itself to all history, culture and experience, and whose

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[2]   According to BBC Radio 4's website *The Routes of English*, it is estimated that 1.3 billion people will use English as a first or second language by 2050.

[3]   It has been the experience of various *Finnegans Wake* reading groups that the book is best read aloud, and in an international company of readers.

[4]   The poem features in L. Carroll's *Through the looking-glass and what Alice found there.* Wandering through a strange land which later turns out to be a dreamscape, Alice finds a book written in a language she cannot read. The first stanza of the poem runs: "Twas brillig, and the slighty toves/ Did gyre and gimble in the wabe; All mimsy were the borogoves/ And the mome raths outgrabe" (Carroll 1872/2010: 132).

action takes place at night, when our perception is limited and unreliable.[5]
In one of many passages in which the text refers to itself we read that "in the
Nichtian glossery which purveys aprioric roots for aposteriorious tongues this
is nat language at any sinse of the world" (Joyce 1939/2000: 83.12). It is not
a language, because it breaks the rules and so it is corrupt (there is a reference
to 'sins of the world'), but, likewise, it is a night language ('nat' is Danish for
'night'), a sort of dreamspeak designed to express the unconscious. Joyce frus-
trates our expectations of logical, "daytime" prose, but at the same time offers
us something far richer and far more exciting than ordinary English. Consider
a brief passage in which a gossipy washerwoman asks her interlocutor to speak
more plainly:

> Emme for your reussischer Honddu jarkon! Tell us in franca langua!
> And call a spate a spate. Did they never sharee you ebro at skol, you
> antiabecedarian?

> (Joyce 2000: 198.18–20)

The two washerwomen are washing clothes by the river Liffey, but to give
their story a more universal dimension, Joyce packs this section of the book
with names of other rivers. Within the excerpt quoted above, a careful read-
er should detect eight of them: Emme, Reuss, Honddu, Cher, Jarkon, Shari,
Ebro and Skollis. The opening reproach 'Emme for your' is a transposition
of the French 'merde pour votre', but also an echo of 'Damn you for your';
the word 'reussicher' hints at the German word for 'Russian', while 'Honddu'
brings to mind 'Hindu'. The word 'jarkon' is nearly a homophone of 'jargon',
and 'franca langua' means 'lingua franca', but also 'frank, straightforward lan-
guage' and possibly 'French language' too, suggesting profanity, just as in the
phrase 'excuse my French'. The idiom 'to call spade a spade' was given an added
value of 'spate', which is 'a sudden rising in a river' but which also collocates
with 'words': 'a spate of words' that the gossiping woman is about to utter.
The final question 'Did they never show you Hebrew at school?', where we
find the Danish 'skole' for 'school', ends on a note friendly to a Slavonic eye
and ear: 'you antiabecedarian,'[6] meaning 'illiterate', which, however, may also

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5   The biographer Richard Ellmann quotes Joyce's apologia for the difficulty of
     Finnegans Wake: "I confess I can't understand some of my critics, like Pound and
     Miss Weaver, for instance. They say it's "obscure". They compare it, of course, with
     Ulysses. But the action of *Ulysses* was chiefly in the daytime, and the action of my
     new work takes place at night. It's natural things should not be so clear at night,
     isn't it now?" (Ellmann 1983: 590).

6   For Joyce's use of Polish in *Finnegans Wake*, see, for example, Bazarnik (1996),
     (2000).

refer to the Dublin Abecedarian Society, instituted in the 18th century for the relief of reduced school-masters and their distressed families. Such a wealth of meaning and multicultural allusions can be found within but three lines of Joyce's text, which, in general, celebrates the fundamental role of language in the history of humanity and searches for some universal discourse, bringing all cultures together again and taking us back to a pre-Babelic state.

5. Liberation from linguistic bounds

Another way in which the language of *Finnegans Wake* seems to anticipate Globish is by undermining the authority of the original, seemingly domineering tongue. As David Norris observes, in his last novel the Irishman Joyce performed an act of

> sophisticated linguistic revenge upon the English colonizers for 800 years of occupation. [He] took over their most prized possession – the language of Milton and Shakespeare, smashed it into fragments and used the resulting 'mess of mottage' to rewrite the history of the world. (Norris and Flint 2000: 151)

In a similar manner, we may expect that the English of the future will be subverted by its non-native speakers: it is them who would be evolving the language in new directions. In the long run, standard English is likely to become a minority dialect, a kind of foundation upon which "new Englishes" will develop, with their alternative syntax, grammar and vocabulary. The future shape of English will no longer be determined in the traditional English-speaking countries, but in Europe, Africa and the Far East.

If Joyce's writing teaches us anything about English, it is definitely a lesson in openness, an attitude most desirable in the era of globalization. During a recent Joyce Symposium in Prague, Bahman Zarrinjooee pointed out that a reader of *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake* must always strive "to liberate himself from the constraints of his own language, from the interpreters whom he might substitute for Joyce, and from his own blindness" (Zarrinjooee 2010). By transcending our limitations we can actually begin to see more. But the linguistic barriers are not the only ones Joyce forces us to overcome; in fact his experimentation takes us further, towards the new epoch of the book.

6. The hypermedia Joyce

The latest trend in Joyce studies hails him as a champion of the open text, hypertexts' patron saint who anticipated the transformative, revolutionary potential of the new media.[7] This approach was pioneered by Marshall McLuhan, who first expanded on how modern communication technologies would put an end to the era of print, and who praised Joyce for his non-linear, non-sequential writing which signifies through a simultaneity of effects. He observed that Joyce's work intuits the potential of electronic media to fuse the world into one consciousness:

> *Finnegans Wake* of James Joyce is a verbal universe in which press, movie, radio, TV merge with the languages of the world to form a Feenichts Playhouse of metamorphoses. (McLuhan 1970: 115)

Then, with the arrival of personal computers, another thinker, Jacques Derrida, proposed the term "Joyceware", comparing Joyce's writing to "a hypermnesiac machine", "capable of integrating all the variables, all the quantitative and qualitative factors", "because you can say nothing that is not programmed on this 1000th generation computer – *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*" (Derrida quoted in Reynolds 1993: 208–209). When the Internet revolution began, Joyce proved up to date again: it was observed that the reading practices which his texts demand bring to mind linkages on the webpage. The cybermedia theorist David Jay Bolter called *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* "hypertexts that have been flattened out to fit on the printed page" (Bolter 1991: 24). Inter-textual and multi-lingual, using a myriad of voices and styles, they make the relationship between reader and text more dynamic as their networks of references clash against the circuits of associations in our brains. The reading process becomes more open, as the relation between what's first and what's next, what's the main body and what's a footnote, is constantly called into question.

7. Concluding remarks

Continually reassessed, Joyce's works are viewed as insightful responses to cultural forms born out of technology, even as it becomes more and more advanced. Anecdotal stories have recently been circulated that Joyce even proph-

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7   See for example the journal of *Hypermedia Joyce Studies* edited by D. Vichnar, and Armand (2006), which is a volume of essays from the Joyce Symposia organized by the Charles University in Prague.

esized the advent of the email, because in a passage from *Finnegans Wake* dealing with postal service, messages and letters, we find the sentence "Speak to us of Emailia" (Joyce 2000: 410.20–27). Compared to the realist Orwell, who limited himself to finding perfect names for phenomena that existed in his time, Joyce was more successful at sensing the shape of the linguistic future to come. But had he lived today and blogged, he would probably fail to receive the Orwell Award. By Orwellian standards, good writing must be "like a window pane" (Orwell 1984: 13) – vivid, concrete and simple, not conceived in any sort of "verbivocovisual" (Joyce 2000: 341.18), "polygluttural" (2000: 117.13), molten Ur-language that the author of *Finnegans Wake* would have offered.

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Beata Piątek

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Has 'Multiculturalism' Become a Dirty Word?

Streszczenie

Czy wielokulturowość jest dziś brzydkim słowem? Takie pytanie można by sobie zadać śledząc wypowiedzi przywódców politycznych Niemiec, Włoch, Francji i Wielkiej Brytanii. Autorka wraca do początków wielokulturowości jako świadomej polityki władz w Wielkiej Brytanii w latach siedemdziesiątych dwudziestego wieku, porównuje różne znaczenia tego słowa w języku angielskim, przedstawia argumenty politycznych przeciwników i zwolenników wielokulturowości w Wielkiej Brytanii oraz modyfikacje tych argumentów w reakcji na ataki terrorystyczne w Nowym Jorku w 2001 roku i Londynie w 2005 roku. Porównanie argumentów obydwu stron pozwala dostrzec brak porozumienia na temat znaczenia słowa 'wielokulturowość'. Zarówno przeciwnicy, jak i zwolennicy kontynuowania tej polityki wobec mniejszości etnicznych i kulturowych są zgodni w wielu kwestiach: obawiają się izolacji społecznej, nawołują do dialogu międzykulturowego i rozwijania postaw obywatelskich.

1. Introduction

On May 9th 2011, the news broadcast by the high-brow Polish radio channel, Radio 2, contained two items in which the Polish equivalent of the English word 'multiculturalism' – 'wielokulturowość', featured prominently. In the first news item, the director of the Book Institute, Grzegorz Gaudan, announced the opening of the Czesław Miłosz festival in Kraków emphasizing its multicultural character. In the second item, the director of Kraków Philharmony, Piotr Szczepanik, declared the, soon to be open, Gustav Mahler festival to be "truly multicultural". As both speakers were referring to the nationalities of guest performers, and the experience of travel and migration in the lives of both celebrated artists, one might wonder if a more old-fashioned word,

'cosmopolitanism' would not have described more precisely what they meant, but it was clear from the context that both cultural professionals used the adjective proudly and with most positive connotations in mind. The audience could infer that in Poland multiculturalism is trendy. This does not seem to be the case in all European countries any more; reports of thousands of refugees from Northern Africa have added to the now ten-year-old fear of Islamist terrorism, which made the Italian, French, German and British leaders speak out against multiculturalism within the last six months. Writing three months after the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, made a speech in Munich, which was reported by the BBC with the heading "State multiculturalism has failed" (BBC News 5th February 2011), I would like to examine the meaning and connotations of this word in English in the course of the twentieth century, as well as to present the various positions in the debate about multiculturalism today.

2. Definitions of 'multiculturalism'

It is significant that the second edition of the OED published in 1989 does not contain a separate entry for 'multiculturalism', it only defines the adjective 'multicultural' as, "of or pertaining to a society consisting of varied cultural groups" (Bembow *et al*. 1989: 79). The first usage of the adjective is recorded in 1941, in *New York Herald Tribune Books* and of the noun in 1965, in Canada. All the sample sentences provided present both words as neutral or positive. In the *Longman dictionary of English language and culture* published in 1992, still only the adjective is defined, but the definition is broader, "including people or teachings from several different cultures" (Rundel *et al.* 1992: 894). This expanded definition reflects a debate about multiculturalism that has been one of the most contentious issues in the American humanities since the late 1980s, when Allan Bloom famously protested against the demise of the traditional Western canon of knowledge, which he saw threatened by the introduction into the university curricula of the works of minority groups and minority cultures together with an insistence that various cultures merit equal respect and academic attention. Wikipedia offers a broad discussion on multiculturalism accompanied by a revision of multicultural policies in various countries. For Wikipedia authors writing in 2010, multiculturalism is a political term which "has come to mean the advocacy of extending equitable status to distinct ethnic and religious groups without promoting any specific ethnic, religious and cultural community values as central". This last definition best describes the policy of multiculturalism which is questioned today in Britain and other Western European countries.

3. History of multiculturalism as government policy in Britain

In Britain, multiculturalism was a policy of the government and local authorities dealing with the tensions and political conflicts caused by the influx of immigrant groups of distinctly different ethnic, religious and cultural background. Immigration after World War II was encouraged by the British Nationality Act of 1948, which gave all Commonwealth citizens free entry into Britain. The immigrants from West Indies and later from the Indian subcontinent arrived as unqualified workforce enticed by the economic prospects offered by the postwar labor shortages in Britain. The first significant group arrived from Jamaica onboard *HMS Empire Windrush* in the summer of 1948; the first anti-immigrant riots directed at West Indians took place in the winter of the same year. The racial tension over public housing and jobs led to Immigration Acts in 1962, 1968 and 1971 which progressively reduced non-white immigration. Popular anti-immigrant feeling in Britain reached its peak in 1968 when Enoch Powell made his ill-famed *Rivers of blood* speech warning that immigration would lead to racial violence and when "a month later a Gallup poll recorded that 74 per cent of Britons supported his views" (Black 1997: 296). Multiculturalism began to be used as a political policy of counter-Powellism, it was built through grassroots mostly on local government level and was based on respect for Britain's diverse cultural groups. This policy resulted in various Race Relations Acts (1968, 1976 and 2000), which provide legal basis for stamping out race discrimination, and secure equal rights of ethnic minorities. One of the most frequently cited documents outlaying multiculturalist policy was written in the wake of Brixton riots in 1981, when the government commissioned an inquiry which resulted in the Scarman Report. Lord Scarman was concerned with the "plight" of the ethnic communities in UK inner cities and their relationship with the rest of the national "community". He concluded that it was essential that "people are encouraged to secure a stake in, feel a pride in, and have a sense of responsibility for their own area". In conclusion he called for a policy of "direct coordinated attack on racial disadvantage" (Rich 1990: 212–13). For a visitor to Western Europe the most visible sign of multicultural policy in Britain was the state's tolerance for religious and cultural practices of ethnic minorities. Unlike in secular France, in Britain a Sikh police officer could wear a turban, and a Muslim woman could work in the NHS with her face covered.

The success of multiculturalism in Britain was first questioned in 1989 during the, so called, *Rushdie affair*. The book burnings, riots and Khomeini's *fatwa*, which forced the author of *The Satanic Verses* into hiding and brought on attacks on publishers and translators all over the world began to change the way in which the West looked at multiculturalism, free speech, radical

Islam and terrorism. Interestingly enough the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in New York and 7/7 in London met with relatively moderate comments about multiculturalism, as if the Rushdie affair had taught the British politicians and journalists to distinguish between British Muslims and radical Islamists. As one of the journalists wrote less than one month after the attacks on London public transport:

> It seems, in fact, that far from being about to crumble, our multicultural society has come to develop strong roots. [...] We are left, despite the tragedies and confusion, with the more normal burden of getting by, being accommodating to one another and to new groups, to transformations and all the social and cultural fluidity that London especially, but not uniquely, has come to embody. (Hewitt 2005)

4. The debate

The debate about British multiculturalism must be distinguished from the way in which the media choose to report it. As Jeremy Harding wrote in his important text on refugees, "bigotry, for the media, is a better story than tolerance" (2000: 7). This is best illustrated by the haste with which the BBC announced that David Cameron declared that "state multiculturalism has failed" in his famous speech during the conference in Munich on February 5th, 2011. In fact, the four-page-long speech on the subject of terrorism and possibilities of preventing young men from joining Islamist extremist groups is very "politically correct", with the PM emphasizing that "Islamist extremism and Islam are not the same thing" (Cameron 2011) and that it is possible that young men are attracted to Islamist extremism due to a crisis of British identity. David Cameron uses the word 'multiculturalism' in his speech only once, when he declares that:

> ...we have allowed the weakening of our collective identity. Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. (Cameron 2011)

A close reading of the text shows that his main target is not multiculturalism *per se*, but specific practices of British authorities and security services which have tried to gain control over Muslim youths by patronizing "non-violent extremists". As he says, "Some organizations that seek to present themselves as a gateway to the Muslim community are showered with public money despite doing little to combat extremism" (Cameron 2011). But he also rec-

ognizes that extremism is a distortion of Islam and appreciates that the vast majority of Muslims in Europe "despise the extremists and their worldview" (Cameron 2011). His main objective is building social cohesion i.e., "meaningful and active participation in society" since, as he says, "we are all in this together" (Cameron 2011). Not much of the above is announced by the title of the report in *The Daily Telegraph*: "Muslims must embrace British values", and its subtitle: "David Cameron declared that the doctrine of multiculturalism has 'failed' and will be abandoned" (Kirkup 2011) goes much further against multiculturalism than the Prime Minister in his speech. Cameron did speak of promoting certain values, but it is a mark of the patriotic feeling of *The Telegraph's* political commentator that he chose to label "freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law, equal rights regardless of race, sex or sexuality" (Cameron 2011) to be "British values" (Kirkup 2011). It is clear that the newspaper reports are colored by the ideology and attitudes of the reporters as *The Guardian* report carried a very different heading: "Cameron begins extremism crackdown as cash withheld from 'suspect groups'" (Wintour and Percival 2011).

In the media the most prominent critic of multiculturalism has been Trevor Philips, most probably due to his position of chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality. The newspapers were eager to report that he declared multiculturalism an obsolete policy, but frequently failed to explain his reasons. In an article published in *The Guardian* in 2004, Philips wrote,

> Integration only works if it both recognizes newcomers' differences and extends complete equality. Celebrating diversity, but ignoring inequality, inevitably leads to the nightmare of entrenched segregation.

In his critique, he focuses on the failure of multiculturalism to secure equality of opportunity for ethnic minorities and on continuing racial discrimination. The journalists do not mention this context when they write that even "Trevor Philips ... has called for multiculturalism to be scrapped" (BBC 2004).

The critic of multiculturalism that most probably inspired David Cameron's speech is Kenan Malik, an Indian-born, left-wing writer and philosopher. He introduces an important distinction into the debate when he points out that "both sides confuse the lived experience of diversity, on the one hand, with multiculturalism as a political process, on the other" (Malik 2010). He goes on to say that:

> The experience of living in a society transformed by mass immigration, a society that is less insular, more vibrant and more cosmopolitan, is positive.

As a political process, however, multiculturalism means something very different. It describes a set of policies, the aim of which is to manage diversity by putting people into ethnic boxes, defining individual needs and rights by virtue of the boxes into which people are put, and using those boxes to shape public policy. It is a case, not for open borders and minds, but for the policing of borders, whether physical, cultural or imaginative. (Malik 2010)

Malik's main objection to multiculturalism is that in an attempt at minimizing conflict, the policy results eventually in isolating various communities.

A similar point is raised by a Dutch sociologist, Paul Scheffer, who first became famous as a critic of multiculturalism in 2000, when he wrote a provocatively titled essay, *The multicultural disaster*, on the demographic situation in the big cities of Western Europe. In his most recent publications, however, he points out that in history, immigration has always had three stages: avoidance, conflict and social compromise, and that Europe has entered the second phase in her relationship with the Muslim immigrants. Like Kenan Malik, Scheffer argues that conflict should not be avoided, that it must be resolved if a compromise is to be reached: "I see the conflict as a sign of integration, as a sign of looking out for an answer to the question how are we going to live together", and to move on "our tolerance has to be redefined: not being indifferent, but being far more active and engaged" (Scheffer 2010) and that this may be achieved by inviting the immigrants to see themselves as citizens. What is more, this process of encouraging the immigrants to participate in the life of the host society requires reciprocity and will force the host society to rethink what being a citizen means (Scheffer 2010). Scheffer's argument throws some light on the current situation in Britain, which, in fact, was also signaled in David Cameron's speech in February, namely the correlation between lack of integration of immigrant groups and a crisis of national identity. The relationship between Englishness, Welshness, Scottishness and Britishness, as well as the meaning of this last term have been discussed for well over a decade now. The devolution of 1999 brought more political and, in the case of Scotland also economic, independence to the nations building the United Kingdom, which resulted in fostering of those national identities and undermining Britishness. The disintegration of British national identity was examined in great detail by Richard Weight, who declared that "Britishness has now virtually disappeared" (Weight 2002: 729); far from regretting the decline, he launched an attack on the political and cultural elites which failed to provide an alternative to an England-dominated, war-obsessed, Eurosceptical and racist British identity (Weight 2002). His account is full of left-wing irreverence for the

traditional institutions, but it still provides a good background for the current debate about British citizenship and makes it quite clear why Gordon Brown's plan to introduce an oath of allegiance for the new citizens, which they were to swear to the Queen, was ridiculed in the press.

Among the defenders of multiculturalism Sir Bhikhu Parekh, a political theorist and Labour peer, holds centre ground objecting to the general tendency to equate multiculturalism with "racial minorities demanding special rights"; he argues that multiculturalism is about "the proper terms of relationship between different cultural communities" and that the standards by which the communities resolve their differences must not come from only one culture, but "must come through an open and equal dialogue between them" (Parekh 2002: 13). Parekh is far from "putting people into ethnic boxes" that Malik objects to, on the contrary, he advocates multiculturalism as "intercultural fusion" (2002: 27). If one looks closely at the arguments on both sides, it becomes quite clear that both the critics and the defenders of multiculturalism are worried by the same symptoms e.g., segregation and ghettoization of immigrants; and calling for similar solutions e.g., dialogue and cooperation. In other words, "the vision of many of those seeking to replace multiculturalism is very much the vision of its original proponents" (Spencer quoted in Lerman 2010). Nick Pearce, the director of Institute for Public Policy Research, a few months after the bomb attacks in London in 2005, defended multiculturalism by stating that:

> the recent challenges to multiculturalism raise at least three ... questions. First, do we need to do more to integrate different communities around a core of common citizenship? Second, can we better tackle community segregation and the social exclusion of minority groups? Third, should we more forcefully insist on basic human rights and democratic norms against some of the claims of different cultures? The answer to all these questions is yes. (Pearce 2005)

David Cameron advocated all the above in the speech in Munich in which, according to the media, he declared the end of multiculturalism.

Britain is not the only European country revising her policy towards immigrants. In a review of a highly controversial book written last year by the former director of the Bundesbank, Thilo Sarrazin, Timothy Garton Ash notes that the badly researched, heavily biased anti-immigrant *Germany abolishes itself* is a cultural and political phenomenon. Garton Ash claims that the book owes its unprecedented popularity to the fact that it is the first book written in post-war Germany on the subject of the integration, or rather, lack of integration of Muslim minority. According to Garton Ash " (2011: 24), "In Ger-

many, not merely the inflammatory, but even the frank discussion of this subject has been constrained by the kind of nervous taboos attacked by Sarrazin and his supporters as 'political correctness'". Keeping a lid on the discussion has brought on a true explosion of frustration and resentment towards immigrants, hence the enthusiastic reception of Sarrazin's book. Timothy Garton Ash admits that Germany is not alone:

> All West European societies are wrestling with the legacy of their multiple past mistakes with respect to immigration and integration. These mistakes include [...] the unacceptable moral and cultural relativism of some of the policies that have passed for 'multiculturalism' during the last decades.
> Sarrazin sums up his recipe for better integration as 'expect more, offer less.' Mine is 'expect more, offer more'. However, that 'more' we offer should not be indiscriminate welfare benefits or state-subsidized multiculturalist folderol, but good education, professional training, genuinely equal opportunities in the labor market, and a welcoming, open, free society, confident in upholding its own values, such as free speech, tolerance and equal rights for women. The 'more' that a free country is entitled to expect of those who wish to live in it is summed up by Mustafa Cerić, the thoroughly down-to-earth grand mufti of Bosnia-Herzegovina. His simple message to the immigrant: first, respect the laws of the land; second, learn the language; third, do something useful for the society in which you live. (Garton Ash 2011: 24)

5. Final remarks

As I have shown in this short paper, even if 'multiculturalism' has not become a dirty word, although Anushka Ashtana from *The Observer* fears so, and offers her own life experience as proof of its success (2010), certainly the consensus that multiculturalism is the best way to secure a balance between respect for diversity and a sense of shared national belonging is gone. The future of multiculturalism seems to be as uncertain as its meaning in the mouths of various politicians and journalists.

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Divided by a Common Language?
The "Special Relationship" between
Britain and the United States

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszej pracy jest próba oceny, do jakiego stopnia posiadanie wspólnego języka przyczynia się do wykształcenia szczególnych więzi politycznych pomiędzy „białymi" krajami anglojęzycznymi. Koncentrując się przede wszystkim na tak zwanym „szczególnym partnerstwie" pomiędzy Wielką Brytanią a Stanami Zjednoczonymi, autor argumentuje, że posługiwanie się językiem angielskim w obydwu krajach, jak również inne podzielane wartości kulturowe, z pewnością pomogło w wykształceniu się wyjątkowo silnych więzi, jakie łączą te kraje. Zarazem jednak autor podkreśla, że anglo-amerykańskie partnerstwo wyrasta ze szczególnych okoliczności historycznych, nade wszystko z doświadczeń drugiej wojny światowej oraz krystalizacji Zimnej Wojny. Wspólne interesy oraz przekonanie o istnieniu wspólnych przeciwników politycznych można uznać za główne czynniki, które zbliżyły obydwa kraje. Wspólny język był zawsze czynnikiem drugorzędnym, choć wzmacniającym ten proces. Co więcej, od zakończenia Zimnej Wojny związki Wielkiej Brytanii z Europą zostały zintensyfikowane, podczas gdy Ameryka stała się krajem mniej anglosaskim. Może to skutkować osłabieniem więzi między obydwoma krajami w przyszłości.

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1. Introduction

Margaret Thatcher, Britain's prime minister from 1979 to 1990, once described the nature of the Anglo-American relationship in characteristically forthright terms. She said: "There is a union of mind and purpose between our peoples which is remarkable and which makes our relationship a truly

remarkable one. It is special. It just is, and that's that" (quoted in Reynolds 1988/89: 89). Clearly the "iron lady" was not prepared to brook any debate on this point. Historians and political scientists have, nonetheless, spilt a great deal of ink asking whether the diplomatic relationship between the United States and Great Britain is "special", and if it is, then what exactly makes it special. Most observers agree that the political relationship between the two countries is indeed unusually close, and when attempting to explain why this is the case, often point to the fact that Britain and the United States share a common language. Indeed, many people (particularly in Europe) assume that the two countries are essentially joined at the hip. From this perspective, Britain itself is little more than the fifty-first state, or a kind of off-shore America – the Atlantic's answer to Hawaii.

The shared language is certainly the most obvious attribute that Americans and Britons have in common. Yet not all specialists who have written about the "special relationship" are agreed that this is by any means the single most important factor when it comes to explaining why this diplomatic relationship is "special". Broadly speaking, two different schools of thought have emerged among those writers who have attempted to explain the existence of the "special relationship." First there is the *functionalist* or *realist* school, who argue that the relationship arose because both countries developed common interests. They emphasize that the Anglo-American alliance came into existence in the midst of the Second World War, and came of age during the Cold War. In contrast to the realists, the *sentimentalist* school argue that a shared history and a common culture (including the shared language) are indeed important elements within the relationship (cf. Smith 1990).

The starting point for any discussion has to be whether or not the "special relationship" does in fact exist. Given the asymmetry in power between the two countries, it is self-evidently the case that the relationship is (and probably always has been) rather more special to the British than it has been to the United States. However, if by the word 'special' we mean different or abnormal, then it is difficult to argue against the fact the relationship is unique in several important respects. David Reynolds has listed three attributes of the relationship – or what he describes as *specialités* – that make it unique. These are the unprecedented levels of diplomatic, intelligence and nuclear collaboration (Reynolds 1985/86: 10–13). Each of these three elements effectively sets the Anglo-American relationship apart from other "normal" diplomatic relationships. To put it bluntly, Britain is the only country in the world that is given the opportunity to purchase one of America's most sophisticated nuclear delivery systems.

This paper will begin by discussing the origins of the relationship. It will argue that the relationship was born out of both countries mutual need to defeat

Nazi Germany. The relationship then persisted into the postwar period because of the crystallization of the Cold War. It therefore argues that the functionalist/realist school of thought is broadly correct in its analysis that shared interests are largely responsible for the emergence of the "special relationship". It will also argue, however, that the shared cultural heritage has also been vital in allowing the relationship to function effectively. Simply put, while shared interests have underpinned the relationship, it is hard to see how it could have worked so effectively had it not been for the fact that Britons and Americans spoke a common language.

2. The foundations of the relationship and World War II

Winston Churchill first coined the phrase "special relationship" in a speech that he gave in Fulton, Missouri, in 1946. The speech is best remembered for Churchill's description of Europe being divided by an "iron curtain". After warning darkly of the threat that the Soviet Union posed to Western Europe, the former prime minister then emphasized the need for a 'fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples'. He went on to say:

> This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States. This is no time for generalities, and I will venture to be precise. Fraternal association requires not only the growing friendship and mutual understanding between our two vast but kindred systems of society, but the continuance of the intimate relationship between our military advisers, leading to common study of potential dangers, the similarity of weapons and manuals of instructions, and to the interchange of officers and cadets at technical colleges (Winston Churchill (n.d.) [?]

Churchill was the first of what would be a succession of British prime ministers who believed firmly that it was in Britain's best interests to maintain a very close diplomatic relationship with the United States. Many writers, when seeking to elucidate the nature of the relationship between Britain and the United States, often resort to familial analogies. Walter Russell Meade, for instance, has likened the Anglo-American relationship to that of two cousins working in a family firm:

> We can be as annoyed with each other as we like, and even temporarily estranged, but the family tie is still there. We may have different views about how the family company should be managed, and we are both

capable of trying to extract the maximum advantage in a quiet but sometimes sharp competition with each other, but the prosperity and security of both cousins remains tied to the health of the firm (Mead 2008: xii).

British people even today still occasionally refer to Americans as "the cousins". Churchill, however, literally had family ties to the US, for his mother was an American (Danchev 1996: 738–739). This genetic transatlantic connection perhaps meant that he was, unlike some of his immediate predecessors, predisposed to adopt a pro-American policy. Certainly, one of his first acts after his return to government as first lord of the admiralty in September 1939 was to begin what would be a lengthy wartime correspondence with the president of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt (Kershaw 2008: 209).

Churchill, as Britain's wartime prime minister, was one of the chief architects of the "special relationship" between Britain and the United States. As one authority on the "special relationship" has commented: "Whatever was special about the special relationship was learned in the schoolroom of the Grand Alliance" (Danchev 1996: 749). Churchill had what would be the first of a series of meetings with his opposite number in the US, President Franklin Roosevelt, in August 1941. The British prime minister traveled across the Atlantic in a British battleship, *HMS Prince of Wales*, and met Roosevelt, who arrived on one of his own destroyers, just off the coast of Newfoundland in Placentia Bay. The United States was still not at war, but Churchill and his advisors were nonetheless at pains to establish a rapport with their American counterparts. The meeting is best remembered for the unveiling of the Atlantic Charter, which was to all intents and purposes – despite the neutrality of the US – a set of war aims. The Charter promised, among other things, that democracy would be restored to occupied Europe (Roberts 2009: 53–4).

The second wartime summit between the two leaders, which was code named Arcadia, occurred during Christmas time 1941–42. The United States had itself recently become a belligerent, and was still in the process of coming to terms with the consequences of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the sudden assault on Southeast Asia. A number of far reaching decisions were taken at this summit meeting. One of the most significant was the Anglo-American decision to establish what became known as the Combined Chiefs of Staff. This was essentially a committee of the most senior British and American military officers, whose purpose was to devise a common Anglo-American grand strategy in both Europe and Asia. The Combined Chiefs of Staff would also advise both Roosevelt and Churchill; the two leaders would also closely co-ordinate their own decisions when it came to the prosecution of the war. These two summit meetings between the British and American political and

military leaders effectively laid down the foundations of the wartime alliance between Britain and the United States (cf. Roberts 2009: 66–101).

The decision that both countries would co-ordinate their wartime strategy in this way was unprecedented. While history is replete with examples of countries forming alliances against a common enemy, there is no comparable example of two countries establishing an institution that was designed to ensure that the major political and strategic decisions would be taken in unison. The creation of the Combined Chiefs of Staff was not uncontroversial. Britain's most senior military officer, General Sir Alan Brooke, who had remained in London, was unhappy when he heard the news, believing that the new Committee would restrict the British government's room for maneuver when it came to devising wartime strategy. It did, nonetheless, reveal very clearly that the British and American political elites were keen to establish an intimate wartime relationship. This effectively marked the beginning of what would become known as the "special relationship", a unique partnership that would endure into the postwar world.

The extent to which a common culture, including a shared language, was responsible for creating this unusually close diplomatic relationship has caused a great deal of debate among historians. But the fact that the two sides during the Second World War both spoke English must, to some degree, have facilitated the establishment of this partnership. Reynolds has noted that:

> the common language permitted more extensive and more intensive communication than would otherwise have been possible, since, in principle, any Briton or American could participate at a depth usually permitted only to skilled linguists. Compare the wartime United States-United Kingdom relationship in this respect to that of Britain and France or America and China. (Reynolds 1985/86: 6)

The fact that Churchill and Roosevelt, and British and American military officers and officials could speak to one another without having to rely on interpreters obviously allowed strong professional and personal relationships to develop between the two sides. For example, Dean Acheson – secretary of state in the Truman administration – once confided that he consulted the British ambassador, Oliver Franks, "on problems that have nothing to do with Anglo-American relations" (quoted in Danchev 2006: 587). The result of all of this wartime experience was the emergence of an intense network of contacts that operated on many different levels. It was not just the politicians or the top military brass that would be in close contact with their counterparts across the Atlantic, but officials at rather more junior levels would also work closely with their transatlantic partners. This was important because it led to

a web of close relationships that would endure into the post-war world (Reynolds 1985/86: 5).

Notwithstanding these points, ease of communication does not automatically result in a more tranquil relationship. As a recent book has clearly shown, there were a number of heated disputes over wartime strategy between British and American decision-makers. The biggest dispute between the two sides in 1941 and 1942 was the strategy that was to be employed in Europe. The British favored an offensive in North Africa; and after the Germans had been expelled from there, British military planners then advocated seizing Sicily before launching an invasion of Italy. The American Chiefs of Staff were rather less than enamored with these ideas, regarding the proposed operations as being, at best, unnecessary sideshows. The Americans favored launching an invasion of France at the earliest possible opportunity, believing this to be the best way to win the war. The result of these conflicting views was a series of acrimonious meetings between the two sets of military leaders between 1942 and 1944. These disputes only came to an end when the Western Allies finally embarked upon the invasion of France with the Normandy landings in June 1944 (Roberts 2009).

The fact that some American commanders were suspicious of British intentions also did little to mitigate the divisions over strategy. For instance, Admiral King – chief of the US Navy – believed that Churchill had too great an influence over Roosevelt, and was essentially using American military forces to protect British interests, particularly in North Africa. King wanted more American resources to be channeled into the Pacific in the war against Japan, and was frustrated that at several key wartime Anglo-American summits, the British successfully managed to persuade US policy-makers to focus on North Africa and the Mediterranean. Generals Albert Wedemeyer and Joe Stilwell – two senior US army officers – also had an instinctive distrust of the British, viewing them as manipulative and snobbish. These individual vignettes suggest that one should be careful not to exaggerate the degree of wartime amity between the British and Americans (Roberts 2009: 82–83, 320–324).

Furthermore, differences in British and American English could occasionally cause confusion. An unnecessary argument occurred during one meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff when a senior British officer said that he wanted a particular subject to be 'tabled'. In British English, 'to table something' means 'to put something on the agenda'. In American English, it means 'to withdraw an item from the agenda'. Therefore, when the British said they wanted something to be tabled, it meant that they wanted it to be discussed during the committee meeting. The Americans, though, interpreted this to mean that the British wanted to ignore it (Roberts 2009: 479, Reynolds 1985/6: 5–6). These kinds of incident were, however, relatively rare. Despite the occasional hiccup, for the most part British and American wartime plan-

ners could easily communicate with one another with little risk of mutual mis-understanding.

Even taking these caveats into consideration, however, it is hard to see how the alliance could have functioned so effectively without the shared culture and indeed the shared language. For all the vehement arguments and dissension, the personality clashes and the divisions over wartime strategy, the fact remains that the two sides managed to formulate a combined strategy that was, in historical terms, truly unprecedented. After the war, General Brooke – Britain's most senior army officer – suggested that there was always an underlying trust between himself and his American counterpart, General George Marshall, largely because they shared similar cultural traits:

> We both spoke the same language, but rather more than that .... There's rather more than a language between English-speaking people. I think it's an English way of thinking that we have, and I found that Marshall had the same way of thinking that I had (quoted in Roberts 2009: 369).

The fact that both Britain and America faced common external threats in the shape of Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany ensured that both countries were bound to be allies. But the wartime collaboration went well beyond the scope of a traditional alliance. The intensity of the contacts between the two countries was something new, and it is hard to see how that could possibly have been achieved had the two sides spoken different languages.

3. The Cold War and beyond

While a shared language may well have been a vital ingredient in the makeup of the wartime alliance, it is important to recognize that there was nothing inevitable about the Anglo-American "special relationship." A common culture and a shared language may be the *sine qua non* for the effective functioning of the "special relationship," but they were not – and are not – enough in and of themselves. Before 1940 the Anglo-American relationship was not particularly special. Certainly, during the 1930s, few American policy-makers or opinion-formers were advocating anything that resembled an alliance with the British. Indeed, when war did break out in September 1939, the Roosevelt administration struggled to persuade a deeply skeptical Congress to allow the sale of war materials to Britain and France. It was not until 1941 and ultimately the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that the US government came to view Britain as a particularly close friend of America (Kershaw 2008: 184–242, 298–330). When the war came to an end in 1945, the Anglo-American

relationship again began to cool. Significantly, Congress in 1946 passed the McMahon Act, which prohibited the sharing of nuclear technology with any other country, including Britain. This conflicted with several Anglo-American wartime agreements which had stated that both countries would continue their nuclear collaboration into the postwar world. In other words, it seemed that once the war had ended and Japan and Germany had been defeated, the relationship was becoming decidedly less special. When it came to the issue of nuclear technology, the US was taking decisions in accordance with its own interests. The shared cultural and linguistic heritage with the British appeared to count for very little in this regard (Kelly 2000: 108–113).

It was the crystallization of the Cold War that more than anything else led to the revival of the "special relationship". Policy-makers in both Britain and the United States throughout 1946 viewed the Soviet Union with increasing foreboding. George Kennan – who was a senior diplomat in the US embassy in Moscow and who would become the chief architect of a policy that would soon be known as "containment" – sent what became known as the "long telegram" that sought to explain to his superiors in Washington why the Soviets seemed to have expansionist designs on Europe and other parts of the world (Gaddis 1982: 18–24). Interestingly, at roughly the same time, Frank Roberts – a senior diplomat in the British embassy in Moscow – sent a telegram to his superiors in London that contained a similar analysis of Soviet intentions (Greenwood 1990). It was these shared perceptions of a common threat that served to re-establish the close diplomatic relationship between Britain and the United States that had existed during the war. This manifested itself in the fact that the United States closely worked with the British when it embarked on a number of initiatives in the late 1940s, including the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, the implementation of the Marshall Plan, the establishment of a West German state and the creation of NATO (Dobson 1995: 90–100). Indeed, Reynolds (1985/6: 8) has even gone so far as to suggest that the "Atlantic Alliance as we know it today was in many ways an *Anglo*-American creation".

This again serves to illustrate that shared interests were primarily responsible for reviving the "special relationship." Both countries worked closely together when they perceived that it was in their own interests to do so. It is important, however, to emphasize once again that the shared cultural and linguistic heritage meant that once the relationship was revived, both countries could co-ordinate their policies with one another to an unprecedented degree.

The discussion on the origins of the "special relationship" essentially illustrates the fact that it has been underpinned by perceived shared interests. The shared cultural and linguistic heritage has only ever been a secondary factor

when it comes to explaining why the Anglo-American diplomatic relationship has been unusually close since the end of the Second World War. It has been argued that the 'functionalist' or 'realist' school on the "special relationship" is therefore essentially correct in its analysis. It is noteworthy that the "special relationship" has always been at its strongest when both countries have faced a common external enemy, such as Nazi Germany during the Second World War, or the Soviet Union during the Cold War, or even today in the shape of al-Qaeda as both countries grapple with the Global War on Terror. Conversely, during periods where there has been an absence of a clearly defined common enemy, like in the early 1990s after the Cold War ended or even during the *détente* period of the late 1960s, which witnessed a stabilization of the superpower relationship, the "special relationship" has, to some degree at least, weakened (Dumbrell 2006: 135–139). Lord Palmerston, a nineteenth-century British prime minister, once stated "We have no eternal allies and no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow" (*Oxford dictionary of political quotations*). This is probably an accurate description of all diplomatic relationships, even the Anglo-American "special relationship."

Yet at press conferences at the end of summit meetings between prime ministers and presidents, both leaders habitually wear fixed grins and spout pieties about the two countries' shared history and cultural heritage. While it would be easy to discount these kinds of remarks as simply platitudes, or a convenient rationalization for a relationship that has, historically, served both countries rather well, one should be careful not to dismiss these notions in their entirety. We come back to the point that one of the elements that sets the Anglo-American alliance apart from other rather more "normal" diplomatic relationships is not simply the intensity of the diplomatic contacts, but also their breadth. The "special relationship" operates on many different levels, a fact that is as true today as it has been in the past. Officials at even relatively junior levels can establish close professional relations with their opposite numbers across the Atlantic, and sometimes these relationships can last for years or even decades. It is hard to see how this would be possible if both countries spoke two different languages. A good illustration of this is Harold Macmillan, who was a relatively junior Conservative politician during the Second World War when he was appointed as the British government's liaison officer to the American military headquarters in North Africa. Macmillan, who was a classicist, famously described the Anglo-American relationship to a colleague in these terms:

> We, my dear Crossman, are Greeks in this American empire. You will find the Americans much as the Greeks found the Romans – great

big, vulgar, bustling people, more vigorous than we are and also more idle, with more unspoiled virtues but also more corrupt. We must run AFHQ [Allied Forces Headquarters] as the Greek slaves ran the operations of the Emperor Claudius (quoted in Ashton 2005: 697).

The North African headquarters was headed by an American general, Dwight Eisenhower. Over fifteen years later both men were heads of their respective governments. Indeed, Macmillan – who like Churchill had an American mother – came to office in 1957 in the immediate aftermath of the Suez debacle, which had resulted in the most severe diplomatic crisis in Anglo-American relations that has ever been seen (Warner 1991). The new prime minister was anxious to re-establish the "special relationship" between the two countries, and his long friendship with Eisenhower greatly helped this endeavor. One of Macmillan's diplomatic achievements was to persuade the Eisenhower administration to amend the McMahon Act; this led to the re-establishment of Anglo-American nuclear co-operation, and was an important step towards President Kennedy's decision – after a summit meeting with Macmillan at Nassau – to sell to the British the Polaris nuclear delivery system in 1963.[1]

The "special relationship" has historically been most prominent when there has been personal chemistry between the two countries' leaders. One thinks of Roosevelt and Churchill, Macmillan and Kennedy, Reagan and Thatcher, or even Blair and George W. Bush. But there have been periods in which the relationship between the two heads of government has been rather less warm. President Truman and Clement Attlee appear not to have had a particularly close relationship; Harold Wilson and Lyndon Johnson's was, if anything, even worse (Dumbrell 2006: 75–79). Yet even during periods when there has been a degree of discord between the two leaders, the "special relationship" has continued to function reasonably effectively, simply because its underlying structures have remained intact. And one of the most important elements within these structures is the multiplicity of interconnections between the two governments. Intelligence collaboration or high-level diplomatic interactions will continue even if the two leaders have little affection for one another. No doubt one of the reasons for the durability of these structures is the fact that the two countries do share a common cultural and linguistic heritage.

While much of the lofty rhetoric on the "special relationship" that has emanated from both Washington and London over the decades has verged on the platitudinous, one cannot ignore the fact that in the postwar period the

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[1]   See Ashton (2005) for an extended analysis of Britain's relationship with the United States during this period.

Anglo-American alliance has proved to be remarkably resilient. There have been numerous occasions over the years in which various commentators and authorities have declared the death of the "special relationship," the most recent being in the early 1990s after the end of the Cold War. Yet the "special relationship" persists. Two historians have even described it as "the Lazarus of international relations" (Marsh and Baylis 2006: 173). It is also notable that since 1941 the British and Americans have found themselves on several occasions fighting side by side in various parts of the world. Whether it has been on the Korean peninsula or in the rough terrain of Afghanistan, British and American soldiers have shed blood together. This has also been an important visceral factor that has helped to elevate the Anglo-American relationship on to a higher plane (Dumbrell 2006: 187–215).

Despite the ancestral connections between Britons and Americans, the "special relationship" has, in the eyes of some observers at least, been controversial. Charles de Gaulle – president of France in the 1960s – famously fretted about potential Anglo-Saxon domination of Europe. As a result, he vetoed the British application for membership of the European Economic Community on two separate occasions in 1963 and 1968 (Ellison 2006). Even in Britain itself, some commentators have questioned whether the relationship has really served British interests. The argument that has usually been advanced is that in placing so much emphasis on their relationship with the United States, the British in the postwar period failed to recognize that their true interests lay in Europe. The British were therefore late entrants into the Common Market, and since then have adopted a resolutely skeptical attitude towards the process of European integration. Were the British to shake off their fixation with the "special relationship," so the argument runs, they would be more willing to embrace and play a leading role within the European project (cf., a.o., Diamond 2008).

While all this may be true, there is little indication to date that the British are seriously contemplating loosening their connection to the United States. Tony Blair was an enthusiastic European who talked of Britain fulfilling the role of a bridge between Europe and the United States. But when the Bush administration decided on a policy of invading Iraq in 2002, Blair was effectively forced to choose between Europe – or at least the two most important states within the European Union, France and Germany – and the United States. He did not hesitate to back the latter (Garton Ash 2005: 41–52). His successor, Gordon Brown – no doubt mindful of the damage that Blair's pro-American policy did to his own political standing – initially adopted a more cautious attitude towards George W. Bush. When Barack Obama became president at the beginning of 2009, Brown swiftly adopted a more pro-American posture (Burkeman 2009).

The continual process of European integration, however, could yet force the British to re-evaluate their relations with both Europe and the United States. While it is difficult to envisage the British radically reorienting their foreign policy in the near future, it is possible that British material interests could become so entangled in Europe that the British would be forced, however reluctantly, to become more European and rather less fixated with the United States. A more likely scenario is that as US interests in the western hemisphere, the Middle East and Asia become increasingly pronounced, the US could come to view Europe – including Britain – as being of less and less importance. There are already indications that this is beginning to happen. Furthermore, the US itself is becoming a less Anglo-Saxon country. In the not distant future white Americans will become a minority. The number of first-language Spanish speaking Americans is also inexorably rising (Coker 1992: 418–421). In this regard, the election of a black president who spent part of his childhood in Indonesia might well presage the future. It is quite possible that the shared cultural heritage that has helped to maintain the bonds between Britain and the United States could weaken in the future.

4. Conclusion

It has been argued that a "special relationship," at least in the sense of being abnormal, does in fact exist between Britain and the United States. The reasons for the existence of this relationship have caused a great deal of debate among historians and political scientists. Broadly speaking, two groups can be identified. On the one hand there is the realist or functionalist school, who argue that common interests have brought the two countries together. On the other, there is the sentimentalist school, who place more emphasis on the shared history and cultural heritage of the two countries, including the common language. It has been argued that the relationship has been most "special" when both Britain and the United States have faced a common external enemy, such as Nazi Germany or al-Qaeda. This would indicate that the realist school is broadly correct in its analysis. It has also been noted, however, that the common culture has allowed the relationship to function particularly effectively. The fact that officials at every level, from the most senior politicians to the most junior diplomats, have been able to communicate directly with their opposite numbers across the Atlantic, has given the relationship a depth that it would not otherwise have had. That has undoubtedly made it easier for both countries to collaborate closely when managing their international diplomacy. This was first evident during the Second World War, and was to become a salient feature of both countries' diplomacy during the Cold War. The durability

of the "special relationship" in the twenty-first century, given both countries' changing interests and the fact that the United States is becoming a less 'Anglo-Saxon' entity, is open to question. Having said that, many commentators over the years have forecast the death of the "special relationship" only to be proved wrong. It might, therefore, be a little premature to begin administering the last rites to the Anglo-American alliance.

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I Report, We Have Our Say.
An Analysis of User-Created Content
on Participatory News Websites

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego badania jest analiza treści materiałów tworzonych przez użytkowników Internetu oraz przedstawianych na stronach dziennikarstwa uczestniczącego należących do portali publicznych kanałów informacyjnych. Uczestnictwo internautów w tworzeniu treści na publicznych stronach informacyjnych jest nowym trendem związanym z przemianami społecznymi oraz technologicznymi, które umożliwiają użytkownikom pełnienie roli nadawcy komunikatów medialnych. Autorka zakłada, iż wolność kontrybucji materiałów prowadzić będzie do różnorodności stylistycznej oraz heterogeniczności tematycznej treści. W rezultacie, treści będzie charakteryzować odmienna wartość informacyjna oraz efekt komunikacyjny. Analiza wskazuje na trzy podstawowe cele komunikacyjne realizowane przez użytkowników ww. portali, czyli rozpowszechnianie informacji oraz relacji z wydarzeń na świecie, prezentowanie własnej osoby i zainteresowań oraz wyrażanie opinii. Badanie wskazuje także na zachodzące obecnie przemiany w dyskursie publicznym oraz medialnym.

1. Introduction

The development of the web has given rise to changes in interpersonal communication, leading to the birth of mediated synchronous and asynchronous forms of contact, with which variation in language is associated, and to the development of new means of expression (cf. Herring 2001, Crystal 2010). Moreover, the progress of the web has brought about profound changes in the genre landscape by causing alterations in the existing genre-forms and leading to the birth of new genres and text-types (cf. Crowston and Williams 2000).

The evolution of the web has brought about changes also in the role that internet users play. The most visible changes concern the nature and level of interactivity and the degree of users' participation in the creation of website content. Interactivity and participation has evolved from the basic level of navigational interactivity, i.e., where the user navigates through a webpage by means of hyperlinks, through functional interactivity, in which limited participation in content addition to the site is allowed, e.g., commenting on the website content, to adaptive interactivity comprising the users' involvement in the creation of materials online (Deuze 2003: 214). Nowadays, users have the possibility to participate in the production of content and may freely create and publish materials online:

> Using the Internet and its communications technologies – chiefly perhaps the Web – implies not longer simply active but silent interpretation (…): it implies also the active expression and communication of views, values, beliefs, ideas, knowledge and creativity. (Bruns 2008: 15)

Due to extensive interactive possibilities and active participatory practices new internet culture is perceived as the *culture of participation* (e.g., Lister *et al.* 2009).

2. Mainstream citizen journalism platforms

The scope of the evolution in user activity online has brought about changes in the sphere of communication between the media and the receivers of media broadcasts, as well as in the approach of the mainstream mass-media to user-created content (cf. Hermida and Thurman 2008, Reich 2008). The major reaction of many news publishers was to open their gates for user-created materials and increase the level of interaction with the receivers. As a result, many websites of news publishers (e.g., CNN, Fox News, BBC) have introduced specially designed sections of user-created content where the users are invited to send their reports, pictures and videos, some of which are incorporated into official broadcasts and published on a wider scale. As Howe (2006) observes, these possibilities help the users feel that they are a part of the mainstream media system.

The aim of the following study has been to analyze user-created sections of mainstream news-media sites with respect to their functional aspects and discourse properties of user-contributions in particular. Thus, the goal is to investigate whether the platforms perform the function of citizen-journalism websites, which focus on the provision of information, or if they are exploited for other purposes as well. The view that I have taken here is that due to the

freedom of contributing, the platforms would serve the users other purposes, going beyond the provision of information. In addition, it can naturally be expected that the *discourse of user-contributions* would differ from that of the journalist news stories available on official websites. The openness of the sites is likely to lead to a considerable individualization in the stylistic layer of the contributions. To review the validity of the hypotheses, I have studied the type of content that users create as well as their stylistic value. The material for the analysis encompasses user-contributed content drawn from 254 CNN *iReports*, 54 Fox News *uReports*, and 89 users' contributions on the BBC *Have Your Say* website collected in March 2011.

3. Professional versus citizen-created content

In order to assess the validity of the hypothesis proclaiming a difference between journalists' and users' contributions it would be useful to compare the messages sent by the users with news stories published on official channels. For the sake of the comparison, two stories focusing on the same event are presented below. Example (1) is a fragment of a typical news article published by the BBC *News*, while example (2) is a fragment from a user-contribution on the BBC *Have Your Say* platform. Both articles concern the earthquake which took place in Japan in 2011.

(1)   Japan's most powerful earthquake since records began has struck the north-east coast, triggering a massive tsunami. Cars, ships and buildings were swept away by a wall of water after the 8.9-magnitude tremor, which struck about 400km (250 miles) north-east of Tokyo. A state of emergency has been declared at a nuclear power plant, where pressure has exceeded normal levels. Officials say 350 people are dead and about 500 missing, but it is feared the final death toll will be much higher.

(2)   My family home in Ishinomaki was flooded and my car too, in over a metre of water after the earthquake caused a tsunami. I'm originally from Otley in West Yorkshire, but live here with my Japanese wife. The last few days we spent sleeping in our car, the weeks before with friends at their home. I went up to the top of a hill, which overlooks our town and the whole place has disappeared – it is total devastation. You can just see a big square where a huge building used to be.

A comprehensive comparison is beyond the scope of this paper, but even this short juxtaposition of the two types of reports affords a general view on the issue and points to marked differences in the functional and discourse layers of the contributions.

The *mainstream report* complies with the typical journalistic requirements of objectivity and neutrality characterizing news articles (Stein *et al.* 2006). We can see emphasis on informative content, attention to detail, and precision. The report, following the conventions of standard written language, is relatively formal. Formality and neutrality are enhanced by the use of passive voice and reported speech, which allow for the achievement of a neutral and depersonalized depiction of the scene of events.

By contrast, the *user-contributed message* reflects an entirely different approach towards reporting. The basic, most visible distinction is that between a global and a local perspective. The first report focuses on the event itself and shows the readers how the region was affected by the earthquake, whereas the second focuses on the life of an individual at the heart of the events. Prominence is given here to the personal situation of the reporter, his experiences and feelings. While the first report could also be written by a journalist present at the scene of events, the perspective of an insider is more noticeable in the second report. Such perspective is clearly reflected in the language of the report – personalized, subjective and more informal. The report assumes the shape of a personal story, a narrative from the scene of events.

The two reports, thus represent two distinct manners and styles of informing about the same event. The reports, though clearly distinct and highlighting different aspects of the state of affairs, are in a way complementary to each other, as they show two distinct sides of the same event, thus giving the readers a broader and multi-dimensional view on the situation.

It can be stated that the publication of user-created content on official mainstream news websites reflects a change in journalistic practices. Traditionally, the accounts of the participants of events were incorporated into journalists' articles as a way of authenticating and enriching the reports (Wojtak 2004). Today, user-created reports have become separate, individualized and autonomous broadcasts. The presence of such content on official websites of publishing companies clearly points to the current changes in the public discourse, in the news providing habits and in the aforementioned relationship between the users and the news-providers.

In the following sections, further aspects of user-created messages are presented, focusing on the major purposes and the most conspicuous discourse features of user-contributions.

4. Purpose and discourse features of citizen-created content

On the basis of the analyzed material, it may be stated that user-created sections on mainstream media sites are not devoted solely to journalism and re-

porting. The motives which induce the users to contribute content seem to be more diversified, going beyond information provision and involving also self-disclosure and self-expression. Specifically, the following purposes may be identified: dissemination of information, reporting on events, personal story-telling, expression of opinions and attitudes, and self-presentation.

4.1. Dissemination of news and reports on events

The first rationale for contribution is reporting on events and the dissemination of information. Due to the affordances of the news sites, their popularity, currency, and global reach, the users perceive such pages as a suitable medium for the distribution of news of various types. The materials analyzed show that the users above all point to the events which have not been presented in the media either due to their local character or due to their limited value from the point of view of broadcasters (cf. Rettberg 2010). Thus, the authors of the posts wish to draw attention of other viewers to local affairs of various types, to affairs which otherwise would not be covered by the mainstream media. Moreover, the users provide information on the events already presented by mass media. The materials are supposed to supplement the information already given or present it from a different perspective, specifically from the perspective of the people directly involved in the events.

As stated above, informative posts presented by immediate witnesses of events give authentic accounts from the scene of the events and are created with the purpose of sharing with the public one's experiences associated with the event described. This approach towards structuring the messages increases the realism of the accounts, as they are no longer purely factual reports, but descriptions in which concrete individuals are involved and their lives shown. The accounts of experiences are presented in the form of first person singular and plural narratives, each of which has a different communicative and informative value.

Reports in the form of first person plural narratives are used to indicate the author's involvement with the people affected, to underline a sense of belonging to the community, and mark the author's participation in the events described. The use of 'we', instead of 'I', helps emphasize the fact that such perspective is shared by other people, that the author does not refer to his/her individual perceptions, but describes events affecting larger communities, as illustrated in (3) from the *Have Your Say* platform:[1]

(3)   We hear bombing from time to time. The banks are open but they have no cash to give out. There are long queues at the station. Some of the

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[1]   All the examples are quoted in their original form, i.e., errors have not been corrected.

supermarkets are open but not like normal. We are waiting and we don't know what we are waiting for.

The use of 'we' in (3) evidently marks the speaker's solidarity with other people, but it also emphasizes the directness of the report. The use of 'we' can be also taken to mark contrast with 'you', i.e., the people and/or readers remaining outside the zone of the conflict or tragedy which affected the community in question. The reports of this kind assume the form of a fragmented narrative, where the account of events is broken down into short, telegraphic, one-sentence items of information. The content is limited to a dry, simple description of the conditions in the place where particular events take place. The account of events is frequently not cohesive, describing varied, unrelated scenes. Yet, such manner of description gives us a sense of immediacy and adds to the dramatic effect which the reports produce.

First person singular narration gives a somewhat narrower perspective and a more restricted scope of description. As Biber claims (1988: 225), the use of the first person singular pronoun signals personal focus and emphasizes personal involvement. Such accounts do not describe collective feelings of a particular community or family, but portray actions reflecting rather an individual perception of the events. Consequently, their informative value is comparatively lower. What is more, the narratives are resonant with evocative statements of personal feelings and emotions triggered by the events which the users report on, as the following examples from the *Have Your Say* website illustrate:

(4)   The trouble broke out on Wednesday, and I first noticed it when on my way out, I found I couldn't get the public transport. I started walking and got to my fiancée's family's house where I have stayed ever since. I took a walk on Thursday morning and to my great surprise I saw a chain of heavy loaded cars with pro-Ouattara guys.

(5)   The earthquake was the scariest experience. I remember seeing a big crack in the road open up and fling cars everywhere.

Such statements of emotion undoubtedly enhance the impressive value of the posts and influence the way they are perceived by the readers. The use of short, simple sentences additionally increases the affective value of the statements and gives the impression of unplanned discourse.

In the posts in the form of personalized accounts of events, a degree of self-disclosure can be noticed. In such contributions, the authors concentrate on the influence of the events on their private lives. The posts are marked by a considerable degree of personal involvement, as the authors focus on the

exposure of personal experiences associated with the events, as illustrated in (6) from the *Have Your Say* website:

(6)   I'm a US citizen living in Japan and I have just been told that US citizens are being evacuated. I would like to leave, as I am concerned about the radiation, but I am divorced with a six-year-old son. If I leave I might lose my right to see him.

Thus, the readers are given moving accounts of personal life-stories or the revelation of intimate details from the authors' lives instead of a publication concerning new information from the scene of specific events.

A further property which distinguishes user- from journalist-reports is their explicit commentative function. While in journalistic reports the reporters rarely express their personal opinions openly (Wojtak 2004), user-contributed reports are supplemented by personal commentaries of the authors concerning the events in question. In this way, the authors do not only describe the events, but analyze and overtly evaluate them. Clearly, the authors do not see their role as restricted to mere reporting, but exercise their right to act as interpreters of events, which can be seen in the post below, which is from the *Have Your Say* platform:

(7)   I think the French forces should focus on helping their people, while the UN should help the citizens of the Ivory Coast. I don't think the UN is doing enough.

The reports show that the authors wish to contribute their knowledge and interpretation of events. The informative potential of the reports is in this way enhanced by an expressive function they perform. In this way, the authors wish to add their voice to a discussion of political and social problems, submitting proposals for measures to be taken to solve the problems in question. The readers, on the other hand, may thus obtain a view of a person directly involved in the events, and do not have to rely only on the interpretation of mainstream reporters or journalists.

Information provision in the shape of such personal narratives departs from journalistic conventions. Clearly, these posts are not designed to function as objective news. Provision of information is in these cases dominated by the expression of emotions and attitudes. Though reporting on the events, the posts are closer in form to intimate life-stories. However, this is where their strong point seems to lie – in the personalized, authentic and intimate content that they reveal. An account of events presented by an average person at the center of the events adds a human touch to the basic and factual description

of the events provided by mainstream media. Thus, as Rettberg (2010: 95) observes, we may have the basic and factual knowledge of the events gained from official publications, but reading such personalized accounts of events may show us a diametrically different side of the events and may be a more affecting experience.

4.2. Expression of opinions and commenting

The portals also serve users as a platform for the expression of personal views, attitudes and judgments in general and for presenting commentaries to mainstream media broadcasts. The web pages explicitly encourage the users to express their opinions; therefore, it is not surprising that the sites are abundant in the users' statements of opinion concerning politics, social life and human rights. Owing to the popularity and global reach of the sites, they offer the users a wider audience, and thus more chances for their voices to be heard than if they were transmitted on a blog or homepage, which may not be discovered in the multitude of other websites. In contrast to the above-mentioned comments, these contributions function as independent units, not associated with reports on events.

The expressive function encompasses the presentation of extensive statements of subjective opinions as well as short comments to news and events broadcast by the mass media. The most frequent statements of opinion involve the expression of attitudinal stance, i.e., presentation of personal preferences and moral judgments (Biber and Finegan 1989). The discourse of such contributions is characterized by expressiveness, exemplification and persuasiveness. The authors articulate their views explicitly, resorting to a variety of lexical and discourse resources. Below, the most frequent of such devices are discussed.

By the use of the first person pronoun (example (8) from the *Have Your Say* website), the authors underline that they express their personal stand on the issue in question. The use of such forms makes the expression of opinion more emphatic and straightforward. Evidently less frequent are comments in which the authors express their stance in an indirect way, e.g., as in (9), which comes from *iReport*.

(8)   I am against the entry of any foreign group forces into Libya and any other forms of occupation. But I support limited air strikes to protect innocent life.

(9)   One cannot help but be proud of New York for passing marriage equality. It was the courageous thing to do.

In messages such as (9), the authors do not mark the opinion as a personal one, but point to their universal character. As illustrated above, the use of the

generic pronoun 'one' serves to emphasize that such opinion is shared by other people, the whole message thus being more persuasive in character.

The contributors openly suggest steps which need to be taken to improve social and political life. Interestingly, such messages are often presented in the first person plural form ('we'), which is to underline the sense of a community in which specific actions need to be taken for the common good. Predominantly, in such messages modal verbs expressing deontic modality are used (Palmer 1987), as illustrated in (10), which is from the *Have Your Say* website, and in (11) from the *iReport* platform:

(10) There is no other way that the government can find a way of borrowing money unless these cuts are made. I think these measures are likely to force Greece to restructure its economy. We need to be more competitive and investor-friendly.

(11) These power hungry men and women must be removed from power and our country must regain fiscal sanity. We cannot and must not allow our country to be destroyed by greed and corruption.

The users express their opinions with an explicit aim of spreading political and social awareness among other users, trying to trigger a debate concerning various themes, and suggesting specific actions which should be taken to deal with particular political problems. This approach is emphasized by the use of imperative forms, which serve different purposes. First person plural imperative form marks the need to pursuit a common aim for the whole community, while second person imperative forms serve mainly to express criticism of other people's actions, which can be seen in the following examples from *iReport*, respectively:

(12) Lets stand together across the world and show our support for ALL fallen Police Officers. Let's be sure to wear something BLUE EVERY SATURDAY to Honor & Respect someone who gave their Life in order for many others to be safe.

(13) Stop telling American Citizens that we aren't in danger, with over 100 nuclear reactors in this country, we ARE in danger. Issue the tablets in the States to the people that are supposed to get them, why haven't they been issued them as of yet?

On the discourse level, the posts differ in the degree of emotiveness and exemplification. An increased level of expressiveness may be observed in the examples below, which also reflect emotional responses and judgments, but they contrast with the above-mentioned attitudinal posts in being consider-

ably more forceful and emotive. The expressive tone of the messages above is achieved by exclamations, rhetorical questions and interjections, which underline the orality of the discourse. Reference to concrete examples and situations from every-day life helps the authors enhance the vividness of their statements and convince the readers that the problems they point to are real:

(14) So an hour ago the phone rings and the news that half a paycheck is all we will receive on the 15th. My husband has served in the Air Force for 10 years and still counting and now we are trying to figure out how 700 dollars will last till Congress figures the budget out. That is a picture of my 3 kids. How will I supply all the needs for them without money in the bank?

In this message, from *iReport*, the user criticizes the so-called shutdown policy introduced by the US Congress by pointing to the immediate impact of this policy on her family's everyday life. She does not evaluate the policy in general or political terms, nor does she consider its influence on the state, but she shows the consequences of the law on an average family of a soldier.

A high number of the authors resort to the use of rhetorical questions in expressing opinions. Previous research devoted to rhetorical strategies on *iReport* proved that rhetorical questions constitute a regular means of expressing opinions on this web page (Tereszkiewicz 2011). The following study has proved their presence also on *uReport* and *Have Your Say*. The frequency of rhetorical questions shows that they are perceived as successful tools not only to express opinions and judgments, but also to influence other readers' views and raise their awareness of particular problems:

(15) What more needs to be said? We can die for our country, but we arent worth it to be paid? Death is free, but it costs to provide for our families. We are only being paid half a paycheck, and for alot of us, our rent is more than our paychecks. But when you talk about we may not see a paycheck for a whole month, how do you make a weeks pay stretch? How do you cover rent, groceries, lights, water, phone, car insurance, day care, gas and medical insurance?

In example (15), which comes from the *iReport* website, the author condemns the introduced regulation by appealing to the value of life and to patriotism. He tries to point out that the law questions the value of one's sacrifice for the nation and concedes that serving the country needs not be recognized and appreciated. We can see a smooth change in his argumentation – the user begins by voicing the fundamental need for respecting the value of life and

then moves on to discussing the problems of everyday existence in order to show more concrete and tangible negative effects of the legal act in question. The message also exemplifies the above-mentioned use of 'we' as an expression of identification with a specific community. Here, the difference between 'we' and 'you' is clearly used to contrast two opposing groups – the people affected by the new policy and the government. The enumeration in the final line of the post additionally emphasizes the criticism of the salary cuts.

The use of the above-described means of stance-taking **serves as means of expressing opinions, judgments, emotional persuasion and appealing to the readers' approach towards various problems,** contributes to a deeply rhetorical nature of the contributions and points to their evidently persuasive function.

4.3. Self-presentation

Previous investigation of *iReport* messages (Tereszkiewicz 2011) showed that self-presentation constitutes a dominant reason for contributing content to this platform. The following research demonstrates that the other websites are used as platforms for self-presentation as well. Among all the posts analyzed, more than 30% focused on personal information concerning current activities or experiences of their authors. In this way, with regard to their functional value, the portals move closer to more *personally-oriented genres*, such as blogs, homepages or social-networking sites, whose major function is self-presentation and up-dating on the life of the authors.

Self-presentation posts assume the form of detailed autobiographical narratives, the discourse of which is marked by high personalization, subjectivity, and emotiveness. The users focusing on self-presentation, rather than information, exploit the websites to give an account of their everyday experiences. In such contributions textual messages are accompanied by personal photographs of various kinds, which highlights their personalized nature. Self-presentation encompasses different aspects of the authors' lives, involving also the revelation of childhood memories, interests and passions. The posts below, which come from *Have Your Say* and *iReport*, respectively, reflect this approach:

(16) I won my Blue Peter badge for making and sending a card to Janet Ellis after her parachuting accident. (...) When I was 12, I visited the Blue Peter garden for the day as part of a Press Pack competition, as I wrote an article about my experience of India, which got printed in Fast Forward magazine.

(17) As a child in my native Argentina, I grew up under the shadow and influence of my grandfather who was a meteorologist, and amateur archaeologist. I was surrounded by historical artifacts and heard many an exciting

tale; (...) I saw the first Indiana Jones movie, and loved it. 30 years later, I live in New England, and am now even more enamored with recovering and touching history.

Here, the authors present their memories and personal stories. In this case, it is difficult to see any explicit reason for such contributions but for self-presentation and the need to share one's adventures and the enthusiasm for pursuing one's hobby with other readers. The authors fully concentrate on their experiences, and do not seem to have any further aims in mind. The posts do not have much, or even any, informative value for the audience.

A different approach to self-disclosure can be illustrated in the next post, in which the user gives an account of his personal problems, associated with job loss. In this instance, self-disclosure seems to serve other purposes than only sharing one's feelings with the audience:

(18) I was fired from my job as a Juvenile Justice Specialist (Correctional Officer) for defending myself from an assault. An inmate that was illegally out of his cell and told to go back after being caught, got mad and started a disturbance on the unit. (...) But I was fired. the reason given was that I violated an inmates rights, failure to report an unusual incident. this all happens to be coincidental with the fact that I am the only African American to be qualified for a Supervisor's position.

The author of this message, which was published on *iReport*, gives a detailed account of the event which led to his being fired. This post, analogously to the above-mentioned messages, reveals a strong need for sharing personal experiences with others. Still, in this case we may say that the author presents his story with the purpose of raising the issue of unjust and unexpected treatment he fell victim to, as well as the issue of prejudice and inequality of African-American workers in the workplace mentioned and in general.

The messages in the form of extended personal life-stories constitute a significant share of all the contributions. Clearly, the majority of self-disclosing contributions cannot be regarded as instances of journalism, pointing rather to the author's need for self-disclosure.

5. Conclusions

It is worth noting that the platforms are governed by different regulations, involving a higher degree of gate-keeping on the *Have Your Say* website, and a greater freedom of publishing given to *iReport* and *uReport* users. However, thematic content of user-contributions shows that regardless of publish-

ing regulations the authors treat the websites as a means to achieve a variety of communicative purposes. The posts show clearly that the websites do not function solely as *citizen-journalism* platforms, but also platforms for personal narratives and self-fulfillment.

The messages point to the advent of new reporting practices. It turns out that citizen contributions focusing on the dissemination of news in contrast to mainstream reporting have their own social objectives. Many authors are not concerned with presenting, checking, discovering new facts, or pursuing truth, i.e., traditional journalist practices, but rather with sharing emotions and personal stories. The contributions confirm that "the key difference between traditional and citizen-journalism is the difference between 'covering' and 'sharing'" (Bentley 2008: 13). We may say that reporting gains a different value and a more personal touch here. Instead of covering a story, "users share a bit of their own lives" (Bentley 2008: 13).

Due to different publishing regulations, differences can be observed between the messages with respect to stylistic value, *iReport* and *uReport* posts being noticeably more informal and expressive in tone. Still, features of discourse characteristic to all the websites can also be identified. The focus on personalized reports is clearly reflected in the stylistic layer of the contributions on all the analyzed websites. To other common features belongs an increased level of self-reference and subjectivity. The contributions, deeply rhetorical in character, evidently show that the authors wish not only to express opinions but also to give vent to their emotions and influence the opinions of other people (cf. also Tereszkiewicz (in print)). Discourse is characterized by authenticity and exemplification, as the authors focus on intimate experiences.

The introduction of participatory sections to mainstream media sites constitutes a new form of user-participation in the creation and contribution of content in mass media. Due to the new practices, profound changes can nowadays be observed in the sphere of public discourse and communication. The new practices and the openness towards the users begin to dissolve the traditional distinction into producers and receivers of information, revolutionize the provision of news and reporting, the relationship between the dissemination of information and self-expression, all of which is reflected in marked changes in media discourses. Self-presentation and expression of opinions is no longer restricted to the confines of a personal blog or homepage, or a commentary to a newspaper article online. As Henry Jenkins (2006) observes, we have faced an end of the era of commercial internet and the advent of a *social web*, in which the users enter into a dialogue with the mass media and execute their right to influence the content and style of the broadcasts. A continuous increase in the number of user-created platforms within mainstream media websites clearly confirms the validity of this observation.
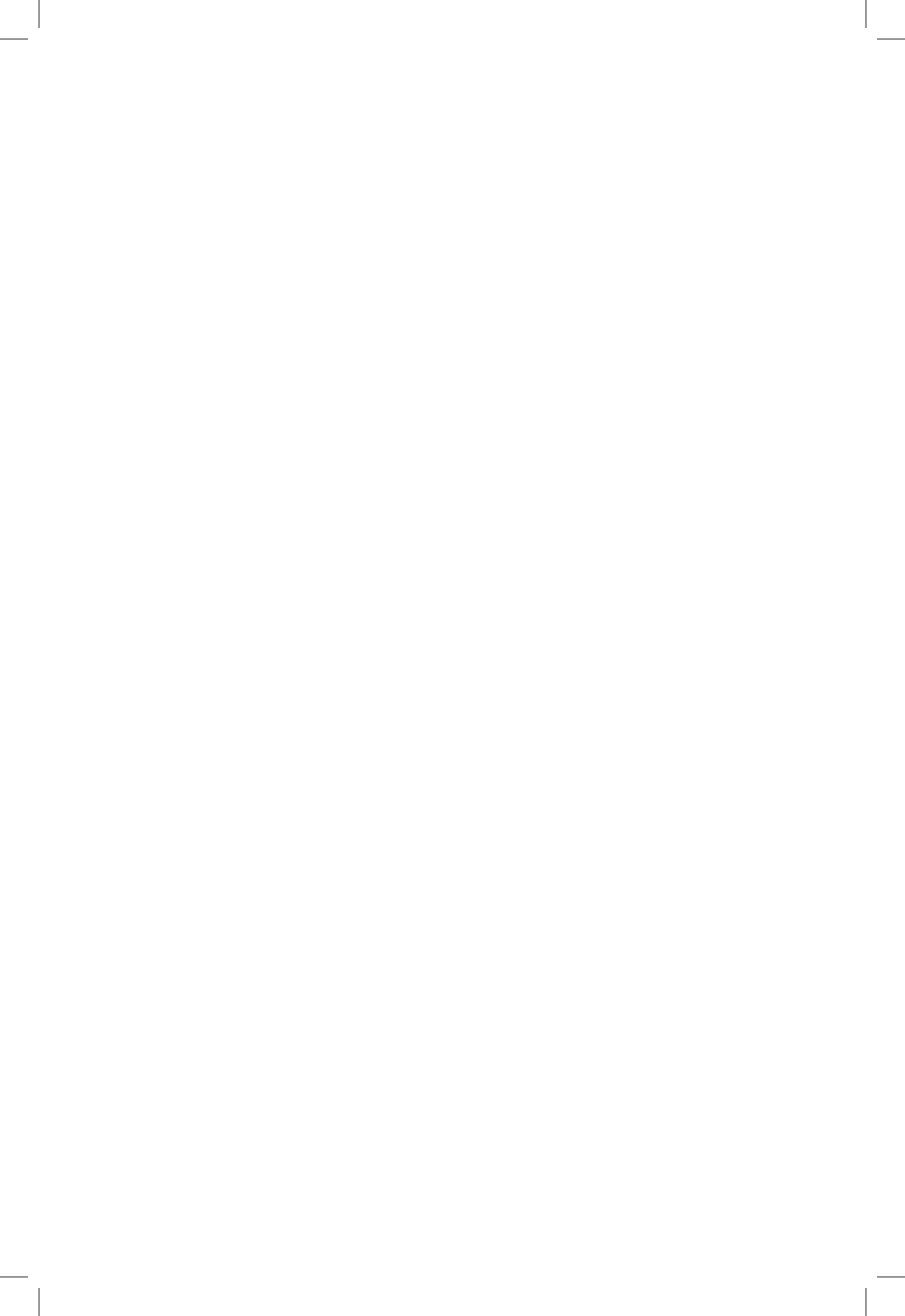
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Black Noise.
The Influence of African-American Oral Tradition on Rap Lyrics

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Streszczenie

Rap, jeden z najbardziej powszechnych i rozpoznawalnych elementów kultury hip-hopu, budzi wiele kontrowersji. W swoich początkach, sięgających lat siedemdziesiątych ubiegłego wieku, był kojarzony głównie jako przejaw walki o wolność i równość Afro-Amerykanów. Stanowił on w tym czasie podstawowe medium, poprzez które mogli oni wyrażać swoje poglądy dotyczące otaczającej ich rzeczywistości społecznej i politycznej. Z czasem zaczął być również postrzegany jako skomercjalizowana forma propagowania narkotyków oraz przemocy i był krytykowany za wykorzystywanie obraźliwego, wulgarnego i często niegramatycznego języka. Jednakże wiele z tych nieprzychylnych opinii może opierać się na niezrozumieniu lub nieświadomości faktu, iż w swojej twórczości raperzy wykorzystują szereg technik i środków stylistycznych, wywodzących się z afro-amerykańskiej tradycji przekazów ustnych. W społeczności tej, w związku z brakiem możliwości zapisywania tekstów aż do końca XIX wieku, tradycja oparta na kulcie żywego słowa przyczyniła się do zachowania bogactwa kultury etnicznej. Poznanie zasad gier słownych oraz różnorodnych technik narracyjnych pomaga dostrzec w rapie coś więcej niż tylko przypadkowy zbiór przekleństw, a także docenić wpływ, jaki tradycja przekazów ustnych wywarła na język rapu.

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1. Rap music as a continuation of the African-American Oral Tradition

Rap music, the most prominent component of the hip-hop culture, has aroused controversial opinions since its beginnings in the 1970s. Due to the fact that it became the principal medium for young African-Americans to air their views and express disappointment with the surrounding reality, it has been recog-

nized as a manifestation of their long-lasting struggle for freedom and equal-ity. On the other hand, this kind of music is also thought to be a commercial-ized way of propagating violence, misogyny and drug abuse, and it is criticized for the use of highly offensive, often "incorrect" language. Nevertheless, no matter which view on its artistic quality and sociological influence prevails, when it comes to its historical roots and structural characteristics, rap should be seen as a continuation of the African-American Oral Tradition, based on African-American Vernacular English (AAVE). A careful examination of the African-American Oral Tradition will help to understand and, to a great ex-tent, even justify the language used by rappers. As a result, the rappers' speech will not be perceived as a random collection of swear words, but as a creation built upon carefully selected rhetorical strategies and devices deeply ingrained in the Oral Tradition.

2. African-American Oral Tradition (Smitherman 2000)

Referring to some aspects of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis concerning language determinism, Smitherman (2000) notes that languages play a dominant role in the foundation of ideology and consciousness of a given gender, class, or race. The impact of language on creating reality is exerted not only by the se-mantic and syntactic realms, but in particular by verbal registers of communi-cation, speech acts and discourse structures. In this way, the significance of the African-American Oral Tradition comprising songs, storytelling, folk sayings, sermons and a rich verbal interplay among ordinary people is stressed in Smi-therman (2000). Since the first African-American texts did not have a written form until the late 19th century, the tradition based on word-of-mouth rituals has served as a fundamental means for preserving the heritage of the ethnic community, strengthening its members' sense of cultural identity, unifying the community in the face of oppression, and *gittin ovuh* (getting over – moving towards "a higher ground").

   According to Smitherman (2000), the oral tradition is rooted in the Afri-can concept of *nommo,* the magic power of the spoken word, which was be-lieved to be necessary to actualize life and give man the mastery over the world; for example, in some African cultures a newborn baby is considered a mere thing until its name is pronounced by its father. Furthermore, contrasted with the white, print-oriented culture, the oral tradition attaches more importance to "the mother's wit" (wisdom) rather than "book learning" (knowledge). As Franz Fanon (quoted in Smitherman 2000: 203) describes it, "to talk like a book is to talk like a white man." Among the many aspects involved in the creation of the African-American oral tradition, the following stand out: the

rich realm of language plays that comprise signifying and ritual insults, various techniques applied in narrativizing that make the African-American tales unique, the interaction with the audience known as call-and-response, and the influence of meaning transfer on the semantic structure of linguistic forms.

3. Elements of the African-American Oral Tradition in rap lyrics

The attitude of rappers towards their roles in the process of artistic creation and the meaning of their performances revealed in the lyrics provides numerous examples of competitive elements. Live rap performances delivered by more than one artist are usually compared to a game or even a battle requiring a great verbal dexterity. The rappers – participants of the contest – challenge each other to a verbal duel, the importance of which seems to be unquestionable. Since the result of the battle may decide about the rappers' position in the neighborhood or the world of music, they do not hesitate to employ various strategies including bragging to beat and insulting their opponents to win the audience's admiration and respect in this way. They show their supremacy by boasting about their merits and achievements in different fields and 'dissing' the opponents at the same time, as illustrated below with a fragment from *Never be beat* by 2Pac:

(1)   Anybody want to battle just step the hell up
       I'll toss your ass like a salad and eat it up.
       My mic's a weapon, I'm stepping with a capable rhyme (...)
       Try to stop me you can't, you puff and you pant
       Try to beat me at this game, but got stomped like an ant (...)

3.1. Signifying

One of the techniques applied by rappers in the battlefield is *signifying*. Known also by regional names such as *sounding*, *joining*, *snapping* or *busting*, it is generally speaking "the verbal art of ceremonial combativeness in which one person puts down, talks about, 'signifies on' someone or on what someone has said" (Smitherman 2000:255). The origins of the language play can be traced back to the slavery period when it started as an outlet from racial oppression; the play was also observed in several cultures in Africa, for example, the Bantu tribe.

According to Morgan (1998), the notion of the *play* involved in signifying helps to establish a boundary between the real and the serious by means of focusing on socially and culturally significant aspects, such as relatives, physical appearance, politics or economic status and putting them in implausible

contexts. The distinction between plausible and implausible contexts is based on cultural and sociological grounds (for example, a story featuring a police officer who "serves and protects" the African-American community would be considered implausible). After creating a proper context, the participants of the *game* start to play with a serious signifier exploiting indirection, humor, sarcasm, wit and unexpected, quick repartees. Using a strong and frequently offensive language, rappers hurl stylized insults concerning their opponents' artistic achievements or personal lives. To make their "snaps" more effective and memorable, they exploit humor and wit by creating original similes such as the following:

(2)   You ain't efficient when you flow, you ain't swift
      Movin like a tortoise, full of rigor mortis. (NWA, *Express yourself*)
(3)   You are *useless* as a *toothless* piranha
      I'm *ruthless* now I'm gonna
      Bust it and discuss it make it funky to *hear*
      Paragraph to the people penetratin' your *ear*. (2Pac, *Never be beat*)

The similes shown above, 'useless as a toothless piranha' and 'moving like a tortoise' attest to the role of indirection in rap games, to which attention is drawn by Morgan (1996). Decoding the message and identifying the appropriate receiver who is the target of the insult, requires from the hearer some prior, shared knowledge of the events. Due to the fact that similes introduce implausible contexts, the snaps are not meant to be understood literally and perceived as serious insults. In this way they remain in the realm of play. Disparaging and ironic comments about other hip hop artists' styles, work and performances are the dominant theme explored in signifying in rap lyrics. Since a high position in the world of music is of a great importance to every rapper, they try to establish it by means of discrediting their rivals and diminishing their achievements. In this case the power of signifying is based on the concept of shared knowledge – both rappers taking part in small neighborhood contests as well as the ones performing successfully on a large scale generally know other participants of the game, which helps them to present compelling and accurate arguments. Once they know one another's weaknesses, it becomes easier to create a witty and powerful snap, as can be seen in the discourse between Dr Dre and Eminem in *Encore*:

(4)   You a fad, that means you something that we already had
      But once you're gone you don't come back. (Dr Dre)
(5)   Too bad, you're off the map now, radar can't even find you
      We stay on the grind you slip, we out-grind you
          You walk around mad, you let your anger blind you. (Eminem)

3.2. Ritual insults

Ritual insults, known as the *dozens*, *playing the dozens* or *yo mama* statements, are sometimes viewed as a subcategory of signifying due to the fact that they are also aimed at discrediting and ridiculing the opponent. While signifying focuses on a given person or a thing either for fun or criticism, the dozens are leveled at the other person's relatives, especially their mothers. It is "low rating the ancestors of your opponent" (Hurston quoted in Smitherman 2000: 224). This is why "signifying is more humane. Instead of coming down on somebody's mother, you come down on them" (Brown quoted in Smitherman 2000: 224). The origins of the dozens come from the African tradition, too. Thomas (quoted in Rose 1994: 18) traces them back to Bantu practices in which "to insult without eliciting anger or violence is a profound sign of companionship and solidarity within the group." Based on the study of ritual insults undertaken by William Labov, Daley (1998) notes that such rhyming couplets would often initiate an exchange which may lead to a competition of ribald *trash talk*. The participants of the contest take turns to insult their adversary's family members until one of them has no comeback – falls silent or starts a fight, either of which would indicate poorer verbal abilities. The dozens are not meant to be personal, and this is why instead of denying the insult, the "victim" strikes back with another one. Dozens contests have winners and losers. As Dumitrescu (2003) observes, the main criteria for judgment is a good memory of insults and an effective delivery. Creativity is not the primary objective. According to Smitherman (2000), playing the dozens involves following sophisticated rules. First of all, the players should be known to each other. If they are not acquaintances, they ought to be familiar with the African-American cultural context. The concept of shared knowledge is a crucial part of the game: not only does it contribute to the effectiveness of the dozens, but it also helps to create a sense of community.

As far as the process of delivery is concerned, the dozens must be exaggerated: the wilder, the better. Timing is another important aspect of the game: the response must be produced immediately and spontaneously, which does not leave much time for lengthy deliberation. This form of art is called *free-styling* in rap. The highest level of mastery is achieved when the couplets rhyme. Finally, according to the most important rule, the dozens must not be literally true, which, as in the case of signifying, locates them in the realm of play.

3.3. Narrativizing

From a wider perspective, the concept of *nommo* (the power of the spoken word) which underpins African-American Oral Tradition, manifests itself in a more complex activity: *storytelling*. According to Smitherman (2000), nar-

rativizing is a characteristic feature of the general African-American discourse practices due to the fact that even everyday conversational talk may be transformed into a "story":

> Narrativizing is a Black rhetorical strategy to explain a point, to persuade holders of opposing views to one's own point of view and to create word-pictures about general, abstract observations about life, love and survival. (Smitherman 2000:275)

Thus, the oratorical style of the African-American verbal tradition differs from the white, European discourse in attaching more importance to concreteness and specificity rather than abstraction and generalization. The speaker who distances himself/herself from the described events or approaches them in a clinical and impartial way may be treated with suspicion or distrust. This demand for personal involvement is called a *field dependent cognitive style*. Using it, the speaker tries to establish a psychological bond with the audience by taking them directly to the arena of conflict.

Despite the fact that the oral tradition provides the speaker with some general structure for the story, the creation of details is left to the author. The teller or rapper is free to improvise by taking advantage of a given situation, like spur-of-the-moment ideas or listener's reactions (which undergo further analysis in the call-and-response process). Thanks to the spontaneous process of creation, the story appears to be always fresh, properly adjusted and immediately personalized to the needs of a particular situation. DJ Jazzy Jeff in *Girls ain't nothing but trouble* presents in a funny way three short stories concerning his personal experiences with girls, which got him into trouble:

(6)   Just last week when I was walking down the street
        I observed this lovely lady that I wanted to meet
        I walked up to her I said hello
        she said you're kind of cute I said yes I know
        but by the way sweetheart what's your name
        she said my friends like to call me exotic Elaine.

The effect of spontaneous narration was achieved thanks to the use of short sentences including several verbs. In this way the story develops quickly and is easy to follow. What is more, the quality of the text was enriched by adding rhymes. This stylistic device is often applied by rappers, who even refer to their kind of music as *rhyming*. Rhymes help to unify the whole story and introduce a certain rhythm, which probably facilitates uttering lyrics simultaneously with the beat of music. While giving vivid and graphic descriptions of

different scenes, rappers help the audience to sense the specific atmosphere of the moment, ranging from parties in R. Kelly's *Fiesta* and Snoopy Dogg's *Gin and juice* to violent fights in Dr Dre's *Lyrical gangbang* and *Nigga witta gun*. Their listeners may feel as if they witnessed the events. The way the rappers talk about the presented situations and the feelings evoked by them indicates their deep and emotional involvement. They appear to be truly engaged in a given problem and seriously concerned about it, confirming Smitherman's (2000) assertion that the necessity of concreteness and personal commitment follows from the field-dependent cognitive style used in the African-American Oral Tradition:

(7)   I didn't take long before the tears start
       I saw my bitch dead with the gunshot to the heart
       And I know it was meant for me
       I guess the niggaz felt they had to kill the closest one to me
       And when I find em your life is to an end
       They killed my best friend... me and my bitch. (Notorious B.I.G, *Me & my bitch*)

Creating such powerful images is to a large extent possible thanks to the application of imaginative language, full of metaphors, comparisons and repetitions. Without doubt, the language effectively attracts listeners' attention and enhances the artistic quality of the text. The use of metaphors involves indirection. The basic feature of images constructed by means of metaphorical language is their multiple meaning. Depending on circumstances, a rap can be deciphered and interpreted by the audience in various ways, as, for instance, in The Game's *Untold story*:

(8)   Layin with dogs, you gon' wake up with fleas
       Fuckin with rats, you'll never get your cheese.

Taking into consideration the whole rap song, 'layin with dogs...' might be interpreted as getting into trouble because of the bad influence of one's company, or more generally, as adopting one's habits because of spending time with a given person. 'You'll never get your cheese...' may be understood literally as never getting one's money, as, according to *Hiphoptionary*, 'cheese' means 'money' in the hip-hop slang (Westbrook 2002: 25); more broadly, 'You'll never get your cheese...' can be interpreted to mean that one will never get what one wants. The decision about the intended meaning is left to the listener.

3.4. Call-and-response

The artists drawing on the African-American Oral Tradition want to impress their spectators. While showing their verbal dexterity they often engage the audience in the performance. What is more, as Smitherman (1998) explains, the communication process in an African-American context requires a dialogue between the participants rather than the artist's monologue. A constant exchange and a mutual commitment are essential for communication to take place. This style, referred to as *call-and-response*, is defined by Smitherman (1998) as a spontaneous, either verbal or non-verbal interaction between the speaker and the listener during which the statements (*calls*) uttered by the speaker are interwoven by the reactions (*responses*) of the listener. The main function of the response is to express affirmation or agreement with the speaker, urging him/her to continue, repeating or complementing what has been said. Both calls and responses enable the participants to manipulate their discourse by using requests, orders or eliciting various patterns of behavior because call-and-response is not limited to verbal interaction. It can be also expressed by some other, non-verbal means, including laughter, "giving five", or dancing. The only bad thing which can be done in an African-American discourse is not responding at all while being engaged in a conversation, since this may be perceived as a conscious attempt to distance oneself and emotionally disconnect from the interlocutor. This technique has been ritualized in the traditional African-American church and is revealed in the back-and-forth exchange between the preacher and the congregation during the sermon. It is also frequently applied by rappers, especially during live performances when the audience is encouraged to take part and respond actively to what is happening on the stage. Rappers usually ask rhetorical questions addressing their listeners, which are meant to attract their attention and make them think more deeply about the matters considered. Furthermore, they seek some signs of affirmation and agreement which would indicate that their message is understood and accepted. This function is mainly realized by phrases such as 'Do you feel me?' 'Do you know what I'm saying?'

3.5 The role of meaning transfers

According to Smitherman (2000), one of the least understood practices in the African-American Oral Tradition is the manipulation of the semantic structure of Standard English, which manifests itself in *semantic inversion* and *tonal semantics*. Semantic inversion, called by the hip-hop generation *flipping the script*, is a process in which African-American speakers use words and concepts from the Standard English lexicon and either reverse their meanings or give them entirely different interpretation:

Semantic inversion was an act of linguistic empowerment as Africans in America took an alien tongue and made it theirs; simultaneously, they created a communication system that became linguistically unintelligible to the oppressor, even though it was his language. (Smitherman 2000: 280)

For example, historically 'the man' did not refer to just any man but, derogatorily, to the white man. During the 1960's and 1970s the meaning was extended and applied not only to the white man but also to policemen. Finally, in the hip-hop generation the word underwent another change in meaning and has come to refer to a person with a great power, knowledge, abilities, etc. (Westbrook 2002: 97). Daley (1998) explains that the interpretation of Standard English words, serving to increase the range of possible referents, may be treated as the legacy of *pidgin languages*. Their major characteristic was the use of a small lexicon for a large variety of meanings. Since one word may have more than one referent, its particular meaning in a given situation is determined by the context. A notable example of context-bound interpretation is the use of profanity in rap lyrics, where terms generally acknowledged as obscene need not have only negative connotations. In rap lyrics, a well-known example of semantic inversion and context-bound interpretation involves the word 'nigger'. Smitherman (2000) notes that, due to historical factors, African-Americans take a grave offence at being referred to with this word by white people, as it has always involved disrespect and contempt. However, the same word (nowadays taking the form of 'nigga' and 'niggas/niggaz' in the plural form) has been widely used among African-Americans. Depending on the circumstances, its connotative meaning ranges from positive to negative and the word is used in reference to: 1. a person of African-American origin (neutral); 2. a term of personal affection or endearment; 3. a term identifying the African-American folk stressing its unity; 4. an expression of disapproval for one's actions, often derogatory or offensive (Westbrook 2002: 97). The negative use of 'nigga' frequently involves the stereotypical image which used to be promoted by white people, that of a dangerous, unintelligent or lazy African-American person, as the following illustrates:

(9)   They say keep em on gangs and drugs
      It's the nigga you love to hate.
      You wanna sweep a nigga like me up under the rug
      Ay yo baby, your mother warned you about me. (Ice Cube, *The nigga you love to hate*)

Very often, the word is used with a derogatory meaning in the lyrics, in which rappers try to offend one another as part of a verbal 'battle', or to warn their opponents:

(10) So feel the wrath, nigga, I rip in half niggas
        So watch me blast, nigga, cuz I'm the last nigga
        You wanna fuck wit. (Dr Dre, *Lyrical gangbang*)

Using 'nigga' may be also seen as a sign of identifying oneself with the African-American folk or calling for its unity. This meaning also has historical roots: it is connected with the African-American struggle for freedom and equality. 2Pac even redefined the term as an acronym which reads 'N(ever) I(gnorant) G(etting) G(oals) A(ccomplished)' (Westbrook 2002: 97), which makes it powerful, as in the following example:

(11) My street niggas, C'mon!
        Stressed niggas, C'mon!
        Hungry niggas, C'mon! (2Pac, *Anarchy*)

Another interesting aspect of the African-American semantics used by rappers is the impassionate, emotional and very expressive style of delivering the message. In order to achieve intensity, rappers usually make use of rhymes, speech rhythm, repetitions and a careful vocabulary choice. Sometimes words are chosen because of their sound quality rather than meaning. Such word plays are mainly based on alliteration or repetitions of words including similar sounds. This strategy is responsible for creating unusual and startling effects:

(12) Hold on homie, that's formost and promos
        Sales, tails, scales and jails. (Snoop Doggy Dogg, *The doggfather*)
(13) If *peter piper pecked* 'em, I *betcha Biggie bust* 'em. (Lil' Kim, *Queen bitch*)

4. Conclusions

While examining rap lyrics, one may find ample evidence demonstrating that the African-American Oral Tradition has exerted considerable influence on the language used by their authors and on the audience that the rappers engage with. Understanding the origin, meaning and purpose of the techniques and strategies used by rappers enables fuller appreciation of the uniqueness of rap: the use of *profanity, insults* or *offensive language* becomes understandable and, to some extent, even justified. While this research disregards the pe-

culiarities of AAVE, its examination (especially in the field of grammar and pronunciation) can be expected to offer further evidence supporting the claim that rap should be perceived as a continuation of the African-American Oral Tradition.

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Part 2

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What to Do with "So much Loudness"? Non-Native English in Film Translation

Streszczenie

W anglojęzycznych komediach często pojawiają się bohaterowie, którzy posługują się językiem angielskim jako językiem obcym, zaznaczając w ten sposób swoją etniczną i kulturową odrębność, a jednocześnie wikłając się w zabawne sytuacje komunikacyjne. W oparciu o analizę podpisów do ośmiu amerykańskich komedii dostępnych na polskim rynku DVD, autorka stawia pytanie, czy i w jaki sposób ograniczona znajomość języka angielskiego znajduje swoje odzwierciedlenie w przekładzie. Omawia zróżnicowane funkcje, jakie może pełnić w filmie obcy akcent (symbolizując rozmowę w innym języku, podkreślając przynależność bohatera do konkretnej społeczności kulturowej, uwydatniając jego wyjątkowość na tle innych postaci) i charakteryzuje strategie i techniki, po jakie sięgnęli tłumacze, by odzwierciedlić fonetyczną, morfologiczną, składniową oraz pragmatyczną niedoskonałość filmowych wypowiedzi i uwypuklić ich humorystyczny potencjał.

1. Introduction

Since the release of the first sound films in the late 1920s, their translators have enabled international audience to enjoy the charms of the Tenth Muse.[1] With the advent of television and subsequently – the Internet, audiovisual

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[1] According to Gottlieb, the first sound film to be presented with foreign subtitles was *The jazz singer*, shown in Paris on the 26th of January 1929 in French translation (quoted in Ivarsson 2004). However, earlier instances of audiovisual translation date back to the era of silent films, which sometimes used intertitles, i.e., comments inserted between the scenes, which had to be rendered into foreign languages. This either involved removing the original intertitles and reinserting their translated version, or providing a simultaneous interpretation of the intertitles (Ivarsson 2004).

translation has become one of the most important channels of intercultural communication, which broadens the horizons and forms the language habits of millions of viewers, thus playing "a unique role in developing both national identities and national stereotypes" (Baker and Hochel 1997: 76). Quite surprisingly, though, it was only in the 1990s that the phenomenon finally attracted the attention of translation scholars, interested primarily in the specific requirements of different translation modes (i.e., dubbing, subtitling and voice-over) and aspects of cultural transfer involved in the translation process (Woźniak 2008: 50).

A small bud on this youngest branch of Translation Studies, my article focuses on the latter issue. It addresses the questions of how Anglophone comedies portray non-native speakers of English and what happens to their linguistic ineptitude in Polish translation. Thus, it touches upon a wider issue concerning the necessity and methods of reflecting dialectal polyphony in film translation. Marginal at first glance, the problem reveals broader implications in the face of the growing popularity of multilingual films, which portray people of different nationalities speaking their vernacular (e.g., Iñárritu's *Babel* or Tarantino's *Inglourious basterds*) or immigrant communities switching and mixing codes (e.g., Chadha's *Bend it like Beckham* or Brooks' *Spanglish*). In response to this trend, manifest since the 1980s (Baldo 2009), more and more scholars show an increased interest in ethno- and sociolinguistic aspects of film translation.

My article follows their example. Starting with the observation that a number of American comedies feature non-native speakers of English, it investigates how consistently their inter-language is depicted in Polish translation. How does the characters' poor command of English affect their mutual interactions, i.e., the *internal communication system*? How does it affect the filmmakers' interactions with the audience, i.e., the *external communication system* (c.f. Totzeva 1999: 84)? What role do the non-native speakers of English perform in the film? Does their mangled speech contribute to the comical effect? If so, does it remain equally awkward in translation? What *techniques* (local solutions applicable to the micro-context) and what *strategies* (global approaches applicable to the entire text) do the subtitlers use to reconstruct language error (Tomaszkiewicz 2006: 103)?

In order to address these questions, I selected and analyzed a sample of eight subtitled films available on DVD, which exploit the humorous potential of English as a lingua franca. These include Jim Abrahams, David and Jerry Zucker's *Top secret!,* which celebrates the comic sides of Denglish, Sofia Coppola's *Lost in translation,* which toys with the idea of Japanese English called Engrish, Joel Coen's *Intolerable cruelty*, which contains a Franglais episode, Joel Zwick's *My big fat Greek wedding*, where Greek English features prominently,

Kelly Makin's *Mickey Blue Eyes* and David Mamet's *State and Main* featuring Chinese and Italian English, respectively, Ivan Reitman's *Ghostbusters II*, in which the motif of Hungarian English appears, and David Mirkin's *Heartbreakers,* which boasts Runglish at its best.

2. Functions of non-native English

As it turns out, the translators' sensitivity to the characters' non-native command of English depends on the significance of this motif for the action and the projected reactions to the film.

In the analyzed comedies, it performs four basic functions. Sometimes it constitutes a *piece of scenery*, which adds local color to the exotic setting, but does not contribute to the development of the plot. On other occasions, it is an *element of the storyline*: a piece of scenery which suddenly starts to interfere in and shape the course of events. In the remaining examples, it mainly helps to portray the protagonists. Thus, it either becomes an additional element of *costume design*, transforming the characters into typical representatives of a given ethnic community, or a handy *make-up accessory*, transforming the characters into atypical oddballs, individuals standing out from the rest of the American society.

Interestingly, depending on the function in the film, the non-native variety of English assumes a different ontological and sociolinguistic status. It reveals itself as a *surrogate of a foreign language* (e.g., non-standard English symbolizing German or Italian), a *distinctive form of learner English* (e.g., an interlanguage developed by Chinese or Japanese learners presented in the film), an *ethnolect* (e.g., a variety of English used by the Greek or Italian population in the United States), or an *idiolect* (i.e., a unique variety of English used by particular protagonists, e.g., by an American con artist pretending to be Russian or a by a Swiss aristocrat). As the analysis shows, each demands a different approach in translation. Let us have a closer look at the techniques and strategies used by the Polish subtitlers to deal with the non-native varieties of English presented in the films.

3. Translation techniques and strategies

In his article on the functions of language variation in screen translation, a scriptwriter and media scholar Boris Trbic emphasizes how important dialectal distinctions are in conveying "cultural references, problems of status and identity" (Trbic 2005). He observes that "the rhythms, cadences, accent,

pitch, and inflection are among the most ignored production elements of the cinematic narrative, inherent to an actor's performance," which nevertheless provide vital information about the characters' "personality, status, relationships, temperament, mood, and feelings, as well as the broader cultural contexts in which they are situated" (Trbic 2005). Thus, the protagonists' socio- and ethnolinguistic background constitutes an important cultural reference, which demands special attention on the part of screen translators.

Generally, they have several techniques at their disposal while dealing with cultural references in audiovisual texts. They can *transfer* the original concepts (i.e., import the original terms unchanged), *naturalize* them (i.e., adapt the imported terms graphically and morphologically), *calque* them (i.e., translate the original terms literally), *neutralize* them (i.e., replace them with more general terms), provide *additional information* (i.e., import the term and explain it), look for a *cultural equivalent* (i.e., replace the reference to the source culture with an approximately equal reference to the target culture), *omit* the cultural reference, or *substitute* it by *another* reference to the source culture (Oltra Ripoll 2004: 87–89).

3.1. Translating English as a foreign language substitute

Obviously, non-native speakers of English are most willingly portrayed in American comedies set outside the Anglosphere, such as *Only you, A happy year, French kiss, Under the Tuscan sun*. The French, Italian or Polish characters populating these films manifest different forms of *learner English* (cf. section 3.2. below), flaunting their linguistic ineptitude to enrich the exotic scenery and to provide a verbal accompaniment to the Eiffel Towers, Coliseums, Venetian canals and Provençal vineyards, which are the backdrop for the action. Depending on the creativity of the screenwriters, the *locals* either speak English with a foreign accent (their mother tongue affecting only the pronunciation) or display more fanciful forms of language transfer (affecting their lexical and grammatical choices) while communicating with each other and with the Anglophone protagonists. This does not hinder their mutual interactions and has consequently no effect on the storyline. It is only meant to draw the viewers' attention to the setting, influencing the *external communication system*. Hence, these signals tend to be disregarded by film translators, who apply the technique of *omission* and allow the characters to speak standard Polish and the original sound and imagery to 'speak for themselves'.

However, there are memorable comedies that expose the triviality of this exotic convention by reducing it to absurdity. Jim Abrahams, David and Jerry Zucker's *Top secret!* is a case in point. Set in East Germany, the film parodies classic wartime dramas and popular Elvis flicks. It features a host of German characters who speak English with an exaggerated Teutonic accent. Their pronunciation is grotesquely foreign, yet the richness of vocabulary and gram-

matical accuracy suggest a native command of English. Thus, when the *locals* communicate with each other, their accent signals metonymically that they are using their vernacular – it is a naïve substitute of German. When the *locals* communicate with their American guests, by contrast, their foreign accent metonymically stands for English as a Foreign Language. In both cases, however, it is not the pronunciation itself that is comical, but the naivety of this exoticizing device, made all the more apparent by the characters' willingness to intersperse their utterances with fanciful Germanisms – some of them blatantly fictional.

Since the characters' national background affects only their English pronunciation in the film, the Polish subtitler disregarded these paralinguistic features of the original, and decided not to reflect them graphically – a strategy used on very rare occasions, as discussed later in sections 3.2. and 3.4. His/her choice of *omission* technique seems obvious, as the subtitles do not interfere with the auditory channel, allowing the viewers to appreciate the characters' foreign accent. Most of the verbal signals of the characters' German background were preserved in translation. For example, the original loanwords used in the conversation between the two German officers were *directly transferred* into Polish, their foreignness highlighted by means of italics:

(1)   Well done, Herr Major.
        'Dobrze się pan spisał, *Herr Major*.'
(2)   Well, not exactly, mein General.
        'Niekoniecznie, *mein General*.'

Similarly, *direct transfer* was used in the translation of another utterance, which abounds in attested German loanwords in English. This time, the subtitler replaced a grammatically correct original with an ungrammatical, German-Polish equivalent:

(3)   I want a schnauzer with my Wiener schnitzel.
        'Proszę o *Schnauzer* i *Wiener Schnitzel*.'

Quite interestingly, however, s/he did not use the same technique again in an analogous situation:

(4)   There is sauerkraut in my lederhosen.
        'Mam w ledewerkach kiszoną kapustę.'

This time, the translator chose a Polish cultural equivalent for 'sauerkraut', i.e., 'kiszona kapusta', and substituted the other Germanism, 'lederhosen'

('leather pants'), assimilated in English, with another Germanism, 'ledewerki' ('leather straps'), which is assimilated in Polish.

On the whole, however, the translator did not seem to employ any consistent strategy in his/her treatment of the German allusions in the film. S/he regularly disregarded the phonetic peculiarities of the German accent and did not adopt any consistent method of reflecting the other traces of language transfer (i.e., code-mixing, borrowing) in the subtitles.

3.2.   Translating English as a foreign language

In some comedies, the characters' non-native command of English is not merely a piece of exotic scenery, but an integral element of the storyline. Unlike the previous category, these films thematize the motifs of culture shock and miscommunication. They show the Anglophones' turbulent encounters with untalented English learners and reconstruct the latter's linguistic awkwardness with loving care. Thus, we can admire traces of first language transfer typical of particular ethnic groups (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, French) on the levels of phonology, morphology and grammar. It is worth noticing, however, that in the age of political correctness it is not actually the characters' poor command of English that is presented as funny, but rather the unorthodox communicative situations it engenders. As it is important for the development of the plot, the characters' poor command of English must be reflected in translation, calling for various local techniques and global strategies of recreating language error. Let us have a look at two examples of films presenting this kind of challenge.

A comedy that paints the most realistic picture of alienation and culture shock is Sofia Coppola's *Lost in translation* (2003). It portrays two Americans in Tokyo, dazed by the exoticism of Japanese culture and intimidated by the unpredictable communication styles of their hosts, who struggle with various phonological, lexical and grammatical difficulties typical of Japanese learners of English. The phonological problems give rise to many amusing incidents in the film. They result primarily from the Japanese speakers' inability to distinguish between the English phonemes *r* and *l,* because these sounds are absent from their vernacular. This typically "Engrish" feature gives rise to numerous mispronunciations and unintentional word substitutions in the film, illustrated best in a famous exchange between the American protagonist and a Japanese masseuse:

(5)   My stockings.
      'Pończochy.'
(6)   'Lip them.'
      'Lwij je.'

(7)   Lip my stockings.
      'Lwij pończochy.'
(8)   Yes, please. Lip them.
      'Lwije!'

The translator, Maria Etienne, decided to reflect this phonetic inaccuracy graphically, by *calquing* the mechanism of erroneous consonant substitution. She found a Polish equivalent for the originally mispronounced verb 'rip', the imperative 'rwij' and transcribed it in a distorted form 'lwij', replacing 'r' with 'l'. Thus, she substituted the original denominal verb 'to lip', resulting from conversion, with a Polish contextual equivalent, the imperative verb form 'lwij', formed from the adjective 'lwi' ('of a lion'). Thus, she managed to reflect both the original miscommunication and the mechanisms of language transfer responsible for it.

The translator consistently used *calque* and *cultural equivalent* techniques, reflecting many of the Engrish mispronunciations orthographically, as in the following examples:

(9)   Lat Pack. Lat Pack, you know?
      'Lat Pack, wiesz?'
(10) Loger Moore?
      'Lodża Mur?'

In the former example (9), only the word 'Lat' is imported into Polish in its mispronounced form, whereas the word 'Pack' is transferred in its intact English form. In the latter example (10), by contrast, the American protagonist's auditory shock is replaced with visual shock. The translator transcribed the mispronounced first name phonetically, coining a neologism 'Lodża', which unfortunately lacks the homophonous potential of the original (the disfigured proper name 'Roger' sounds like a common noun 'lodger'). However, she compensated for this loss by transcribing the surname 'Moore' and coming up with the noun 'Mur' ('a brick wall'). Thus, Maria Etienne took pains to reflect all the Engrish mispronunciations that give rise to misunderstandings and affect the storyline. Her strategy involved substituting unintentional puns with functional equivalents and using calques to reflect the mechanism of phonological transfer.

The translator also had to recreate the Japanese speakers' limited grammatical and pragmatic competence, which contributed to the culture shock experienced by the Anglophone protagonists and – vicariously – by the audience. It is best illustrated in the following scene, in which a Japanese interpreter instructs the American actor on how to perform in a whiskey commercial:

(11) He want you to turn. Look in camera.
      'Chce, żeby się *pan* obrócił i spojrzał w kamerę.'
(12) Yes, turn to camera.
      'Tak, obrót do kamery.'
(13) Right side and with intensity.
      'Z prawej strony. Wyrazisty.'
(14) Like an old friend and into the camera.
      'Jak stary przyjaciel i do kamery.'
(15) Could you do it slower? And more intensity?
      'Może *pan* to zrobić wolniej? *I bardziej wyraziście*?'

Apparently, the interpreter uses simplified grammar to address her American interlocutor – she omits articles and inflectional affixes (e.g., 'he want', 'turn to camera'). She often restricts herself to malformed adverbial modifiers of place and manner (e.g., 'right side', 'more intensity'), instead of forming complete sentences. However, her English is sufficiently advanced to include inversion, comparative forms and complicated modal structures, thanks to which she does not violate the rules of politeness. Maria Etienne reflects several idiosyncrasies of the character's interlanguage in her subtitles. She calques the fragmentation and incoherence of the original by juxtaposing the adverbial of place 'z prawej strony' ('right side') with an adjectival attribute 'wyrazisty' ('with intensity'), which sounds clumsy in Polish. Apart from this example, however, she fails to produce any overtly incorrect sentences, similar to the original 'he want'. She also ascribes to the Japanese character a more extensive command of Polish grammar, allowing her to use courteous form of address, e.g., the polite *pan* 'sir/mister' (cf. (11) and (15)) and highbrow comparative forms of adverbs, e.g., 'bardziej wyraziście' ('with more intensity'). On the whole, Maria Etienne preserves both the original level of formality and the original level of imprecision (incoherence, fragmentation), although she polishes up some of the character's stylistic gaffes.

The translator's sensitivity to the peculiarities of EFL is clearly visible in the next example. Here, the Japanese photographer has a poorer command of English than the interpreter and, consequently, a poorer command of Polish:

(16) I need mysterious face. Can you show mysterious?
      'Chcę tajemniczą twarz, możesz to pokazać?'
(17) I need more mysterious.
      'Większa tajemniczość.'

In English, the Japanese protagonist apparently produces malformed sentences, replacing the noun phrase with the adjective 'mysterious'. In Polish,

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by contrast, his first utterance (16) is grammatically correct, but the second (17) sounds vague and clumsy, owing to the use of uninflected nominalization 'tajemniczość' ('secretiveness'). The character also seems to violate the Polish rules of politeness by addressing his much older interlocutor with an informal second person singular form 'ty' ('you'), instead of the more appropriate polite form 'pan'. Thus, again, the translator combined the techniques of *omission* with that of *cultural equivalence* to recreate the level of pragmatic competence typical of non-native speakers of English.

All in all, Maria Etienne adopted a consistent strategy of reflecting all the phonological, morphosyntactic and pragmatic problems which affect the characters' mutual interactions, and play an important role both within the internal and the external communication systems. She signaled orthographically the idiosyncrasies of the Engrish accent. She signaled grammatically and stylistically the inaccuracies of Engrish morphosyntax. On the whole, however, she produced a text that is slightly more coherent and understandable than the original.

Another comedy that thematizes the motif of culture clash is Kelly Makin's *Mickey Blue Eyes* (1999). In one of the scenes, the main character, Mickey, decides to propose to his girlfriend. He invites her to a Chinese restaurant and secretly asks the restaurant owner to hide the engagement ring in a fortune-cookie, so that his would-be fiancé could find it. The plan fails, as Gina is not hungry and refuses to accept the cookie. This engenders a violent emotional reaction on the part of the restaurant owner, who betrays her exceptionally poor command of English in the following way:

(18) You eat cookie.
      'Pani je ciasteczko.'
(19) Eat cookie.
      'Ciasteczko.'
(20) No. You eat cookie. Eat cookie!
      'Nie, pani. Jeść!'
      [No, I don't feel like taking orders from a waitress.]
      ['Nie muszę słuchać kelnerki.']
(21) No waitress, owner.
'Właścicielki.'
(22) Eat fucking cookie!
      'Ciacho!'
(23) No waitress, owner.
      'Nie jestem kelnerką.'
(24) My restaurant.
      'Moja restauracja!'

The character speaks with a foreign accent – the tonality of Chinese weighing heavily on her English pronunciation – and uses extremely simplified grammar. She seems to be familiar with the elementary forms of possessive constructions ('my restaurant'), negation ('no waitress') and imperative ('eat cookie'), expressing her emotional involvement by non-verbal means. Thus, she utters her polite offer, 'Eat cookie,' with a nice bow, and a minute later transforms it into a brusque command with an agitated tone of voice. It is only the use of the vulgarism 'fucking' that betrays her ability to verbalize her attitudes, quite unimpressive from the point of view of lexical and grammatical complexity.

The Polish translator presented the Chinese restaurant owner as a more advanced language learner, allowing her to use more diverse and more demanding syntactic structures. Her first utterance is incorrect grammatically, but still quite adequate pragmatically, preserving an appropriate level of formality. She makes a statement instead of an offer, producing a declarative sentence 'Pani je ciasteczko' (18), but utilizes a polite addressative form 'pani' ('Madam'). Her next command 'Jeść!' (20) – however blunt – is grammatically acceptable and demonstrates familiarity with different imperative constructions available in Polish. Moreover, the character seems adept at word-formation, using not only diminutive, but also augmentative forms of nouns ('ciasteczko' ('little cookie') and 'ciacho' ('cookie'), respectively). She produces correct clauses, containing complicated noun inflections, such as the genitive 'właścicielki' ('owner') and the instrumental form 'kelnerką' ('waitress').

On the whole, the restaurant owner seems to speak better Polish than English, although her poor command of language is clearly visible in the Polish subtitles. The translator's strategy seemed to involve highlighting the pragmatic rather than grammatical inadequacy of the character's utterances, her brusqueness rather than inarticulateness. In the original, the former results from the latter. The restaurant owner sounds abrupt and aggressive because she is incapable of expressing her emotional attitudes, politeness and indignation verbally, or, to be more precise, grammatically. In Polish translation, by contrast, her interlanguage is presented in a less consistent and predictable way: several syntactic structures seem troublesome (owing to the use of *calques*), but others come surprisingly easy to her (owing to the use of *neutralization* and *equivalents*). Thus, it is her lack of cultural competence rather than linguistic competence that comes to the fore.

On the whole, both translators took pains to reflect the characters' poor command of English by orthographic, lexical and grammatical means. Apparently, within this group of films, "language error" is so important both within the internal communication system (resulting in misunderstandings among the characters) and the external communication system (contributing to the

viewers' humorous reactions) that it had to be carefully preserved by the subtitlers.

3.3. Translating non-native English as an ethnolect

Another category of films which poses severe problems in translation portrays the diasporic experience of immigrants living in the Anglophone countries. The variety of English spoken by these characters (who often tend to switch and mix codes) represents an *ethnolect* – with all its cultural and social implications – rather than a distinctive form of *learner's English*, as in the previous group of films. The question arises: if/how to render Italian English, Greek English or Hinglish in Polish subtitles? And how to mark the distinction between the language of the first- and second-generation immigrants?

Within my corpus, Joel Zwick's *My big fat Greek wedding* (2002) provides a good example of such dilemmas. The comedy features three generations of Greek immigrants in Chicago, the older ones speaking English as a foreign language, the younger – bilingual – using it as their mother tongue. Thus, the variety of language used by particular characters provides important information about their cultural, ethnic and social background, as well as the generation they represent. It therefore resembles an element of costume design and helps to portray the characters more realistically. The protagonists speaking non-standard English belong to the Greek community of small business owners and restaurateurs who came to America in search of a better life. Their ethnolect symbolizes a strong sense of national identity and respect for traditional values. It reveals various traces of first language interference: their pronunciation is affected by Greek phonology and prosody, their lexical and grammatical repertoire is evidently limited. They tend to mispronounce words, lack others, use calques and mix codes. Their children, by contrast, boast a native command of English and show first signs of cultural assimilation. All in all, the dialect variation emphasizes the ethnic differences between the Greeks and Xenos, and marks the generation gap within the Greek community.

Most of the phonetic and morphosyntactic idiosyncrasies of the Greek English disappear in Polish translation. Dominika Kmiecik Micali's decision to *omit* these signals is quite understandable, as they do not affect the storyline. Thus, in the scenes where linguistic awkwardness does not disrupt the characters' interactions, they are allowed to speak standard Polish. We can observe this strategy in the following examples, where the main representatives of the first-generation immigrants, Gus Portokalos and Aunt Voula, reveal themselves as non-native speakers of English and commit occasional mistakes:

(25) You better get married soon. You start to look old.
      'Lepiej się pośpiesz z *zamążpójściem.* Zaczynasz wyglądać staro.'

(26) Give me a word. Any word. And *I show you* how the root of this word
     is Greek. OK. How about *arachnophobia*? *Arachne* that comes from
     a Greek word for 'spider' and *phobia* or *phovia is mean* fear. So, fear of
     spiders, there you go.
     'Daj mi słowo, a ja udowodnię wam, że to słowo pochodzi z greki. Może
     arachnofobia. *Arachne* to greckie słowo oznaczające pająka a *phobia* lub
     phovia to strach. Czyli strach przed pająkiem, otóż to!'
(27) So *why you not wait* for me?
     'Czemu na mnie nie poczekałeś?'
(28) She won't go… It's *like she don't want* to get married.
     'Ona nie chce jechać. Zupełnie jakby nie chciała wyjść za mąż.'

Since these syntactic peculiarities do not affect the communicative process,
but serve to emphasize the foreign origin of the characters, the translator did
not reflect them in the subtitles. She apparently concluded that the characters'
appearance and intonation are sufficient indicators of their Hellenic roots,
which do not need to be reinforced verbally.

The only strategy used by the translator to distinguish Greek English eth-
nolect from standard varieties of English involves mixing styles. It manifested
itself in the first example (25), where Gus advises his daughter to get mar-
ried soon, choosing a literary Polish word *zamążpójście* ('marriage') instead of
more pedestrian equivalents. According to this strategy, the grammatical and
lexical inadequacies disappear, replaced by stylistic inconsistency. The Greek
English speakers use simple yet grammatically correct Polish structures, but
they intersperse their utterances with colloquialisms and archaisms, mixing
registers and thus highlighting stylistic dissonance. Let us consider the follow-
ing example:

(29) Didn't I say is a mistake to educate women? But nobody *listen* to me!
     'A nie mówiłem, że kształcenie *bab* to błąd. Ale nikt mnie nie słuchał!'
(30) Now, we have a boyfriend in the house.
     'Teraz mamy w domu *zalotnika*.'
(31) Is he nice Greek boy? Oh, no Greek no Greek! A Xeno! A Xeno with big
     long hairs on his head.
     'Czy to miły grecki chłopiec? Gdzie tam Grek! Żaden Grek, to *Xeno*!
     Xeno! *Obcokrajowiec* z długimi *kudłami* na głowie!'

The translator reflected Gus Portokalos' incoherent emotional outburst by
mixing colloquialisms, such as the pejorative 'baby' ('of women, old cows') or
'kudły' ('mop' (of hair)) with archaisms, such as 'zalotnik' ('suitor') and long
compound words, such as 'obcokrajowiec' ('foreigner').

Thus, Dorota Kmiecik-Micali took pains to reflect the exoticism of Greek English ethnolect by intentional stylistic inconsistency and surprising lexical choices. She used the technique of *omission*, smoothing up the grammatical inaccuracies, and the technique of *transfer*, importing the Hellenisms from the original to reflect the protagonists' code-mixing habits. Sometimes she provided the viewers with *additional information* (as in the 'Xeno' example discussed above). This approach seems reasonable, considering the function of the Greek ethnolect in the film. With their simplified idiom the characters expressed their "un-Anglophone", warm-hearted attitude to life, opposed to the dry, toast-like, unemotional heritage of the Anglophone civilization. Hence, the translator was right to downplay the Greeks' linguistic incompetence and bring out their emotional involvement (by introducing more powerful, emotionally loaded lexical choices) and traditionalism (by introducing archaisms).

3.4. Translating non-native English as an idiolect

Some comedies exploit the motif of "language *in*competence" to paint a more memorable, multidimensional picture of particular characters. Instead of presenting them as members of a foreign language community (as the German, Chinese and Japanese protagonists presented in sections 3.1. and 3.2.) or representatives of an ethnic minority (as the Greek protagonists presented in section 3.3.), these comedies portray unique individuals whose linguistic idiosyncrasy distinguishes them from the crowd. Here, the translator's task involves recreating *idiolect* rather than a particular foreign accent or ethnolect. Quite interestingly, many translators tend to disregard these signals, sometimes to the detriment of the comic potential of the film. Sometimes the choice of *omission* technique seems understandable, as in the case of David Mamet's film *State and Main*, where one of the characters, the Italian cinematographer, uses very poor English, but performs only a supporting role:

(32) Wally. I got to take this off the window from the dog. I can't shoot through … Wally, if I have some moment of your time. This shot. I cannot do this shot you want. Because it's got the window with the dogs in it. Do you want me to push in, or I can lose this shot?
'Muszę usunąć to okno z psem. Nie mogę kręcić… Wally, możesz mi poświęcić chwilę? Spójrz. Nie mogę zrobić tego ujęcia. To okno z psami. Jak się tam nie wepchnę, nici z ujęcia.'

However, in Amos Kollek's film *Happy end*, which focuses on a young French girl, who wishes to become an actress in New York and fakes German pronunciation to cover up her real French accent, the translator might have

paid more attention to the main protagonists' efforts, rendering her utterances more 'German'. Also in Ivan Reitman's *Ghostbusters II*, the character of doctor Janosh Poha, a Hungarian art historian whose original idiolect includes interesting stylistic peculiarities deserved more attention on the part of the subtitler.

There are some films, however, in which the translators showed mastery recreating the characters' unique idioms and reconstructing various traces of language transfer. The most interesting example is David Mirkin's *Heartbreakers* (2001), translated in a masterly fashion by Elżbieta Gałązka-Salamon. The main character in the film, a con artist played by Sigourney Weaver, pretends to be a Russian immigrant Ulga Yevanova to seduce an elderly millionaire (Gene Hackman). Her contrived version of Runglish, unsupported by any actual familiarity with Russian, is a state-of-the-art idiolect, characterized by a grotesque Russian accent, fancifully deformed grammatical patterns and innovative lexical choices. Ulga Yevanova fakes her poor English methodically, violating the same morphosyntactic rules over and over again and thereby helping the translator to adopt a consistent strategy of reflecting them. For instance, Ulga excels in malformed negations, she also persistently produces subjectless sentences, dropping the dummy pronoun *it*. Let us have a look at a few illustrative examples:

(33) *Is* no crime.
        '*Eto* nie zbrodnia.'
(34) Oh. *Is* nothing
        '*Eto* nic.'
(35) Marry you *is* legal question. 'Yes I will' *is* binding answer.
        'Poślubić cię ... *eto* kwestia prawna. Tak. *Eta* odpowiedź wiążąca.'
(36) Please, I *am so not* musical.
        'Proszę. Ja niemuzykalna.'

We can easily notice Elżbieta Gałązka-Salamon's strategy of removing as many verbs as possible from Ulga's Polish utterances. The original subjectless structures ('Is no crime'; 'Is nothing') transform into verbless structures ('Eto nic'; 'Eto kwestia prawna'). Ironically, the absence of the dummy pronoun 'it' in the source text is best reflected by the conspicuous presence of the Russian demonstrative 'eto' in the target text, pointing blatantly to Ulga's alleged country of origin.

Examples (37), (38) and (39) below show how merciless and uncompromising the translator was, choosing inappropriate forms of verbs and nouns to reflect Ulga's fake Runglish:

(37) I no understand. What is you want?
      'Nie rozumiem. Co *pani chesz*?'
(38) Is this not clothing you wear yesterday when you see me out?
      'Czy w *ten strój* mnie wczoraj odprowadziłaś do drzwi?'
(39) Why *are you stealing* from loyal kind *employer man*?
      '*Ograbiasz* miłego, dobrego pracodawcę?'

Elżbieta Gałązka-Salamon's creativity blossoms when the character's lexical creativity is in full bloom. Ulga adores coining mock-Russian borrowings according to her superficial knowledge of Russian. In such situations the translator consistently applies the *naturalization* technique, preserving these fake loanwords and adapting them orthographically and morphologically to the needs of the Polish grammar. Thus, she produces inflected forms of the masculine noun 'bebuszek' ('baby'):

(40) My poor, poor *bebushka*.
      'Mój biedny, biedny *bebuszku*.'

and the feminine neologism 'pipiska' ('penis/the pee pee thing'). The latter example illustrates another communicative strategy feigned by the character. Ulga often uses circumlocution to compensate for her ostensible vocabulary deficits. Thus, shocked at the terrible damage suffered by the male statue she bought at an auction (it lost private parts in transport), she exclaims:

(41) Oh my God! My beautiful man. In ruined. Ruined!
      'Mój piękny mężczyzna ... w ruinie! Ruina!'
(42) *Man thing* off, deal off. What good is he to me now? He has no ...
      pipiska.
      '*Męska rzecz* odpada, zakup odpada. Na co mi on teraz? Bez ... *pipiski*.'

Apparently, the translator *naturalizes* the fake Russian loanword and *calques* the euphemistic coinage 'man thing'. She applies the same technique to all lexical innovations, recreating the same original word-formation mechanisms:

(43) Oh, William. So much *loudness*. Can we not go somewhere where I can
      relate to you ... orally?
      'Williamie, tu straszna *hałaśliwość*. Może pójdziemy gdzieś, gdzie można
      się porozumieć... oralnie?'
(44) Oh... a *personal fire device*.
      'Osobisty *maszynka ogniowa*.'

(45) Is oddness.
     '*Eto* dziwność.'
(46) Costly lighter-gift you gave me is missing.
     'Kosztowna zapalniczka od ciebie zniknęła.'
     [Oh, you must have left it somewhere.
     'Gdzieś ją zostawiłaś.']
(47) Never. I cherished too much. Perhaps… No. Is inconceivablish.
     'Nigdy. Zbyt droga sercu. A może? Nie… To *nieprawdopodobienne*.'
(48) Your housekeep did much admire and when she give me purse yesterday
     was open.
     'Twoja gosposia bardzo *zachwycała*, a kiedy wczoraj podawała mi torebkę
     była *żenowana*.'

All in all, Elżbieta Gałązka-Salamon's strategy involved enriching her Polish version of Runglish with as many traces of language interference as possible. She combined direct transfer of mock-Russian borrowings with the use of malformed morphosyntactic structures (rendered as ambiguous and as humorous as possible) and non-existent words. This consistent foreignizing strategy was rewarded with great success. The subtitles increase the comic potential of the original and provide an additional source of amusement even to those viewers who do not need the Polish subtitles.

The last example I would like to mention is Joel Coen's *Intolerable cruelty*, where the unique character of Swiss baron Klaus von Espe appears, parading the most shameless form of Franglais imaginable. He speaks with a strong French accent and tends to use exceptionally complex and pretentious words and structures, resorting to code-mixing as often as possible. However, he also commits occasional grammar mistakes, for example producing incorrect forms of verbs and uncountable nouns, as in the following examples:

(49) She wanted to know the businesses and the *wealthses*… the wealthses…
     Can I say this? Wealthses of our various eligible guests.
     'Chciała poznać zajęcia i majątek… *Mająteki*. Można tak powiedzieć?
     Mająteki odpowiednich na męża gości.'
(50) She *specificated* a silly man.
     '*Wyszczegółowiła*, że *facet* ma być głupi.'

The subtitler Anna Niedźwiedzka decided to reflect not only the stylistic, but also the phonetic peculiarities of Baron's idiolect. Thus, she calqued his faulty word-formation mechanisms, producing such forms as 'mająteki' ('wealthses') or 'wyszczegółowiła' ('specificated'). Besides, she highlighted the Baron's unorthodox pronunciation graphically, replacing 'r' with 'h'.

(51) [Does anyone have any Bonz? Uh, Bonz? Dog candy?
      'Czy ktoś z państwa ma kostkę cukru?']
      No. They are not candies. Milk Bones. Hard, crunchy bones for the
      teeth.
      'Nie *cukhu*! Kostkę! *Twahdą* kość!'

On the whole, the translator made a conscious effort to preserve as much
as possible from Klaus von Espe's characteristic mode of expression. The only
stylistic change she introduced involved rendering the text less formal than
the original.

4. Conclusion

In the above discussion, I have taken a look at the role of non-native varieties of
language in comedies and their fate in film translation. As the analysis showed,
the subtitlers' sensitivity to both verbal and non-verbal signals of language *im*-
proficiency depended on its importance for the development of the plot and
the comic potential of the film. Some translators tended to disregard these sig-
nals, counting on the exoticism of sound and image. They seemed quite justi-
fied in their decisions. Others adopted exoticizing strategies, reflecting foreign
accents graphically, 'committing' equivalent lexical and grammatical mistakes
and mixing registers. They also seemed justified in their decisions. All in all,
regardless of the translators' efforts, the appreciation of dialect variation in
comedies still depends on the viewers' background knowledge and cultural
sensitivity. As Boris Trbic observes, "the audience may benefit from using sub-
titles only as *one* of the references in interpreting film, rather than a definitive
and sometimes misleading set of interpretive guidelines to the basic plot and
the characters" (Trbic 2005).

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Euro-English and Language Pedagogy

Streszczenie

Pozycja języka angielskiego jako języka komunikacji międzynarodowej, za-
kwestionowanie statusu i roli rodzimego użytkownika języka angielskiego
jako wzorca i modelu, wytyczającego cele dydaktyczne w nauczaniu i uczeniu
się języka angielskiego jako języka drugiego/obcego i wyłonienie się nowych
odmian tego języka na arenie światowej nie pozostają bez wpływu na politykę
edukacyjną i metodykę nauczania języka angielskiego na świecie i w Europie.
Wielu teoretyków i praktyków stawia dziś pytanie, czy przedmiotem naucza-
nia powinien być nadal amerykański czy brytyjski angielski, czy może jedna
z nowszych odmian tego języka, np. tzw. euro-angielski, czyli nieco uproszczo-
na forma języka angielskiego, funkcjonująca jako lingua franca wśród Europej-
czyków. W chwili obecnej wydaje się, że potencjalne korzyści, jakie mogłoby
przynieść wybranie tej odmiany języka angielskiego zamiast jednej z odmian
standardowych, nie stanowią istotnej przeciwwagi dla ewidentnych minusów
takiego wyboru, co jest główną tezą autorki niniejszego studium.

> *How English develops in the world is no business whatever of native speak-
> ers in England, the United States, or anywhere else. They have no say in
> the matter, no right to intervene or pass judgment. They are irrelevant.
> The very fact that English is an international language means that no
> nation can have custody over it. ...It is not a property for them to lease out
> to others while still retaining the freehold. Other people actually own it.*
>
> Widdowson (2003: 43)

1. New Englishes: basic terminological distinctions

It is commonly recognized that the role of English as a language of global com-
munication is entirely unprecedented. While, as Crystal (2003: 7–12) con-
vincingly argues, throughout the centuries it has always been the case that the
power of the people who speak a certain language, in particular the political

and military power, has been the most important factor contributing to and decisive for the language gaining the status of an international tongue, the present-day status of English as the global lingua franca is due to a whole range of different and multi-faceted reasons (cf. Smith 2005 for an interesting devil's advocate polemic of why English features rather poorly as a lingua franca).

It is open to dispute to what extent the sheer numbers of speakers of English in the world *originate in* the success of the English language and to what extent they *contribute to* this success, but these numbers remain impressive nevertheless: it is estimated that there are around 375 million of native speakers of this language, and over a billion of non-native speakers (Graddol 1997: 14, 18).

Unquestionably, the different functions that the language performs in personal, social and professional contexts, which are referred to as its *range*, and the varied social strata that the language 'belongs to', indicative of its *depth* (B. Kachru 1986, Y. Kachru 2011), are unmatched by any other language spoken on earth, even though such languages as Hindi or Chinese can boast to have more L1 speakers, and some other languages are used as international languages, e.g., French and Spanish, or as lingua franca tongues, e.g., Japanese and Swahili (Young and Walsh 2010: 125).

The territorial expansion of English is likewise unparalleled, with the diaspora of two kinds contributing to the spread: on the one hand, a large migration of English native speakers to Australia, North America and New Zealand in the past, and, on the other, the dissemination of the English language among many ethnic groups in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world (Y. Kachru 2011: 156–7). As a result, both mother-tongue (that is native) and second-language (nativized) varieties of English have originated (MacKenzie 2009: 226–7). B. Kachru (1986) has classified these as Inner and Outer Circle countries respectively. In addition, as a result of globalization, in the last couple of decades the role of English in countries which remain basically monolingual and where it has merely the status of a foreign language has increased considerably, and it "is seen as an important key to success and upward social mobility" (Jeon 2009: 232). These countries are classified as the Expanding Circle by B. Kachru (1986), and English has the role of a foreign language there.

In very many countries all over the world at least a working command of English is considered an important professional skill, and English labels and names used in product, shop and service names are regarded to be a sign of "elitism, trendiness, late-fashion and high-quality" (Hasanova 2010: 8). It is important even in countries where it is not used for any institutional or public purposes, as English is the language of international corporations and organizations, the language of academic conferences and publications, the language

of best-selling books and renowned media (cf., among others, Crystal 2003, Gil 2010, Graddol 1997, 2006, MacKenzie 2009, Taavitsainen and Pahta 2008, Young and Walsh 2010).

All this means that while performing essential political and public functions in a number of divergent societies and communities, English has also acquired the status of the language of wider communication, especially in Europe, where it is commonly used for interpersonal, professional and administrative purposes by non-native speakers of English who do not share a common language (Berns 2009, Taavitsainen and Pahta 2008). It is postulated by some researchers that the *English as a lingua franca* label should be associated with such contexts, in contrast with situations in which communication between non-native and native speakers takes place, for which the term *English as an international language* is applicable (Jenkins 2006: 160–1, see also Erling 2005 for a useful discussion on the different labels used for English in its worldwide role, and McArthur 2004 and Watterson 2011, for reviews of the history and uses of the terms *world*, *international* and *global English*).

In these distant geographical locations and very different political, economic, social and educational contexts, the English language has been developing in various ways, giving rise to what is often referred to as *New Englishes* (cf. Berns 2009, Jenkins 2006), that is varieties of English characterized by specific linguistic and socio-pragmatic features, which define their idiosyncratic profile. There is again a lot of disagreement on the status of these and how they compare with well-established varieties, such as American, Indian or Singaporean English (Jenkins 2006, Y. Kachru 2011). For example, there is an on-going debate on the status and role of European English, or Euro-English, that is the variety of English as used by Europeans. Euro-English is believed to be marked by specific phonological, grammatical and lexical features typical of the European lingua franca (Modiano 2006: 231), but these are not homogeneous and differ depending on the L1 of the users, the context and the function for which the language is employed. While some scholars emphasize the formal, distinctive features of Euro-English (cf., e.g., Modiano 2006, 2007, Seidlhofer 2001a, 2001b), others argue for the "form follows functions" approach, indicating that it is negotiation of meaning more than anything else that determines "the identity of an English that is distinctly European in its formal manifestations and in its functional allocation" (Berns 2009: 195).

2. Problems with nativeness and the standard variety

The recognition of new Englishes promotes "a pluricentric view of English" (McKay 2011: 125), which questions the legitimization of its standard variet-

ies (identified by B. Karchu 1983 as the Inner Circle) as models of English to be learnt. As a result, the notion of the native language norm to be targeted in English language instruction has been severely undermined. Previously looked up to as one of the key reference points in English language pedagogy, now the native speaker is frowned upon as "a political construct carrying a particular ideological baggage" (Hackert 2009: 306). In fact, the very idea of the English native speaker is nowadays considered a pernicious myth (Alptekin 2002), to be replaced with a proficient language user or even a successful bilingual speaker, or as House (2003: 573 cited in Doerr 2009a:4) puts it, "an expert in ELF [English as a lingua franca] use." On the one hand, the very fact that native speakers constitute a minority among English language users, and, on the other, that it is virtually impossible to answer the question about who should be recognized as the 'real' native speaker, render the notion heavily value-laden and highly controversial.

Globalization and heterogeneity of English, the blurred distinctions between L1 and L2 in certain situations, sensitivity to issues of language policy, national identity and multiculturality, to mention just a few crucial problem areas, severely destabilize the native speaker construct (Doerr 2009b). However, the questions about which or whose English should be taught and learnt remain as pertinent as ever (Pauwels 2011).

Two dominant trends continue to compete here. On the one hand, advocates of the *exonormativity* strongly argue for the British, American, Australian etc. (i.e., Inner Circle) English to be recognized as the target language norm to be followed by English language teachers and learners. On the other hand, there is a growing body of supporters of *endonormativity*, who promote new varieties of English as legitimate models to be targeted in language education (cf. Luke *et al.* 2007, Pauwels 2011).

3. Fundamental controversies in modern English pedagogy

All these developments necessarily affect English language pedagogy and have provoked many scholars into raising a number of probing questions. How should the status of English affect English language instruction in the new millennium? Should the English language syllabus be based on the new varieties of English rather than the standard Inner Circle varieties? Should Euro-English be adopted as the variety to be taught and learnt for international communication in Europe?

As it is only to be expected in the period of transition, no simple and straightforward answers to these queries can be offered. The dubious status of the English native speaker and problems with identifying the standards of use

and usage to be targeted in English language courses provide a powerful impetus for the redefinition of the goals of instruction to be pursued, and reevaluation of the linguistic norms to be focused on. As a matter of fact, the idea that the Inner Circle varieties should be the standard version of the language to be taught and learnt is seriously challenged nowadays.

A lot of the debate aimed against the hegemony of the hitherto dominant British and American varieties is fuelled by political and socio-political considerations. The notions of *self*, as represented by the less-than-competent and defective learner, and *other*, the idealized native speaker, which underlie the value-laden anti-native discourse understandably generate a lot of negative publicity (McKay 2011: 134–6). English, as the above opening quote from Widdowson (2003) highlights, belongs to many, and it is these masses who use, modify and shape it, taking possession of the language.

If the mainstream varieties are treated with suspicion, what kind of English should be selected by language teachers? One of the options would be a 'common core' syllabus based on most commonly attested non-native forms, for which Jenkins (2006) makes a strong case. This suggestion does not seem a very appealing solution though: teaching and learning English reduced to a kind of fossilized interlanguage system shared by the non-native majority may be viewed as a democratization of the language but is not likely to be seen as a particularly empowering and attractive compromise. A standard international variety, that is a lingua franca version of English, is postulated as another possibility (Ur 2010). In Europe, the so-called Euro-English is this kind of variety.

4.   Should we teach Euro-English?

In most European countries (in fact, with the exception of Belgium and Luxembourg), English is the most commonly taught L2 at the primary school level. Over 90% of European secondary school students learn English as an additional language (Cook 2011: 141). Therefore, the question of which English should be taught appears very relevant in the European context.

In view of the worldwide changes on the English language scene, it seems useful to consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of shifting to the Euro-English variety. Selecting this model rather than British or American English would lead to defining teaching and learning objectives in more realistic terms: Euro-English is a kind of contact language that is actually used by European speakers of different vernaculars to communicate in various contexts and for various purposes. In certain ways less complex and demanding than the Inner Circle standard varieties, as it is simplified at the level of phonology and

syntax to match the prevalent attested non-native use (cf. Jenkins 2007 and Seidlhofer 2004, both cited in Cook 2011), Euro-English should be easier to internalize for the learner. Furthermore, the native speaker ideal and the surrounding controversies could be effectively eliminated from the instructional horizon, with the principal goal in English language instruction redefined in terms of the target English language user who "is not just someone who can go to another country and speak the language like a native, ... [but rather] someone who can successfully use the language for the purposes of their life and who has reaped the mental benefits of learning another language as well as its utilitarian use" (Cook 2011: 152). The emphasis then is on a conscious socio-pragmatically aware student.

Focus on Euro-English also means that English teachers will no longer be required to teach the model that they themselves have failed to fully master, and students will not have to learn the forms that are foisted on them and with which they are not likely be very successful (cf. MacKenzie 2009: 229). Likewise, the problems of inequality and inferiority of non-native speaker vis-à-vis native-speaker teachers that trouble theoreticians and practitioners alike will be circumvented.

While these considerable tactical advantages appear very attractive, at the moment they seem to be outweighed by powerful arguments against replacing the (good?) old standard British or American variety with Euro-English. In the first place, it is one of the notable characteristics of Euro-English that it is flexible, so – as if by definition – difficult, if not impossible, to codify. This creates a major stumbling block to nominating it as the language to be taught and learnt in instructional contexts: without clear rules and principles that Euro-English is based on, it can hardly be taught as a coherent system. It is frequently described as an emergent language, which, as MacKenzie (2009: 230) echoing sociolinguistic descriptions rightly points out, "suggests a perpetual process in which there is a constant movement toward a complete structure, but completion is always deferred." Thus raising the status of Euro-English from a variety of use to a model to be followed would actually amount to putting "the prescriptive cart after the descriptive horse" (Prodromou 2007: 52). At this juncture, an important fact about this variety needs to be acknowledged: users of English as a lingua franca tend to produce language that faithfully adheres to the formal standards of the Inner Circle varieties. In the studies reported by MacKenzie (2009: 230) more than 90% of the English utterances collected from Outer and Expanding Circle speakers showed syntactic regularity and conformity with the native speaker norms.

In fact, many students want to learn native speaker norms (cf. Cullen and Cho 2007, Hynninen 2010, Kuo 2006, Timms 2002). This is by no means surprising: as hinted at above, the native speaker standards provide an impor-

tant point of reference for learners of English. Many of them, apart from using English for interpersonal purposes, need it for educational and professional contexts, therefore a good command of the language may prove a precious asset in the intra- and international competition on the job market (Kuo 2006: 219).

It should not be forgotten that it is in British and American English that many prestigious periodicals and books are published. For the same reasons for which Esperanto has turned out to be less successful than anticipated, because it was not a natural language so it could offer much less than any living language, Euro-English is not a good candidate for a universal European language, since what it offers fails to be as versatile and useful as what the mainstream varieties provide.

5. Further implications for English language teaching

Even though at the moment it seems that neither Euro-English nor any other variety of English developed in the Expanding Circle is likely to win recognition as the model to be taught and learnt in English language courses, there are a number of important implications of English functioning as a language of wider communication for language pedagogy.

Firstly, the status of English as a global language indicates that the major emphasis in English pedagogy should be put on learners using it as a contact language in international communication contexts. So while the target is *not English as lingua franca per se*, the focus of teaching and learning should be on *functioning in English as a lingua franca* in cross-cultural communicative situations. As Prodromou (2007: 50) aptly puts it, "rather than set up a code which all users of ELF have to follow, it is surely time that we recognized the diversity among users and multiplicity of uses to which English is put worldwide and think in terms of varied *processes of interaction* rather than a *single prescriptive model*" (emphasis original). One of the major pedagogic goals then should be to equip the student with the repertoire of language resources and strategies that would make it possible for him or her to communicate efficiently. It can be achieved by implementing language pedagogy based on adopting the C-bound perspective, which "prioritizes the process of cross-cultural comprehensibility between learners as a communicative goal in itself" (Sifakis 2004: 239), rather than the N-bound (i. e. norm-bound) pedagogic profile. This should not be thought of as a major innovation in language teaching, as the teaching objectives defined in this way are very much in line with the communicative approach, apparently ruling the world of English methodology for almost half a century.

The second implication, which directly follows from the point just made, is that English language syllabuses need to exemplify the diversity of forms used today. In other words, there should be place in the language classroom for information about and examples from different varieties of English as well as illustration of non-native speaker discourse. This has got nothing to do with teaching an amalgam of different Englishes or a sub-standard variety of English, but simply means raising the learners' awareness of the diversity of forms used and preparing them for functioning in lingua franca encounters.

Thirdly, both *product* and *process* orientation should be given due attention in English language instruction. This indicates that while proficiency in English should be viewed as the vital goal to be worked towards in terms of the product of language teaching and learning, the process of developing the ability to make use of the available, even if sometimes insufficient, language resources at the learner's disposal in order to communicate the intended meaning should be constantly emphasized and adequately attended to. All this needs to be done in a manner that gives due respect to the local culture of learning (McKay 2011) and promotes multi-culturalism (Cook 2011).

6. Concluding remarks

While concerns for language imperialism, national identity, language attrition and other socio-political issues remain weighty matters on other continents, they do not appear very relevant in the European context (Cook 2011). However, the status of English as a global language, the rejection of the native speaker ideal, and the development and recognition of new Englishes cannot be underestimated as factors that exert influence on language policy and pedagogy also in Europe. The central question addressed by many theoreticians and some practitioners concerns the variety of English to be selected as a teaching and learning target relevant for international communication and global multi-cultural encounters. Euro-English might be viewed as a viable option in the European educational context. However, as it is argued in this paper, at this moment the advantages that nominating Euro-English as the variety to teach and learn might bring are counterbalanced by considerable disadvantages. The latter mainly stem from the fact that by belonging to the community of European English language users, Euro-English has no true power of a living language with its historical, artistic, literary and cultural heritage. In fact, since – as any emergent variety – it can hardly be codified, so its teachability is highly questionable.

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The Ownership of English and Communities of Practice

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Streszczenie

Niniejsze studium jest głosem w dyskusji dotyczącej kwestii związanych z przynależnością języka angielskiego. W środowisku językoznawców trwa debata pomiędzy zwolennikami poglądu monocentrycznego określającego język angielski jako wyłączną domenę tzw. użytkowników natywnych i zwolennikami poglądu mówiącego, że angielski jest językiem międzynarodowej komunikacji charakteryzującym się wieloma standardami i brakiem jednego centrum określającego jedynie obowiązujące zasady jego użycia. Szczególnym głosem w tej dyskusji jest pogląd mówiący o potrzebie nowego rozumienia pojęcia wspólnoty użytkowników języka angielskiego, a co za tym idzie, innego rozumienia przynależności języka angielskiego. Ze względu na to, że komunikacja w języku angielskim ma charakter masowy, nasze rozumienie *wspólnoty* powinno zostać uzupełnione o pojęcie wspólnot tworzonych przez użytkowników Internetu. Szczególnym typem wspólnot tworzonych zarówno w sieci jak i poza nią jest tzw. *wspólnota praktyków* (*community of practice*). Niniejsza praca dokonuje analizy użycia języka angielskiego w sieci przez wspólnotę praktyków na podstawie wypowiedzi zebranych podczas seminarium przeprowadzonego na platformie zdalnego nauczania jednego z uniwersytetów w Wielkiej Brytanii. Konkluzją jest teza mówiąca o tym, że język angielski funkcjonuje jako jedno z narzędzi komunikacji pomiędzy członkami wielu wspólnot, w tym wspólnot praktyków.
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1. Introduction

The ongoing debate revolving around the questions of the ownership of English has divided the community of linguists into two groups. While one group supports the *monocentric* view which claims that only the long-established varieties such as British, American or Australian Englishes count as legitimate

standards, the other supports the *pluricentric* approaches which perceive the regional varieties used in former colonies as fully legitimate types of the English language.

This debate is premised on the idea that geographical or political boundaries play a role in establishing the status of the varieties of English. However, in the age of mass travel and global digital communication facilitated by the Internet such boundaries often become obsolete. Transgressing such traditional boundaries leads to the formation of new forms of worldwide communities. Such communities are often formed for particular purposes uniting people with similar interests and goals. Frequently, it is English that becomes the main tool of communication in such communities. As a consequence, the traditional views on the issue of ownership of English, especially those associated with the monocentric perspective, can be put into question.

The current study reviews the approaches to the issue of ownership of English and discusses the claim that English belongs to various communities of practice, which use it as one of the main communication tools. The arguments in this discussion are supported by the presentation of the results of a small-scale study, which examines how English is used in a synchronous online academic discussion.

2. Ownership of English: from standard English to English as a lingua franca

The debate of the ownership of English revolves around the two above-mentioned general approaches. One approach sees English as belonging to the native speakers from such countries as Britain, Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia, etc. In his model describing how English is used around the globe Kachru (1985) labels these as Inner Circle countries, because they represent those regions from which English started spreading across the world.

Adopting this monocentric perspective results in accepting the view which assigns the status of the standard setters to native speakers and the status of the passive observers of these standards to everybody else. Such a view is held by linguists from all Kachruvian circle countries. For example, both the British linguist Quirk (1990) and the Polish linguist Sobkowiak (2005) deny the right to assign any legitimate variety status to the Englishes used by the speakers residing in Kachruvian Outer (mostly former British or American colonies such as India, Nigeria or Singapore) or Expanding Circle countries (the rest of the world where English is spoken as a foreign language).

On the other hand, the pluricentric approach supports a completely different view of the ownership of English. Kachru (1985) claims, for example, that there are no reasons, perhaps except for the purely political ones, why regional

varieties of English should not be treated on a par with the long-established ones. Within this perspective, the following two main concepts come to the fore: World Englishes (WE) and English as a lingua franca (ELF).

Both concepts can be perceived as pointing to the global character of English, which has ceased to be the sole property of the so-called *native speaker*. The concept of World Englishes legitimizes the Outer Circle varieties of English and postulates placing them on the same level as the long-established ones. Jenkins (2009) describes the concept of World Englishes as encompassing any spoken variety used in the three Kachruvian circles. English as a lingua franca is defined by Jenkins (2009) as a common language for people coming from various linguo-cultural backgrounds. Understood within the ELF construct, using English requires speakers to negotiate the level of proficiency to the point where communicative exchanges become equally comprehensible for all parties. In consequence, ELF exchanges may require simplification of the vocabulary and grammatical structures on the part of native speakers in order to match the proficiency levels of their non-native interlocutors.

According to Seidlhofer (2009), there exist valid arguments in support of the pluricentric visions of the role of English, such as the WE and ELF. The changing nature and the contexts in which communication takes place in the contemporary world can be argued to speak in favor of the pluricentric approaches. Seidlhofer (2009) argues that in the age of mass travel and electronic communication the old notion of face-to-face community, which encompasses local or regional contexts, needs to be revised. She points to the changes in the social conditions that necessarily lead to different perceptions of the roles that English has to play in the contemporary world. She argues that:

> [i]n the early 21st century, it seems clear that there are English-using communities not only in the Inner and the Outer Circle but also English-using local, regional, and global communities of practice communicating via ELF in the Expanding Circle and, importantly, across all circles. What is certain is that we have come a long way from conditions a quarter of a century ago that prompted an eminent linguist to claim that "*[t]he relatively narrow range of purposes* for which the non-native needs to use English is arguably well catered for by a single monochrome standard form" (Quirk 1985: 6, emphasis added). Seidlhofer (2009: 239–240)

An alternative understanding of the term *community* stems from Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of *community of practice* which seems able to, better than the traditional definitions, grasp the idea of social groupings in which

learning may take place. Wenger (2006) defines communities of practice as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." The idea of communities of practice stems from the observation of how knowledge and skills are developed among members of various communities who share the same type of work tasks in a particular context. For example, Lave and Wenger (1991) examined the work of such communities as Yucatec midwives, Vai and Gola tailors, US Navy meat cutters and others and came to the conclusion that novice learners develop their knowledge and skills observing and participating in tasks together with experts.

According to Wenger (2006), communities of practice are distinguished by: 1) the shared domain in which the community's identity is defined, 2) shared community where learners engage in joint activities such as discussions when members build a sense of community, and 3) shared practice which refers to a common repertoire of resources, such as stories or experiences whose purpose is to facilitate learning.

These notions can be argued to apply to online communities, too. Wenger directly refers to online communities when he states that "the web has enabled people to interact in new ways across time and space and form new breeds of distributed yet interactive communities of practice" (quoted in Guldberg and Macknesst 2009: 2). The use of the English language as one of the shared tools in online communities seems to be pervasive. One example where online communities thrive and use English is the popular social network Facebook, which in 2009 boasted 350 million users (*Facebook Statistics* n.d.). The burgeoning use of English by Facebook communities is evidenced by, for example, Yunker (2009), who claims that only 40 % of all Facebook members are non-English language users. This means that in 2009, English was the tool of communication for about 200 million of users who formed numerous communities across the globe.

The question of how English is used online is an interesting issue in itself. The language used in online synchronous chats, which is of direct interest here, was labeled by Crystal (2006) as *netspeak*. Crystal (2006: 20) characterizes netspeak "as a type of language displaying features that are unique to the Internet, and encountered in all the above situations, arising out of its character as a medium which is electronic, global, and interactive." Despite its textual form, this language shares more characteristics with speech than it does with writing. It is typically instantaneous and rapid. Such observations are also shared by many online chat participants. Below is a comment referring to the language used in online chats made by one of the chat participants examined in this study:

(1)   Although we are using written lgg in a chat, we are not really developing any writing skills. It's more like talking, thus the major problems with spelling, I think.

3. The study

In order to illustrate how English is used by an online community, this article analyzes samples of language produced during synchronous exchanges. One aim of this analysis was to describe the lingua franca status of English used by a multinational group of students taking part in online chats. Another aim of the analysis was to reveal the features of English used online. The analysis focuses on the similarities and differences in how the language is used by the native and non-native speakers.

The examined group can be argued to constitute an online community of practice since it displays all or most of the typical characteristics of such a community listed by Wenger (2006). The group was characterized by a shared domain of interest which, in this case, was information and communication technology in education. The community and a sense of participation were built through computer mediated communication tools, both synchronous (chats) and asynchronous (conferences, email messages). The community also engaged in a set of common practices which, apart from using technological tools, included sharing experiences and stories related to the common domain of interest. The shared repertoire of resources may also be said to include the use of English which functioned as the lingua franca in this community.

The chat seminars were held within the academic context and were carried out on a distance learning platform at a British university. The participants took part in discussions on topics related to computer technology in education. The examined group consisted of multinational participants including students from Brazil, Brunei, Cyprus, England, Greece, Poland and Turkey. 7 native speakers (English) and 14 non-native speakers (the remaining nationalities) participated in the analyzed conversations.

The examined sample consisted of 10 synchronous discussions whose length of transcripts ranged from 8 to 12 pages of text. Each of the discussions encompassed between 150 to 300 turns. The typical structure of each chat consisted of greetings and introductions, introductions to the topics, discussion sessions and concluding remarks. The examination of the language used in these exchanges focused on answering the following questions: 1) what are the differences between how the native (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) use English in these online chats? and 2) what are the similarities in how the language is used?

As regards the first of these questions, one of the differences observed between how NS and NNS used English concerned the fluency of language use. Fluency can be defined as "the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation" (Ellis 2003:342). Wolf (2008) points out that measuring fluency is a debatable issue and that various criteria have been proposed. For the purposes of this study Kormos and Denet's (2004) criterion of fluency was selected. The authors argue that speaking fluency can be measured as an average length of turn. This criterion seems to fit the context of this study since, as it was pointed out above, netspeak shares more characteristics with speaking than it does with writing.

In the analyzed samples the average length of turn calculated for the NS was 10.6 words per turn whereas the average for the NNS was considerably lower and reached 6.6 words per turn. This difference can be explained by the difference in the levels of the general English language proficiency displayed by the native and the non-native speakers. However, it needs to be added that the average length of turn observed in the analyzed samples was considerably higher than the average length of turn calculated for discussions on general subjects in public chat rooms. Crystal (2006) points out that the average length of turn in netspeak exchanges in public chat rooms equals ca. 3.5 word/turn. He adds, however, that academic discussions are characterized by much longer turns since they require verbalizing more insightful views and opinions than those usually expressed in conversations on general topics.

Yet another difference between how NS and NNS use English consists in the complexity of the language used by both groups. Complexity may be defined as "[t]he extent to which the language produced in performing a task is elaborate and varied" (Ellis 2003: 340). One measure used to diagnose complexity of the language used by the chat participants was the frequency of phrasal verbs (e.g., 'put off', 'take on', etc.) used by both groups. For example, Laufer and Eliasson (1993) as well as Liao and Fukuya (2004) argue that advanced speakers of English use phrasal verbs much more frequently than those who are less advanced.

In the analyzed samples the average NS used statistically 1 phrasal verb in a single chat. This mean was about two times higher than the mean calculated for the NNS who, on average, used about 0.5 phrasal verb in each chat. The native speakers demonstrated higher complexity as measured by the number of phrasal verbs used in a chat. This is hardly surprising given the higher language proficiency of the native speakers group.

Apart from the differences, both groups displayed a number of similarities, especially regarding discourse strategies. One similarity concerned the common repertoire of discourse devices used in the exchanges. For example, the

chat participants extensively used various acronyms (e.g., 'btw' ('by the way'), 'lol' ('laughing out loud'), 'imho' ('in my humble opinion'), shortenings and the strategy of representing words with numbers (e.g., 'f2f' ('face to face') or multiplying vowels to represent special pronunciation (e.g., 'it's sooooo funny').

The similarities also concern other strategies. For example, the language produced by both groups was characterized by frequent misspellings which were caused by the rapid pace of communication and quick typing. These misspellings, sometimes potentially disrupting communication, were hardly ever subject to corrections from fellow participants. Self-repairs were the most frequent types of corrections. Below is one example of such correction made by chat participant PP:

(2)   PP: *interative*
       PP: can't spell
       PP: interactive!

Generally, the chat participants displayed a very tolerant approach to spelling and other mistakes. Neither the native speakers nor the non-native speakers intervened in the cases of even blatant violations of spelling, grammatical or lexical rules of English, presumably rating comprehensibility much higher than accuracy. Another reason which can explain this lack of correction may be the instantaneous character of online chats, which leaves participants with little time to react.

On the whole, the similarities concerning how both groups used English confirm the lingua franca character of the language. Both groups negotiated a common set of linguistic behaviors which was acceptable to both the native and non-native speakers. The focus of communication in such contexts was placed on the subject matter while meta-linguistic issues, such as focus on form, played a considerably less important role and were brought up only in the cases of communication breakdown. The example below illustrates an exchange in which chat participant NT asks another chat participant HA for clarification or reformulation of an ill-formed question:

(3)   HA: but what do u think the way?
       HA: that we can develop E-learning?
       NT: what do u mean by *what do u think the way that we can develop E-learning*, HA??
       HA: how we can develop e-learning?

4. Conclusions

The question of the ownership of English requires a revision of our under-standing of contexts in which communication takes place. The old notions of *community* and *language variety* need to be revised in order to accommodate the concept of the *online community* and varieties of English used on the Inter-net. English may be claimed to belong to various communities of practice who use it as part of their shared repertoire of resources. Members of these commu-nities, although often characterized by different levels of language proficiency, seem to employ a common set of *online discourse strategies*.

The fact that English is the language of choice for (hundreds of) millions of people communicating online leads to a number of consequences which transform our understanding of the question of the ownership of this lan-guage. This unprecedented situation has the potential to create numerous ex-citing research perspectives.

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The Role of Metacognition and Background Knowledge in Reading in L1 and FL/L2: A Psycholinguistic Perspective

Streszczenie

Jednym z celów nauczania języka obcego jest rozwijanie czytania – sprawności, która we współczesnej metodyce uważana jest za ważny element kompetencji obcojęzycznej. W badaniach psycholingwistycznych można wyróżnić dwa podejścia metodologiczne: pierwsze, traktujące czytanie jako sprawność uniwersalną, tzn. taką samą dla wszystkich uczących się, niezależną od języka rodzimego czytelników, oraz drugie, które podkreśla językowo specyficzne cechy czytania, te określane przez język rodzimy uczącego się. Podejście uniwersalne bada m. in. rolę wiedzy metakognitywnej, w tym strategii czytania, oraz szeroko pojętej wiedzy o świecie (*background knowledge*), natomiast perspektywa międzyjęzykowa koncentruje się na badaniach procesów przetwarzania tekstu, takich jak dekodowanie czy rozumienie słownictwa, podkreślając wpływ zarówno języka obcego, jak i rodzimego, na czytanie obcojęzyczne. Celem pracy jest przedstawienie roli dwóch„uniwersalnych” komponentów sprawności czytania – wiedzy metakognitywnej oraz wiedzy o świecie na podstawie wybranych badań nad czytaniem w języku rodzimym i obcym. Analiza ukazuje interakcje wiedzy metakognitywnej oraz wiedzy o świecie z elementami przetwarzania tekstu, podkreślając tym samym zasadność wykorzystania obu omawianych perspektyw metodologicznych w badaniach dotyczących czytania. Dyskusję kończą propozycje skierowane do nauczyciela języka obcego, płynące z przedstawianych badań.

1. Introduction

Reading is referred to by many researchers as reading competence or ability and the two terms are often used interchangeably. Although different per-

spectives conceptualize reading in different ways, all share the assumption that "successful comprehension emerges from the integrative interaction of derived text information and pre-existing reader knowledge" (Koda 2005: 4). Over the years reading has attracted the attention of both L1 and L2 reading research. Although initially L1 constructs and research paradigms were accepted, slowly it has become clear that L2 reading should be treated as a completely independent phenomenon. In the extensive literature on reading two perspectives can be identified: the early approach that sees reading procedures as universal across languages and the other, more recent, which claims that reading involves language-specific processes. Since reading can be viewed as an interaction of information derived from text and pre-existing reader knowledge, text-information processes can be thought to be language-specific (which means that they differ across languages), whereas conceptual processing and strategic manipulation can be taken to be universal (which means that they do not vary from language to language). The language-specific perspective concentrates on cross-linguistic analyses that investigate how different aspects of L1 processing, such as decoding, morphological analysis, parsing and discourse processing, influence L2 reading processing. The universal framework, on the other hand, focuses on investigating background knowledge and metacognition, which are believed to be language-independent aspects of reading. Nowadays, however, as Koda (2005: 15) suggests: "[r]ather than favoring one perspective over the other, we would do better to investigate reading ... from both vantage points." In this paper, a selection of studies investigating metacognition and background knowledge is presented, with special focus on the cross-linguistic analyses of each component of reading. The studies discussed here clearly point to the interaction of each construct with other aspects of text-information processing (e.g., vocabulary knowledge or affective factors), thus emphasizing advantages of looking at reading competence from both aforementioned research perspectives. Although the main concern of the paper is not pedagogical, the studies included in the paper have practical implications for FL teachers. Suggestions concerning developing reading competence are presented at the end of the paper.

2. Studies on metacognition of L1 readers

Flavell (1981) defines *metacognition* as the knowledge we possess about ourselves, the tasks we are to perform and the strategies we apply; in the literature it is usually called *person, task and strategy knowledge.* The concept of metacognition has contributed to studies which aim to distinguish the knowledge and strategies of effective and less skilled readers. Competent successful readers

show the ability both to realize that their comprehension has failed and to decide what strategic actions they should apply to overcome reading difficulties (Brown 1980, quoted in Baker and Brown 1984: 356). The awareness of miscomprehension has been identified as a factor distinguishing between successful and less successful readers by a large number of researchers (e.g., Garner and Reis 1981). Numerous experimental and interview studies (e.g., Canney and Winograd 1979, Chan and Law 2003) indicate that younger and poorer readers have limited awareness of the necessity to make sense of the text and that they focus on reading as a decoding process rather than a search for meaning. Baker and Anderson (1982) show that adult readers evaluate and monitor their comprehension during reading and also apply various strategies upon encountering problems. According to Baker and Anderson (1982), these self-regulation processes are characteristic of mature effective readers and it is what children should acquire to become successful readers.

Another skill distinguishing successful readers from less successful ones is effectiveness in assessing the correctness of their reading comprehension answers. Readers who evaluate their answers as correct when they are indeed correct or who indicate their answers as incorrect when they are wrong are considered good reading comprehension monitors. In contrast, poor comprehension monitors are more likely to misjudge the correctness of their answers. Forrest and Waller (1979) observed this phenomenon while investigating confidence in children's comprehension skills.

3. Studies on metacognition of FL/L2 readers

A number of studies (e.g., Devine 1988, Haastrup 1991, Hosenfeld 1977, Kusiak 2001, Zhang 2001) have investigated metacognitive knowledge and its relation to strategy use as applied by successful and unsuccessful second/foreign language readers. Devine (1988) examined the readers' internalized models of the reading process and how these models affect reading behavior.[1] A significant correspondence was found between the type of reading model the learners had and the kind of information the learners focused on during an oral reading task. The study also found a relationship between the reading models of the learners and the success in reading comprehension: the learners who in the interviews expressed an opinion that good reading means good

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[1]   Devine (1988) defines a model of reading as a set of assumptions about reading that a reader brings to reading and draws upon during reading. The results of the interviews allowed the researcher to identify three models of reading: sound-, word-, and meaning-centered.

pronunciation of the words (sound-centered readers) usually demonstrated poor understanding of the text; those who held the view that effective reading means understanding the author's message (meaning-centered readers) turned out good or excellent at recalling and understanding the text.

Hosenfeld (1977) investigated readers' strategy use and worked out computer "reading maps" of the examined readers. The study showed that more successful readers are more likely to remember the meaning of the text they read, read in broad phrases, skip unimportant words and use context to guess the meaning of important ones, and hold positive self-concepts as readers. By contrast, unsuccessful readers lose the meaning of the words as soon as they decode them, read in short phrases and seldom skip unimportant words because they treat all words as equally important for the broader text meaning. Importantly, unsuccessful readers have negative self-concepts as readers.

In the next study investigating strategy use, Haastrup (1991) observed the process of lexical inferencing. The study supported the assumption that L2 proficiency is a crucial factor in lexical inferencing and allowed the researcher to identify the problems characteristic of high-proficiency and low-proficiency learners. Haastrup found that low-proficiency learners make inappropriate use of text context: they use it either too much or too little. They also tend to rely more heavily on bottom-up clues of the text, i.e., a range of various syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological clues provided by the text. High-proficiency learners, on the other hand, infer on the basis of the interaction between bottom-up and top-down clues (the latter defined by Haastrup as semantic and context clues). Hence, successful readers "intensify their use of top-down rules processing" (Haastrup 1991:129) and "test bottom-up cues against the top" (Haastrup 1991:128). Consequently, the differences between effective and less effective readers may be attributed to the way readers approach inferencing tasks: poor inferencers seem to treat inferencing as a linguistic exercise, while good inferencers treat it as a text interpretation exercise.

Kusiak (2001) investigated metacognitive strategies of intermediate Polish learners of English as a foreign language and showed that the good and poor readers differed significantly in many respects. Although both groups liked reading to the same extent, the good readers perceived themselves as better readers and considered reading as less difficult. The groups differed in the evaluation of reading strategies: the good readers viewed as less effective bottom-up strategies which involve understanding the meaning of every word in a text, the ability to pronounce every word of a text, and looking up every word in a dictionary. A comparison of self-evaluation questionnaires indicated that the good readers demonstrated more effective self-evaluation skills.

Zhang (2001) compared the knowledge of reading strategy use reported by EFL learners of different proficiency levels. Ten Chinese learners were di-

vided into two groups according to their level of English. A guided interview was applied to elicit the learners' knowledge of reading strategy use. The study showed that the subjects' knowledge of strategy use varied across EFL proficiency levels. The high-proficiency learners were more aware of the strategies they use in their reading than the low-proficiency students. For example, the more advanced learners reported the use of monitoring comprehension four times more often than the other group. They reported guessing meaning from context through inferencing more frequently, whereas the less advanced students preferred using dictionaries. Additionally, the high-proficiency learners demonstrated clearer awareness of cooperating with the text as a strategy that can help them in coping with reading comprehension problems.

Summing up, the findings of L2/FL research are reminiscent of the results of L1 reading studies: more skilled readers are more consistent and effective in monitoring their reading. Not surprisingly, in comparison with L1 studies, the results of L2/FL studies provide more information concerning the role of the readers' language competence in reading. Better readers focus on meaning rather than on decoding processes during the reading process; they are aware of text structure and are able to integrate linguistic clues of a text with their schematic knowledge. In lexical inferencing they skillfully integrate top-down and bottom-up rules processing. L2 research, like L1 studies, emphasizes the importance of readers' perceptions of reading and of themselves as readers and explain the relationship between these perceptions and readers' performance.

3.1. Metacognition as a component of L2 reading competence in Bernhardt's (1991) constructivist model of reading in L2

In Bernhardt's (1991) model, reading is a process of building a representation of the text by the reader on the basis of text and non-text information. Three text-driven factors are distinguished: word recognition, phonemic/graphemic decoding, and syntactic feature recognition, and three conceptually-driven factors are recognized: intra-textual perception (how the reader perceives and processes the text as discourse context), metacognition, and prior knowledge (the reader's knowledge of the world, especially concerning the topic of the text).

Bernhardt used her constructivist model of reading in the analysis of the recall protocol data from the studies of Allen *et al.* (1988), Bernhardt and Berkemeyer (1988) and Berkemeyer (1989). The results revealed that reading problems can be differentially linked to L2 literacy development.

Word recognition and phonemic/graphemic feature errors are very common in the early stages of development. With the development of proficiency, the error rate decreases almost toward zero. Syntax errors behave in a different way: their development resembles a normal-curve shape, with errors increasing up to a medium point, which may be explained by greater growth of the

language proficiency (the increase in language production and, consequently, the increase in the number of errors). Syntax errors decrease later, as language and reading proficiency improves. Errors due to background knowledge and intra-textual perceptions decrease as proficiency increases. However, the error rate here is never as high as in the case of word recognition and phono-graphemic errors in the initial stages of development, and never as low as of the two word-based errors in the later stages. The syntheses of the study results provide an interesting perspective on the role of metacognition: metacognition is present in all the stages of language proficiency. However, the term *error rate* does not apply here, as the factor (unlike the other features) either appears in the examined readers' recalls or not. Therefore, Bernhardt postulates that metacognition should be treated as an individual learner characteristic. The results point to an interaction between the reader's text-driven knowledge and conceptually-driven knowledge. With the development of proficiency, the reader begins to depend more on the language itself than on the speculations about the meaning of linguistic forms. Metacognition "accompanies" readers regardless of their language proficiency level.

3.2. Interaction between metacognition in L1 and L2 reading

As discussed above, metacognition is an important element of reading in both L1 and L2. Let us now look at the relationship between metacognition in L1 reading and that in L2 reading. It is common knowledge that learners approach and process L1 texts equipped with a tacit knowledge of their native language. However, due to direct language instruction their knowledge of L2/FL can be more explicit than their knowledge of L1. With the recent stress in FL methodology on learner reflection on learning, it may happen that students develop greater metacognitive awareness of how they learn a foreign language and what makes their learning successful. This means that FL learners may be more aware of how they learn a foreign language than how they use (and learn) their mother tongue. Grabe and Stoller (2002) suggest taking advantage of the metacognitive abilities students developed in learning a L2/FL to increase their awareness of L1 reading. According to them, it may be more beneficial to increase learners' awareness and practice of strategies that are most useful for students in L1 reading than to practice in L2/FL situations strategies that students have never used before. This reasoning underlines the importance of L1 reading in L2 reading development and suggests a transfer of L1 reading strategies to L2 reading.

While studies investigating the role of metacognition in both L1 and L2 reading point to an interaction of metacognition with other linguistic factors, such as vocabulary and general language competence, the role of metacognition in L1 and L2 reading was highlighted in the study conducted by Schoo-

nen, Hulstijn and Bossers (1998). Their aim was to investigate to what extent vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive knowledge account for L1 and L2 reading comprehension. The study demonstrated that vocabulary had a greater influence on L2 reading than on L1 reading, especially at lower levels, whereas metacognitive knowledge was an important factor in both L1 and L2 reading, although making a bigger contribution to reading at higher level of language competence. Drawing on the results which suggested that metacognition can to a large extent explain the common variance of L1 and L2 reading comprehension, the investigators concluded that metacognition is a language-independent factor. Similar conclusion was drawn by Bernhardt (1991), whose constructivist model of reading has been described in section 3.1. above.

Van Gelderen *et al.* (2004) investigated the influence of metacognitive knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, grammar knowledge and processing efficiency (i.e., speed of word recognition and speed of sentence verification) on L1 (Dutch) and L2 (English) reading comprehension. The subjects were Dutch adolescents at the age of 13, just starting their L2 reading. Metacognitive knowledge was measured by means of a questionnaire consisting of statements concerning L1 and L2 reading, writing, as well as text characteristics. Metacognitive knowledge turned out to be the most powerful predictor of both L1 and L2 reading comprehension skills.

Van Gelderen *et al.* (2007) replicated their earlier study described above, investigating in a longitudinal study the effects of the same components, i.e., metacognitive knowledge, language knowledge and processing skills on L1 (Dutch) and L2 (English) reading comprehension over a period of two years. The results showed that the effect of metacognitive knowledge on L1 and L2 reading was substantial throughout the two years of study. This suggests continued influence of metacognitive knowledge on both L1 and L2 reading comprehension. The findings of the 2007 study extended the investigators' conclusion concerning metacognition drawn from the earlier study. Thus, Van Gelderen *et al.* (2007) concluded that the indication that metacognitive knowledge also continues to influence L1 reading comprehension implies that metacognitive knowledge may have a more general developmental effect on reading comprehension in any language. In particular, metacognitive knowledge does not depend only on L1 reading experiences but is a result of other intellectual practices, such as writing and general learning at school and outside school. Also L2 reading experiences can facilitate a development of metacognitive knowledge about reading strategies and text characteristics: metacognitive knowledge can be regarded "a separate component contributing to both L1 and L2 reading development rather than a carrier of cross-language transfer of L1 reading strategies" (van Gelderen *et al.* 2007: 8). This claim is in line with Bernhardt's (1991) conclusion about a continuous influence of

metacognition on L2 reading development. It also supports Grabe and Stoller's (2002) suggestion that increasing learners' awareness of reading in their L1 may facilitate their awareness of reading in L2.

4. Studies on background knowledge

Schema theory models, e.g., those by Minsky (1977) and Schank and Abelson (1977), emphasize the role of background knowledge in the reading process. A fundamental assumption is that the text itself does not carry the meaning; successful comprehension involves reconstruction of the intended meaning with the aid of the knowledge the reader brings to the text (Adams and Collins 1979).

Researchers have looked at the role of several types of *content knowledge*, e.g., *conceptual knowledge*, *domain knowledge*, and *cultural knowledge*. Research indicates that conceptual knowledge is a powerful factor in L2 reading comprehension. For example, Ulijn and Kempen (1976: 504) argue that "[f] oreign language instruction aiming at promoting reading skill in the students should concentrate on vocabulary, concept words being the salient carriers of conceptual information in the text."

Similarly, domain knowledge, i.e., specialized content knowledge, was found to play a significant role in FL learners' reading comprehension. Erickson and Molloy (1983) examined college students and observed that engineering students performed better than non-engineering students in reading both general and specific engineering texts. Also Alderson and Urquhart (1985) provide evidence that subject matter familiarity can surpass limited L2 competence of college students. McNamara *et al.* (1996), inspired by the construction-integration model, examined the role of domain knowledge and text coherence in learning from text.[2] Their working assumption was that readers who know little about the domain of the text will benefit from a coherent text, whereas those with extensive domain knowledge will benefit from a minimally coherent text. Understanding the text at a deeper level requires of the reader more inferencing to integrate information explicitly stated in the text with his/her store of knowledge concerning the domain of the text.

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[2]   In the van Dijk and Kintsch's model (1983) and the Kintsch construction-integration model (1988), the most important comprehension processes are: construction of a propositional text-base and a situation model. While developing a text base, the reader analyses the text cues and draws on his/her lexical and morphosyntactic knowledge. In situation-model building the reader's processing is based mostly on his/her conceptual knowledge.

The outcome of such processing is a text representation which is organized according to the reader's understanding of the domain knowledge as a whole and is thereby linked to the reader's long-term memory. Not only does it allow the reader to reproduce the text but to extrapolate from the text and use it in a more critical way as well. The experiments confirmed the researchers' assumption concerning the relation between coherence of the text and the reader's domain knowledge in learning from text. Less coherent texts encouraged the readers to make more active inferencing, thus facilitating learning from text. However, this condition was effective only for those readers who had sufficient domain knowledge related to the text. These results were confirmed by Gasparinatou, Tsaganou and Gridoriadou (2007), who found that readers with low knowledge about the domain of Computer Networks benefited more from a coherent text, while those who knew more about this specialized topic benefited more from a minimally coherent text. Drawing on the construction-integration model, Gasparinatou, Tsaganou and Gridoriadou (2007: 153) explained that this occurred "because the text with coherence gaps would force the high-knowledge readers to engage in active processing, leading to a better situation model of the text information".

Cross-cultural studies were conducted by Steffensen *et al.* (1979) to investigate the interaction between the readers' text knowledge and cultural knowledge. The study looked at how readers from the USA and India comprehended letters about an Indian wedding and an American wedding. The results revealed that the readers' background knowledge was a significant factor in reading comprehension. The subjects recalled more of the native story and there were more elaborations of text information in their comprehension of the native text. In a similar study, Steffensen (1986) examined whether readers who share the cultural knowledge with the writer of the text approach the text equipped with appropriate schemata. Absence of the schemata might cause problems in reading comprehension at the level of inference. The findings of the study indicated that readers' background knowledge facilitated the processing of textual cohesion, which led to more effective construction of text representation. In a more recent study Keshavarz, Atai, and Ahmadi (2007) examined Iranian students who were instructed to read two English texts: one about an Islamic religious leader and the other about a non-Islamic religious figure. The researchers found a significant correlation between familiarity with the text content and reading comprehension scores. Similar results were reported by Sasaki (2000), who investigated students' test performance when reading texts containing culturally familiar and culturally unfamiliar items.

An interesting study comparing text-induced imagery and emotional reactions among Mandarin-speaking learners of English was conducted by Steffensen, Goetz and Cheng (1999). The subjects were asked to read a Chinese

text about a trip to China and an English text about a trip to the USA. More imagery and stronger emotions were observed in the group reading the L1 text. The results raised the question whether poorer imagery in reading the L2 text was due to insufficient linguistic knowledge or cultural unfamiliarity.

The relation of background knowledge and the level of FL proficiency has drawn the attention of many researchers. Hudson (1982) investigated the effect of different pre-reading exercises which aimed to activate learners' schemata on the reading performance of beginner, intermediate and advanced students. No significant effects were observed in the case of advanced students, whereas beginner and intermediate students seemed to benefit from pre-reading activities.

In his study about the thresholds of the background knowledge in FL reading Ridgway (1995) suggested that the effect of background knowledge depends on the level of L2 knowledge. Background knowledge seems to be a significant factor at the intermediate level. At this level background knowledge is used to compensate for language problems, and the effect of background knowledge is detectable in empirical research. However, the background knowledge effect disappears at upper intermediate or advanced level and its effect is not detected. Similarly, it is not observed at very early stages of FL development. Numerous studies, e.g., Clapham (1996), Zhang (2001) and Liu *et al.* (2009), report similar findings. For example, in the study of high-proficiency and low-proficiency students Zhang (2001) observed that the more advanced learners reported the use of background knowledge in reading less frequently than the less advanced students. Both Clapham (1996) and Liu *et al.* (2009) investigated the impact of background knowledge on reading test performance. Both studies indicate the impact of learners' language proficiency level on their use of subject knowledge in reading. In the former, the students who obtained high scores on the grammar test "were less affected by subject area than were the intermediate level students" (Clapham 1996: 196). According to Liu *et al.* (2009: 20), "it may be the low to intermediate level test takers who are mostly affected by content schema."

The aforementioned observations suggest that there is an important interaction between background knowledge and FL proficiency. In the case of low proficiency readers, insufficient FL knowledge limits the use of background knowledge and the advantageous effect of top-down processing in general. For more advanced readers, background knowledge becomes less important, since advanced FL knowledge compensates for lack of background knowledge. As Bernhardt (1991:170) put it, "[a]s a reader's linguistic knowledge grows, it begins to override knowledge-driven inferencing." The greater role of language competence could explain why EFL teachers can understand texts on subjects at which they are not experts and why, unlike native readers, "non-

native readers show virtually no significant effect of background knowledge"
(Carrell 1983:183).

In conclusion, a vast body of research shows that background knowledge
plays a significant role in both L1 and L2 text comprehension. Studies investi-
gating L2 reading consistently indicate that background knowledge influences
text-information processing, interacting with other factors, such as L2 profi-
ciency, the coherence of the text, and the affective involvement of the reader.

5. Teaching implications

It is important that the teacher should be aware of the different factors that
influence his/her FL learners' reading, both the factors that are universal and
the factors that are specific to the students' mother tongue.

As regards metacognition, research in L2/FL reading instruction provides
evidence that metacognitive instruction brings positive results. Even after a
short four-day long training learners can demonstrate significant increase in
their reading performance (as shown by Carrell, Pharis and Liberto 1989).
An effective idea may be asking learners to become researchers of their own
reading, a technique applied by many researchers (cf., a.o., Auerbach and Pax-
ton 1997, Kusiak 2001, Salataci and Akyel 2002). Learners should become
aware of the complex nature of reading and learning to read. Reading strate-
gies should be presented as possibilities rather than prescriptions, encouraging
learners to investigate and try out the most suitable strategies. Students can be
involved in a range of exploratory reading activities to give them an opportu-
nity to experiment with new strategies and assess their effectiveness. Readers
should be taught that not all texts are equal and different strategies should
be applied to different types of reading. This approach can enhance students'
metacognitive awareness concerning reading and expand their repertoire of
strategies.

The teacher should also consider the role of background knowledge, both
its debilitating and facilitating effects on reading. In reading instruction this
would imply using pre-reading activities, which provide learners with neces-
sary knowledge about the topic of a text, thus facilitating reading compre-
hension. Using a text on a topic of a particular interest to the learners could
compensate for the linguistic complexity of the text and facilitate potentially
difficult reading. Many existing reading materials offer pre-reading exercises
building the reader's background knowledge.

However, it is worth realizing, as has been elucidated above, that pre-
reading tasks activating background knowledge can be effective only in teach-
ing beginner and intermediate learners. In teaching more advanced learners

the concept of background knowledge should be broadened (as suggested by Clark 1995).[3] Background knowledge in this case would encompass also an awareness of the ideological nature of reading, an awareness of the social process of production and interpretation of texts. While interacting with a text, the reader could draw on his/her general knowledge of the world, knowledge of other texts that the particular text brings in as well as his/her world view, i.e., ideology. Clark (1995) suggests that teaching critical reading should focus on activating the reader's background knowledge and increasing awareness of his/her reactions to the text. The reader should be aware of his/her own beliefs, standpoints, and cultural values activated during reading as well as his/her *positioning*, i.e., the way the writer attempts to influence the reader. Critical reading courses have been successfully incorporated into teaching FL reading skills, e.g., by Wallace (2005), Kusiak and Bandura (2007), or Skopinskaja (2009).

It seems that teaching FL reading means exploring together with students a very complex, multi-faceted competence. By developing learners' awareness of their background knowledge and metacognitive knowledge, teachers can help their students to participate in real communication, not only in another language exercise.

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[3]   In this conception of critical reading Clark (1995) draws on a critical language awareness (CLA) approach suggested by Fairclough (1989).

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To Teach or Not to Teach Culture? The Role of Culture in Teaching Foreign Languages

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Streszczenie

Niniejsza praca omawia kwestię roli i miejsca kultury w nauczaniu języków obcych. Pierwszy podrozdział zawiera próbę zdefiniowania pojęcia *kultura*, a drugi wyjaśnia różnicę pomiędzy kulturą przez małe „k" a Kulturą pisaną przez duże „K". Trzeci podrozdział skupia się na nierozerwalnym związku między nauczaniem języka obcego a nauczaniem szeroko pojętej kultury kraju, w którym ten język jest językiem ojczystym, konkludując, że nie jest możliwe nauczanie i nauczenie się języka obcego z całkowitym pominięciem elementów kulturowych, natomiast czwarty podrozdział przedstawia kilka technik nauczania elementów kulturowych, które mogą być wykorzystane przez nauczycieli na zajęciach języka obcego.

> *The study of language cannot be divorced*
> *from the study of culture, and vice-versa*
> (Seelye 1993: 22)

1. Culture defined

Culture is a vast concept which is notoriously difficult to define in unambiguous academic terms, even though the intuitive understanding of this term does not create great problems for most people. However, a more precise definition poses a considerable challenge. As Hinkel (1999: 1) rightly observed, "there are as many definitions of culture as there are fields of inquiry into human societies, groups, systems, behaviors and activities." In branches of social sciences, such as linguistics, anthropology, sociology and psychology, attempts have been made at providing comprehensive definitions of this notion in terms of such aspects of human behavior as perception, cognition, language

and communication (Arias, Campo and Zuluaga n.d.). The definitions provided vary greatly and range from the most general to the most specific. For Seelye (1993: 26) "[c]ulture is a broad concept that embraces all aspects of human life. It includes everything people learn to do. It is everything humans have learned. Culture shapes our thoughts and actions." Tepperman (1994: 1) sees culture as a "humanly created environment for all our thoughts and actions" and McDevitt (2004: 3) holds that human nature is "seamlessly related to culture, thus there is no such a thing as human nature independent of culture" (McDevitt 2004: 3). Danison (n.d) contrasts culture with nature: "culture is the human-made part of the environment; all the rest of nature is wild and uncultivated." The subjectivity of the notion of culture is stressed by Harklau, for whom "[c]ulture is an elusive construct that shifts constantly over time and according to who is perceiving and interpreting it" (Harklau 1999: 110). American National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) defines culture on its official web page as:

> an integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations.

Another approach to culture is to define this concept by determining its components. The scholars who have tried this method include Brooks, who identified ten aspects in terms of which culture could be analyzed: 1) symbolism, 2) value, 3) authority, 4) order, 5) ceremony, 6) love, 7) honor, 8) humor, 9) beauty, and 10) spirit (cf. Abisamra n.d.). Tomalin and Stemplesky (1994: 7) listed the following elements of culture: products (including literature, folklore, art, music, and artifacts), ideas (including beliefs, values, and institutions) and behaviors (including customs, habits, dress, foods, and leisure). By contrast, Hammerly (quoted in Stern 1992: 210–211) offered a three-way division of culture into information culture i.e., the information and facts average native speakers know about their culture, behavior culture i.e., people's actual behavior and attitudes, and achievement/accomplishment culture i.e., artistic and literary accomplishments of a particular country.

Other scholars focused on compiling human universals, i.e., human activities that are common among cultures. For instance, the anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski listed seven basic biological and psychological needs or impulses common to all human beings: metabolism, reproduction, bodily comforts, safety, movement, growth and health, whose way of performance is forced on an individual by a given culture (quoted in Danison n.d.). A substantially longer list can be found in the *Outline of cultural materials*, in which

examples of about 900 common categories of human behavior can be found, including the following:

> age grading, athletic sports, bodily adornment, calendar, cleanliness training, cosmology, dancing, decorative art, division of labor, dream interpretation, education, ethics, etiquette, family, feasting, food ta-boos, funeral rites, games, gestures, gift giving, government, greetings, hair styles, hospitality, hygiene, inheritance rules, joking, kin groups, kinship nomenclature, law, luck, superstitions, magic, marriage, meal-times, medicine, music, numerals, personal names, population policy, postnatal care, property rights, puberty customs, status differentiation, surgery, tool making, trade, visiting. (Danison n.d.)

The *Common European framework of reference for languages* (2001)*, which serves as a guideline for describing the linguistic achievements of learners of foreign languages, also addresses the issue of culture. The chapter devoted to the learner's competences includes a list of socio-cultural factors constituting basic information about the culture of a given country and its linguistic community. The list contains the following seven points:

• everyday living, e.g., food and drink, meal times, table manners, public holidays, working hours and practices, leisure activities (hobbies, sports, reading habits, media);
• living conditions, e.g., living standards (with regional, class and ethnic variations), housing conditions, welfare arrangements;
• interpersonal relations, e.g., class structure of society and relations between classes, relations between sexes, family structures and relations, relations between generations, relations in work situations, relations between public and police, race and community relations, relations among political and religious groupings;
• values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to such factors as, e.g., social class; occupational groups, wealth, regional cultures, security, institutions, tradition and social change, history, minorities, national identity, foreign countries, states and peoples, politics, arts, religion, humor;
• body language;
• social conventions, e.g., with regard to giving and receiving hospitality, behavioral and conversational conventions and taboos, length of stay, leave-taking;
• ritual behavior in such areas as religious observances and rites, birth, marriage, death, audience and spectator behavior at public performances and ceremonies, celebrations, festivals, dances, discos, etc. (*Common European framework of reference for languages* 2001: 210–211)

2. Big "C" Culture versus little "c" culture

When discussing culture in the context of language teaching and learning, a clear distinction needs to be made between so-called big "C" Culture and little "c" culture. The latter (also called *Culture BBV,* i.e., *Beliefs, Behavior, and Values,* or *Heartstone culture* (Abisamra n.d.)) comprises everything connected with a way of life of a given group of people, and includes aspects of life connected with everyday routines, such as ways of greeting and addressing each other, eating habits, wedding customs, etc. The former (also called *Culture MLA,* i.e., *Great Music, Literature and Art,* or *Olympian culture,* *formal culture,* *high culture,* or *achievement culture* (Abisamra n.d.)) is connected with the most "refined" achievements of a given culture and comprises such areas as history, geography, institutions, music, literature, art, science, sports, economy and other outstanding accomplishments of a given society. It can be said that little "c" culture is everything in human life, while big "C" Culture refers to the best in human life restricted to the elites. The two concepts of culture, *culture* and *Culture*, seem to be inherently interconnected. For example, according to Danison (n.d.):

> [l]ittle "c" culture encompasses everything as a total way of life, so big "C" Culture is necessarily part of little "c" culture. Big "C" Culture is very often the refinement of little "c" activities. For instance, little "c" food becomes big "C" cuisine; little "c" meals become big "C" formal banquets and all of the etiquette and ritual that goes with them. Little "c" clothing becomes big "C" fashion.

3. To teach or not to teach culture?

The ultimate goal of teaching (and, of course, learning) a foreign language is to enable students not only to survive, but to function effectively and maybe even thrive, in the country where the target language is the native tongue. However, to achieve this goal it is necessary to master the conventions of such linguistic functions as, e.g., greetings, forms of address, thanking, accepting/rejecting invitations, making requests or complaints. To perform them all well one must know the appropriate forms depending on what is to be said, to whom, where, when and in what situations. Such aspects of a language constitute a part of little "c" culture, thus, it is justifiable to assert that little "c" culture directly contributes to the students' ability to "function linguistically and socially in the contemporary culture" (Chastain 1988: 303).

In the past, when culture was primarily perceived in terms of formal or "high" culture (i.e., the very best in literature, art, music, etc.), and not with

the popular or "low" culture, it was believed that the main reason for learning a foreign language was to acquire to ability to appreciate the high culture of the target language community and not to enhance the knowledge of the language itself. Nowadays, when the "seamless relationship between a language and culture" (Genc and Bada n.d.) is unquestionable, it seems obvious that without the study of culture, teaching a language is not only insufficient and incorrect, but simply impossible, as "acquiring a new language means a lot more than the manipulation of syntax and lexicon" (Genc and Bada n.d.).

Linguistic competence alone is not enough for learners of a language to be competent in that language. As Kramsch (1993) sees it:

> [c]ulture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them. (Kramsch 1993: 1)

It seems obvious that foreign language learners necessarily become learners of the target culture, as a language cannot be learnt without understanding the cultural context in which it is used. It is even claimed that culture represents the *hidden curriculum* in the process of teaching a language (Arias, Campo and Zuluaga n.d.):

> the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers. (Genc and Bada n.d.)

One of the main aims of foreign language teaching today is to develop learners' ability to "communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (*Common European framework of reference for languages* 2001: 3). The National Curriculum for England and Wales states that:

> without the cultural dimension, successful communication is often difficult: comprehension of even basic words and phrases (such as those referring to meals) may be partial or approximate, and speakers and writers may fail to convey their meaning adequately or may even cause offence. (quoted in Byram and Fleming 1998: 4)

The Polish National Curriculum also mentions cultural aspects in the part connected with teaching foreign languages: "[t]eaching foreign languages should result in developing learners' curiosity, openness and tolerance towards other cultures" (*Podstawa programowa wychowania przedszkolnego i kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół* 2009: 72). It recommends widening the scope of culture components regarding the target culture and acquainting students with socio-cultural norms required on the job market. Teaching communication without teaching culture might be enough for "survival and routine transactions" (Byram 1989: 41), but effective communicative competence is hindered without cultural awareness and understanding. Apart from this obvious reason for teaching culture, students can benefit from culturally-bound teaching also in other dimensions. For example, the already mentioned National Curriculum for England and Wales specifies the following aims of teaching culture:

> to offer insights into the culture and the civilization of the countries where the language is spoken; to encourage positive attitudes to foreign language learning and to speakers of foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilizations, and to develop pupils' understanding of themselves and their own culture. (quoted in Byram and Fleming 1998: 4)

Other benefits might include motivational factors, developing students' ability to think critically, broadening their horizons, teaching them to be more open, tolerant and sensitive towards other people, as well as promoting better communication and understanding between speakers of different languages. It might also help students to understand their own culture better (e.g., by comparing certain aspects of the two cultures) and prove useful in general education (geography, history, civics).

Tomalin and Stempelsky (1994: 3) doubt whether it is possible to teach culture at all, pointing out that "it remains doubtful whether culture, high or low, can really be taught, though generations of learners have been taught about culture." The solution they offer to overcome this difficulty is to teach culture by raising students' cultural awareness, which should lead to their being more open, tolerant and sensitive towards other people and promote better communication and understanding between the speakers (and cultures) of two different languages.

The *Common European framework of reference for languages* (2001: 103) delineates intercultural awareness in the following terms:

knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the "world of origin" and the "world of the target community" produce *an intercultural awareness*. It is, of course, important to note that intercultural awareness includes an awareness of regional and social diversity in both worlds. It is also enriched by awareness of a wider range of cultures than those carried by the learner's L1 and L2. This wider awareness helps to place both in context. In addition to objective knowledge, intercultural awareness covers an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes.

Since it is the school's major role to prepare students for living and working in multicultural environments of the 21ˢᵗ century, teaching culture is significant. However, as far as English is concerned, the question arises which culture should be taught: English, American, the cultures of other English-speaking countries, or the cultures of the world? Wandel suggests that not only British and American cultures, as representatives of most 'popular' English speaking countries, should be taught:

> as English nowadays is a "world language", EFL-teaching must enhance its geographical scope and include non-mainstream cultures. ... Educating students to make use of English as a lingua franca also means to accustom them to being inter-culturally sensitive. (Wandel 2003: 72)

Thus, English coursebooks should reflect not only the target culture, (i.e., the culture where the target language is used as a first language) but also source cultures (i.e., learner's own culture) and international cultures (i.e., cultures in English or non-English speaking countries where English is not a first language but a means of communication of various cultures). Several authors have attempted to compile the lists of cultural 'items' which should be incorporated into the process of teaching. A representative example of such a list is given by Hinkel (1999); the cultural concepts viewed as teaching essentials in fact coincide with the cultural concepts singled out by the *Common European framework of reference for languages* (2001) discussed in section 1 above:

- social identity and social groups, e.g., social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities;
- social interaction, e.g., differing levels of formality, as outsider and insider;
- belief and behavior, e.g., moral and religious beliefs, daily routines;
- social and political institutions, e.g., state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government;

- socialization and the life cycle, e.g., families, school, employment, rites of passage;
- national history, e.g., historical and contemporary events seen as markers on national identity;
- national geography, e.g., significant geographical factors;
- stereotypes and national identity, e.g., what is 'typical', symbols of national stereotypes. (Hinkel 1993: 203)

4. How to teach culture?

As has been indicated above, it is not possible to teach a foreign language without teaching culture, or at least some elements of it. A perfect example illustrating the need to teach culture is the situation in which Polish learners explicitly ask about formal forms of addressing people who are not very well known, as in Polish the polite forms 'Pan/Pani' ('Sir/Madam') are used in such situations. When a teacher explains this problem, s/he teaches culture. Frequently culture is taught implicitly as an inherent part of the linguistic structures that are being taught. However, it might not be enough, especially if we agree with the statement that "[s]tudents will master a language only when they learn both its linguistic and cultural norms" (Peterson and Coltrane n.d.). Some teachers do incorporate the elements of culture in their teaching and there are numerous strategies in which it can be done. Galloway (quoted in Abisamra n.d.) lists the following (a bit humoristic, yet accurate) approaches to teaching culture:

- *the Frankenstein approach*: a taco from here, a flamenco dancer from there, a Gacho from here, a bullfight from there, etc.;
- *the 4-F approach*: folk dances, festivals, fairs and food, etc.;
- *the tour guide approach*: monuments, rivers, cities, etc.;
- *the 'by-the-way' approach*: sporadic lectures or bits of behavior selected at random to draw students' attention to the differences between their own culture and the culture of the target language countries. (Abisamra n.d.)

Galloway (quoted in Abisamra n.d.) also offers something he calls a *framework for teaching culture* which consists of four different types of knowledge: *knowing about*, *knowing how*, *knowing why* and *knowing oneself. Knowing about* is connected with providing factual information of the type: 'What is the biggest river in the UK?' or 'How many states are there in the USA?' This is a traditional way of teaching culture – some facts are provided by the teacher or the textbook, and students are expected to learn them. Activities typically

introducing the facts include reading suitable texts, listening to recordings, watching films, etc.

Knowing how is connected with developing skills, such as buying a ticket to a concert, applying for a membership in a fun club of your favorite band, cheering the band during the concert, etc., thanks to which the learners know what to say in a particular situation and how to say it in a culturally appropriate way. As with other skills, the most effective activities allowing students to practice them are dialogues, role plays, simulations, and field trips (if possible).

Knowing why is about arriving at or discovering explanations to culturally-bound questions such as: 'Why do the English keep/love their monarchy?', 'Why are sports so important to Americans?' or 'Why are Americans so excited about Tiger Woods and his marital problems?' The main learning objective here is to give students a chance to practice their speaking and writing skills demonstrating the abilities to think logically, draw conclusions, generalize, infer, provide arguments, defend their own point of view, etc., in culturally-meaningful contexts.

The last type of knowledge, *knowing oneself*, is about personalizing knowledge. Here students' task is to reflect on their own life by comparing their own experiences, feelings and thoughts by talking or writing about such issues as: 'Sport is very important for Americans. How important is sport in your life?' or 'What would you do if you were Tiger Woods' wife?' Thanks to such activities students learn more about themselves and their attitudes towards the target culture.

To aid teachers in working on intercultural communication, Seelye (1993) listed the goals they should bear in mind if they to want to teach culture effectively:

- *interest*: students should be interested in the target culture;
- *who*: students should be aware of the differences in speech and behavior resulting from various social roles and social positions important in target culture, e.g., age, sex, social class, ethnicity, place of residence, etc.;
- *what*: students should realize that culture influences the way we perceive the world around us, which, in turn affects intercultural communication, i.e., even when people from different cultures use the same word, they may have different images and associate different connotations to the word (e.g., the concept of a dog in Western culture evokes a positive image, while in Arab cultures it evokes a negative one);
- *where* and *when*: students should realize that also situational variables influence the way in which we think and behave, e.g., a teenager behaves differently at a birthday party of his/her elderly aunt and his/her best friend' party;

- *exploration*: students should be able to evaluate the elements of target culture on the basis of the data available to him/her, e.g., personal experience, books, mass media, etc. (Seelye 1993)

Another approach connected with teaching and learning goals was suggested by Nostrand and Nostrand (1970), who postulated that effective culture teaching should result in the following abilities of students:

- reacting appropriately in a social situation;
- describing a pattern in the culture;
- recognizing a pattern when it is illustrated;
- explaining a pattern;
- predicting how a pattern is likely to apply in a given situation;
- describing or manifesting an attitude important for making oneself acceptable in the foreign society;
- evaluating the form of a statement concerning a culture pattern;
- describing/demonstrating defensible methods of analyzing a socio-cultural whole;
- identifying basic human purposes that make significant the understanding that is being taught. (Nostrand and Nostrand 1970)

Another aspect intricately connected with teaching culture is the teacher's and the students' attitude to target culture. Twenty years ago all Polish students had to study Russian at schools, now they have to study English, yet those two "haves to" are incommensurable: Russian was imposed on people because of political reasons and, as such, was learnt (and taught) quite unwillingly, whereas now most students realize the importance of knowing English, which, of course, influences their motivation for studying it and their (rather positive) perception of English-speaking countries. Nonetheless, whenever culture is taught, it should be presented "in a nonjudgmental fashion, in a way that does not place value or judgment on distinctions between the students' native culture and the culture explored in the classroom" (Peterson and Coltrane n.d.). Kramsch (1993: 238) even defines *the third culture* of the language classroom as "a neutral space that learners can create and use to explore and reflect on their own and the target culture and language."

In the past, culture used to be regarded as distinct from language, but now the integral link between the two is generally accepted. Since it is of paramount importance to teach a foreign language in order to facilitate communication, it is also essential to implant in students the genuine appreciation of the culture of the target language. As Abisamra (n.d.) puts it:

There is no question that the successful integration of culture and language teaching can contribute significantly to general humanistic knowledge, that language ability and cultural sensitivity can play a vital role in the security, defense, and economic well-being of any country, and that global understanding ought to be a mandatory component of basic education.

5. Conclusions

It is a platitude to say that there are significant differences in the ways in which speakers of different languages communicate. The ultimate goal of teaching and learning a foreign language is to achieve language proficiency and effective communication skills. As language proficiency can be greatly enhanced by the awareness of the cultural similarities and differences in communication, which can, in turn, substantially reduce or even eliminate confusion or misunderstandings among speakers, the present paper has reflected on the benefits of incorporating the intercultural dimension in FLT.

Culture is a multifaceted concept, which can denote all manner of features that are the basis of people's cultural identity and biases. Attention to the many dimensions of the notion *culture* is drawn in section 1. Section 2 highlights two broad perspectives on culture: the big "C" Culture and the little "c" culture, elements of both have a role to play in people's intercultural competence and their ability to interact effectively in intercultural contexts. The cultural and intercultural dimensions are embraced in sections 3 and 4, which indicate what elements are important for shaping the cultural patterns of a given linguistic society and why it is beneficial to include them in an FTL classroom. The paper closes by highlighting some approaches that teachers can take to teaching elements of culture and the goals that should be fulfilled in teaching culture for intercultural communication.

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