Featured titles

“Teaching in a World Languages Classroom/Lab: Benefits and Challenges” by Adrián M. García (USA) Page 1

“Personal and Communicative Potential of Technically Oriented Young People in the Globalized World” by Inna V. Atamanova and Sergey A. Bogomaz (Russia) Page 12

“The relationship between domains of self-efficacy and FL attainment” by Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel (Poland) Page 23

“The Czech Republic Languages in Cyberspace: An Evolutionary Phenomenon for English as a Second Language” by Biagio Aulino (Canada), Roberto Bergami (Australia) and Blanka Frydrychová Klimoňová (The Czech Republic) Page 34

“Personal and Professional Development of Future Entrepreneurs in Higher Educational Environment” by Natalia V. Kozlova, Tatiana Ye. Levitskaya and Inna V. Atamanova (Russia) Page 44
“Expressing Emotions in the Native and the Foreign Language – a Cross-Linguistic Study” by Liliana Plasecka (Poland) Page 55

“Learning and Teaching Style Preferences in EFL” by Songyut Akkakoson (Thailand) Page 66

“The Impact of Teacher Leadership on Teacher Education in the UAE” by Lauren Stephenson and Elizabeth Howard (UAE) Page 79

“The Varieties of English and Other Factors Affecting the Online Academic Listening Ability of EFL Students” by Supalak Nakhornsri (Thailand) Page 90

“Stereotypes in a Foreign Language Classroom – Modifying Negative Attitudes to Enhance Foreign Language Learning” by Elżbieta Szymańska-Czapla (Poland) Page 102

“Educating the Children of Immigrants: A Cross-Cultural Study Between Boston and Rome” by Deana Bardetti (USA) Page 114

“A Season of Discontent: The Use of Study Notes with First-year Undergraduate Bahraini Students” by John McKeown (Turkey) Page 124

“Beyond Industry Placement: What Happens After the VET Business Teacher Returns to Work?” by Annamarie Schüller and Roberto Bergami (Australia) Page 134
The **Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture** (ISSN: 1949-2774) is a multi-disciplinary academic journal that publishes original articles on research in areas such as:

- Arts and Humanities
- Business and Management
- Capacity Building
- Communities of Practice
- Computers and the Internet
- Curriculum Design and Enhancement
- Distance and Online Education
- Education-Industry Partnerships
- Educational Policy
- English as a Second Language
- Entertainment and the Media
- Entrepreneurship
- Ethnicity
- Government and Politics
- Health and Recreation
- Knowledge Management
- Language Skills
- Management of Educational Institutions
- Religion and Philosophy
- Science and Technology
- Social Sciences
- Society and Culture
- Teacher Education

Manuscripts submitted may be based on research that is theoretical, practical, empirical, or exploratory.

The Journal aims to disseminate high calibre research to scholars across the globe through free on-line access at: [http://www.theworldwideforum.org](http://www.theworldwideforum.org).

Each manuscript is submitted electronically to the **Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture** and it is evaluated to determine the suitability of topic and content. Acceptable manuscripts are reviewed by at least two referees in a double-blind peer review process. This is a process where the authors’ and the referees’ identities are kept anonymous. Referees are asked to evaluate the manuscript against ten criteria, including originality, methodology, relevance and contribution to knowledge. Based on the referees’ reports the Editor-in-Chief makes a final decision on the manuscript and communicates with the authors, providing them with a copy of the referees’ reports. The outcome of the refereeing process may result in the manuscript being either: **Accept** (minor revisions may be required); **Resubmit** (major revisions may be required); or **Reject** (manuscript not suitable for publication).

Additional information for authors is available at: [http://www.theworldwideforum.org](http://www.theworldwideforum.org).

Roberto Bergami
Editor-in-Chief
The Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture
(ISSN: 1949-2774)

Editorial Board

Editor –in-Chief

Roberto Bergami, Ph.D.
Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

Editors

Sandra Liliana Pucci, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Linguistics, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI, USA

Annamarie Schuller, Chisholm Institute, Melbourne, Australia

Editorial team

Professor Silvia Ammary, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy

Associate Professor Lucia Buttaro, Ph D, Adelphi University, New York, NY, USA

Associate Professor Danuta Gabrys-Barker, University of Silesia, Sosnowiec, Poland

Dr Iris Guske, Director of the Kempten School of Translation & Interpreting Studies, Germany

Dr Arthur Lizie, Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, MA, USA

Dr Lauren Stephenson, Assistant Professor, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates

Professor Bruce C. Swafffield, Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA. USA
Dear Friends of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture,

This volume marks a special time in the life of our annual congress in Rome, Italy. We are celebrating 10 years together. What began as a small group of persons interested in promoting multiculturalism back in 2002 has now flourished into an organization with representatives from more than three dozen nations. Each year the conference attracts experts in academia who are changing the way the next generation views the world. As a result, today’s students will become tomorrow’s leaders in a truly global community.

Our progress through the years has been nothing short of remarkable. We now publish a juried journal along with official proceedings. In addition, we have produced two books that are teaching others in the discipline how to make the classroom more of a learning laboratory focused on world cultures. We also offer several scholarships for each conference to help presenters with the costs of travel and registration.

From the very beginning, the purpose of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture has been the same: we are dedicated to teaching and learning in today’s global classroom. We seek practical approaches to teaching the world about the world.

The articles in this year’s journal represent outstanding approaches to learning. This unique collection shows both the diversity and the expertise of those who continue, year after year, to make positive changes in educational systems throughout the world. As you read each piece, you will see ways to improve your own teaching and scholarship.

On behalf of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, I would like to thank these authors as well as the many others who share their ideas each year. The organization has grown because of each person who has ever contributed either in person or in writing. We are especially grateful for the hard work of the editorial board. Without their dedication and service, the journal and proceedings would not be available to everyone around the globe.

Sincerely,

Bruce C. Swaffield, Ph.D.
Founder and Director,
The Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture
Dear Readers of the Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture,

On behalf of the Editors and the Editorial Board, I present you with the third volume of the Journal.

The Journal is a multi-disciplinary international publication, available online, that accepts manuscripts based on research that is theoretical, practical, empirical, or exploratory.

The authors of the featured titles in this issue come from ten different countries spread across North America, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Australia, a truly global representation. Likewise our Editorial Board features scholars from six countries across four continents.

The collection of works in this edition represents a sample of the academic papers presented at the X Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture held in Rome between 30 November and 2 December, 2011. These particular papers were chosen by the Editorial Board, for inclusion in this edition of the Journal, after a double-blind review process involving at least two reviewers.

Much time and effort went into the preparation of this issue of the Journal. From the planning stages, the development of reviewing criteria, to the authors who submitted high calibre papers, to the reviewers who diligently carried out their task of providing valuable feedback, and to the authors again for submitting the final version of their research.

There are too many to thank individually, but I express my gratitude collectively to all who have worked so hard to make the Journal become a reality. I especially acknowledge the contribution and the constant dedication to the Forum by Professor Bruce Swaffield.

I encourage all the readers to consider making their own contributions in future editions of the Journal.

Sincerely,

Roberto Bergami
Editor-in-Chief
December 2011
Teaching in a World Languages Classroom/Lab: Benefits and Challenges

Adrián M. García, Associate Professor of Spanish, Indiana University Northwest, Gary, IN, USA
agarcia@iun.edu

Abstract
Bearing in mind the typical underuse of world languages labs, instructors at Indiana University Northwest designed a classroom/lab, a hybrid form meant to maximize the use and effectiveness of what a state-of-the-art language lab offers. In this space, students comfortably view the teacher and interact with one another, without the significant physical barriers of traditional labs. Instructors can integrate lab elements into their preferred pedagogy, selectively employing lab software tools, audio-visual materials, headsets, word processing, and web sites, exploring real-life aspects from around the globe. Relatively few colleges and universities have such a facility, although some high schools in the United States do. A classroom/lab promotes dynamic instruction, real-life content, and active student learning; but it also presents many serious challenges. Nevertheless, the benefits of a classroom/lab seem to outweigh the drawbacks.

Keywords: Language Lab, Computer Assisted Language Learning, CALL, Multimedia Classroom, Second Language Acquisition, Classroom/Lab

Introduction
For many years, most contemporary language labs have been under-utilized, in part because students can accomplish many lab-type activities on any up-to-date computer. Furthermore, since labs generally have not been used as classrooms, instructors have found it challenging to incorporate lab-based practice activities in their curriculum or teaching. But this is unfortunate, since a fully-equipped lab designed as a classroom offers an array of teaching tools that promote language learning and facilitate connections between languages and cultures, and learning and living. Accordingly, at Indiana University Northwest, the Department of Modern Languages designed a state-of-the-art classroom/lab, a hybrid form meant to maximize the use and effectiveness of a language lab. The seating pattern promotes interaction among students and instructor: there are no carrels or other significant impediments, and students sit in rolling chairs and comfortably view and interact with one another and the teacher. Classes are held in the lab throughout the day, and most course sections meet there one out of every two class sessions. In addition, there are a limited number of open lab and tutoring hours. The room offers specialized lighting; amplified ceiling speakers; and aesthetic enhancements, including attractive armchairs and large framed photos and posters. These design elements are meant to inspire students and encourage learning. Here teachers integrate computer and lab elements in their approaches, selectively employing tools such as web sites, e-books, word processing, language lab software, audio-visual materials, and headsets to enhance their pedagogy. A remote control allows the instructor to adjust various technological aspects from anywhere in the room, including the ceiling projector, volume, and mute. A classroom/lab fosters dynamic teaching, real-life content, and active student learning. Yet, as I will discuss, it also presents significant challenges for teachers and students.
The classroom/lab at Indiana University Northwest is a fully-equipped multimedia classroom that includes a document camera (Elmo), DVD player, sound amplifier, premium ceiling speaker system, twelve-foot wide pull-down screen, and ample white boards. But in addition it has an instructor's station with a computer and dual monitors, one for the lab software control panel image and another for all other computer images. There are also twenty-four computers for students, and areas for tutoring, meetings, and presentations. Varied furniture and decoration create distinct, comfortable, and inspiring areas of the room. The language lab software system, *Genesis*, forms a computer network among students and teacher, allowing them to share web sites, e-book exercises, WORD or PowerPoint documents, DVDs, CDs, and other images and sounds.

With only a few mouse clicks, the teacher can show on the students’ monitors and the pull-down screen the same images as those on the teacher’s monitor; conversely, students may give presentations, sending the images and sounds from any student’s computer to all other monitors and the pull-down screen. With just two clicks, the instructor can randomly pair students for conversation activities via headsets. Also, students are able to record, replay, or save their conversation or pronunciation activities. And the instructor may remotely open web sites or software programs on students' computers. As needed, one can remotely monitor students' computer use, control or disable any computer, and darken the students’ screens. Most instructors are able to utilize several of the lab software’s most useful functions after only a few hours of training.

Today schools in the United States commonly have a number of multimedia (“smart”) classrooms, in which the world languages teacher has computer and other technology at one’s disposal. Some schools have a world languages lab, where students on occasion go to complete various activities. And instructors at times reserve a lab to teach class on a one-time basis. But to have class daily or weekly in a combination classroom/lab is highly unusual. In the United States there are few colleges or universities that utilize a lab primarily in this way. On the other hand, a number of post-secondary English As a Second Language programs use classroom/labs, and some high schools have employed them for years. Nonetheless, I find no study that addresses the effectiveness of teaching in a classroom/lab, an “all-in-one” room that is a “smart” classroom, a computer classroom, and a state-of-the-art language lab. It is important to investigate the use, effectiveness, and feasibility of a classroom/lab in part because newer technologies such as e-books, tablets, and cloud computing will increasingly make classrooms more hybrid, and in the future a growing number of world languages students and teachers may be using instant messaging, headsets, and other language lab–like tools in class. Hence language classroom/labs, possibly of unforeseen types, will presumably become more common.

**Benefits**

Perhaps the foremost advantage of a classroom/lab is that it helps maximize the use and effectiveness of a language lab, since classes are taught there each day. Instructors are present and can make sure that students make the most of lab resources. Moreover, having computers in class for today’s world language students is logical, since, “Just as students . . . have seamlessly integrated the Internet into their daily lives, so will they come to expect technological applications to be integrated into their classroom environments as well” (Spodark, 2005, p. 435). And for those students who have not yet attained sufficient computer literacy and skills, a classroom/lab is an effective setting in which to increase them. What is more, many studies have shown that computer classrooms and online resources can enhance language learning in various ways, and that most students enjoy using them (Altstaedter and
Jones, 2009; Arnold, 2006; Chappelle, 2009; Dubreil, Herron, and Cole, 2004; Lai and Li, 2011; Lee, 2005; Pennington, 2004; Stepp-Greany, 2002). Having one’s own computer during class can expand a student’s exposure to the target language and cultures (Chapelle, 2009, p. 750); and computer-based language learning materials are effective at providing more immediate feedback for all students (Luke, 2006b, p. 32).

The classroom/lab enables teachers and students to make full use of and share materials from E-books and other textbook web site materials, which are extensive, helpful, and integral to language learning today. Also, the web sites offer myriad opportunities for free (self-selected) reading activities, which, like structured readings, are primary vehicles for language input and vital for language acquisition (Krashen, 2003). And the hybrid and multi-faceted character of the classroom/lab increases options for satisfying distinct learning styles: visual, aural, and haptic.

The classroom/lab encourages more varied and stimulating teaching methods, and diversification of classroom activities, techniques, and approaches. The wealth of web-based cultural resources increases cultural content and facilitates teaching languages and cultures in context. One can often incorporate web-based activities without extensive lesson-planning. And many students today become more active constructors of their own knowledge when they can work with computers (Arnold and Lucate, 2006, p. 7). In addition, the lab software network creates many opportunities for a community-oriented classroom and collaborative projects, as students and teacher can more readily work and share with one another via conversation, writing, reading, and diverse web site and software tools.

A classroom/lab that has spaces for tutoring and studying, with comfortable tables and chairs, is a welcoming and productive space for students during open lab hours. Also, teachers can meet there to share experiences and ideas (Garrett, 2009, 735). Furthermore, a computer classroom (even one without a language lab system) dedicated solely to world languages and cultures is crucial because information technology specialists can fashion their technology support especially for the facility’s needs, which differ markedly from those of other kinds of computer rooms (Garrett, 2009, p. 720).

Challenges
One danger in a classroom/lab is that, as in other computer-assisted language learning (CALL) environments, instructors may focus too much on technology-centered exercises and activities, dropping some or all non-technological methods, leading to patterns that become tiresome, repetitive, or ineffective. Technology can be a “crutch” for teachers. Indeed, instructors must bear in mind that technology is only “a pedagogical tool--a medium--not an end in and of itself” (Dubreil, 2006, p. 256). Moreover, “There is consensus in CALL research that it is not the technology per se that affects the learning of language and culture but the particular uses of technology” (Kern, 2006, p. 200). Since technology is no panacea for language acquisition, the instructor’s first priority in a classroom/lab should be to teach one’s class, maximizing students’ learning, with or without the aid of technology. Class in this facility ought to include as much conversation, listening, reading, and social interaction as in any other classroom. Headset activities should not be overused, replacing face to face communication. Teachers ought to avoid having students do web site self-correcting mechanical drills that are better-suited for study time outside of class. And instructors should teach students a number of commonly used computer-related target language words and phrases, so that one can stay more with the target language in class. Inevitably, some class sessions in a classroom/lab will not involve much or any technology, due to time constraints,
or pedagogical needs, such as preparing students for an exam when little time is left for covering material. In spite of this, however, language lab technology will likely be used more extensively in a classroom/lab than in a traditional lab setting, where classes are not normally held.

At first it can be confusing or uncomfortable for instructors to switch among the numerous roles and activities in a classroom/lab, and for this and other reasons teacher training is essential, as I discuss later. In a classroom/lab, like in other types of world languages computer classrooms,

the role of the foreign language teacher is becoming increasingly complex. We are knowledge providers, activity designers, facilitators, motivators, grammar checkers, guides, linguistic models, sirens, learning style coordinators, technology resource people, and directors and creators of constructive learning environments. We may fulfill any one of these roles or we may combine multiple roles during any given class period. (Spodark, 2001, p. 50)

The teacher is also an “architect” who creates learning environments and a “composer” who develops one’s own classroom materials (Dubreil, 2006, p. 250). Many teachers require a full semester or more to adapt to alternating among so many roles, although others adjust more quickly.

Teaching in a classroom/lab requires complex lesson-planning, since one has so many tools to consider. This can be overwhelming and daunting, particularly at first. One must in effect prepare two plans: for a “smart” classroom and a lab. Additionally, even when only teaching in a “smart” classroom, one is faced with ever-increasing resources from web sites and e-books. Keeping abreast is challenging, especially for part-time teachers (Garrett, 2009, p. 723). Also, it is crucial that instructors organize some web resources for students, suggesting sites, creating assignments, and sometimes crafting a syllabus accordingly. As I will discuss, trainers should provide some of these materials to teachers.

Lesson plans for a classroom/lab should create variety, alternating among tools and methods, which may include the textbook, the textbook web site or e-book, other web sites, DVDs, document camera materials, WORD documents sent to the class, handouts, realia, whiteboards, or playing music and other audio for students. There ought to be alternation among activities for individual work, pairs, and groups; listening, speaking, reading, and writing; Total Physical Response (TPR), especially for elementary level classes; and task-based and collaborative work. Likewise, in a “communicative, network-assisted learning environment” such as this one, there should be an appropriate balance between “learner-centered and teacher-guided learning” (Deusen-Scholl, Frei, and Dizon, 2008, p. 674). And teachers should aim to create technology-based activities that “support individual learning styles” (Spodark, 2001, p. 48). For in a CALL classroom, “instructors need to recognize that some students may respond favorably to innovation and increased responsibility and that others may prefer and thrive in a more structured and guided learning environment” (Luke, 2006a, p. 80). And teachers need to plan carefully their use of the classroom/lab to complement—not eliminate—pedagogical approaches that are successful for them. Only over time can a teacher learn how to comfortably synthesize the classroom/lab’s array of possibilities with one’s personal teaching style. Researchers are looking for ways to analyze more profoundly how specific CALL methods and techniques relate to current SLA theories (Chappelle, 2009; Luke, 2006b; Thorne & Smith, 2011). This continuing effort is beginning to yield a greater theoretical framework from which CALL trainers and teachers can draw.
Regardless, due to time constraints in preparing lesson plans that take into account so many factors and possibilities, some teachers in a classroom/lab, like those in other CALL classrooms, may avoid employing much technology (Arnold & Ducate, 2006, p. 8). One solution is to train instructors to be mindful of the fact that one does not have to include all forms of technology each class period, and that it is fine only to use a few lab tools each day as one becomes more comfortable in this environment. Also, teachers must try to be patient while becoming accustomed to planning lessons for a classroom/lab; after all, to blend consistently and in optimum ways such diverse tools, methods, and activities during a class period is a skill that normally will only develop over a number of months. Teachers require some experience to transition logically and effectively from one technology-enhanced activity to another, and from lab activities to non-lab ones. It takes practice to devise shifts that are sensitive to students’ needs and reactions, and to become more able to alter a plan on the spur of the moment, according to the situation and students’ feedback.

Students as well may find the transitions in a classroom/lab confusing at first, as they become accustomed to rotating among roles such as listener, observer, speaker, writer, reader, explorer, tutor, leader, and presenter. It helps if at the start of the semester the instructor discusses with the students the hybrid nature of the classroom/lab and various changes that happen there during class, including when and why the teacher darkens students’ screens and locks their keyboards and mice. Another challenge is that even an instructor adept at using technology can feel uncomfortable as one loses a degree of control over students while they do learner-centered, sometimes collaborative, computer-based work in a computer classroom (Kessler, 2010, p. 381). And the instructor must at times monitor students’ computer use for any extraneous use of e-mail, social media, or other types of web sites. It can be difficult to remain calm when a student returns to these activities even after being told that this is not permitted. Yet lab technology does allow the teacher to monitor from the instructor’s station each student’s computer use and also disable any screen or computer. It is vital to communicate calmly with students who use computers inappropriately, meet with each of them outside of class, and explain that such behavior will lower one’s participation grade and perhaps even the final grade. It requires practice to take these events in stride, not become angry, and maintain a positive and harmonious classroom/lab atmosphere.

Teachers also need to have patience and grace when facing the inevitable technical glitches and breakdowns that occur during a semester. These can relate to software, computers, and other equipment. Teacher trainings should emphasize, though, that often one can easily transform technology-based activities into non-technology ones; for instance, a conversation exercise with headphones can instead be done face to face, or the paper book can be employed in place of the e-book. Moreover, one should attempt not to organize an entire class session around a given technology, with no back-up plan in case of a breakdown. With time, instructors become more adept at taking technical failures in stride. But it is essential to have information technology staff persons that can provide prompt service for technical problems (Garrett, 2009, 720-721). Furthermore, it is vital that the lab software producer or vendor provide technical support when needed.

It is clear, then, that the teacher’s role “as facilitator is important and complex in technology-enhanced environments and involves well-developed instructional skills” (Stepp-Greany, 2002, p. 174). And therefore it is crucial to provide to instructors in a CALL environment ongoing and dependable training opportunities and support; otherwise, as studies show, instructors may not invest the time and energy to become proficient (Arnold & Ducate, 2006, p. 10). Such guidance is also vital because—and also in spite of the fact that—technology is
always outpacing the rate at which SLA theorists and world languages teachers decide how best to incorporate it in their approaches (Chapelle, 2009, p. 751). More, trainings should prepare instructors to help students utilize highly practical software; web sites; and online tools for language learning, including dictionaries, translators, and interactive exercises. Teacher trainers at larger universities will need to ensure sufficient uniformity of content and methods across multiple course sections (Garrett, 2009, 733). Consequently, there should be a dedicated classroom/lab coordinator and at least a few part-time assistants, who schedule and conduct trainings. Nonetheless, it is fortunate that new world languages teachers today are likely to have greater familiarity with computer technology, and some will have taken one or more CALL courses in education degree programs (Arnold, 2007, p. 175).

A classroom/lab coordinator must carefully design the teaching and open lab schedules each semester and plan the facility’s budget. Building a state-of-the-art, comfortable, and stimulating classroom/lab in the United States today can be expensive, costing around $100,000. Computers and lab software are usually upgraded every four years, costing approximately $35,000. Colleges or universities can charge a student lab fee to raise funds and may seek private donations. But larger schools might discard the idea of a classroom/lab because several of these facilities would be needed to accommodate many thousands of language students. Therefore at present a world languages classroom/lab is probably more feasible in well-funded elementary, middle, and secondary schools, and smaller post-secondary institutions.

**Activities for a Classroom/Lab**

The classroom/lab at Indiana University Northwest is designed to enhance instructors' teaching approaches and methodologies, not to replace them in effect with technology. During class sessions, instructors vary their practices in part by sometimes utilizing language lab technology and sometimes not. Hence one employs the language lab technological elements as “salt and pepper”—a “spice”—that one selectively intersperses in one’s chosen methods. Many of the computer-based activities are interactive, with students relating to one another in inspiring ways in the target language. The sample lesson plan activities in Table 1 illustrate how world languages teachers utilizing a classroom/lab can design their lesson plans so that one alternates among activities that require lab software and student computers (indicated by “Lab”) and those that do not (indicated by “Non-Lab”). Also, as Table 1 shows, most activities only require between six and nine minutes, allowing for a greater number and variety of teaching techniques and learning approaches during each class session.

All of the sample activities in Table 1 are for a second-semester post-secondary world languages course, although a classroom/lab is also highly useful for more advanced language and culture classes. The activities are presented in the chronological order in which an instructor might list them in a lesson plan, yet they span more than two class periods. When teaching in a classroom/lab, language instructors should of course aim to use the target language only and lead students to do the same. The technology-based activities in the classroom/lab function more smoothly when the teacher arrives early and opens on the instructor’s computer various web sites and software programs so that she/he can more quickly access them during class. Also, before initiating activities not requiring students’ computers, teachers may darken the student’s screens and lock their keyboards and mice, which helps students to concentrate on what the instructor or classmates are saying and also creates a more traditional classroom environment for periods of time during a class session, thus diversifying the learning atmosphere and experience, making them less predictable or monotonous.
Table 1: Sample lesson plan activities for a world languages classroom/lab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Time (Minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor begins a textbook chapter by presenting the information it offers on a particular country; she/he also uses a web site showing related photos or a video, and sends these images to students' monitors and to the pull-down screen. The teacher walks throughout the room, asking the class questions regarding information on the country.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor reads aloud the chapter’s initial vocabulary list (or uses a CD or the e-book to play it via the ceiling speakers) and has students repeat it.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With just two mouse clicks, the teacher divides the class into random pairs for using headsets, and students read aloud the initial vocabulary list, correcting one another's pronunciation. The instructor uses a headset to listen to each pair and assist with pronunciation.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher utilizes a CD or the e-book to play audio for a textbook dialogue via the ceiling speakers. Students use their book and write by hand their answers for comprehension questions listed in the text. Afterward the teacher moves throughout the room, soliciting students’ responses to the questions.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students work with a partner (in front of them, behind them, to their side, or elsewhere in the room) to complete a few textbook vocabulary exercises. The instructor walks around assisting students, and then reviews answers with the class, using the whiteboards at the front or rear. Meanwhile the instructor plays music from the country of emphasis via the teacher computer (with a CD, a musician’s web site, You Tube, etc.).</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in random pairs use headsets to carry out a conversation activity from the textbook, expressing food preferences. The instructor, via headset, selects and listens to pairs of students, offering corrections and comments. Afterward the teacher discusses errors with the class, with or without headsets.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor moves throughout the room, asking the entire class, or specific students, oral questions with chapter vocabulary.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In their e-book, students click on a link for a web site about a &quot;food pyramid&quot; with recommended amounts for each food category. They complete a written exercise in the e-book, expressing how much they should consume from each category. Afterward, a volunteer presents answers to the class, with the instructor sending them to students’ screens and the pull-down screen. The teacher may ask the student to type corrections for grammar or vocabulary errors; she/he also can remotely control the student’s computer, revising the written work, while all students watch on their monitors or the large screen.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor gives a PowerPoint presentation on an array of additional verbs expressing likes and dislikes, sending it to all monitors and the large screen.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Time (Minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher distributes a paper handout with a few communicative oral activities based on these verbs and calls on pairs of students to complete them for the entire class. The instructor moves about the room, using whiteboards to highlight or revise elements of students’ language use.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor sends to all students’ screens a narration in WORD that she/he has prepared about two persons’ food preferences. The teacher than asks students oral questions with regard to the narration.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students utilize the textbook on line program (e.g., Quia) to complete a written exercise on one’s own food preferences. Afterward the teacher asks certain students to present their answers to the class, via all monitors and the pull-down screen.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students write to one another about their likes and dislikes, with instant messaging (text chat) through the lab software. The instructor randomly pairs the students to do this and from the teacher station can select any pair, review a conversation, and join it, offering written comments or corrections.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher remotely opens WORD on students' computers; they write several sentences expressing their likes and dislikes, utilizing the dictionary and thesaurus. The teacher requests a volunteer to present to the class and sends the student’s writing to all monitors and the big screen. The instructor may ask the student to correct mistakes and can also remotely type revisions on the student’s document.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several students volunteer to read aloud their brief compositions written for homework. Afterward the teacher leads a discussion on some positive aspects and key errors.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor plays via ceiling speakers the audio for a listening comprehension exercise from the textbook. Students write their answers by hand. The teacher reviews them with the class.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students work in groups of three to complete a role-play activity outlined on a sheet projected on the pull-down screen via the document camera (e.g., Elmo). First the teacher forms the groups, asking students to stand up and move to different areas of the room, working with new partners and utilizing armchairs and various tables and rolling chairs, many of these away from computers. The teacher goes throughout the room to provide any needed assistance.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students use headsets and Windows Recorder (found under Windows &quot;Accessories&quot;) to practice pronunciation while recording oneself reading aloud a textbook passage. On the lab software control panel, the teacher clicks the icons for selected students one by one and offers each student some suggestions or corrections via headset. A student may save one’s recording and also send it to the teacher. This activity can be a graded assignment.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teacher sends to all screens a DVD movie segment portraying dance or music from the featured country. The movie appears within a small “TV” image window, which each student can drag around one’s screen as needed. The teacher remotely opens WORD for all students. While watching the DVD, students use WORD in an adjacent window to write sentences reacting to what they are viewing. Afterward they work in pairs, sharing their written ideas and correcting one another’s work. The instructor then calls on students to present sentences to the class, and these appear on all screens.

Students work in groups of three in different areas of the room, sharing and discussing their written answers to an exercise that they completed for homework, regarding a literary or other cultural reading. Afterward, there is a full class discussion.

The instructor sends to all screens part of a speech by the featured country’s president, on You Tube. Beforehand a handout with questions on the speech is given to students. They watch the video twice, listening with headsets. Afterward the teacher leads a discussion based on the handout, but without headsets.

Students browse works by a famous visual artist from the target country, via Google Images. Each student chooses one’s favorite work; then students work in pairs, showing the images to one another and explaining their preferences and interpretations.

The instructor remotely starts on students’ computers a web site in the target language, about travel destinations in the featured country. Students work in pairs to plan a vacation; later they orally present their travel plans to the class, while showing the class their web site images and sounds via all monitors and the ceiling speakers.

The teacher provides to groups of students paper copies of restaurant menus in the target language so that they can role play being servers and customers. After rehearsing, a few groups are asked to present their dialogue to the class, in the presentation area at the front of the room.

Students complete a textbook conversation exercise synthesizing various chapter vocabulary items and grammar elements. Afterward a few pairs are asked to present their conversation to the class.

Each student creates one’s own restaurant menu with WORD, using the target language, foods from the target culture(s), and the currency of the emphasized country. Afterward volunteers share their menus via all monitors and the pull-down screen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Time (Minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher sends to all screens a DVD movie segment portraying dance or music from the featured country. The movie appears within a small “TV” image window, which each student can drag around one’s screen as needed. The teacher remotely opens WORD for all students. While watching the DVD, students use WORD in an adjacent window to write sentences reacting to what they are viewing. Afterward they work in pairs, sharing their written ideas and correcting one another’s work. The instructor then calls on students to present sentences to the class, and these appear on all screens.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students work in groups of three in different areas of the room, sharing and discussing their written answers to an exercise that they completed for homework, regarding a literary or other cultural reading. Afterward, there is a full class discussion.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor sends to all screens part of a speech by the featured country’s president, on You Tube. Beforehand a handout with questions on the speech is given to students. They watch the video twice, listening with headsets. Afterward the teacher leads a discussion based on the handout, but without headsets.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students browse works by a famous visual artist from the target country, via Google Images. Each student chooses one’s favorite work; then students work in pairs, showing the images to one another and explaining their preferences and interpretations.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor remotely starts on students’ computers a web site in the target language, about travel destinations in the featured country. Students work in pairs to plan a vacation; later they orally present their travel plans to the class, while showing the class their web site images and sounds via all monitors and the ceiling speakers.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides to groups of students paper copies of restaurant menus in the target language so that they can role play being servers and customers. After rehearsing, a few groups are asked to present their dialogue to the class, in the presentation area at the front of the room.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students complete a textbook conversation exercise synthesizing various chapter vocabulary items and grammar elements. Afterward a few pairs are asked to present their conversation to the class.</td>
<td>Non-Lab</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each student creates one’s own restaurant menu with WORD, using the target language, foods from the target culture(s), and the currency of the emphasized country. Afterward volunteers share their menus via all monitors and the pull-down screen.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

In spite of many challenges, the benefits of a classroom/lab appear to outweigh the drawbacks. It is always better to have more teaching and learning tools, and this environment presents the best of both worlds: the possibilities that both a “smart classroom” and a lab afford. Clearly a classroom/lab can enrich the instruction of languages and cultures. But much research is needed to fully assess the effectiveness of this classroom setting, including surveys and studies of students and faculty, and analyses on how this teaching space relates to
distinct instructional approaches and methods and learning styles. Also, one should compare the degree of language acquisition in a classroom/lab to that of “smart” classrooms, computer labs, and traditional classrooms. With e-books and tablets growing in use, and cloud computing on the way, world languages classroom/labs will likely become more pervasive, especially if these newer technologies reduce lab construction and maintenance costs. A more widespread use of classroom/labs might affect the popularity of certain language teaching approaches and techniques. And classroom/labs may become more common in other academic subject areas, such as mathematics, sociology, and business, not only due to the effects of emerging technologies, but also because these rooms facilitate the integration of real-life aspects from around the globe into everyday classroom activities.

References
Arnold, N., & Ducate, L. (2006). CALL: Where are we and where do we go from here? In L. Ducate & N. Arnold (Eds.), *Calling on CALL: From theory and research to new directions in foreign language teaching* (pp. 1-20). San Marcos, TX, USA: CALICO Publications.


Personal and Communicative Potential of Technically Oriented Young People in the Globalized World

Inna V. Atamanova, Senior Lecturer, Department of Foreign Languages, Tomsk State University, Russia
iatamanova@yandex.ru
Sergey A. Bogomaz, Professor, Department of Psychology, Tomsk State University, Russia
bogomazsa@sibmail.com

Abstract
It seems reasonable that solving global problems which the world faces requires innovative ideas and revolutionary new technologies. One of the most important prerequisites for developing one’s capacity for generating innovative ideas and technologies is likely to be the system of education being oriented toward the prospects of future technical, economic and social development. Such a system of education should be aimed at developing personal and communicative potential of young people to be involved in innovative, scientific and entrepreneurial activity. Personal potential is interpreted as an integral parameter which characterizes one’s ability to resist undesirable changes on the one hand, and to initiate and bring about desirable ones on the other. As far as communicative potential is concerned, it describes one’s ability to communicate (in its wide meaning) effectively. The objective of this paper is to present the study conducted to discover personal and communicative qualities of Russian university students, whose majors were technically oriented subjects. The results obtained have revealed various combinations of different levels of personal and communicative potential, e.g. high personal potential and low communicative potential. Meanwhile, one of the most typical communicative strategies has proved to be manipulative. Therefore, it is becoming necessary to provide psychological tutoring for technically oriented students to develop their personal and communicative potential appropriately. Moreover, the study presented has shown that there is a statistically significant difference in personal and communicative potential between the typological groups (according to Carl Jung’s typology).

Key words: innovative activity, personal potential, communicative potential, higher professional education, Jungian typology

Introduction
One of the global challenges that countries are facing at present is the transition to a knowledge-based economy or, more widely, to a knowledge society. To meet the challenge, scholars and professionals throughout the world have channeled their efforts into searching possible ways of enhancing countries’ economic, political and social development. In Russia, the strategy of innovative development is recognized as a key factor of modernizing the national economy and the society as a whole.

The paper first addresses the concept of innovative activity that is interpreted as a form of human activity being realized by going ‘beyond the habitual’ and has been a subject of research in recent years (Непомнящая & Богомаз, 2007; Краснорядцева, 2008; Клочко & Галажинский, 2009; Богомаз & Каракулова, 2010; Богомаз & Мацута, 2010; Atamanova & Bogomaz, 2011; etc). It is initiating innovative activity that is becoming a locomotive of changes. In this regard, the research interest is focusing on the role of human factor in the process of innovative development.
Traditionally, innovative development is associated with innovations in the development of technologies. Therefore, it is required that the system of higher professional education should provide science and economy with qualified specialists able to initiate innovative activity in their professional sphere. The paper presents the study aimed at exploring personal and communicative potential of university students whose majors are technically oriented subjects. It is the two psychological characteristics that seem to be crucial for our understanding of the initiation of innovative activity.

It should be noted that personal and communicative potential are integral psychological characteristics in essence and involve a number of psychological parameters to be described below. In addition, the research tools for examining the characteristics mentioned are presented. Finally, the paper focuses on verifying a hypothesis about possible differences in personal and communicative potential between various psychological types according to the Jungian typology.

**Innovative Development Strategy**

The current situation in Russia is much affected by the global challenge of transition from a resource-oriented economy to a knowledge-based one (OECD, 2007). The emerging knowledge society is calling for countries’ innovative development throughout the world. The Innovative Development Strategy, the advanced version of the document adopted is called *Innovative Russia – 2020*, determines the first-priority ways of modernizing not only the national economy but also the society as a whole (Стратегия, 2011).

In general, innovations are associated with changes in biotechnology, nanotechnology and information technology. Meanwhile, innovation is a novelty that changes the habitual ways of thinking and doing things (Клочко & Галажинский, 2009; Atamanova & Bogomaz, 2011). This means that the role of the human factor in the country’s innovative development is becoming essential since, as Klochko and others note, “behind the problem of initiating innovative activity lies a global pattern of human self-development, self-realization, and generation of one’s own norms” (Atamanova & Bogomaz, 2011, p. 95). Consequently, scholars’ efforts are focused on identifying and studying specific personal qualities that characterize people who are and will be occupied in the spheres of innovative development (Непомнящая & Богомаз, 2007; Краснорядцева, 2008; Клочко & Галажинский, 2009; Богомаз & Мацута, 2010).

**The Research Program of Tomsk State University**

Tomsk State University, as one of the leading universities in the national system of higher professional education, plays an important role in implementing the Innovative Development Strategy in the Siberian region. Its research activity is mainly connected with the development of innovative technologies, and since 2010 the university has had a status of the National Research University. There are 5 key orientations of research and educational practice dealing with innovations in the fields of: 1) nanotechnologies and materials; 2) information and computer technologies; 3) biological systems and sustainable nature management; 4) cosmic research and 5) social and humanitarian technologies of managing innovations. It should be emphasized that the last block is not the least because it is directly concerned with the role of the human factor in the process of innovative development.

In turn, it was required to find a psychological basis for managing innovative development in science, technology and entrepreneurship. Having started several research projects aimed at
studying innovative personality and innovative activity, the Department of Psychology at the university is gradually expanding the spheres of research interest and accumulating the results obtained. These projects are mainly interdisciplinary and practice-oriented. It should be noted that one of these orientations is modernization of the current system of higher professional education in order to provide the development of future specialists’ capacity for generating innovative ideas and technologies or, in a broader sense, for initiating innovative activity.

**Personal and communicative potential in the context of innovative activity**

According to Klochko and others, innovative activity is defined as a form of human activity being realized by going ‘beyond’, i.e. beyond the existing attitudes and behavioral patterns, beyond the stereotypes or, in other words, beyond the habitual. Potentiality is becoming a key factor of both personal and professional development (Краснорядцева, 2008; Ключко & Галажинский, 2009; Атаманова & Богомаз, 2011). Thus, behind the problem of initiating innovative activity lies a global pattern of human self-development and self-actualization, as mentioned above.

The studies conducted recently have revealed two factors that seem to be crucial for our understanding of the initiation of innovative activity, namely personal and communicative potential. Likely, it is these characteristics that are ‘responsible’ for the involvement of young people in innovative, scientific or entrepreneurial activity in higher educational settings (Непомнящая & Богомаз, 2007; Краснорядцева, 2008; Богомаз & Каракулова, 2010; Богомаз & Мацута, 2010).

**Personal potential**

In general, personal potential is defined as an integral parameter that characterizes one’s capacity to resist undesirable changes, on the one hand, and to initiate and bring about desirable changes, on the other (Леонтьев et al., 2007).

Личностный потенциал представляет собой интегральную характеристику индивидуально-психологических особенностей личности, лежащую в основе способности личности исходить из устойчивых внутренних критериев и ориентиров в своей жизнедеятельности и сохранять стабильность деятельности и смысловых ориентаций на фоне давлений и изменяющихся внешних условий (p. 10).

In other words, personal potential simultaneously combines in itself resilience and flexibility and, in our opinion, is responsible for initiating one’s intellectual or creative activity and enables to achieve meaningful purposes. The studies mentioned confirmed that the effectiveness of one’s activity was much affected by one’s personal potential (Богомаз & Каракулова, 2010). Moreover, personal potential may be oriented by an individual toward different life spheres (Богомаз & Мацута, 2010). It should be emphasized that personal potential is an integral characteristics and includes a number of parameters, namely ambiguity tolerance, satisfaction with life, hardiness and self-organization of activity.

As known, innovative, scientific or entrepreneurial activity, to a large extent, deals with uncertain situations. Also, scholars point out that countries low in uncertainty avoidance are more comfortable with change and novelty, i.e. innovations (Samovar & Porter, 2004; Yaveroglu & Donthu, 2002; Adler et al., 2007). The degree of uncertainty avoidance depends on the specific culture and influences the way people communicate. The lower the uncertainty-avoidance index, the more tolerant people are. Thus, tolerance for ambiguity can
be used as a predictor of initiating innovative activity as well as scientific and entrepreneurial activity because they have much in common as their very essence is going ‘beyond’.

The next parameter to be discussed is satisfaction with life (Ed Diener et al., 1985). It is one of the factors of subjective well-being and means an overall assessment of feeling and attitudes about one’s life. It involves individuals’ thinking about their life as a whole with respect to achieving their goals, doing as well as other people around them and being happy in general.

There is one more parameter to be taken into account, namely hardiness. This concept was introduced by Kobasa (1979) and further elaborated by Maddi and his colleagues (Kobasa et al., 1985; Maddi, 2004, 2006). As they point out, hardiness is responsible for strengthening stress resistance resources and helps individuals deal with changes successfully. It comprises three related dispositions: Commitment, Control and Challenge. The commitment disposition means a tendency to involve oneself in the activity and take a genuine interest in and have a curiosity about the world around (other people, things and activities). The control disposition means a tendency to believe in one’s possibility to influence the events around through one’s own efforts and act accordingly. The challenge disposition means a tendency to believe that change (rather than stability) is the norm of life and it can be viewed as an opportunity for personal growth.

Finally, pay attention to the parameter that can be used for predicting individual differences among young people being involved in innovative activity. This is self-organization of activity (Мандрикова, 2007). The parameter enables to assess to what extent an individual is able to define the goal, to draw up a plan of achieving the goal and put this plan into operation. Meanwhile, it can serve as an evaluation of both one’s persistence and one’s flexibility in achieving the goal.

**Communicative potential**

The importance of communication is beyond question. As Adler and others (2007) note, “besides satisfying practical needs, meaningful communication contributes to physical health, plays a major role in our identity, and forms the basis for our social relationships” (p. 24).

Interpreting communication in its wider meaning, as interaction, reflects the very essence of the phenomenon and its significance for human existence. Moreover, revolutionary changes in electronics, information technology, technical and social environments, communication systems have brought about a dynamic international cooperation of professionals in different areas on the one hand, and a tremendous flow of professional information on the other. In this regard, communicative potential can be used as a measure of the effectiveness of communication or, in other words, it indicates one’s capacity to interact effectively in various contexts.

The process of communication is extremely complicated. According to Nedashkovsky (Недашковский, 2002), to communicate effectively it is necessary to be aware of your own intentions and your partner’s intentions, i.e. to understand self and other people. Besides, it is very important to be congruent in communication or, more exactly, to have some kind of balance between self, other and context. There is one more significant aspect of communication, namely interpersonal borders that characterize one’s ability to regulate them in a proper way.
Research methodology
The study presented was aimed at exploring personal and communicative potential of the university students whose majors were technically oriented subjects. In addition, we verified a hypothesis about possible differences in communicative potential among representatives of various psychological types based on the Jungian typology.

Sample
The study sample consisted of 273 university students aged between 18 and 23 years old whose majors were technically oriented. 40 percent of the participants were females and 60 percent were males.

Data collection
The students were offered to fill in several paper-and-pencil forms in Russian in order to examine psychological characteristics under study, namely personal and communicative potential and psychological types. As mentioned above, personal and communicative potential include a number of subscales, research tools for measuring these subscales and psychological types being described further. The data collected were statistically treated using descriptive analysis, correlation analysis and analysis of variance.

Research tools
First, a set of questionnaires was used to evaluate the participants’ personal potential (Боромаз & Мацуга, 2010). The tool includes a number of scales to measure one’s ambiguity tolerance, satisfaction with life, hardiness, self-organization of activity and communicative effectiveness. Ambiguity tolerance was assessed by means of McLain’s MSTAT-I instrument (McLain, 1993) translated into Russian and psychometrically checked by Lukovitskaya (1998). Diener’s Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985), translated and adapted by Леонтьев (2008), was used to measure the participants’ satisfaction with life. Their hardiness was evaluated by Maddi’s Hardiness Test, translated into Russian and psychometrically checked by Леонтьев and Рассказова (2006). To estimate the students’ tendency to self-organization of activity we apply the Self-Organization of Activity Questionnaire developed by Mandrikova (2007). The questionnaire contains several subscales but, as our previous studies showed, more informative for predicting individual differences in self-organization is to use the following indices, namely Purposefulness and Rationality.

Second, to evaluate the communicative potential of young people, we used Nedashkovsky’s Questionnaire (Недашковский, 2002) enabling to determine several aspects of one’s communication pattern with regard to its effectiveness. The most important parameters are self-understanding, understanding of others, congruence in communication and interpersonal borders.

Third, the participants were offered to complete the Typological Questionnaire TOP-UNIT based on the Jungian typology. It was developed in the laboratory of Humanitarian Technologies in Moscow, Russia in 2005-2006 (HT, 2006). The questionnaire includes the following scales: Introversion-Extraversion, Sensing-Intuition, Feeling-Thinking, and Perceiving-Judging.
Research findings and discussion

In whole, our findings indicate that for technically oriented students the scores in ambiguity tolerance, hardiness, self-organization of activity and satisfaction with life are higher than the standard values of these scales. This can be interpreted as an evidence of rather high personal potential of young people at universities. As for communicative potential, it is difficult to compare the results with the standards because the scale was modified. On the other hand, the scores of students' communicative potential, especially for technically oriented young people, are lower than the adults' scores. This means that it is very important that the current system of education at the faculties with science and engineering majors should be strengthened by developing students' communicative competence. But what is more important is the fact that there can be various combinations of the scores of personal and communicative potential, e.g. high personal potential and low communicative potential. The problem is that the dominated strategy in this case may be manipulation. So it is necessary to provide such students with psychological tutoring in order to develop their communicative competence and broaden their repertoire of communicative strategies.

To verify the hypothesis about possible differences in personal and communicative potential among representatives of various psychological types (based on the Jungian typology), the participants were divided into 16 psychological types (for details, see Jung, 1921/1971; Богомаз, 2000; HT, 2006). Statistically significant differences in the parameters under study were obtained for the following psychological types (see Table 1).

Table 1: Psychological types and their characteristic features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Type</th>
<th>Characteristic Features</th>
<th>N of Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE-type</td>
<td>introversion, sensing, feeling, perceiving</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TE-type</td>
<td>introversion, intuition, feeling, perceiving</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LI-type</td>
<td>introversion, intuition, thinking, judging</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT-type</td>
<td>extraversion, intuition, thinking, judging</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS-type</td>
<td>extraversion, sensing, thinking, judging</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-type</td>
<td>extraversion, intuition, thinking, perceiving</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As analyzed, a statistically significant difference in Understanding of Others in communication was revealed between Groups 1 and 2 (see Table 2). The first group included SE-type and TE-type, the other one united LI-type and PT-type. The mean scores in the parameter discussed for the two groups were 14.0 and 17.7 (p<0.001), respectively. It follows that representatives of SE and TE psychological types may face much difficulty in communication because of their higher emotionality. By contrast, representatives of LI and PT psychological types are able to understand others to a larger extent since they are able to analyze their partners’ behavior while communicating and not to demonstrate their emotions.
Table 2: Between-group differences in communicative potential subscales

| Group | Psychological Types                  | Communicative Potential Subscale | Mean   | p<  
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|------
| 1     | SE-type and TE-type                  | Understanding of Others           | 14.0   | 0.001|
| 2     | LI-type and PT-type                  |                                    | 17.7   |      |
| 3     | PS-type and PT-type                  | Understanding of Others           | 17.1   | 0.0157|
| 4     | SE-type and IL-type                  |                                    | 15.2   |      |
| 3     | PS-type and PT-type                  | Congruence                        | 16.8   | 0.0002|
| 4     | SE-type and IL-type                  |                                    | 13.5   |      |
| 3     | PS-type and PT-type                  | Communicative Potential           | 14.6   | 0.0006|
| 4     | SE-type and IL-type                  |                                    | 12.8   |      |

Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference in Understanding of Others in communication between Groups 3 (PS-type and PT-type) and 4 (SE-type and IL-type) with the mean scores in the parameter examined 17.1 and 15.2 (p<0.0157), respectively. It should be noted that IL representatives’ low ability to understand others may be accounted for by their tendency to abstract thinking and fantasy generating and, as a result, they may be ineffective in communication.

Moreover, Table 2 also shows that Groups 3 and 4 significantly varied in both Congruence in communication (16.8 and 13.5; p<0.0002, respectively) and communicative potential as a whole (14.6 and 12.8; p<0.0006, respectively). In other words, representatives of SE-type and IL-type are likely characterized by the lack of clear purposes of communication and, consequently, their scores in communicative potential are the lowest. On the other hand, representatives of PS and PT psychological types, characterized by purposefulness, tend to achieve the goals defined and, therefore, tend to understand the partner and to be congruent in communication.

In addition, we analyzed in-group correlations between the communicative potential subscales and the personal potential ones (see Table 3). For instance, in Group 4 Self Understanding in communication showed statistically significant correlations with Commitment (r=0.507; p=0.011), Control (r=0.606; p=0.002) and Hardiness in whole (r=0.585; p=0.003). Communicative potential in this group revealed statistically significant correlations only with Commitment (r=0.519; p=0.009) and Hardiness (r=0.511; p=0.011). This may be interpreted as follows. The higher is self-understanding in communication and the higher is communicative potential, the easier representatives of SE and IL psychological types are involved in the situation of novelty because of their ability to control such a situation.
In Table 3 it can be seen that Group 3 revealed more statistically significant correlations. Self-Understanding in communication correlated to a lesser degree with Commitment ($r=0.347; p=0.023$) and Control ($r=0.318; p=0.038$) and to a greater degree with Challenge ($r=0.505; p=0.001$) and Hardiness ($r=0.417; p=0.005$). It follows that representatives of PS and PT psychological types may possess a better ability for self-understanding in the process of communication and, consequently, may be able to take risk. In other words, it is possible to use the Self Understanding scale as a predictor of one’s ability for risk taking.

Summarizing the results obtained enables us to highlight some peculiarities of the psychological types discussed and make some predictions about how effective their representatives may be in communication (see Table 4). In our opinion, this knowledge could contribute to a better understanding of team building. Nowadays, it is obvious that some progress in science and technology is made by the efforts of the whole scientific team. Communication, therefore, has become the key factor of research activity. On the one hand, effective communication within the research group advances the process of researching through brainstorming, critical thinking and decision making. On the other, effective communication with the outer circle (universities, funds, scientific communities, enterprises, etc.) can promote both the research itself and implementation of its results.

Table 3: In-group correlations between communicative potential and personal potential subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Psychological Types</th>
<th>Communicative Potential Subscale</th>
<th>Personal Potential Subscale</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PS-type, PT-type</td>
<td>Self-Understanding</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>$r=0.347; p=0.023$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>$r=0.318; p=0.038$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>$r=0.505; p=0.001$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hardiness</td>
<td>$r=0.417; p=0.005$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SE-type, IL-type</td>
<td>Self-Understanding</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>$r=0.507; p=0.011$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>$r=0.507; p=0.002$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hardiness</td>
<td>$r=0.585; p=0.003$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>$r=0.519; p=0.009$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hardiness</td>
<td>$r=0.511; p=0.011$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Psychological types, their peculiarities and predictions about effectiveness in communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Types</th>
<th>Peculiarities</th>
<th>Predictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE-type, TE-type</td>
<td>high emotionality</td>
<td>possible difficulties in communication if there is difficulty in controlling emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE-type, IL-type</td>
<td>unclear purpose of communication</td>
<td>lowest in communicative potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ability to deal with novelty</td>
<td>easier involvement in the situation of novelty if self-understanding and communicative potential is higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LI-type, PT-type</td>
<td>ability to analyze partners' behavior</td>
<td>better understanding of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ability to control emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-type</td>
<td>abstract thinking, fantasy</td>
<td>possible ineffectiveness in communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>low ability to understand others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS-type, PT-type</td>
<td>purposefulness</td>
<td>better understanding of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>better congruence in communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>better ability for risk taking if self-understanding is higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In turn, in higher educational settings it seems reasonable to take into account this study’s findings when organizing and supervising, for example, the work of student research teams in case of research incubators in order to enhance technically oriented students’ personal and professional development as well as to develop their communicative competence.

**Conclusion**

The emerging knowledge-based society is calling for countries’ innovative development all over the world. Scholars and professionals have concentrated on searching possible ways of enhancing the development of national economies and communities taking into account the global challenges.

The Innovative Development Strategy adopted in Russia determines modernization as one of the key factors of the society transformation, including modernization of the system of higher professional education. One of the main goals of professional training has become to develop future specialists’ readiness for initiating innovative activity.

As noted, innovative activity is a form of human activity concerned with going ‘beyond the habitual’. In this regard, the research interest has focused on studying psychological characteristics of the people who are or will be involved in innovative activity as well as scientific and entrepreneurial activity. The paper presented one of the studies aimed at exploring personal and communicative potential of technically oriented young people.

Theoretically, personal and communicative potential are integral psychological characteristics including a number of components. Personal potential can be evaluated through one’s ambiguity tolerance, satisfaction with life, hardiness and self-organization of activity. As far as communicative potential is concerned, it is a measure of the effectiveness of communication.

The study revealed that the university students had higher scores in the subscales of personal potential compared to the standard values. This means that their personal potential is rather high and enables them to achieve meaningful purposes. Meanwhile, their communicative potential showed lower scores compared to the standard values. This may testify to some deficiency in communicative competence among technically oriented young people. Therefore, such students need psychological tutoring to enhance the development of their communicative competence.

Finally, the study verified the hypothesis about possible differences in personal and communicative potential between the psychological types based on the Jungian typology. It was statistically confirmed that certain psychological types seemed to be more effective in communication and uncertain situations than others. Based on the results obtained, some peculiarities of the psychological types discussed were highlighted and some predictions about their representatives’ effectiveness in communication were made. This knowledge seems to be beneficial to a better understanding of research team building in general and to organization and supervision of the work of student research teams in higher educational settings in particular.

**References**


Богомаз, С.А. (1980) Психологические типы К. Юнга, психофизиологические типы и интертипные отношения. Томск, Россия: ТГУ.


Осин, Е.Н. & Леонтьев, Д.А. (2008) Апробация русскоязычных версий двух шкал экспресс-оценки субъективного благополучия. Материалы III Всероссийского социологического конгресса. Москва, Россия: Институт социологии РАН.
Abstract
The aim of the study is to analyze the role of self-efficacy beliefs in the process of foreign language learning. Self-efficacy, such as perceived academic efficacy, perceived social efficacy and self-regulatory efficacy, are hypothesized to be related to such measures of success or failure in the foreign language (FL) learning process, as final grades or self-perceived FL (English) skill (speaking, listening, writing and reading) levels. The participants of the study were 621 students from secondary grammar schools in southwestern Poland. Students with high and low final grades in English, and high and low self-assessment of FL skills were compared. The results revealed that academic self-efficacy appears to be more strongly related to final grades than self-assessment of the four skills due to the fact that grades reveal the general standing of the student in the educational context. Social self-efficacy is connected only with final grades, while self-regulated efficacy only with self-assessment of the four skills. It is argued that the foreign language learning process is a unique experience, different from learning other school subjects.

Keywords: academic self-efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, social efficacy, self-assessment, grades, foreign language learning

Introduction
Possible causes of success and failure in various domains of human activity, such as learning a foreign language, have been subject to various sorts of inquiry. One of the ways of analyzing the role of the influence of cognitive processes on social behavior, such as learning, is social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). It proposes viewing human beings as proactive, self-organizing, self-reflecting, and self-regulating agents of their own development. The basis for their future success or failure in different spheres of life are the interpretations they make of the results of their actions, forming beliefs about their capabilities to engage in subsequent tasks and actions.

For the purpose of this paper it is hypothesized that self-efficacy types, such as perceived academic efficacy, perceived social efficacy and self-regulatory efficacy, are strongly related to such measures of success or failure in the foreign language (FL) learning process as final grades or self-perceived FL skill levels. In order to corroborate this, first the concept of self-efficacy and related issues (academic, social, and self-regulatory efficacy) is presented, along with their role in and relevance to the language learning process. Next, the results of empirical research focusing on the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language attainment are depicted. The paper ends with a discussion and implications for the English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) classroom.

Self-efficacy: domains of functioning
Social cognitive theory proposes that socio-structural influences and psychological mechanisms form a mixture of interdependent forces regulating the individual’s functioning (Bandura, 1999). Yet, the human being cannot be viewed as their passive subject. Instead, he
is an agent of their psychosocial development, regulating their behaviours through information from different sources. Among them, previous experiences, watching others, feedback enacted and received from external sources, as well as from somatic and emotional states must be enumerated. In the course of time the individual progressively achieves personal control by means of perceiving and understanding causal relations between events, and by acknowledging oneself as the agent of action (Pastorelli et al., 2001).

Self-efficacy beliefs are the central mechanism of the self-system of personal agency. They can be defined as “people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391) or as “beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over events that affect their lives” (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175).

In short, self-efficacy beliefs affect the development of cognitive abilities (Pastorelli et al., 2001) by influencing one’s thinking about their capacities. In the case of one’s sense of self-efficacy, a human being demonstrates the ability to realize desired goals, with necessary persistence on a difficult task, in spite of difficulties. In this way feelings of personal accomplishment are enhanced, and a sense of personal self-efficacy increases. However, a low sense of self-efficacy is the effect of experiencing failure, which in the course of time gives way to low personal aspirations and weak commitment to goals. This is accompanied by avoidance of difficult tasks, viewed as personal threats, instead of challenges, as in the case of high self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy is considered a domain-specific phenomenon (Carroll et al., 2009). It cannot be considered a global trait, but a distinguished set of self-beliefs connected with distinct areas of functioning. Self-efficacy as domain- or task-specific has been proven to be a better predictor of actual behavior (Valentine et al., 2004) than a general self-efficacy concept. For this reason, several different domains of self-efficacy have been proposed. Among them, three distinct ones can be enumerated: academic self-efficacy, perceived social efficacy, and self-regulatory efficacy.

Academic self-efficacy is defined “as personal judgments of one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attain designated types of educational performances” (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 203). These capabilities affect academic achievement directly by enhancing mastery of different subject matters. Within this domain self-regulated learning efficacy can be placed. It concerns the individual’s self-efficacy to organize settings that contribute to learning, and to design and manage academic activities (Pastorelli et al., 2001). This type of self-efficacy beliefs denote how students can become masters of their own learning by being metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally active in their own learning process (Marchis & Balogh, 2010). Another type of self-efficacy belonging to this domain is self-efficacy to meet others’ expectations. More specifically, it refers to one’s beliefs in their ability to accomplish what their parents, teachers, and peers expect of them, and to act accordingly to what one expects of themself (Pastorelli et al., 2001).

Perceived social efficacy refers to one’s perception about their capability to form and manage social relationships, and to deal with interpersonal conflicts (Bandura, 1997). It also relates to beliefs about using one’s abilities for the purpose of managing satisfactory relationships. The individual’s beliefs that they can make friends, form reliable peer
relationships, receive encouraging peer feedback, be socially acceptable, and act in a prosocial manner at school are good indicators of such efficacy, conducive to academic success (Patrick, Hicks & Ryan, 1997). This type of self-efficacy also covers other social domains. For instance there is self-efficacy for leisure and extracurricular activities, which relates to the individual’s beliefs that they can carry out recreational and student group activities (Pastorelli et al., 2001). These activities include organized leisure-time pursuits, such as sports or any optional pastimes or prearranged courses offered outside the school regime. Aside from that, there is self-assertive efficacy, covering one’s perceived capability to voice their opinions, to stand up to abuse, and to refuse irrational requests (Bandura et al., 2001). In general, this type of self-efficacy denotes one’s opinion about their resistance to peer pressure for high-risk behaviors, referring to the individual’s beliefs about opposing peer pressure to take on high-risk activities involving alcohol, drugs, and transgressive demeanors (Pastorelli et al., 2001).

Finally, self-regulatory efficacy can be mentioned here. Self-regulation is the process by which one monitors and takes charge of one’s own cognitive outcomes (West & Hastings, 2011). It also designates self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and regularly adapted to achieve personal goals (Zimmerman, 1989). Hence, self-regulatory (self-management) efficacy “refers to the ability to regulate cognition, motivation, affect, and behavior in a learning context” (Klassen, 2010, p. 19). It is an important factor influencing the student’s academic performance (e.g., Caprara et al., 1998), showing that good students are able to regulate their learning by means of setting goals, retaining their focus on difficult tasks in the face of seductive distractions, organizing their workspace and workload, and engaging in effective learning strategies (Zimmerman, 2000).

Self-efficacy and foreign language learning

The academic domain is comprised of subject-specific domains. One of them is foreign language learning, which, at first glance, appears similar to many other subject areas covered in school. However, its study requires learning the four basic skills (listening and speaking, reading and writing). Apart from that, it also requires studying its subsystems (phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics), which have implications for the acquisition of the skills of language.

It appears then that foreign language learning is much more complicated than studying other school subjects. The factor that makes language learning “a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition” (Guiora, 1983, p. 8) seems to be the interplay of acquiring various aspects of another culture and the social aspects of language learning motivation and other influential personal and social variables (MacIntyre, Clément & Noels, 2007). Understandably, foreign language learning is termed “fundamentally different” due to the fact that “language and self are so closely bound, if not identical, that an attack on one is an attack on the other” (Cohen & North, 1989, p. 65).

Consequently, it can be expected that in such complex circumstances self-efficacy may play a very important role, acting as a buffer between the learner and these disturbing processes, impinging upon the self of the learner. Students with high-efficacy beliefs are able to manage their foreign learning process effectively, because they are confident about FL achievement, committed to achieving goals they have chosen, hard working, and resilient to stress. On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy beliefs are unable to manage their language acquisition efficiently; their learning goals may be deficient or imposed on them, and they
may be doubtful about their own language abilities. Moreover, pressures of the language learning process may induce in them higher levels of stress and anxiety.

Regrettably, research on the role of self-efficacy in the foreign language learning process is still scarce. The main results confirm the findings from other academic domains. Self-efficacy has been found to be a strong predictor of English-as-a-foreign-language performance (Anyadubalu, 2010). Its importance in the development of FL skills, such as listening (Rahimi & Abedini, 2009), reading (Ghonsooly & Elahy, 2010), and writing (Erkan & Saban, 2011) is recognized. More importantly, global self-efficacy beliefs about future FL success are positively correlated with self-assessment scores (Coronado-Aliegro, 2008). Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs related to language learning have been found to mediate the consequences of aptitude or even previous achievement on future performance (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007).

As the empirical research on the role of self-efficacy beliefs in the context of the Polish educational system is practically nonexistent, it seems justified to confirm its significance in reference to the specific subject area, such as learning English as a foreign language from the perspective of formal education; i.e. secondary grammar school. It can be assumed that at this educational level, students have already gained practical knowledge of the foreign language (they started learning the English language at previous educational levels: either primary or lower secondary), which has familiarized them with the threats of the foreign language process, and made them sensitive to its uniqueness.

The main working hypothesis adopted for the purpose of this study is formulated as follows: Students with higher self-efficacy levels gain higher FL achievement. It is expected that their high personal judgments of capabilities in this field are revealed in high FL achievement, and therefore follows that the three main domains of self-efficacy: academic, social and self-regulatory, play a crucial role in estimating the student’s FL success. First of all, academic self-efficacy enhances mastery of the foreign language. Second, social self-efficacy is vital to language proficiency, because language learning is mostly communication, stemming from social contacts. Third, self-regulatory efficacy is important for language success, because students can monitor and take charge of their own language learning outcomes.

Foreign language achievement in the study is operationalized as final course grades and self-assessment of the four FL skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading), acting as indices of self-efficacy in this subject area. Final course grades serve as a primary source of information about students’ language progress, because they represent learners’ levels of academic achievement in an FL course, and are the consequence of students’ previous performance displayed throughout the whole semester and school year. Self-perceived levels of FL skills are also good predictors of self-efficacy, because they promote monitoring of progress, and revision strategies (Andrade et al., 2009). The supportive power of self-assessment can be expected even in the case of students who are inexperienced in self-evaluation, and rely on intuitive self-assessment (Cassidy, 2007).

Method

In this part of the paper the participants of the study are described, and then the instruments. It finishes with an account of the procedure implemented for the purpose of the empirical research.
Participants
The participants of the study were students (N=621) from 23 classes of the six secondary grammar schools in Opole, southwestern Poland (396 girls and 225 boys). Their mean age was 16.50 (range: 14.5-18). They were drawn from the first grade at their schools, with three to six hours a week of English (elementary to intermediate level of English). Their average length of the English language experience was almost nine years, with the vast majority (91%) learning it for five to 15 years. The cohort consisted of students from different residential locations, mostly urban (286 from the city of Opole, 122 from neighboring towns), and 213 from rural areas.

On the basis of the participants’ final grades and self-assessment the sample was divided into quartiles. As far as grades are concerned, the lower one, called LFG, (≤11 points) comprised 205 students with low final grades, and the upper, HFG, accommodated 169 students with high self-efficacy levels (≤14 points). In the case of self-assessment of the four skills, the lower quartile (LSA) was composed of 207 students with low self-assessment (≤14 points). The upper quartile (HSA) contained 190 students who assessed their skills at a high level (≥18 pts). In both cases the middle quartiles were excluded from further analyses.

Instruments
The basic instrument adopted for the purpose of the research was a questionnaire. Its first part was explored demographic variables such as age, gender (1 – male, 2 – female), and place of residence (1 – village: up to 2,500 inhabitants, 2 – town: 2,500-50,000 inhabitants, 3 – city: more than 50,000 inhabitants).

Aside from that, the questionnaire included self-efficacy measures. The Perceived Academic Efficacy scale (Pastorelli et al., 2001) comprised 19 items assigned to different domains of academic activities. More specifically, there were 7 items exploring beliefs in the capability to master different areas of coursework, 10 items devoted to perceived efficacy for regulating one’s own motivation and learning activities, and 2 items focusing on efficacy beliefs regarding parental and teacher expectations. Sample items in the scale were: “How well can you get teachers to help you when you get stuck on schoolwork?” or “How well can you study when there are other interesting things to do?” The 5-point response format ranged from 1 (perceived incapability) to 5 (complete self-assurance in one’s capability). The minimum number of points on the scale was 19, while the maximum was 95. In the study the scale’s reliability was measured in terms of Cronbach’s alpha, ranging the level of .78.

Perceived Social Efficacy contained 13 items referring to different social domains: 3 items estimated efficacy for leisure and extracurricular group activities, 5 were devoted to students’ beliefs to form and maintain social relationships and to manage interpersonal conflicts, and 5 items assessed self-assertive efficacy. Sample items in the scale were: “How well do you learn regular physical education activities?” or “How well do you stop yourself from skipping school when you feel bored or upset?” or “How well do you live up to what your teachers expect of you?” There was the same response format, and the minimum number of points was 13, the maximum: 65. The scale’s reliability was .76.

Perceived Social Efficacy included 5 items measuring students’ capability to resist peer pressure to engage in high-risk activities. Sample items in the scale were: “How well do you express your opinions when other classmates disagree with you?” or “How well do you stand up for yourself when you feel you are being treated unfairly?” The minimum number of
points was 5, the maximum was 25 (the same response format). The scale’s reliability was .80.

Another instrument used in the study was a scale estimating self-perceived levels of FL skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading): an aggregated value of separate assessments of the FL skills on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 6 (excellent). The minimum number of points on the scale was 4, while the maximum was 24. The scale’s reliability was assessed in terms of Cronbach’s α=.87.

The last source of data was final grades: the aggregated value of the last year’s grade and the prospective semester and final grades (Likert scale ranging from 1 – unsatisfactory to 6 – excellent). The scale’s reliability was α=.87.

Procedure
The data collection procedure took place over the months of March and April 2010. In each class, the students filled in the questionnaire. The time designed for the activity was 15 to 45 minutes, depending on their speed. The participants were asked to give sincere answers without taking excessive time to think. Each part of the questionnaire was preceded by a short statement introducing a new set of items in an unobtrusive manner.

The design of the study is mostly differential, comparing groups that are differentiated on a pre-existing variable, i.e., levels of self-assessment of FL skills, as well as grades. The research was conducted by comparing means obtained on the self-efficacy scale in two groups, e.g. the one with low (LSE), and high (HSE) self-assessment of FL skills. Apart from that, there is a comparison between two other groups: with low (LFG) and high (HFG) final grades in English.

Results
In the first step means and SD for all the grouped variables were calculated. They are divided into groups with low (LSA) and high self-assessment of the four skills (HSA) (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Descriptive results of students with low (LSA) and high (HSA) self-assessment of the four skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>LSA (N=207)</th>
<th>HSA (N=190)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>63.93</td>
<td>10.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social self-efficacy</td>
<td>50.06</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulatory efficacy</td>
<td>19.17</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 2 there are descriptive results for the groups with low (LFG) and high (HFG) final grades.

Table 2: Descriptive results of students with low (LFG) and high (HFG) final grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>LFG (N=205)</th>
<th>HFG (N=169)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>61.94</td>
<td>11.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social self-efficacy</td>
<td>49.74</td>
<td>7.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the last step groups were compared by means of the student’s t-test (see Table 3). As far as low and high self-assessment of the four skills is concerned, it turned out that the groups did not differ on the measurement of social self-efficacy. In the case of academic and self-regulatory efficacy, there is a strong difference between them. When it comes to the comparison between groups differing in their final grades levels, the results showed a very powerful discrepancy in their academic self-efficacy results, and a statistically significant difference between their social self-efficacy measurements. No difference was found between their self-regulatory estimates.

Table 3: Between group comparisons

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment (LSAxHSA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>-2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social self-efficacy</td>
<td>-1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulatory efficacy</td>
<td>-2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final grades (LFGxHFG)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>-6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social self-efficacy</td>
<td>-2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulatory efficacy</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

According to the hypothesis adopted for the purpose of this paper, *students with higher self-efficacy levels gain higher FL achievement*. As the results show, it can only partially be corroborated, due to different measures of FL achievement.

In regards to academic self-efficacy, it appears that the key measurement of FL proficiency is final grades, not self-assessment of the four skills. It can be inferred that grades as an external and apparently objective measurement of the students’ foreign language achievement can reflect their confidence in their personal ability to carry out behavior necessary for effective language study. It follows that the teacher’s assessment of their overall semester or school year progress has a powerful effect on how students perceive their capabilities in this subject area, which enhances or weakens their FL mastery. Hence, students who obtain high final grades are those who have a strong perception of their foreign language learning abilities, while the ones who are graded lowly may be convinced that they are poor language learners.

At the same time, it can also be expected that grades are strongly connected with self-regulated learning efficacy, placed within the academic self-efficacy domain. For this reason, it can be reasoned that students with high final grades in English are able to organize settings contributing to learning in general, and to design and manage learning activities in all subject areas. On the other hand, students with low final grades in English cannot be considered masters of their own FL learning process, as they lack metacognitive, motivational and behavioral engagement in the learning process. The same can be said about self-efficacy to meet others’ expectations. The results show that students graded highly have strong beliefs in their ability to accomplish what their parents, English language teachers, and peers expect of them. Unfortunately, learners with lower grades cannot or do not want to meet these expectations.
The importance of grades while discussing the role of academic self-efficacy is undoubtedly decisive; however, similar results cannot be attributed to self-assessment of the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing in English). It follows that beliefs in general learning abilities are less dependent on the perception of one’s success in the academic domain. It may be then inferred that foreign language learning may not be likened to all other school subjects, though a certain degree of similarity between studying a foreign language and studying other subjects can be found. The statistical difference between the groups with low and high self-assessment, though not as strongly pronounced as in the case of grades, shows that general beliefs in academic capabilities are a common denominator in the case of all subject areas, language study among them.

As far as social self-efficacy is concerned, it appears that it is strongly related to grades collected during the foreign language process. Obviously, the student’s perception of their capability to form and manage social relationships is reflected in the external assessment of their linguistic progress, due to the fact that language study is a social enterprise requiring prosocial behavior (i.e. willingness to communicate). Similarly, it can be inferred that self-efficacy for leisure and extracurricular activities, requiring effective student group activities is also reflected in one’s grades because of its focus on prosocial skills, such as participation in extracurricular language courses. In the case of self-assertive efficacy one can speculate that resistance to peer pressure for high risk behaviors is also reflected in the external assessment of the student’s linguistic abilities, showing teachers’ endorsement of students’ secure development.

On the other hand, self-assessment of the level of the four skills in English is not related to social self-efficacy, at all. It seems, then, that one’s perception of their capability to form and manage social relationships does not come into play with the student’s self-assessment of the level of the four skills in English. For this reason it can be believed that the estimation of the level of the isolated FL skills does not require prosocial behavior, but is an individual phenomenon, fully attributable to the uniqueness of the foreign language learning process.

Conversely, self-regulatory efficacy is strongly related to self-assessment of the four skills, and not to final grades in English, at all. This finding, again, can be ascribed to the specificity of this self-efficacy type, focusing on one’s ability to monitor and take charge of one’s own cognitive outcomes. As this efficacy type requires the ability to regulate cognition, motivation, affect, and behavior in a learning context, it follows that it is an act of volition, an individual activity, revealed in the student’s personal assessment of the four skills, requiring individual capacities. On the other hand, the lack of connection between grades and self-regulatory efficacy can be attributed to the fact that external assessment does not necessarily come into play with information processing in the foreign language or one’s responsibility for their own foreign language learning.

To sum up, it should be noted that students with low and high self-assessment of the four skills do not differ in their social self-efficacy. However, those more convinced about the level of skills have higher academic and self-regulatory self-efficacy beliefs. When it comes to the comparison of students with low and high final grades, they have similar self-regulatory efficacy; yet, the ones with higher grades strongly believe in their academic skills.
Aside from that, their social self-efficacy beliefs are better in comparison to their peer with low final grades.

Conclusion
Self-efficacy theory proposes that confidence in personal ability to carry out a behavior (i.e., self-efficacy) influences the direction, intensity, and persistence of that behavior. However, Bandura (1997) also notes that, “cultural values and practices affect how efficacy beliefs are developed” (p. 32). For this reason it can be believed that the cultural milieu may significantly influence the way in which self-efficacy operates. The specific situation of Polish secondary grammar school students learning a foreign language (English) in a formal education context may not necessarily translate into another cultural context; nevertheless its analysis offers an insight into the understanding of self-efficacy seen from the perspective of the unique process of foreign language learning.

Although the experience of learning a foreign language cannot be likened to studying other school subjects, boosting students’ self-efficacy in an FL classroom appears an essential venture students can benefit from in many other areas. Teachers can help students develop their self-efficacy by consciously exploring its four basic sources (Bandura, 1997). In the case of mastery experiences (experience of success), it is vital to help students attribute their success to internal, stable, and global factors (“I did this task well, because I am smart and work hard”). Another source is vicarious experience (observing a peer succeeding at a task). In this case, students should become aware of other peers, similar to them, who work hard and can overcome obstacles. In this way they can enhance their self-efficacy and become masters of their own learning. Apart from that, verbal persuasions (credible communication and feedback guiding the student through the task and motivating them to make more effort) are an important source of self-efficacy when learning a foreign language. It follows that feedback from the language teacher should stress the fact that the student possesses the sufficient skills and capabilities to tackle the problem at hand. Finally, emotional states are extremely essential for boosting self-efficacy, because positive affective modes of being allow for experiencing more feelings of competence. Teachers can help by reducing stressful situations and lowering anxiety. In the process of foreign language this factor appears crucial due to the fact that acquiring a foreign language is inextricably connected with the experience of language anxiety – the negative experience of every learner. For this reason, it is necessary for the teacher to pursue a stress-free atmosphere in the classroom.

High self-efficacy, the ability to identify a goal, persist, and see oneself as competent, is an important lifelong coping skill that proves being proactive brings about significant benefits not only in the academic context, but also in other domains. Low self-efficacy, attributed to passivity and helplessness in the face of a challenge, is a serious obstacle in the effective management of daily problems. Therefore, parents, teachers, and other well-informed adults should help students in need to find best coping responses, aiding them to deal successfully with various everyday problems.

References


The Czech Republic Languages in Cyberspace: An Evolutionary Phenomenon for English as a Second Language

Dr. Biagio Aulino, EDd Graduate, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
biagio.aulino@gmail.com

Dr. Roberto Bergami, School of International Business, Centre for Cultural Diversity and Wellbeing, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia
Roberto.Bergami@vu.edu.au

Dr. Blanka Frydrychova Klimova, Fakulta Informatiky a Managementu, Univerzita Hradec Králové, Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic
Blanka.Klimova@uhk.cz

Abstract
This paper reports on a pilot study, conducted in the Czech Republic during 2011, on the influence that cyber language is rapidly gaining on linguistic communities of adolescents using virtual social networks, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. This study focuses on the use of cyber language (also known as cyber speak; net speak; text speak; net lingo; linguanet; and internetese) and how this is responding to new technologies. Data for this study were gathered through the administration of a voluntary written survey.

An analysis of the data reveals a framework of linguistic strategies used by adolescents for both on-line and off-line communications. The use of this framework is used to analyse communication styles of Czech adolescents studying English as a second language (L2). The adolescent speech varieties discovered in this project correlate with observations reported in literature by other researchers in Europe and North America. These authors highlight the existence of a distinct and recognizable speech code that adolescents have developed and use among their peers.

The paper concludes by highlighting a pedagogical rationale on the importance of including cyber language in the design of the curriculum, to ensure it is relevant and of interest to the contemporary L2 learner in the context of classroom teaching and learning.

Keywords: Adolescent Communication, Cyber Language, Czech Republic Adolescent, Foreign Language Learning, Foreign Language Teaching, Virtual Linguistic Communities

Introduction

Students pursuing English as a second language (L2) in the Czech Republic at the secondary level seem to be influenced by the new phenomenon of ‘internet language’. Internet language is evidenced in ‘cyberspace hangout’, or virtual social network (VSN) sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. Cyber language is a unique speech variety constituting a particular speech discourse code that is changing the way in which adolescents and communicate with each other. Cyber language is also as (Azevedo, 2009; Nuessel 2010a, 2010b; Danesi, 2006b, 2008b; Tavosanis, 2007): cyber speak; net speak; text speak; net lingo; linguanet; and internetese; and these terms may be used interchangeably in this paper.

Adolescents are the major users of cyberspace (Danesi, 2006a). The term ‘cyberspace’ was first coined by the American writer William Gibson in his 1984 science fiction novel Neuromancer, that launched the ‘cyberpunk’ generation and defined ‘cyberspace’ as a place of ‘unthinkable complexity’. Gibson (1984) provides the definition of cyberspace as “a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators” (p. 51).
According to Danesi (2009), Gibson’s (1984) predictions certainly materialized a few decades later. In a world where VSN continue to make written communication rapid, languages are indeed changing and adapting to meet the needs of cyber language. This is the new linguistic phenomenon that has recently evolved in responding to the demands of online communication.

Interestingly, Gibson’s (184) predictions were not new. In fact, about three decades earlier, Marshal McLuhan (1951, 1962, 1964) predicted that the spread of electronic media would eventually turn the world into one electronic “global village” (Danesi, 2008b, p. 178). McLuhan (1951, 1962, 1964) appears to have been an enlightened author, given that at time of his writing computers were not a household item and it is commonly accepted that the birth of the internet took place in 1969.

In order to gain a more in depth understanding about the new ‘internet language’, and how it is coded and decoded in online communications amongst adolescents, an exploratory study was conducted in the Czech Republic during 2011. The principal aim of this study was to gather information on adolescent and youth adult electronic communication exchanges in order to examine the data and discover any patterns that may be categorized as a social dialect in the virtual global village.

The paper firstly describes the theoretical framework that is used to analyse adolescent cyber language discourse. This is followed by a short description of the methodology used to gather data for the study, before discussing the findings of the survey and comparing these data with those of Crystal (2008). A brief discussion on the pedagogical implications of the study is provided and this is followed by the conclusion.

A theoretical framework for studying adolescent cyber language discourse

Adolescent verbal communication is based on communicative competence, such as different forms of expression-gestures, vocal language, and the need to engage in shared action. This paper limits its discussion to two online communication aspects: cyber phonetics replacements and online compounds and initialisms. The paper also considers the Principle of Least Effort (PLE) as part of the theoretical framework for studying adolescent cyber language discourse. PLE, more commonly known as Zipf’s (1929, 1932, 1935, 1949) Law, has been used by historical linguists and dialectologists to explain the evolution of languages, (Clivio, Danesi & Maida-Nicol, 2011), where many phenomena in language could be explained as the result of an inborn tendency in the human species to make the most of its communicative resources with the least expenditure of effort (physical, cognitive, and social) (Zipf, 1949, quoted in Danesi, 2008a, p. 259).

According to Danesi (2009) various theories have been fashioned to explain why languages change. For example, Martinet (1955) claimed that languages change as a result of the “operation of economic tendencies” (Danesi, 2009, p. 430). Martinet (1955) called this the ‘Principle of Economic Change’, claiming that complex language forms and structures tended towards reduction, abbreviation, compression, levelling, or elimination over time. Martinet’s (1955) observations appear to correlate well with the previous writing of Zipf (1929, 1932, 1935,1949) who claimed that languages tend to evolve economically, “making progressively greater use of ‘compression strategy’ as abbreviation, acronymy, and the like” (Danesi 2008c, p. 69, quoted in Nuessel 2010a, p. 16).
According to Danesi (2008c), there are five types of forces of miniaturization that are generally working with net lingo. These are: **abbreviations** (shortened words); **acronyms** (forms composed by the first letter of every word within a phrase); **phonetic replacements** (certain letters and numbers replace entire parts of words because they represent the pronunciation more exactly); **compounding** (combination of separate words in order to make a new word that is shorter than the forms it compounds taken separately); and **symbol replacement** (use of symbols, or letters with the value of symbols, in place of letters or words). This application of miniaturization form part of the research findings discussion provided in the section following the methodology.

**Methodology**

Data for this study were gathered through a written questionnaire distributed to adolescent secondary school students, pursing English L2 studies, in a private school in the Czech Republic. Participation to this study was voluntary, and subject to prior parental approval. Responses were received from 37 students, between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, comprising 15 males and 22 females.

Students were asked to answer a series of questions including: listing the most common words used online, their level of interest and usage of VSN, and the reasons why they select to dialogue with peers online. The study focused on answering the following questions:

i) What special code do Czech adolescents make use of, both on-line and off-line?  
ii) What is the influence of English cyber language on Czech adolescent social online dialogue?  
iii) What are the implications for the teaching of English as an L2 in the Czech Republic?

The findings of this research are discussed below.

**Research findings and discussion**

The research findings and discussion are presented under four sub-headings in this section: cyber abbreviations; phonetic replacements; online compounds and initialism; and the use of new communication technologies.

**Cyber abbreviations**

The cyber abbreviations used by the respondents are shown at Table 1, and all may be categorized as netspeak.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOL</td>
<td>Laughing out loud</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROFL</td>
<td>Rolling on the floor</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTW</td>
<td>By the way</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRB</td>
<td>Be right back</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTF</td>
<td>What the f**k</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The influence of English is clearly demonstrated in Table 1, where Czech adolescents appear to routinely use abbreviations borrowed from English, such as ‘lol’ (laughing out loud) and ‘rofl’ (rolling on the floor). According to Crystal (2008) there are several reasons why the English language has influence on other languages in the online context. The major reason is
that English is the ‘lingua franca’ (Crystal 2008, p. 18). Additionally, English is considered the language for international communication, and business, and it is the language of the internet worldwide. According to Baron (2008), in 1996 English was the native language of 89 percent of Internet users, but by 2006, more than two-thirds of those on the internet were native speakers of some language other than English. These figures highlight the fact that the internet has progressively been adopted by non-English native speakers, and with it, the adoption of English. It must be remembered that both the computer and the internet were inventions of the USA, an English speaking nation. Many of the technological words invented to describe both hardware and software and their applications were devised within an English context, and in many languages, there are no translations of such terms, rather these terms have crept into other languages in their original (English) format. These factors have all contributed to a greater adoption of English on a global scale. Testament to the influence of English in online communication, according to Crystal (2008), is that the language of communication in many chat rooms is, evidently, English.

It is interesting to note the widespread usage of cyber abbreviations. Crystal (2008) in the book, *Txtng: The Gr8 Db8* lists text abbreviations in the English language in appendix A and a total of eleven languages in appendix B, including Chinese; Dutch; Finnish; French; German; Italian; Portuguese; Spanish; Swedish; Welsh; and Czech. The data gathered in this study relevant to cyber abbreviations is clearly biased towards expressions borrowed from the English language and these appear different to the examples given by Crystal (2008, pp. 201-202), as shown in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full form</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jsm</td>
<td>Jak se máš</td>
<td>How are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zz</td>
<td>zatím zdar</td>
<td>bye for now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szm</td>
<td>jsem zamilovaný</td>
<td>I’m in love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Msf</td>
<td>Mêj se fajn</td>
<td>enjoy (when saying goodbye)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nvm</td>
<td>Nevim</td>
<td>I do not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences between Crystal (2008) and this study may be explained by the different population samples, and in particular the structure of the sample. Crystal’s (2008) findings were representative of the broader population, whereas this study was restricted to adolescents studying English as L2. It is quite likely that the students in the study sample are more prone to use English expressions, exactly because they are studying English.

**Cyber phonetic replacements**

Cyber phonetic replacements are another type of miniaturization used in internet language. Phonetic replacement is the replacement of certain letters and numbers as substitutes for entire words, or parts of words, to produce a more compact pronunciation (Danesi 2008a; Nuessel, 2010a).

It can be observed from Table 3 that the cyber phonetics replacements reported by respondents are all borrowed phonetic replacements from the English language.
Table 3: Czech Phonetic Replacements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonetic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G2G</td>
<td>Got to go</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>Wait</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4U</td>
<td>For you</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUL8</td>
<td>See you later</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4N</td>
<td>Bye for now</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4ever</td>
<td>Forever</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, there are differences between the responses in this study and Crystal’s (2008) examples. However, apart from the differences in the study samples as discussed earlier, the explanation provided by Crystal in the more limited ability to use abbreviations in the Czech language may be another reason for the differences in the findings in this study.

Crystal (2008) found evidence that the Czech language, when used, was simplified in the online environment. This author provides the following examples to explain how in the Czech language diacritics are omitted in text messages: ê becomes e; š becomes s; and ž becomes z. Consequently, as shown in Table 4, the following can be noted: “o5” (opět); “05z5” (opět zpět) and ‘z5’ (zpět).

Table 4: Czech Phonetic Replacements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full form</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o5</td>
<td>Opět</td>
<td>Again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05z5</td>
<td>opět zpět</td>
<td>Back again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z5</td>
<td>Zpět</td>
<td>Back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crystal (2008) explains that the context is usually clear to ensure that ambiguity is avoided. The writing system in the Czech language is ‘strongly phonetic’, something that this author claims is lacking in the English language with regards to sounds and letters. The English language has unpredictable spellings for words such as: ‘see’; ‘you’; and ‘are’ – words that are abbreviated as ‘c’; ‘u’; and ‘r’ (Crystal, 2008). This texting option is not able to be used in the Czech language, unless the phonetic replacements are borrowed from the English language.

It is interesting to note that the letter “x”1 in the Czech alphabet is used in texting as a substitute for k+ s. Crystal (2008, p. 138) provides the following examples: “jak se maš?” (how are you?) becomes ‘jaxe mas’, and “pak se uvidime” (see you later) becomes ‘paxe uvidime’.

Online Compounds and Initalisms

Compounding involves the “combination of separate words, or parts of words, to make a new word” (Nuessel 2010a, p. 16). Initialisms is the reduction of words to their initial letter (Crystal 2008), that is, an acronym. The study data, as shown in Table 5, has elements of initialisms borrowed from the English. It should be noted that the use of compounds was not reported by any of the respondents.

1 It should be noted that the letter ‘x’, although included in the 24 letter Czech alphabet, in practice this letter is used only for foreign language derived words, such as Xenofobie and Xerxes.
Table 5: Czech Online Initialisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initialisms</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OMG</td>
<td>Oh my God</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>No problem</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFK</td>
<td>Away from keyboard</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRB</td>
<td>Be right back</td>
<td>Borrowed from the English language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of Czech language expressions is evident from the data gathered in this study, that differ from those of Crystal (2008), as shown in Table 6. It can be observed that, according to Crystal (2008), the Czech language has elements of compound words and, initialisms such as “mtr” (I love you); “nz” (you’re welcome) and “dh” (shut up).

Table 6: Czech Online Initialisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full form</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mtr</td>
<td>mam te rad</td>
<td>I love you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nz</td>
<td>neni zac</td>
<td>You are welcome (after ‘thank you’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dh</td>
<td>drz hubu</td>
<td>Shut up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comments made earlier about the differences between the two studies may also be an applicable explanatory factor in the context of initialisms.

Use of new communication technologies

New communication technologies include: Instant Messaging (include MSN Messenger, Yahoo, Google Talk); Text Messaging; Blogs; VSN sites such as Facebook, My Space and You Tube; and ‘Twitter’ (Nuessel, 2010a, 2010b). Respondents were asked to list which social site they used and identify the frequency of usage. These data are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Use of New Communications Technologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>More than 3 hours/day</th>
<th>Between 1 to 3 hours/day</th>
<th>Less than 1 hour/day</th>
<th>Once a week (not every day)</th>
<th>Once a month (not every week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Space</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>19 %</td>
<td>35 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed from Table 7, only three VSN were listed by respondents, and of these, Facebook appears to be the most popular means of online communication. This can be seen by the data in Table 7, with about 65% of respondents reported using Facebook at least once daily, with 11% weekly and 8% monthly. By contrast, Twitter was only used daily by 5% of respondents and MySpace by only 3% of respondents. These data correlate with the generally known fact that Facebook is the most popular VSN in the globe today, and that this is particularly favoured by the younger generation.

Students were asked to list reasons why they make use of internet based social networks. The responses given by individual students were quite similar and included: to chat with friends;
to make new acquaintances; to share photos; it is easy and fast; instant communication; to share common interests; and to keep in touch with friends living abroad. All of these responses evidence the high social value placed on these types of adolescent communications.

Having considered the data from the survey, the pedagogical rationale and implications are discussed below.

**Pedagogical Rationale and Implications**

Virtual social networks have created their own form of language that highlights the need for a communication strategy that is quick and economical, a phenomenon never before seen in the history of the Czech language.

The language of adolescents has been described as an equivalent of pop music (Danesi, 2006a). The linguist, Savan (2005) labelled this type of language as pop language. Pop language is hip language for a mass audience. The data from this study shows that the simple ‘economizing of form’ (Danesi, 2006a, p. 443) has resulted in pop language, as used by contemporary adolescents in an online environment. So how do we link this ‘special language’ in the context of English as L2 to keep adolescent interested in pursuing studies in it?

The survey included questions about preferences for syllabus topics. The respondents expressed a preference for a learning syllabus to be tailored to their interests of importance, and this supported by previous studies (Aulino 2005; Aulino & Bergami, 2011; Bergami & Aulino, 2010; Danesi, 1996, 1997; Nuessel 1999). Respondents indicated that they would embrace a syllabus that includes internet related activities, such as text-messaging, emails, epals, and other VSN relevant to their daily lives as teenagers.

Most beginners, intermediate and advanced level English L2 textbooks do not address the widespread variety of English cyber language. This is largely due to the fact that most educators see the use of such language as a roadblock to the standard form of language. However, students studying English L2 need to recognize diverse registers of the language that their international counterparts are making use of on a daily basis. According to Chan (2010) very little research has been undertaken on whether English L2 (ESL) students should be taught English slang. Chan (2010) strongly believes that teachers will do ESL students a disservice if they do not alert students to the different registers of English being used globally.

It is argued here that cyber language ought to be included in the English L2 curriculum in order to meet the 21st century linguistic demands of online communication abroad. This communication would be ‘in a contemporary idiomatic fashion that includes the different varieties of internet language, across the various mediums they may use’ (Bergami & Aulino, 210, p. 378). The inclusion of cyber language should be added to the syllabus under the rubric of ‘cultural material’ (Aulino, 2005, p. 93). In essence, it will introduce students to online communication relevant in the study of the target language. In so doing, teachers are effectively articulating for L2 teaching to be ‘relevant’ (Bryam and Esarte-Sarries, 1991). However, this does not mean that the L2 adolescent language learner should be trained to write only using online cyber language.
Nuessel (2010b, pp. 8-10) provides a list of topics that should be included into the L2 Italian curriculum. This list could be easily modified to meet the needs of the adolescent studying English L2, as follows:

- Encode and decode messages in English cyber language;
- Appreciate English grammar through the entertaining comprehension of new forms of this constantly changing language;
- Communicate effectively and knowledgeably with English-speaking e-pals anywhere in the world;
- Acquire a wider knowledge of speech varieties of English beyond the traditional English language textbook;
- Create novel cyber linguistic forms.

It is expected that the traditional ‘holders’ of any language will resist changes that they may consider as negative, that is weaken or debase the original language, such as by the introduction of the cyber language dialect’. Yet, all languages constantly evolve and the meanings of words and expressions change in response to the changing environment we live in. After all, language is a means of communication and the vast majority of people around the world are not orthography or grammar experts in their own language, let alone L2. This is not to say that the standard language should be abandoned in favour of teaching cyber language alone, rather a balance needs to be achieved between the old and the new, so that students can still learn the important elements of an L2 language whilst being interested in doing so because the material is relevant to them. As Danesi (2008a, p. 264) aptly puts it, the English language is clearly the default language of global communications. Enchanted by the lure of American pop culture, increasing numbers of young people throughout the world are embracing English, not because it is any better than their own languages, but because it is there … everywhere.

Conclusion

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the results of this study, as the survey sample was small, although the researchers do not believe the respondents are not broadly representative of the wider adolescent population in the Czech Republic. To the best of the authors’ knowledge this was the first study of Czech adolescents studying English L2 and the influence of cyber language on their online communications. In this context this paper makes an additional contribution to existing knowledge in this area of study.

The findings from the exploratory research suggest that there is a need to develop an integrated curriculum, for teaching and learning English (L2) that is of significance and relevance to contemporary Czech adolescents. The proposed curriculum needs to be supported by appropriate teaching and learning practices that enhance the student learning and motivate the students to participate and learn. The curriculum for English (L2) needs to include a component on cyber language which will be beneficial for online social communications.

Cyberspace will continue to influence the teaching and learning of a second language (L2) in the future. The linguistic changes that rapidly take place are reshaping language and social interactions. The features of cyber language display implications for change in the language.

The language of the internet, as observed in the responses to the Czech study, evidences the use of the same online social dialect by adolescents in different parts of the world. This social
dialect appears to be the new contemporary communication language. If the curriculum of the L2 target language is to be of relevance and interest to the adolescents studying it, it is impossible to imagine how cyber language may be disregarded, given the known high frequency of usage at the international level.

There are opportunities for further research through more rigorous lines of enquiries. For example a similar study could be conducted again in the Czech Republic with a much larger sample size across different locations to gather richer data for further analysis. It would also be interesting to undertake cross-national studies in countries where similar Slavic languages, are spoken, such as the Slovak Republic, to discover whether the influence of cyber language on adolescent English L2 learners have similar patterns.

References

Danesi, M. (2006b) Perspectives on youth culture. Pearson Custom Publication, Boston, MA, USA


Personal and Professional Development of Future Entrepreneurs in Higher Educational Environment

Natalia V. Kozlova, Professor, Department of Psychology, Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia
akme_2003@mail.ru

Tatiana Ye. Levitskaya, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia
levic69@mail.ru

Inna V. Atamanova, Senior Lecturer, Department of Foreign Languages, Tomsk State University, Tomsk, Russia
iatamanova@yandex.ru

Abstract
The global tendencies in the field of higher professional education require a new paradigm of professional training to encourage future specialists’ capacity to initiate innovative activity. Entrepreneurship is certainly to be the very sphere where innovative activity is essentially important. Therefore, one of the priorities of professional training of future entrepreneurs is to provide an environment for their sustainable personal and professional development in the context of their readiness for innovative activity. It is also worth mentioning that entrepreneurial activity is characterized as an intellectually, emotionally and socially stressful one, with a high level of responsibility and a large number of ambiguous situations. Hence, it is necessary to develop personal potential of future entrepreneurs, their own strategies of effective behavior and self-realization, and their capacity for self-regulation. For this purpose, a special training program based on the biological feedback mechanism was designed and integrated into the educational process. Combining a computer game plot with a procedure for registering physiological reactions of an individual, the training program allows its participants to develop their self-regulation skills following the algorithm created. The paper also focuses on the results of the study aimed at finding out the relationship between the participants’ physiological indices and their psychological characteristics.

Key words: higher professional education, innovative activity, entrepreneurship, personal and professional development, biofeedback, self-regulation

Introduction
The current situation in Russia is characterized by intensive reforms in economic, political and social spheres. The challenge of transition from a resource-oriented economy to a knowledge-based one requires innovative development (OECD, 2007). The Innovative Development Strategy, which is called Innovative Russia – 2020, determines the first-priority ways of modernizing the national economy and the society as a whole (Стратегия, 2011). On the other hand, the process of globalization of the world economy and the increasing international cooperation in science, technology and education considerably influence the national system of higher professional education. Its ongoing modernization is calling for a new paradigm of professional training in order to encourage future specialists’ capacity to initiate innovative activity. It is higher professional education that plays an important role in providing science and economy with highly qualified human resource.

It is obvious that innovative development is much affected by the human factor because, first and foremost, innovations mean changes in the established ways of thinking and doing.
things. As far as entrepreneurship is concerned, innovative activity is essentially important in this sphere (Клочко & Галажинский, 2009). Hence, one of the key goals of professional training of future entrepreneurs is to create an environment for their sustainable personal and professional development in the context of their readiness for innovative activity (Козлова, 2008, 2009; Козлова et al., 2009; Богомаз & Мачута, 2010).

It should be noted that entrepreneurial activity is characterized as intellectually, emotionally and socially stressful. It requires a high level of responsibility and involves a large number of ambiguous situations. In turn, this causes educational practice to be oriented toward the development of students’ readiness for activity under considerable stress (Козлова & Богомаз, 2010). Moreover, students in higher educational settings quite often face difficulties in managing their psycho-emotional state. On the other hand, psycho-physiological mechanisms are found to be basic in generating emotions and, therefore, in determining human behavior as a whole (Анохин, 1975; Русалов, 1979). This means that it is necessary to develop personal potential of future entrepreneurs and their capacity for psycho-physiological self-regulation.

Biological feedback (biofeedback) as a therapeutic method of controlling over an individual’s physiological function seems to be beneficial to the task mentioned above (Захарова et al., 1993). Biofeedback Gaming Technology, one of the biofeedback applications, is an innovative technique which combines a computer game with the biofeedback mechanism.

The objective of this paper is to present one of the research projects being conducted at Tomsk State University within the Research Program of studying innovative personality and innovative activity. The study is aimed at discovering practical ways of psychological tutoring as a part of professional training of future entrepreneurs. This enables students to become more aware of their own value orientations and entrepreneurship goals as well as to develop their own strategies of effective behavior and self-realization. This paper also focuses on Biofeedback Games Training, a special training program to help students develop their self-regulation skills following the algorithm based on the biofeedback mechanism.

**Entrepreneurship as a sphere of innovative activity**

Entrepreneurial activity plays a crucial role in the globalized economy of today and there has been an increasing interest in entrepreneurship research. It is an interdisciplinary approach that can contribute much to a better understanding of this phenomenon and “bring closer together the practice of entrepreneurship with the theory” (de Bruin & Dupuis, 2003, p. 2).

It should be mentioned that there is still no widely accepted definition of what entrepreneurship is. Its taxonomies are numerous and often conflicting (Reynolds et al., 2001), entrepreneurship research varies greatly in fields and approaches (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008), the concept of entrepreneurship is multifaceted and multidimensional (Chell, 2001; de Bruin & Dupuis, 2003; OECD, 2008; Filion, 2011). For example, Filion characterizes entrepreneurship as “a complex phenomenon involving a set of activities with technical, human, managerial and entrepreneurial characteristics, the performance of which requires a diverse set of skills” (p. 41). Therefore, it is reasonable for the purposes of our study to focus on the most important aspects of this phenomenon.

Richard Cantillon was likely the first to capture the essence of entrepreneurship. As early as the eighteenth century he discerned risk taking and uncertainty as characteristic features of
entrepreneurial activity. Ahmad and Seymour note that entrepreneurs, according to Cantillon (1755), “purchased goods at certain price in the present to sell at uncertain price in the future” (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008, p. 6). Tracing the etymology of the word entrepreneur, first appeared in literature in 1253, Filion points out that it has had its origin from the French verb entreprendre and its meaning is to do or to undertake. He divides the word into two parts, entre that means between and preneur that means taker, and derives its literal meaning: between-taker or go between (Filion, 2011, p. 42). In other words, the term entrepreneur linguistically encapsulates the very nature of entrepreneurial activity, namely initiative taking and risk taking as well as ambiguity or uncertainty.

Another key aspect of entrepreneurship is an effort to take advantage of a new idea. It has been recognized the importance of innovation for the development of national economies (OECD, 2008). It is widely accepted that it was Joseph Schumpeter (1911) who first linked entrepreneurship with innovation.

Schumpeter defined entrepreneurs as innovators who take advantage of change, including: (i) the introduction of a new (or improved) good; (ii) the introduction of a new method of production; (iii) the opening of a new market; (iv) the exploitation of a new source of supply; and (v) the re-engineering/organization of business management processes (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008, p. 8).

Thus, entrepreneurship is aimed at initiation, maintenance and development of a profit-oriented business and it is becoming obvious that entrepreneurial activity and innovative activity have much in common, they “share many characteristics and challenges” (OECD, 2008, p. 5). This enables us to define entrepreneurship as such a sphere of human activity which is purposefully oriented towards initiation, maintenance and further development of a new business and characterized by taking advantage of change and dealing with situations of uncertainty.

From the psychological perspective, innovation is a novelty that changes the habitual ways of doing things and, what is more essential, the habitual ways of thinking (Клочко & Галажинский, 2009; Atamanova & Bogomaz, 2011). Innovative activity, according to Klochko and others, is associated with “going beyond the scope of existing attitudes and behavioral patterns” (Atamanova & Bogomaz, 2011, p. 95). Moreover, the initiation of innovative activity is tightly connected with such phenomena as self-development, self-actualization and norms generation. Hence, one of the key goals of professional training of future entrepreneurs is to create an environment for their sustainable personal and professional development in the context of their readiness for innovative activity.

Finally, one of the challenges, especially arising from an economic or social shake-up, deals with the revision of the previous scenario of business process. Unusual situations demand non-routine responses. Chell (2001) emphasizes the role of creativity in the innovative development. It is very important for entrepreneurs to be able to recognize the uncertainty of the situation emerged and have the desire to meet the challenge. She argues that “it is the ambiguity inherent in the (…) situation and the willingness to respond to it which results in the development of creative solutions” (p. 229). In turn, this demands a considerable consumption of psychic energy because of intellectual, emotional and social stress. Unexpected situations require a strong sense of responsibility as well as flexibility and autonomy in making decisions.
Characteristics of personal and professional development of future entrepreneurs

The system of higher education is expected to become one of the main sources of the country's innovative development. It is higher professional education that plays an important role in providing science and economy with highly qualified human resource (OECD, 2007). According to the third-generation State Standards for Higher Professional Education adopted in Russia (EDU, 2009), one of the main goals of professional training in higher educational environment is to develop future specialists’ competence in project and research activity. On the one hand, it helps students integrate the knowledge they gain and solve efficiently the tasks they deal with (Козлова, 2008). On the other hand, it helps students in general and future entrepreneurs in particular develop their readiness for solving various problems which they may encounter in the future (Козлова, 2009; Козлова et al., 2009). Hence, it is necessary to modernize the courses qualitatively and implement them in educational practice. This especially concerns the application of cutting edge technologies to educational process in order to enhance the development of future entrepreneurs’ readiness for activity under considerable intellectual, emotional or social stress. It should be noted that despite the fact that modern life is stressful, for entrepreneurs it is essentially important to realize positive meaning of stress for further self-development when stress is viewed as a source of change and transformation (Бохан, 2008) because they constantly deal with ambiguous situations and risk taking.

In addition, many researchers in their works pay attention to the fact that students in higher educational settings quite often face difficulties in managing their psycho-emotional state and relieving the extra psychic tension which results from intensive studies (Сагалакова, 2004; Нагорнова, 2005; Козлова & Богомаз, 2010). This not only decreases the efficiency of learning, but also can lead to distress and later to psychosomatic disorders.

It seems reasonable that one of the ways of solving this problem is to develop students’ capacity for self-regulation. This is important for students in general, and for future entrepreneurs in particular, because psycho-physiological mechanisms are basic in generating emotions and, therefore, they also determine human behavior as a whole (Анохин, 1975; Русалов, 1979; Моросанова & Коноз, 2000; Мажиринна et al., 2008). Consequently, it is necessary to create specific training programs in order to develop personal potential of future entrepreneurs and their capacity for psycho-physiological self-regulation.

Biofeedback and how it can be applied to educational practice

Biological feedback means a therapeutic method designed to give an individual conscious control over a physiological function which is not usually under conscious control. Biofeedback requires one’s active participation in order to learn to control normally involuntary physiological functions, namely heart rate, blood pressure, brain waves, skin temperature, muscle tension, breathing, and digestion (Захарова et al., 1993; MDGuidelines). In general, biological feedback includes a set of procedures which are applied to provide an individual with some information on functional state of his or her body systems by means of special devices (Wall, 2004; Левицкая, 2009; Левицкая, 2010).

Based on this data the individual is learning how to regulate his or her own physiological parameters using specific techniques. They may be various relaxation techniques, for example: visualization or breathing exercises, or muscular relaxation. While learning these
techniques, it is very important that the individual should develop his or her own relaxation strategy.

Thus, analyzing their own actions during the biofeedback training sessions, the trainees are becoming aware of: 1) how efficient their behavior is under stress; 2) how to control their stress reactions; 3) what is more important: the process of activity or its result; 4) how important is the ability to relax.

**Biofeedback Games Training**

One of the biofeedback applications is Biofeedback Gaming Technology. This is an innovative technique which combines a computer game with a biofeedback mechanism. One of the practical implementations of this technology was developed in the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Science and is called *Biofeedback-Pulse*. It consists of computer games, sensors and devices to record physiological parameters and software that enables to control these parameters. For example, the plot of a computer game depends on the individual’s skill to control physiological characteristics.

Using the idea of Biofeedback Gaming Technology and the package *Biofeedback-Pulse*, we created a training program for undergraduates whose majors were entrepreneurially oriented. The algorithm of the training was the following: 1) each game session included 3 rounds (20-25 min each); 2) the tasks became more complicated with the next round; 3) an individual’s heart rate was continually recorded and the data were shown on the screen; 4) the trainees had to reach maximum relaxation keeping their heart rate under control (‘maximum’ in this case means the level of relaxation that the participants were able to reach).

There were 2 game sessions. During the first session the trainees played the computer game – *Lift!* In order to win the game the participants had to learn to slow down their heart rate using a relaxation technique and the data on the screen. During the second session there was another computer game – *Rally*. To win this game it was required to learn, in addition, to react quickly when confronted with sudden obstacles.

**Research methodology**

Based on the theoretical analysis given above and the training algorithm described the study was conducted as follows.

**Sample**

The study sample consisted of eighty university undergraduates between the ages of eighteen and twenty. Twenty-six students were from Tomsk State University and fifty-four students were from Tomsk Polytechnic University. Their majors were entrepreneurially oriented, namely twenty-six participants studied Personnel Management, thirty-four participants studied Management and twenty participants studied Innovation Management. The gender issue was not taken into account in the study.

**Data collection**

In addition to the training all the participants were offered to fill in several paper-and-pencil forms for examining their psychological characteristics. The physiological parameters (cardio intervals and reaction time) were registered during the training sessions. All the data described below were united and then analyzed using Statistica 6.0.
Psychological characteristics

A range of psychological data was collected using the methods described below. First, the participants were offered to complete the Typological Questionnaire TOP-UNIT based on the Jungian typology. It was developed in the laboratory of Humanitarian Technologies in Moscow, Russia in 2005-2006 (HT, 2006). The questionnaire includes the following scales: Introversion-Extraversion, Sensing-Intuition, Feeling-Thinking, and Perceiving-Judging.

The second questionnaire was the World Assumptions Scale (Janoff-Bulman, 1989) translated into Russian and adapted by Kravtsova (Солдатова et al., 2003). It enables to measure a variety of components of one’s worldview. The questionnaire consists of eight subscales, namely Benevolence of People, Benevolence of the World, Justice, Randomness, Control, Self-Worth, Self-Control and Luckiness. Moreover, the subscales are grouped into three primary categories reflecting one’s basic beliefs about: 1) how benevolent the world is; 2) how meaningful the world is; 3) how worthy the self is.

Also a set of questionnaires was used to evaluate the participants’ personal and communicative potential (Богомаз & Матура, 2010). It includes a number of scales to measure one’s ambiguity tolerance, satisfaction with life, hardness, self-organization of activity and communicative effectiveness.

Physiological parameters

The participants’ physiological parameters were registered during the training sessions. They were cardio intervals and reaction time. Besides, these parameters were used for calculating the following indices: 1) the index of regulatory system tension or the stress index (SI) that characterizes activity of sympathetic regulation mechanisms; 2) the index of vegetative equilibrium (IVE) that specifies the interrelation between activity of sympathetic and parasympathetic divisions of the autonomous nervous system; 3) the index of sympathoadrenal tone (ISAT) that can be used to characterize one’s stress sensitivity (Baevsky & Berseneva, 2008).

Research findings and discussion

In order to trace the development of the participants’ self-regulation skills during the training sessions, we analyzed the dynamics of the mean values of the physiological indices being studied. The indices were automatically calculated on the basis of the physiological parameters registered during the game sessions.

Tables 1 and 2 show the indices calculated during the first and third rounds of the first game session, respectively. It should be noted that the obtained mean values are in good agreement with the standard values with a little tendency to increase in the first round. This may be attributed to the participants’ excitement and nervousness at the beginning of the training because of uncertainty (a new situation). On the other hand, as they were absorbed in the game, their stress index decreased significantly. Meanwhile, the index of sympathoadrenal tone, which characterizes the participants’ stress sensitivity, remained practically unchanged. This means that the trainees’ sympathoadrenal tone was rather high, i.e. they were excited and the first game session as a whole was likely to be a stress factor for the participants.
Table 1: Mean values of stress index (SI), index of vegetative equilibrium (IVE) and index of sympatoadrenal ton (ISAT). Game session 1, Round 1, N=80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
<th>Lower quartile</th>
<th>Higher quartile</th>
<th>Standard value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>104.5</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVE</td>
<td>138.7</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>182.1</td>
<td>135.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>130.5</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>185.0</td>
<td>126.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Mean values of stress index (SI), index of vegetative equilibrium (IVE) and index of sympatoadrenal ton (ISAT). Game session 1, Round 3, N=80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
<th>Lower quartile</th>
<th>Higher quartile</th>
<th>Standard value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVE</td>
<td>128.1</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>158.6</td>
<td>106.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>128.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>159.0</td>
<td>124.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the participants’ physiological indices during the first and third rounds of the second game session Rally, respectively. In spite of the fact that this session was more complicated because it required learning to slow down one’s heart rate and, in addition, learning to react to a sudden obstacle quickly, all the indices analyzed decreased significantly by the end of the game session. Moreover, the participants’ cardio intervals increased while their reaction time values decreased by the end of the game session.

Table 3: Mean values of stress index (SI), index of vegetative equilibrium (IVE) and index of sympatoadrenal ton (ISAT). Game session 2, Round 1, N=80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
<th>Lower quartile</th>
<th>Higher quartile</th>
<th>Standard value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>101.1</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVE</td>
<td>106.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>147.6</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>147.0</td>
<td>101.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Mean values of stress index (SI), index of vegetative equilibrium (IVE) and index of sympatoadrenal ton (ISAT). Game session 2, Round 3, N=80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
<th>Lower quartile</th>
<th>Higher quartile</th>
<th>Standard value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVE</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>124.5</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the findings indicate that by the end of the training the participants’ self-regulation skills became more effective. Therefore, Biofeedback Gaming Technology can contribute much to the development one’s capacity for self-regulation. The training based on the technology mentioned is likely to be one of the beneficial ways to help students in general and future entrepreneurs in particular develop their self-regulation skills.
The second research question concerned possible interrelations between the trainees’ physiological indices (SI, IVE and ISAT) and their psychological characteristics described above. Correlation analysis enabled to reveal statistically significant relationships between some of them.

The index of sympathoadrenal tone showed a positive correlation with the Introversion scale both in the first game session and the second one (Table 5). This means that introverts may be characterized as stress sensitive because of predominant activity of the sympathetic division of the autonomous nervous system.

Table 5: Correlation between index of sympathoadrenal tone (ISAT) and Introversion scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Game session</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Introversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>I Lift!</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>r=0.338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAT</td>
<td>II Rally</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>r=0.417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, this index was in a positive correlation with the participants’ tendency to make a better impression (r=0.346; p =0.033), tendency to lie (r=0.428; p=0.008) and high scores in internal locus of control (r=0.456; p=0.006). There was also a negative correlation between ISAT and low scores in communicative potential (r =-0.368; p=0.020). On the other hand, it is these personal traits that are generally attributed to introverts.

Furthermore, ISAT showed a negative correlation (r=-0.341; p=0.027) with the World and Self cluster (Богомаз & Гладких, 2009), which is calculated on the basis of 4 subscales of Janoff-Bulman’s World Assumptions Scale (1989), namely Benevolence of the World, Benevolence of People, Self-Worth and Luckiness. In our opinion, this may also be interpreted in terms of introversion. Indeed, it seems reasonable that predominant activity of the sympathetic division of the autonomous nervous system and, as a result, higher stress sensitivity and nervousness could lead to accumulating negative experience by an individual and further to introversion. In other words, introverts’ negative basic beliefs about the world and themselves have likely been developed since childhood based on their own experience.

Meanwhile, ISAT showed a positive correlation (r=0.479; p=0.001) with the Meaningfulness of the World factor of the Scale mentioned. It follows that, on the one hand, introverts have negative beliefs about benevolence of the world, people and themselves and, on the other hand, there is a possibility to develop their positive beliefs about the world taking into account the fact that the world seems meaningful to them. Thus, it may be concluded that introverted students need to develop their self-regulation skills as well as personal potential in order to avoid personal disintegration in the future. Biofeedback Games Training is likely to be one of the effective ways of solving the task formulated.

Conclusion

The age of globalization is calling for countries’ innovative development strategies throughout the world. To meet the challenge of transition to a knowledge-based economy, scholars and professionals in Russia have focused their efforts on modernizing the national system of professional education because the human factor is believed to be one of the key factors of economic progress. It is higher professional education that plays a significant role...
in providing science and economy with highly qualified human resource capable to initiate innovative activity.

This paper concerned personal and professional development of future entrepreneurs. The theoretical analysis revealed that entrepreneurial activity and innovative activity have much in common as they both aim at expanding horizons of the habitual: existing attitudes, behavioral patterns or norms and beliefs. **Entrepreneurship** is defined as such a sphere of human activity which is purposefully oriented towards initiation, maintenance and further development of a new business and characterized by taking advantage of change and dealing with situations of uncertainty. Therefore, one of the main goals of professional training of future entrepreneurs in higher educational settings is to develop their readiness for innovative activity.

Moreover, entrepreneurship is a sphere of activity under considerable intellectual, emotional and social stress and it is very important to realize positive meaning of stress for self-development viewing stress as a source of change and transformation. The paper also addressed the problem of psycho-physiological self-regulation as it is psycho-physiological mechanisms that are basic in generating emotions as well as in determining human behavior as a whole. Biological feedback, a therapeutic method of providing conscious control over a physiological function, seems to be beneficial to the development of students’ self-regulation skills.

The training program created on the basis of the biofeedback mechanism was aimed at enabling students to become aware of the effectiveness of their behavior under stress and develop their own relaxation strategies. Thus, one of the two research questions concerned the dynamics of the trainees’ physiological parameters as an indicator of effective self-regulation skills. The results obtained showed a marked decrease in the participants’ physiological indices by the end of the training and this can serve as evidence that their self-regulation skills became more effective. Therefore, implementation of Biofeedback Games Training into educational practice could contribute much to developing self-regulation skills of future entrepreneurs and students as a whole, enhancing, in turn, their personal and professional development in higher educational environment.

The other research question dealt with a possible relationship between the participants’ physiological indices and their psychological characteristics. Correlation analysis revealed statistically significant relationships between some of them. In particular, there are correlations between the index of sympathoadrenale tone (ISAT) and Introversion scale as well as some subscales of Janoff-Bulman’s World Assumptions Scale. The results obtained can be interpreted as follows: predominant activity of the sympathetic division of the autonomous nervous system could lead to accumulating negative experience since childhood because of one’s higher stress sensitivity and then to introversion. On the other hand, there is a possibility to develop introverts’ positive beliefs about the world since it seems meaningful to them. Therefore, introverted students especially need psychological tutoring in higher educational environment in order to develop their personal potential.

**References**


---

**Journal of the Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture**

*Issue 3, No. 1*  
*Page 52*


Богомаз, С.А. & Манцута, В.В. (2010). Оценка личностного потенциала и выявление основных типов ориентации на профессиональную деятельность у современной вузовской молодежи. Психология обучения, 12, 77-88.


Левицкая, Т.Е. (2009). Развитие навыков саморегуляции у спортсменов с использованием БОС-технологий. Сборник материалов Всероссийской конференции «Олимпийский Сочи: социум, культура, личность» (pp. 4-11), Сочи, Россия.

Левицкая, Т.Е. (2010). Развитие навыков саморегуляции у субъектов образовательного процесса с использованием БОС-технологий. Психология обучения, 12, 106-118.


Солдатова, Г.У., Шайгерова, Л.А., Прокофьева, Т.Ю. & Кравцова, О.А. (2003). Практикум по психодиагностике и исследованию толерантности личности. Москва, Россия: МГУ.


Expressing Emotions in the Native and the Foreign Language – a Cross-Linguistic Study

Liliana Piasecka, Institute of English, Opole University, Opole, Poland, elpia@o2.pl

Abstract
Successful cross-cultural communication is shaped by communicative and sociocultural competence as well as by the emotional states of the interlocutors, frequently bi- and multilinguals. Although research on affect and language learning has focused primarily on language anxiety, recent developments in this area focus also on bi- and multilinguals’ languages of emotions, thus providing evidence to complex relations between them. Using empirical data, this paper discusses how bilinguals respond to emotionally loaded situations in their native and a foreign language, and compares the linguistic means used to find out if there are cross-linguistic influences. The results show that foreign language users are able to label a wide range of emotion. Expressing them in the native language, they use shorter utterances with more emotional overtones than in the foreign language in which emotional expressions are longer than in the native language and fixed phrases are used frequently. The participants’ awareness of the meaning potential of emotionally loaded expressions is evidenced by infrequent use of swear words scarcely. The results also show that females and males differ in their responses to emotionally loaded events. Females identify more emotions and they talk about them using longer utterances, which supports the opinion on high female emotionality.

Keywords: emotions, native language, foreign language, cross-linguistic influence, cross-cultural communication

Introduction
Successful cross-cultural communication depends on such factors as sharing the common code (language), and recognising the social and the cultural context in which the communicative event takes place, to say the least. It is also a highly affective event because interlocutors are emotionally engaged in the communicative act which means that they have to decode the emotional attitude of the interlocutor, regulate their own emotionality as well as to express emotions that accompany language use. As Bamberg (1997) puts it, "language and emotion are two concurrent, parallel systems in use, and their relationship exists in that one system (emotions) impacts on the performance of the other (language)"(p. 309). In cross-cultural communication, people speaking two or more languages (bilinguals and multilinguals) will have to manage quite a complex situation both in linguistic and affective terms as the linguistic and affective systems pertaining to languages known will be interacting and influencing each other.

Issues related to the role of native language (henceforth L1) knowledge in the acquisition and learning of a second (henceforth L2) or foreign language (henceforth FL), have been investigated within the framework of language transfer or cross-linguistic influence studies. Transfer is defined as “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly acquired” (Odlin, 1989, p. 27). This influence concerns all linguistic subsystems and levels of language use. Moreover, it has also been postulated that a satisfactory transferability theory
has to take into account affective factors (Odlin, 2006, p. 26) since they are involved in making decisions about the L1 elements that are most likely to be transferred. Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural research (e.g., Athanasiadou & Tabakowska, 1998; Kövecses, 2000; Rosaldo, 1984; Wierzbicka, 1999) shows that emotion concepts and their linguistic expression may vary across languages and cultures. Moreover, recent studies on bilingualism and emotions suggest that they are differently expressed in the languages used by an individual. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to discuss how bilinguals respond to emotionally loaded situations in their L1 and FL, and compare the linguistic means used to find out if there are cross-linguistic influences. Throughout the paper, the term FL will be used to refer to English as a foreign language because the participants of the empirical study reported have been learning and using English primarily in a foreign, not in a second language context. This is an important distinction when discussing affective states because socializing in a new speech community (which is the case of L2 learning/acquisition context) may result in reconceptualisation of emotions and adapting lexical resources to express them (Pavlenko 2002).

In the following section selected recent findings on emotions and bilingualism are briefly reviewed since they contain interesting points of departure, provide the background for the empirical study reported later in the paper, and offer suggestions for further research.

Bilingualism and emotions – theoretical and empirical underpinnings

Difficulties in communicating emotions in languages other than L1 may be quite challenging because the L2 users may not be confident enough both to express and to decode them due to the lack of sufficient linguistic and pragmatic resources (Dewaele, 2010). This does not mean, however, that they are absent from bilingual and multilingual communicative contexts. Empirical investigations on the expression of emotions by bilinguals suggest that except the situations when the L2 is learned in early childhood, L1 is more emotional and reflects personal involvement while the L2 is more distant and detached (Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2002; Pavlenko, 2008).

On the basis of available research, Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002) identified five factors that might influence the use of L2 emotion vocabulary, that is, sociocultural competence, language proficiency, gender, extraversion and topic. They report two studies they carried out to find out the effect of these factors on the use of emotion vocabulary.

The first study reported by the authors investigated the relationship between language proficiency, gender and extraversion (independent variables) and emotion vocabulary (dependent variable operationalized by the number of word tokens and word types–lemmas–produced by the participants). The participants – twenty nine university students, native speakers of Dutch – chatted informally in their L2 (French) with the experimenter on the one–to–one basis about their likes, dislikes, hobbies and studies. Emotions are similarly conceptualized and expressed in these two languages. The obtained results reveal that gender, language proficiency and extraversion are strong predictors of the richness of L2 emotion vocabulary (manifested by the number of word types) as well as of the level of emotionality and of personal involvement in the chat (manifested by the number of word tokens). Female participants had richer emotion vocabulary and were more emotionally involved than the males. Extraverts also used more emotion lemmas while more proficient participants were more emotionally involved since they used more emotion word tokens than less proficient speakers.
In the second study, emotion vocabulary of Russian learners of English was examined. However, emotions are conceptualized and expressed differently in these languages. In English, emotions are passive states resulting from external or past causes and they are described by means of adjectives thus resulting in an adjectival pattern of expressing emotions. In Russian, emotions are seen as inner activities that are expressed by means of verbs, which accounts for a verbal pattern of expressing emotions.

Emotion vocabulary was collected from monolingual speakers of English and Russian who described the same material. Also, twenty Russian learners of English were examined in Russia and fourteen Russian users of English living in the U.S. were examined there. The researcher wanted to find out the relationship between sociocultural competence, gender and the linguistic material (independent variables) and the frequency and the range of use of emotion words (dependent variable). The participants were university students. Twenty of them were from the University of St. Petersburg, and fourteen took undergraduate and graduate courses at Cornell University. The participants viewed two short films without a dialogue (The Letter and Pis’mo) and were to tell the researcher what they had seen. The films showed a person reading somebody else’s letter without this person’s permission. For American monolinguals, this is a violation of privacy and personal space.

The results show that American and Russian monolinguals describing the films used the same proportion of emotion lemmas and emotion word tokens but they differed in terms of vocabulary richness, with the Russian monolinguals using more different emotion lemmas than the American monolinguals. Moreover, female monolinguals employed more emotion lemmas and tokens than male monolinguals, regardless of their L1. With respect to the material used to elicit the descriptions (topic), richer emotion vocabulary was elicited by The Letter than Pis’mo.

When the performance of Russian learners of English as a foreign language (REFLs) and Russian users of English as a second language (RESLs) was compared, it turned out that only the type of material had a weak effect on the proportion of emotion lemmas while no such effect was found for either sociocultural competence or gender. Interestingly, the female REFLs used more emotion vocabulary than the male REFLs while the female RESLs used less emotion vocabulary than the male RESLs.

All in all, the results of the studies show that gender most strongly predicts the use of emotion vocabulary by monolinguals, Dutch learners of French and advanced Russian learners of English but not by Russian users of English as a second language. Language proficiency level predicts the level of emotionality and personal involvement in Dutch learners of English whereas extraversion predicts the richness of emotion vocabulary in this group of learners. The type of material (topic) is important for monolinguals’ use of emotion lemmas and tokens but it does not matter for speakers of English as a foreign/second language. Finally, sociocultural competence does not have an effect on the use of emotion vocabulary. The Russian participants living and learning English in the United States did not use more emotion lemmas and word types than the Russian students learning English as a foreign language. Pavlenko (2002) explains that this may be due to the acculturation process which accounts for qualitative changes in the RESLs’ choice of emotion vocabulary. The emotion vocabulary they employ marks the shift from the verbal to adjectival pattern of expressing emotions.
Discussing emotion and emotion-laden words in the bilingual lexicon, Pavlenko (2008) argues that emotion words should be regarded as a separate category of words in the bilingual mental lexicon, distinct from concrete and abstract words, because of their different representation and processing. These words have to be approached from a cross-cultural perspective since languages differ in their conceptualizations of emotions as well as in the choice of grammatical categories to express them. In languages such as Polish or Russian, for example, emotions are expressed by means of verbs which indicates that they are conceptualized as processes. In English, however, emotions are viewed as inner states and for this reason they are expressed by means of adjectives and nouns (cf. Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2002).

Learning and using a FL, then, also entails learning to recognize and produce linguistic expressions of emotions since such emotional competence will contribute to successful cross-cultural communication.

The study

The present study originated from the observations that while there is evidence concerning languages of emotions of L2 users, relatively little is known about the expression of emotions in a FL in a foreign language learning context. The aim of the study, then, is to compare L1 and FL responses to emotionally loaded situations. On the basis of theoretical and empirical findings two research questions were formulated:

1. Are there quantitative and qualitative differences in the ways of expressing emotions in L1 (Polish) and FL (English)?
2. Do females and males differ in their expression of emotions in the two languages?

Participants

50 graduate students of English Philology at the Institute of English, Opole University, Poland, took part in the study. They were in their final year, completing their M.A. theses. They had also passed an English language proficiency exam that documented that they had achieved the C2 level, in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), and according to the university requirements. There were 34 females and 16 males. Their mean age was 24.12 years and the mean length of learning English as a foreign language was 12.79 years.

Instrument

To collect the data, a questionnaire including twenty emotionally loaded situations (i.e., situations expected to elicit emotional responses, see the Appendix) was designed. Sample situations included in the questionnaire were the following:

- You have just won one million PLN on the lottery.
- You are getting married.
- You invited some friends to a party. Nobody turns in.

The participants were asked to write what they would feel if they were in such situations, and what they would say in these situations in their L1 (Polish) and in their FL English.

Analysis

Because the study was qualitative, very rich data were collected. Therefore 20 randomly selected questionnaires were selected for closer analysis. To keep the balance between the sexes and to avoid gender bias in the analysis, 10 of them were filled in by females and 10
were filled in by males. The mean age of females was 25.3, and they had been learning English for 11.3 years. The mean age of males was 23.8 years and they had been learning English for 15.2. The females are older than males but the difference is not statistically significant. However, the males had been learning English longer than the females and in this case the difference is statistically significant as shown by the results of a t-test for independent samples ($t=-2.70, p<.01$).

The data were analysed in terms of emotions identified by the participants along with L1 and FL linguistic forms used to express them.

The emotionally loaded situations evoked a large variety of feelings in the participants. The situations that received most consistent emotional responses were selected for further analysis and the decision was made on the basis of frequencies with which the responses appeared in the data. Then the linguistic expressions of emotions pertaining to these situations were also analysed. Eventually, the following situations that evoked basic emotions (Ortony and Turner, 1990) were selected:

- connected with happiness/excitement/euphoria
  
  You have just won one million PLN on the lottery.  
  You are getting married.
- evoking anger
  
  Your computer has been hacked and you lost very important data. It cannot be retrieved.  
  You have just lost your job.
- combination (anger + relief and happiness)
  
  Your best friend borrowed your car and crashed it. It’s completely damaged.  
  Your friend does not even have a scratch.

Results

Linguistic means used to express emotions identified by the participants are presented quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative results refer to the mean length of emotion expressions (henceforth MLEE) in both languages. The analysis has shown that in L1 MLEE was 4.2 words while in FL it was 4.99 words. The t-test for independent samples has shown that the difference between the means is statistically significant ($t=3.35, p<.01$). The participants use more words to express selected emotions in their FL.

The data were also analysed in terms of gender differences. The differences were found in two areas. First, it appeared that females identify more emotions, and consequently name more emotional states in the analyzed situations than males. Second, they differ in the verbal expression of emotions both in L1 and in the FL. Table 1 shows mean length of emotion expressions in two languages and the results of t-tests for independent samples.

The results imply that females express their emotions in longer phrases than males, regardless of the language. The differences in MLEE between females and males are statistically significant both in L1 and FL, as shown by the $p$ value. In addition, females use more words to express emotions in FL than in L1 and the difference is statistically significant ($t=2.97, p=.04$). No such differences were found in the expression of emotions by males.
Table 1. MLEE according to gender and t-tests results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Females (N=10)</th>
<th>Males (N=10)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MLEE</td>
<td>MLEE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative analysis of the emotion expressions in L1 reveals that they are more accurate and precise, they “hit the head of the nail”. The participants frequently expressed their emotions by means of youth jargon but they used few swear words. As regards FL expressions, not only are they longer, but they also disclose the participants’ tendency to use what I call “heavy duty phrases” that may express a range of various emotions, for example *Oh, my God!* As in L1, few swear words were used.

In situations related to happiness/excitement/euphoria, the participants addressed God (Polish *O mój Boże* – Oh, my God; *O Jezu* – Oh Jesus), surprise (*Serio?* – Is it certain?) and disbelief (*Nie wierzę* – I don’t believe it). In FL they responded with “Oh, my God!”, “Oh, great!”, “Wow!”, “Yeah!”

Faced with the situations eliciting anger, in L1 they were blaming themselves for the loss of data or the job. They were also trying to find some comfort and considered further action to change the situation. In FL, they used expressions such as “Oh, no!”, “Damn it!”. Anger also made the participants use swear-words, as six out of ten males used them in both languages. Two females used them in FL and one in L1. Actually, the only swear word used in English was “fuck”.

The situation that evoked a combination of anger and happiness and/or relief made the participants express relief and happiness about the friend’s well-being. They were praising good luck and were trying to diminish the losses. They showed a similar approach to the situation in both languages, being concerned primarily about the health of the friend (“Most important that you are fine”, “Damn it. At least you are OK”).

**Discussion**

The results of the study provide a positive answer to the first research question. There are quantitative and qualitative differences in the ways of expressing emotions in L1 (Polish) and FL (English). Advanced Polish learners of English use more words in FL than in L1 to express their emotions, which is quite surprising since L1 is postulated to show more emotional involvement than L2 which is associated with emotional detachment and distance (Pavlenko 2008). This may be due to two factors. First, the participants are advanced learners and users of English, and they had been using this language across a variety of contexts for a number of purposes, both academic and non-academic. They had also been exposed to this language in formal and informal situations, in public and private contexts. Second, they started learning English when they were quite young, which might have influenced their perception and expression of affectivity in the FL. However, no shift in the grammatical forms used to express emotions was found (cf. Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2002), probably due to the lack of a wider context for eliciting emotions.
Although FL expressions of emotions are longer than L1 expressions, the latter are more precise and accurate. They also show a more creative use of language while the FL expressions are more fixed and routine. Responding to the situation of the loss of important data, one participant produced the following expression in her L1: *A niech ci się dysk spali* (“Let your hard drive burn”), thus cursing the inanimate object for the experienced loss.

The linguistic expressions of emotional states vary but they do not reflect the emotional states directly. The expressions such as Polish *O Boże! Jezu! Hurra!* (Oh, God!, Jesus! Hooray!) and English “Oh, my God!”,”Damn it!”, “Oh, my goodness!”,”Yeah!”,”Hooray!”,”Oh, no!” may be used to express various feelings.

It also turned out that the participants used swear words (one swear word, to be exact) more frequently when they expressed anger in the FL, although a larger variety of these words was observed in the L1. This should not be surprising because, according to Jay and Janschewitz (2008, p. 267), “The main purpose of swearing is to express emotions, especially anger and frustration. Swear words are well suited to express emotions as their primary meanings are connotative”. Dewaele (2010) adds that expressing anger in a foreign language may be a real challenge for its users because of some loss of control over emotions and linguistic resources. In additions, the FL users have to be aware of different levels of offensiveness that swear words carry. There are also opinions (eg. Mugford, 2008) that impolite or rude language should not be neglected in a foreign language classroom because the learners may experience instances of such language use in communicative contexts and they should be prepared to recognize the meaning and respond to it using appropriate linguistic means.

The study also demonstrated that there are gender differences in the expression of emotions in the two languages. Females and males differ in naming emotions. Females identify more emotions and they talk about them using longer utterances which may mean that they respond more emotionally to emotionally leaded events and are more willing to communicate their emotions. Moreover, they use more words than males to communicate emotions in their L1 and FL, which may be attributed to gender differences paradigm. In this paradigm, women care more about interpersonal and affective relations with their interlocutors, which is reflected in their use of language (Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2002; Tannen, 1992).

The most striking gender differences were found in emotional responses concerning getting married. While the females perceived it as the beginning of a new chapter in their lives, the males saw it as the termination of their freedom, thus implying that marriage is a kind of slavery. This may result from stereotypical thinking about social roles of men and women. However, when females say that a new chapter in their life is beginning, they do not know whether it will bring happiness and joy, or frustration and sorrow, or a combination of these states, but they seem to accept the unknown hoping for the best.

A considerable overlap between L1 and FL expressions was also identified, suggesting a mutual influence of L1 and FL. In addition, the observed cross-linguistic transfer might have been induced by the manner of data collection. L1 and FL expressions were collected on one occasion and the participants might not have resisted the temptation to translate from one language to another.
Conclusion
The participants labeled a wide range of emotions connected with the presented situations. Expressing their emotions in L1, they used shorter expressions with more emotional overtones than in the FL. FL emotional expressions turned out to be longer than in L1 and fixed phrases were used frequently.

The participants seem to be aware of the meaning potential of the expressions they use, for example they used swear words scarcely. Participants using swear words in L1 also use them in L2. Males tend to use more such words than females—especially when they experience anger.

Females and males differ in their responses to emotionally loaded events, which is evidenced by the range of emotions ascribed to these events. Females identify more emotions and they talk about them using longer utterances, which supports the opinion on high female emotionality.

The study itself is not without limitations. First, during data collection the participants described how they would probably feel if they were in the situations presented, and what they would probably say. Second, the expressions in L1 and in the FL were collected at the same time which may be a cause of transfer due to translation. Different patterns of language use might be observed if the data were collected on different occasions, for example two or three weeks apart. L1 expressions of emotion might also be collected from non-English philology students as this might shed some light on whether and how learning a FL affects L1 emotional expressions.

The ability to communicate successfully across languages and cultures entails the ability to recognize the emotional temperature of such encounters and to respond to it appropriately. This suggests that FL learners should be exposed to emotionally loaded expression to develop sensitivity to them and to acquire linguistic resources to express them.

References
Appendix

The instrument used in the study to elicit the data

Age __________________

Sex (circle)   Female   Male

How long have you been learning English? __________________________

Have you ever stayed abroad for longer than three months? (circle) YES NO

If you did, where and how long did you stay there? _______________________

Several situations are described below. In the line marked A write what you would feel if you were in such a situation. In the line marked B write what you would say in such a situation in English. In line C write what you would say in such a situation in Polish.

1. You have won one million PLN on the lottery.
   A. ______________________________________________________________________
   B. ______________________________________________________________________
   C. ______________________________________________________________________

2. You have lost all your money.
   A. ______________________________________________________________________
   B. ______________________________________________________________________
   C. ______________________________________________________________________

3. Your best friend borrowed your car and crashed it. It’s completely damaged. Your friend does not even have a scratch.
   A. ______________________________________________________________________
   B. ______________________________________________________________________
   C. ______________________________________________________________________

4. You are just about to leave for the round the world trip that you have been dreaming about your whole life.
   A. ______________________________________________________________________
   B. ______________________________________________________________________
   C. ______________________________________________________________________

2 It is a lot of money in Poland. PLN – Polish currency (Polish zloty)
5. You have just taken an important exam that may significantly affect your future.
   A. 
   B. 
   C. 

6. Your little daughter/son has just fallen down and scratched her/his knee. The knee is bleeding badly. The child is crying.
   A. 
   B. 
   C. 

7. Your friend has just bought a mink coat (futro z norek). You craved such a coat but you have never had enough money to buy it.
   A. 
   B. 
   C. 

8. Your computer has been hacked and you lost very important data. They cannot be retrieved.
   A. 
   B. 
   C. 

9. You are getting married.
   A. 
   B. 
   C. 

10. Your first child was born.
    A. 
    B. 
    C. 

11. You have just lost your job.
    A. 
    B. 
    C. 

12. You are speaking and somebody interrupts you.
    A. 
    B. 
    C. 

13. You watch news about disasters, conflicts, war and killing.
    A. 
    B. 
    C. 

14. You are waiting in a long queue. Somebody pushes in front of you.
    A. 
    B. 
    C. 

15. You have an appointment with a doctor and you have been waiting for ages.
16. You see a person hitting a dog.
A. ____________________________________________________________________________
B. ____________________________________________________________________________
C. ____________________________________________________________________________

17. You invited some friends to a party. Nobody turns in.
A. ____________________________________________________________________________
B. ____________________________________________________________________________
C. ____________________________________________________________________________

18. It’s the middle of the night. You are alone in the house and you hear strange noises coming from the outside.
A. ____________________________________________________________________________
B. ____________________________________________________________________________
C. ____________________________________________________________________________

19. You meet an old friend of yours whom you haven’t seen for ages.
A. ____________________________________________________________________________
B. ____________________________________________________________________________
C. ____________________________________________________________________________

20. Your parent/partner/best friend has been elected the President of Poland.
A. ____________________________________________________________________________
B. ____________________________________________________________________________
C. ____________________________________________________________________________
Learning and Teaching Style Preferences in EFL

Songyut Akkakoson, Lecturer of English, King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB), Bangkok, Thailand
songyutbee@hotmail.com

Abstract
In the contemporary practices in the tertiary education, students’ learning styles have at times been overlooked and teachers are likely to be unaware of their own teaching styles and a match between teaching and learning style preferences. As a result, students may not gain a deep understanding of the lessons due to the instructional methods, which may not correspond to their learning style preferences. Since so far little attention has been focused on how learners learn and how teachers teach in many situations, this study aims to identify the learning styles of Thai EFL university students of science and technology disciplines and to investigate the differences in their learning styles. It attempts to further explore whether there is a match between students’ learning styles and teachers’ teaching styles. Data were collected through Reid’s (1987) questionnaire using 160 EFL students and three EFL teachers at a Thai university. The results indicated that learners favoured Group learning most, followed by Auditory, Visual, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Individual styles respectively, whereas teachers preferred Kinesthetic and/or Tactile styles most, followed by Visual, Auditory and/or Group, and Individual styles. There was, thus, a mismatch regarding Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Group styles between the two parties. The majority of students wanted teachers to have a more traditional, teacher-centred role while most of the teachers disagreed on this. The majority of teachers agreed with Reid’s hypotheses. Implications and suggestions were made for the improvement of teaching methods to facilitate student achievement and retention, curricula and assessment practices.

Keywords: learning styles, language learning styles, learning style preferences, perceptual learning styles, teaching styles

Introduction
Language learning is among the most challenging academic pursuits a Thai tertiary student has to take on. Not only does such learning process need the professional and educational advice, it also requires learner personal systematic, conscious and mindful engagements in the language. Thus, the key to academic success in learning a second language is the personal reflection on how one acquires language. Researchers (eg Ehrman, 1996; Oxford, 2003; Reid, 1995) also suggest that teachers should assist their students with identifying their own learning style preferences. This is because when taking a look round at the students in any classroom, language teachers may find a common diversity among students. For example, why do some students have problems understanding directions in English while others understand them easily? Why do some students do well when they can work alone or in pairs, whereas others are at their best when they work in large groups? What can we do to help each of our students when there can be such a variety of learners in our English classroom?

So far there have been various studies investigating the influence of learning styles on learning a second or foreign language (eg Ehrman, 1996; Khamkhien, 2012; Mulalic, Shah, & Ahmad, 2009; Peacock, 2001; Reid, 1987; Sabeh, Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhan, 2011; Stebbins, 1995; Sywelem & Wang, 2010), but there have been not many studies conducted in Thai contexts. The present study, therefore, is driven by the researcher’s curiosity to
investigate matters concerning the diversity of students’ learning style preferences – a case of Thai EFL science and technology university students, and their EFL teachers’ teaching style preferences. Its primary purpose is to identify students’ perceptual learning styles in order to prove Reid’s (1987, 1995) first hypothesis whether all students have their own learning styles and learning strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, a question whether there is a match between students’ learning and teachers’ teaching styles is further investigated.

Theoretical Background

Definitions of learning style preferences

In the literature, diverse definitions of learning styles are mentioned. Learning styles are defined as the ways ones like to learn which are put into practice by particular learning strategies (Ehrman, 1996). Dunn and Griggs (1988) refer learning styles to ‘...the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others’ (p. 3). According to Cohen and Weaver (2005), learning styles are not particular qualities in each individual’s personality, but they are only preferences which can be changeable. If the classroom environment suits their learning styles, students are likely to learn better. If language material, for example, is delivered in several different ways, that means learning styles of various students in a class are more likely to be taken into consideration. To illustrate this, Cohen and Weaver suggest that the present and past perfect tenses in the target language should be taught by having students listen to the recording and then draw a chart in their notebook of a timeline that details when to use each form of the tenses. If so, both ways serve both the auditory and visual learners.

Assessing learning styles

Learning styles have been classified from a wide range of different views and there are several ways of assessing a person’s learning styles. By far the most typical way of assessing L2 learning styles is the written survey. Students respond to the survey questions that indicate their specific leaning style preferences. Among the first researchers to develop a standardised tool to look at learning styles, Reid (1987, 1995) designed an instrument, Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ), to identify the learning styles of non-native speakers of English in the ESL classroom in terms of the senses they favour, their cognitive styles and personality types. In the last few decades, learning style surveys have been widely conducted with a variety of reliability and validity and have revealed data from which teachers and learners have begun to understand L2 learning styles. A survey questionnaire, Learning Style Survey, developed by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2001) is based on style dimensions that are relevant to language learning. It is drawn from the works of Oxford (1995; the Style Analysis Survey) and Ehrman and Leaver (1997). However, in classroom contexts, these kinds of surveys, which categorise learners, may make some students feel that they are being labelled. The students should be informed that these instruments do not intend to investigate their absolutes for learning, but just preferences. Their learning styles can be changeable according to the situations, and new and diverse styles can also be tried. As language learners may have a general sense of their style preferences for how to learn already, such investigation can assist them in being aware of their own predispositions to learning and being able to understand and organise their learning styles better. It also helps a teacher to understand his/her approach to teaching provided that he/she tends to follow his/her own teaching styles. Moreover, this survey will help students to start to understand their own ways to learning and can provide the teacher information about how the students learn best.
Methodology

Participants
This exploratory research was conducted at a science and technology-orientated university in Bangkok, Thailand. Selected through convenience sampling, the population was three Thai teachers of English and 202 Thai EFL undergraduate students taking an elective EFL reading course (6 sections). All three teachers are female. One has an MA in Linguistics, another in TEFL and the other one has a PhD in EIL. These three lecturers were assigned to teach two sections each. The assorted group of 202 male and female students was of second, third or fourth year science and technology disciplines. Their age ranged from 17 to 22 years. They shared common characteristics such as passing two prerequisite English foundation courses before taking the present course, representing Thai students who were accepted to study in a government university, having Thai as their L1 and studying English as a foreign language. However, out of 202 student questionnaires distributed, a total of 160 questionnaires was returned and used as a representative sample for analysis.

Instrument
The researcher adapted the 30-item, Likert-type Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) from the work of Reid (1987) to identify the students’ learning style preferences and teachers’ teaching style preferences. The questionnaire is composed of two parts. The first part surveyed the respondents’ personal and academic information. The second part comprised 30 learning style statements. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with each preferred learning style on a scale from 1 to 4 when they learn English. Each number notes certain measurement, namely (4) strongly agree, (3) agree, (2) disagree and (1) strongly disagree (see the Appendix). The researcher also added another five questions from Peacock’s (2001) questionnaire (items 31 – 35, based on Jones (1997)) to the PLSPQ in order to investigate student opinions on whether they wanted the following teaching:

- having a more traditional, teacher-centred role,
- correcting their errors,
- providing them with a model,
- providing plenty of in-class discussions and
- encouraging them to become independent learners.

The teacher questionnaire asked the teacher participants to respond to the same statements as on the student questionnaire, but they were applied to their teaching of English. Their opinions on Reid’s (1987, 1995) hypotheses were also investigated in items 36-40:

**Major hypotheses:**
- H1: All students have their own learning styles and learning strengths and weaknesses.
- H2: A mismatch between teaching and learning styles causes learning failure, frustration, and demotivation.

**Minor hypotheses:**
- H3: Learning styles (if unchecked) persist regardless of teaching methods and materials.
- H4: Learning styles can be adapted because they are partly habit rather than biological attributes.
• H5: Learning will be improved if students become aware of a wider range of styles and stretch their own styles.

Based on Reid (1987), the style preferences surveyed were also categorised as major, minor and negative learning style preferences:

- Mean scores of 11.00 and above = major learning styles indicating that one could function well as a learner
- Mean scores of 9.00 to 10.99 = minor learning styles indicating that one still can function well
- Mean scores of 8.99 or less = negative learning styles indicating that the learners may have difficulty in learning

Both teacher and student PLSPQs were translated into Thai. The Thai versions were then reviewed and double-checked by three experts in the field of Applied Linguistics for clarity and accuracy. The modified versions were based on all suggestions received.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected with permission from teachers and students in six classes of the Reading I course. At the beginning of the course, the teacher and student PLSPQs were administered to all participants with a consent form for their research participation. All questionnaire data obtained were coded and calculated by descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). Comparisons were then made between the preferred teaching styles and learning styles of all the teacher and the student participants, and results were compared with those from previous studies.

Results

Perceptual learning style preferences of Thai EFL students of science and technology disciplines

The results from the student version of the PLSPQ are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Overall students’ perceptual learning style preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>14.56</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>15.34</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>12.09</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: -11.00 and above = major learning style preference
-9.00 to 10.99 = minor learning style preference
-8.99 or less = negative learning style preference

Table 1 shows the overall mean score for each perceptual learning style category. Students in this study favoured Group (15.34), Auditory (15.30), Visual (14.56), Kinesthetic (14.50), Tactile (14.00) and Individual (12.09) as their major learning style preferences while there were no minor and negative preferences reported. This indicates that they can function well in learning by means of whatever style of learning.

Perceptual teaching styles of Thai EFL teachers
The results from the teacher version of the PLSPQ are presented in Table 2.

### Table 2: Overall teachers’ perceptual teaching style preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.66</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, all teachers reported a major preference for Kinesthetic and/or Tactile (16.00), Visual (15.66), Auditory and/or Group (15.00), and Individual (14.33) teaching styles while they exhibited no minor and negative preferences.

### Matching teaching and learning styles

The identified teaching style preferences of the teachers were compared with the identified learning styles of the students in order to explore the possible impact of this match. The results showed that not all of the reported styles of both parties matched. Some rankings of the favoured learning styles and the favoured teaching styles were different. Table 3 displays such results.

### Table 3: A match between students’ learning styles and teachers’ teaching styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Style Preferences</th>
<th>Popularity Rank</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Popularity Rank</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student and teacher teaching/learning styles match</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student and teacher teaching/learning styles do not match</td>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the above table, there is a mismatch between teacher’s teaching styles and student’s learning styles in four categories, namely Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Group. However, there is a match for Visual and Individual styles. Moreover, all of these styles were found to be of a major preference. This indicates that both parties could function well as a learner and have no difficulty in teaching or learning using any of these styles.

### Collecting further views on learning and teaching styles

Table 4 shows the results of a comparison between students’ and teachers’ further opinions on learning and teaching styles (5 statements) added to the PLSPQ. This table displays quite large differences of views between teachers and students on item 1 and a proportional degree of agreement on the others.
Table 4: Further views on learning and teaching styles (percentages) – student \((N = 160)\) and teacher \((N = 3)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Strongly agree/Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree/Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Comparison between students and teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students want teachers to have a more traditional, teacher-centred role.</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>67.50</td>
<td>32.50</td>
<td>a quite large difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students want teachers to correct their errors.</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>81.90</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>a similar agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students want teachers to provide them with a model.</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>86.30</td>
<td>13.80</td>
<td>a similar agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students want teachers to provide plenty of in-class discussions.</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>81.90</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>a similar agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Students want teachers to encourage them to become independent learners.</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>a similar agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers’ opinions on Reid’s (1987, 1995) hypotheses

Background to current ideas and work in the field of learning styles are based on Reid’s hypotheses which have generated the most interest in researching into learning styles. Considerable support to these theoretical ideas has been made in a number of studies since 1987. The results of teachers’ views on Reid’s hypotheses in this study are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Teachers’ \((N = 3)\) opinions on Reid’s major and minor hypotheses (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Strongly agree/Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree/Disagree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All students have their own learning styles and learning strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A mismatch between teaching and learning styles causes learning failure, frustration, and demotivation.</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learning styles (if unchecked) persist regardless of teaching methods and materials.</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Learning styles can be adapted because they are partly habit rather than biological attributes.</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Learning will be improved if</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students become aware of a wider range of styles and stretch their own styles.

As can be seen in Table 5, all teachers expressed a high degree of agreement with Reid’s two major and three minor hypotheses.

**Discussion**

The present study revealed that the major learning style preferences of Thai EFL learners of science and technology disciplines include Group, Auditory, Visual, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Individual and these learners did not disfavour any styles. The learning style that was preferred most is learning in a group. This indicates that these students are likely to learn with their peers as group learning may make them feel less anxious and give ways for them to gain knowledge. It is probable that learning by interacting as a group member and working with other students is what they value. Working with classmates may also help them to remember information or understand new information better. As understanding of learning style preferences can be useful to both the teacher and the student (eg Rassool & Rawaf, 2007; Zhang & Lambert, 2008), this finding can be beneficial in that teachers of language learners may consider emphasising more on group work and defocusing classroom activities for an individual (eg Wintergerst, DeCapua, & Verna, 2002).

In order to demonstrate these learners’ identified learning styles in a clearer picture, previous studies into perceptual learning styles of Thai students in various fields of study are compared (Table 6).

**Table 6: Thai students’ learning style preferences: present study in comparison with previous studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>14.56</td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>17.13</td>
<td>13.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>17.80</td>
<td>12.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>39.00</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>18.55</td>
<td>14.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>26.60</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>17.73</td>
<td>14.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>15.34</td>
<td>42.90</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>17.83</td>
<td>11.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>12.09</td>
<td>13.70</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>14.80</td>
<td>12.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 6, the finding that group learning is the topmost style of learning in this study is corroborated by that of Munsakorn (2012) who also found the same result that her Bangkok University students in Thailand favoured learning in a group most. However, this finding is different from that of Khamkhien (2012) whose students preferred Auditory learning styles and those of Wasanasomsithi (1999-2000) and Reid (1987) whose students preferred Kinesthetic learning styles. It is interesting to note that students in the first four studies expressed their disfavour for Individual styles. This may be ascribed to general characteristics of Thais who are likely to be shy, lacking self-confidence, afraid of losing face and keen on compromise. Thus, when it comes to learning a foreign language, they prefer not to study alone. However, as the Thai students in Reid’ (1987) study were those studying in the US, this is probable that learning environment – in particular, their educational experience at that time – enters into their negative preferences for group learning ($M = 11.49$).
To focus especially on Thai university students in the field of science and technology, learning style preferences of students identified in the following studies are compared (Table 7).

Table 7: Thai EFL science and technology students’ learning style preferences: present study in comparison with previous studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Present Study (Science and technology students)</th>
<th>Wasanasomsithi (1999-2000) (Science and technology students)</th>
<th>Khamkhien (2012) (Engineering students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>14.56</td>
<td>17.39</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>17.72</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>18.84</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactile</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>17.95</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>15.34</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>12.09</td>
<td>14.75</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, the style preferred by most of the science and technology students in the present study and Khamkhien’s (2012) is learning in a group, whereas those in Wasanasomsithi’s (1999-2000) study preferred learning by practising in different situations most. Still, the least favourite learning style expressed by students in these three studies is learning individually.

The results of this study do not support studies carried out in some other countries. For example, Chinese EFL students in Peacock’s (2001) study expressed their preferences for Kinesthetic learning and disfavoured Group styles. Chinese EFL students in Melton’s (1990) study also favoured Kinesthetic together with Tactile and Individual styles and disfavoured Group styles. Mulalic et al. (2009) also found that Malaysian ESL university students preferred Kinesthetic styles and expressed negative preferences towards Individual and Tactile learning styles.

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the results on learning style preferences cannot always be generalised as preferred styles may vary. Researchers suggest that there are other factors that may influence the choice of students’ learning style preferences, for example educational background, ethnicity, gender, motivation to learn, learning environments and teaching styles (eg Dörnyei, 2005, Wenden, 1999).

With regard to teaching style preferences, the topmost major teaching styles expressed by the teachers in this study are Kinesthetic and Tactile. This finding is similar to those of Sabe et al. (2011) and Peacock (2001). All teachers in Sabe et al.’s study reported a major preference for Kinesthetic and Individual styles and those in Peacock’s study expressed a preference for Kinesthetic, Group and Auditory styles. It is interesting to note that Western teachers in Peacock’s disfavoured Auditory styles while Thai teachers of English in the present study favoured Auditory styles. This may result from cultural differences and traditional teaching methods (ie having a heavy emphasis on teacher lecturing and rote learning) which are still dominant among Asian teachers of English.

As hypothesised by the learning style theorists, a match or mismatch between teacher teaching styles and student learning styles is important. Reid (1987) suggests that a match could result in better achievement, equal educational opportunities and positive attitudes to
learning. Stebbins (1995) supports that mismatching learning and teaching styles could cause a negative impact on the students’ attitude and learning process while matching could improve their attitude, behaviour, motivation and learning. The results of teaching-learning style comparison in this study revealed a mismatch between the teaching and the learning style preferences. Differences were found in the first, second, fourth and fifth ranks of style preferences of both parties (among Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Group styles), which may lead to learners’ failure in learning. This result supports the idea that the compatibility between teaching and learning styles could be a factor to be considered for language teaching and learning.

The five statements that the researcher added to both versions of the PLSPQ in this study also yielded interesting results (Table 4). The first finding showed quite large student misunderstandings of their teachers. The students prefer a dominant role of teachers in class while the teachers want to reduce their leading roles and want their students to become more independent learners. The reason why these students still prefer a more traditional, teacher-centred role may be due to the fact that they are accustomed to being taught using this style. Thai education is typically teacher-centred or teacher-fronted, with infrequent use of alternative learning activities such as group work, discussions, individual research and/or cross-class work (Wisaijorn, 2005). Thus, Thai students are familiar with a style of teaching and learning which emphasises whole class activities and repetition and memorisation of facts. Peacock (2001) warns that this mismatch may cause student frustration and lead to negative effects on learning. However, this finding contrasts sharply with the fifth finding which shows that both students and teachers unanimously agreed on more support for developing autonomy as learners. These contrasting ideas indicate that these students still do not have a real understanding of autonomous learners and the desirable trend of language teaching methodology (needs-based instruction or learner-centred approach). The National Scheme of Education of B.E. 2545-2559 (2002-2016) has initiated Thailand’s learning reform towards the learner-centred approach (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003). In this approach, teachers are encouraged to ‘become enthusiastic about their roles as facilitators of classroom learning[,] more learner oriented [and] more aware of their students’ needs’ (Oxford et al., 1990, p. 210). Therefore, students should be made clear about the fact that to promote learner autonomy, an over-dominant role in classroom of teachers must be reduced so that a learner-centred classroom can be encouraged more. As for the second to fourth findings, a large number of the students and teachers agree on an increase in such normal teaching-learning activities as teacher corrective feedback, teacher modelling and opportunities to speak in class. These findings are partly consistent with those of Peacock (2001) who found quite large differences of opinion between students and teachers in his study on items 1 and 5 and a reasonable degree of agreement on items 2 to 4.

The results of the teachers’ opinions on learning styles in this study support Reid’s (1987, 1995) major and minor hypotheses about learning styles. Most of the sampled teachers expressed their high degree of agreement with the ideas that all students have their own learning styles and learning strengths and weaknesses; a mismatch between teaching and learning styles causes learning failure, frustration, and demotivation; learning styles (if unchecked) persist regardless of teaching methods and materials; learning styles can be adapted because they are partly habit rather than biological attributes; learning will be improved if students become aware of a wider range of styles and stretch their own styles. These results are in line with what Peacock (2001) found in his study, which posits Reid’s hypotheses and urges teachers’ awareness of these differences when teaching English.
Conclusion
The present study aimed to identify Thai EFL science and technology students’ perceptual learning styles in order to prove Reid’s (1987, 1995) first hypothesis whether all students have their own learning styles and learning strengths and weaknesses. It attempts to further investigate whether there is a match between students’ learning and teachers’ teaching styles. Based on the modified PLSPQs, originated by Reid (1987), this group of learners perceived themselves as group learners. They preferred to learn English as a foreign language with a group by interacting as a member of a group. The help of a group may motivate them to learn new things. This may be ascribed to the social-cultural influences which shape up Thai students to rely on or help each other, which is one of the dominant characteristics of Asian students (Wintergerst, DeCapua, & Verna, 2003). Although this study did not aim to prove Reid’s second hypothesis (that a mismatch between teaching and learning styles causes learning failure, frustration and demotivation), the results partly proved it. The researcher examined the match between the learning styles of 160 students and the teaching styles of three teachers. As the results revealed, not all teaching and learning styles were found to be parallel (ie a match for two styles and a mismatch for four styles, see Table 3). All teachers reported a major preference for Kinesthetic, Tactile, Visual, Auditory, Group and Individual learning styles while the students had a major preference for Group, Auditory, Visual, Kinesthetic, Tactile and Individual respectively. No minor and negative preferences which may cause difficulties in teaching and learning were expressed by both parties.

Implications
It can be said that the major benefit from this study is urging awareness of the effect of learning styles on students’ learning in the EFL classroom. For teachers and students to recognise their teaching and learning style preferences, a learning style questionnaire (PLSPQ) should be administered at the beginning of the course. The identified styles should be familiarised by both teachers and students. Their strengths and weaknesses, and likes and dislikes in relation to how they learn best should be considered. The identification of the preferred styles would also help teachers to select more efficient teaching materials. As an EFL classroom like the one in this study is found to be an assorted one comprising a various population of learners with regard to age, gender, discipline, time spent studying English and grade in their prerequisite course, particular instructional methods may not be able to deal with these variables effectively. A modification of teaching to suit the students’ diverse learning styles should be made (Peacock, 2001). For EFL learners, as they themselves are the ones who know best about their own needs and preferred learning styles, they should be responsible more for their own learning and attempt to fulfil those needs on their own both in class and out of class. Students should also be informed to prepare themselves for dealing with learning styles that do not match theirs, respect others’ learning styles and respond to different learning style preferences. For EFL teachers, the point is that a failure to facilitate learning for students whose learning styles are not addressed by the teaching methods in class may end in student frustration and demotivation. Academic success in a classroom is also likely to be caused by a match between learning and teaching styles. It is, therefore, crucial that teachers should not overlook their own teaching style preferences and their students’ learning style preferences, but they should try to identify those styles and try to accommodate or match both parties’ styles.

Teachers’ and students’ opinions on the five additional statements revealed in this study remind EFL teachers that there can be differences between their own and their students’ beliefs, regarding the traditional teacher-centred role, correcting errors, encouraging students
to become independent learners, providing students with a model and providing plenty of in-class discussions. According to Peacock (2001), these differences signify that learners should not be overlooked but should be part of teachers’ planning of lessons and activities. Students should be given more control over their learning, more chances to speak and more opportunities to develop autonomy. These suggestions could apply to those English L1 or L2 teachers of Thai learners as well. In their daily classroom teaching, there can be a mismatch between their teaching styles and their Thai students’ learning styles. Thus, they should consider paying more attention to their students’ learning style preferences.

Limitations of the Study
Although the results of this study enhance a better understanding of Thai EFL learners’ learning style preferences, limitations need to be mentioned. First, the number of teacher participants in this study is quite low as there were only three EFL teachers assigned to teach the target course. With this small sample size, the findings regarding teachers’ perceptions and opinions are considered indicative only as they cannot be generalised to all the EFL teachers at the research setting. Second, the present study did not empirically explore whether the mismatch between teachers’ teaching styles and their learning styles results in students’ learning failure, frustration and demotivation. Therefore, the mismatch of learning and teaching styles found in this study may not be conclusive.

Recommendations
With the above limitations in mind, four future research agendas are called for. First, a study that empirically proves whether a mismatch between teaching and learning styles causes learning failure, frustration and demotivation should be conducted. Second, other factors which may contribute to language learning styles such as learners’ age, cultural backgrounds, language learning contexts and fluctuations in learning style preferences also need to be examined. Third, the PLSPQ should be validated and triangulated with interviews and focus-group discussions. Through these appraisals, such data collection methods for learning styles can be improved and thus can unveil more the real style preferences of the learner. Fourth, a true or a quasi-experimental study should be implemented to prove whether students in an experimental cohort who have been taught, using teaching styles that accommodate multiple learning styles can outperform their peers in a control cohort who receive a traditional, teacher-centred method. This could help to heighten educators’ awareness of learning and teaching style preferences.

Acknowledgement
The research reported here is supported by King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok, awarded to the author of this article.

References


**Appendix**

**Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire – Student**

**Section A: Background Information**

Gender: [ ] male [ ] female  Age_________  Faculty

Major field/discipline_______________________________________________________

How long did you study English?____________________________________________

Most recent fundamental English grade: A [ ] B+ [ ] B [ ] C+ [ ] C [ ] D+ [ ] D [ ]

**Section B: Perceptual Learning Style Preference**

Directions: People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and/or by ‘hands-on’ tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone, while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best—the way(s) you prefer to learn.

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH. Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you *strongly agree*, mark ‘X’ on the number 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>EXAMPLE STATEMENT</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I find it useful to read out loud when reading the textbook.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Impact of Teacher Leadership on Teacher Education in the UAE

Lauren Stephenson, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates
Lauren.stephenson@zu.ac.ae
Elizabeth Howard, Deira International School, United Arab Emirates
ehoward@disdubai.ae

Abstract
This paper reports on a study that aimed to evaluate the impact of interaction with teacher leader mentors (TLMs) on a practicum teacher education course in relation to the language choices that the candidates made in the classroom. Using survey, focus groups, informal dialogue, journals, reflections and observations to collect data, teacher candidates (TCs) and experienced TLMs were asked to reflect on candidates’ classroom management practices and perspectives to identify how their teaching practice was impacted by the TLMs’ interactions. An inductive process of identifying themes and key content areas was used. The study identified key values and characteristics of teacher leaders (TLs). Teacher candidates’ successes and challenges in managing learning and behavior were identified, including their improved content and pedagogical knowledge when teaching in the English medium, specifically in the development of professional language and English vocabulary of teaching practice. Key areas for consideration include the nature of TLM help and interaction with the TCs in terms of language, cultural context and teaching style. As a result of the school-university partnership, TCs benefited from the embedded learning experiences in developing their own language, habits, and behaviors of professional practice. With the support of experienced TLMs, TCs were provided with varied and extensive opportunities to blend academic and practitioner knowledge.

Keywords: teacher leadership, teacher education, United Arab Emirates

Background
Zayed University’s (ZU) College of Education (CoE) is committed to the preparation of effective professional Emirati teachers central to the decade long push for school reform in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The authors believe that one of the most important resources for leadership and reform lies with the experience, ideas and capacity to lead of the UAE’s school teachers. For over five years, ZU’s CoE and Deira International School (DIS) have been closely involved in a partnership preparing TCs in their third year of practicum prior to internship.

At DIS self identified TLs volunteer to mentor (over a ten week period) pre-service teacher candidates (TCs) as they plan and implement lessons with DIS classes. These TLs are typically ‘second-stage” teachers (Donaldson, 2005) who feel competent and confident in their work, keen to vary their responsibilities and expand their influence by sharing their expertise with the ZU TCs. Recognizing that TCs needed more practical knowledge about the teaching profession, both Liz Howard, a Year 2 DIS teacher leader mentor (TLM1), and Lauren Stephenson, the ZU faculty supervisor (S), identified a modest starting point as the need for TCs to improve their appreciation and use of child friendly language as a tool to manage teaching, learning and children’s behaviors. To further support TCs, TLM1 was the first TL to volunteer to participate in the ten week prerequisite university course prior to the practicum at DIS. This study aimed to investigate the impact of her interaction and that of
other DIS TLMs on a practicum teacher education course with a specific focus on classroom management strategies used by the TCs. The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the characteristics of learning focused TLMs in DIS?
2. What are the particular teacher leadership strategies/approaches (such as collaboration, coaching, modeling, mentoring, guidance and professional support) that are useful with the TCs?
3. What impact does a learning focused TLM have on TC classroom management practice in their third practicum experience?

**Teacher Leadership**

Teacher leadership is anchored in the belief that “all individuals in the school… have knowledge that can contribute to and enhance the work of the school” (O’Hair and Reitzug, 1997, p.70). Such distributed approaches to school leadership allow for increased opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles (Spillane, Halverson and Diamond, 2001; 2004).

Typically teacher leader roles have been at three levels – the classroom, the profession and the organization (Kurtz, 2004). The vast majority of teacher leadership literature indicates that TLs have considerable teaching experience, are known for their excellence in teaching and are respected by their peers (see York-Barr and Duke, 2004). Saeeda Shah (2006) reminds readers of the special responsibilities of leadership within an Islamic educational system:

> From an Islamic perspective ... the teacher is perceived as a leader within and beyond the classroom context, expected to fulfill the leadership role as a guide to knowledge and conduct and to be a role model (p.371).

Similarly, for Lieberman and Miller (2004), TLs are today’s stewards for an invigorated profession and individually or collectively influence others in the educational community to improve the learning of children and adults alike. They model current best practices, attitudes and dispositions and, as such, are recognized and valued for their various roles (Harrison and Killon, 2007) and expertise in one or more of the following areas: collaboration, content knowledge, expertise in teaching and learning, modeling, mentoring, guidance and professional support (Portin, 2009).

Danielson’s (2008) characteristics of effective TLs include expertise in their field, respect for their own instructional skills, self-confidence and the confidence of other educators, enthusiasm, willingness to try new ideas and respect for others’ views. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) argue that TLs have a clearly developed personal philosophy of education. For others creativity, innovation, lifelong learning and organizational skills are essential (Le Blanc and Shelton, 1997). Similarly to Portin (2009), Stephenson, Dada and Harold (2012) found that TLs displayed expertise in communicating and building relationships. Effective interpersonal skills often determined whether TLs were welcomed as mentors which in turn impacted on what they were able to accomplish as a result (Stephenson et al. 2012). Their ability to build relational trust, provide systemic linkages and operate in a climate of ambiguity and rapid change was another critical factor in their ability to development teacher leadership in others (Portin, 2009). The importance of regular, and often informal communication, with teachers about teaching, learning and assessment also proved to be a significant finding for Portin (2009), Dada (2011) and Stephenson et al (2012).
Effective intrapersonal skills were also key. The *Model Teacher Leader Standards* (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (TLEC), 2010) require TLs demonstrate lifelong learning and ability to critically reflect on their own practice and then foster the development of critical self-analysis in others.

Whilst teacher leadership is not a new concept, recognition of its value as an element in educational reform is largely new in the UAE. However, teacher leadership is beginning to emerge in pockets across the country and improve instruction and student achievement. In these schools, leadership is shared with a continued focus on expertise in teaching. Teacher leaders generate instructionally specific conversations, develop trusting relationships and advocate shared leadership development resulting in team oriented cultures (Portin, 2009) and the development of communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Individual TLs share intrinsic motivation for improving teaching, learning and assessment. What is significant in their re-emergence now is the realization that leadership is the work of everyone (Lambert, 2002) and that shared and collaborative approaches to solving educational problems are more effective.

**Teacher Education and the Role of Mentoring**

At the same time as new perspectives about educational leadership have emerged, there has been a corresponding growth in understanding of the most effective approaches to teacher education, professional learning and development of pedagogical skills. Because teaching is a profession of practice, teacher education must focus on preparing expert practitioners who know their students, their content area and modern pedagogies. In order to develop in these areas, effective practitioners must learn through academic and professional courses interwoven and grounded in clinical practice. These field opportunities should provide expertly mentored experiences where TCs can connect what they learn with the challenges of using it (NCATE, 2010). Social theories of learning recognise that learning in the workplace is both a cognitive and social activity (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Learning is not an individual process separated from our daily activities and experience but rather occurs by acting, reflecting and talking with others. Lave and Wenger’s (1991) practice based theory of learning takes the position that learning occurs in communities of practice. This concept has changed the way professional learning occurs from a traditional transmission model to a ‘new normal’ where teacher professional learning is site based, collaborative and grounded in real world pedagogical challenges (Stephenson et al., 2012).

Teacher leaders engaged in mentoring and coaching others are now considered critical for professional learning (Kok (n.d); Ryan and Hornbeck, 2004). Quality mentoring and coaching exists when TLs challenge themselves and others to think deeply about teaching and learning. Furthermore, mentors who take the responsibility of coaching and advising beginning teachers are not only concerned with instructional, professional and organizational needs, they are also engaged in lending emotional and moral support to alleviate anxieties and stress that beginning teachers can feel (Gabriel, 2005).

The majority of teacher education programs in the UAE are characterized by university based courses supported by field experience in the schools. There is little evidence of school embedded models such as those found in professional development school partnership contexts (NCATE, 2010) where teacher education institutions and local schools partner in the development of teacher candidates. Taken together, the elements of teacher leadership and
communities of practice underscore this study’s objective to gain a better understanding of the critical role that TLMs can play in the area of teacher education, specifically through the mentoring and instructional work engaged in by TLs in UAE schools.

**Methodology**

The study was designed as a longitudinal case study over the Spring 2011 semester and which drew predominantly on qualitative methods. The rationale for this is that rich, descriptive and thick data best capture the intricacies, complexities and nuances of teacher leadership, educational practices and teacher education in the UAE.

The research sample consisted of eleven self-identified DIS teacher leader mentors (TLM), teacher candidates (TC) and the faculty supervisor (S). This paper discusses the findings on the TLMs’ strategies and their impact on TCs and provides examples from two specific TCs who were in TLM1’s classroom. The TLM’s role was to coach and mentor the candidates by helping them plan and deliver a range of lessons within various units of inquiry. The TCs were in class two days per week. The children were from various backgrounds with a majority on non-English speaking background learners. The supervisor’s role was to support the TLMs and TCs, and to observe and evaluate planning and teaching to ensure TC readiness for internship. The authors, Liz Howard (TLM1) and Lauren Stephenson (S), made up the research team and maintained regular contact throughout the study.

The tools for data collection were survey, dialogue, focus groups, journals, observations and documents such as lesson plans, reflections, and lesson feedback.

The survey data were analysed based on frequency. These data were then analyzed using an inductive process of identifying themes and key content areas. Themes and categories were identified and examples and quotes then extracted to illustrate the themes. Participants are referred to by position in this article and quotes are attributed to the TLMs, TCs and the S. All other proper names used are pseudonyms.

**Findings and Discussion**

Throughout the study there were key issues that impacted the TC learning process and the nature of teacher leadership. These included the characteristics of TLs, the strategies TLs used and their impact on TCs.

**Characteristics of TLs**

The survey data revealed that the majority of TLs agreed or strongly agreed with Danielson’s (2008) TL characteristics. TLs prioritized the following characteristics as most important for TL: expertise in their field (“competence in managing learning”); enthusiasm; open mindedness; and flexibility. For TLM1, the additional teacher leadership values that underpin her ongoing mentoring practices included “approachability, confidence in my own practice and in what I share …with TCs, support and empathy, and perseverance, and reflectivity.” Two TLs remained neutral concerning gaining the confidence of other educators and persuasiveness, while one TLM commented on the importance of “recognizing students’ religious and cultural influences and practices.”

**Strategies of TLs**

Through TL mentoring, modeling, coaching, support and guidance TCs improved content and pedagogical knowledge when teaching in the English medium. Specifically, their
understanding and use of professional language and English vocabulary developed. The supportive nature of the TLMs mentoring style and their understanding of TCs’ cultural background and language positively impacted TC learning. Throughout the practicum, the TLMs used a range of approaches with TCs dependent on the cultural context (Shah, 2006). However, similarly to Portin (2009), the most common mentoring approaches were modeling, coaching, guiding and supporting. Teacher candidate successes and challenges in managing learning and behavior included their improved content and pedagogical knowledge when teaching in the English medium, and the development of professional, positive, child friendly language in teaching practice and communication.

Improving content and pedagogical knowledge was a major focus throughout the practicum:

*Although exposed to a wide variety of current best practices in teacher education, particularly inquiry learning and the importance of differentiation, the TCs continually struggled with applying those and often reverted to the ways they themselves had been taught in UAE government schools. This meant they often slipped into traditional teacher-centered, authoritarian presentation lesson types which resulted in the children disengaging quickly and caused behavior management challenges for the TCs. We had to constantly remind them and ask them to reflect on more child friendly, engaging, learner-centered, inquiry based models (S).*

Similarly to the findings in Stephenson et al. (2012), the TCs commented on their improved pedagogical knowledge as a result of the hands on experience in real classrooms in a variety of significant ways including adapting their lesson plans, activities and timings to suit children’s needs:

*We were always learning. ...as the weeks passed we learnt that it was ok to change a lesson plan to react to the needs of the children. For example, if the children lack understanding of a concept you should not just move on and ignore this because in your lesson plan you only had 5 minutes to cover this concept (TC1).*

TCs’ language proficiency was between IELTS 5.5-6.0 and as such they made frequent spoken and written grammatical, phonological, lexical and spelling errors. It was necessary for the supervisor to proof read their lesson plans and all written handouts for the children, and remind TCs to continually monitor their own language for accuracy and expression. Teacher leader mentors also needed to continue to support and guide TCs to foster their understanding and use of professional technical language:

*They required support and input to understand the language to be taught, such as figurative language, character analysis ... (TLM2).*

Similarly to Harrison and Killon (2007) and Koki (n.d), guiding and modeling were key strategies used in the ongoing communication necessary to prepare TCs for teaching practice:

*Initially, they received considerable planning support [face to face or through email during the week] prior to the lesson and this became only somewhat less as the practicum progressed. I had to ensure I broke down any advice very simply so the [TCs] definitely understood...[It was very important to help with] correct vocabulary [and] language use ... Writing the suggestions also seemed to help (TLM1).*
TCs had to be reminded about expectations of professional conduct including punctuality, putting their handbags down when in the classroom, putting phones on silent, not texting or using the lap top in the middle of a class and engaging in meaningful, child friendly behaviors with the children. This surprised the majority of TLMs and led to their suggestions that TCs would benefit from more observation time of TLM professional conduct and time to get to know the children’s needs and interests before being asked to teach. TCs were willing to examine their behavior and tried to address these areas particularly because they wanted to change the stereotypes they perceived others, from outside their culture, may hold about them.

As the literature suggests (Danielson, 2008; Koki, n.d; Portin, 2009; Stephenson et al., 2012), the importance of clear and ongoing communication with the TLMs was critical for TCs:

*We were successful because we had open communication with our mentor and supervisor from the beginning. They were always available to help and answer questions ...to make sure we felt safe and secure in what we were doing... I liked the way the mentor began by asking us to observe and then we discussed what we had seen and she asked if there were any ideas we wanted to adopt especially with behavior management (TC1).*

Much TC learning occurred as a result of TLMs and TCs talking together about aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. Similarly to Stephenson et al.’s (2012) findings, the majority of the TLMs had a natural gift for relationship building through communication which resulted in greater individual and collective learning.

Whilst several TCs often relied on email to communicate with TLMs they sometimes failed to realize, despite ongoing reminders and communication breakdowns that TLMs and the supervisor did not typically check their email after 11pm. Teacher candidate 2 initially either did not send any plans or materials to the supervisor and the TLM for feedback or she did so only a few hours before she was due to teach. After this was pointed out she tried to become more organized and professional, resulting in better use of child friendly language when giving instructions, improved and differentiated activity design and greater accuracy of her own written language. Both TC2 and TC1 commented on this towards the end of the practicum:

*My planning became more detailed and easier towards the end of the practicum. I learned so much about better ways to plan, write instructions and create interesting activities for the children (TC2).*

TLMs commented on their need to coach TCs explicitly on breaking down the lesson stages and model instructional language:

*I had to make it very explicit that the [TCs] script their instructions. I needed to continually remind them and model the use of professional, positive, child friendly language ...and use a step by step and systematic approach ... remember when [TC1] simply said “off you go to your tables” at one point and the children had no idea what to do? (TLM1).*

The situation described above provided a powerful coaching opportunity for TLM1 and a learning opportunity for TC1 during the lesson itself. In real time TLM1 coached TC1 and asked her to bring the children back to the carpet and direct the children to the activity.

This ‘just in time’ modeling is captured in the example from TLM1 below:
When I felt my own in-class modeling could guide and support [TC1] and [TC2], I would signal to stop the children and wait for the talking to stop and then ask her to say this “I am waiting for some children to be ready. I can see that Adam and Aysha are ready … let’s see if we can all be ready”. There were several times when I would ask them mid-class to re-phrase confusing language or instructions (TLM1).

The TCs commented on the usefulness of such ‘just in time’ feedback during their lessons:
I didn’t know what Ms Liz meant when she said bring them back and tell them again but when she gave me examples [right then and there] of what I could say I understood what she meant immediately (TC1).

Initially, in post lesson discussions TLMs took more of the lead in offering suggestions and advice which is typical of the nature of mentoring in teacher education (Koki, (n.d). Liz would also encourage candidates to become more comfortable with key phrases they could use repeatedly which incorporated positive behavior strategies. Liz believed it was essential to model positive, child friendly language that TCs could use when teaching children:
I would highlight comments so the meaning was more specific in terms of expectation and behavior. I suggested changing ‘Excellent’ to a more specific and positive phrase such as ‘I like the way you are using adjectives.’ Sometimes the candidates would say things such as ‘raise your hand’ I suggested ways they could innovate that e.g. I am really glad you know the answer but can you please raise your hand (TLM1).

The TCs also indicated their appreciation for such concrete suggestions and ongoing reminders:
I feel happier because now I know what I am supposed to say but it’s hard to make those phrases mine. We never say such things in Arabic and I sometimes feel uncomfortable saying them (TC1).

As the practicum progressed, TLMs asked TCs to critically reflect on particular aspects of the lesson and specifically, through a variety of guiding questions, TLM1 would direct TCs to particular language choices they had made and ask them to offer more child friendly language:
When all the children were almost standing and grunting and obviously enthusiastic about wanting to answer, what could you have said and done to make sure you still had control of the class and also give all the children opportunities to give the answer? (TLM1)

However, as evident in TCs’ post lesson comments and written reflections on their teaching and impact on student learning, they found it challenging to critically and deeply reflect on their own practice. The TCs were only able to superficially consider their own experiences when applying their knowledge in practice despite ongoing coaching:
I think it worked well because the children liked the lesson. They said the lesson was fun! (TCM2).

Impact of TLs on TCs
Teacher candidate behavior management practices were clearly impacted by the nature of planning support, the frequency of lesson observations and the quality of post lesson reflection and discussion provided by the TLMs and the supervisor:
We observed our mentor teaching and we had discussions about classroom and behavior management strategies [particularly] the language the teacher used with the children. We were observed and videoed and then we sat down to discuss feedback after every observation as well as reading the written feedback. This really developed our confidence with the language of teaching and I think our teaching style improved too (TC1).

The majority of TLMs also commented on the improved confidence of TCs and their willingness to try a wider range of positive classroom management strategies:

Both TCs developed greatly in confidence with classroom management, creating a more positive learning environment in the classroom and planning more interactive well balanced lessons (TLM1).

Overall, the other TLMs and supervisor agreed that by the end of the practicum, the TCs were better able to use effective behavior strategies:

They used all the strategies they had observed which worked [well] with the children. They were using count down, patterned clapping, hand clasp, ‘give me 5’, waiting in silence with arms folded, praising the positive behavior, the wow chart…. They also introduced their own positive praise coins for specific good behavior such as good listening, deep thinking, thoughtful answers and so on (TLM3).

Because TCs were naturally shy and reserved one of the areas that they continued to find challenging was being assertive, raising their voices and appearing in control:

They still need to ensure they project their voices when starting count downs or commanding attention to ensure all children hear them (TLM2).

Another significant area that continued to challenge TCs was consistency and accuracy when using child friendly language with young children:

As time went on I noticed that more appropriate language was being used, however to feel confident using child friendly language in such a short time was difficult [for TCs]. We talked constantly about the type of language they could use and we gave written models to use but the TCs really struggled with this in terms of accuracy, fluency and ownership of the phrases (S).

The mentoring approaches used were clearly more explicit and directive initially. Later, as the TCs became more confident and able, and as the TLMs developed their mentoring skills, the strategies TLMs used changed to guiding and supporting. The TLMs commented that their own teacher leadership also developed through a variety of informal roles (critical friend, mentor, teaching colleague). Similarly to the Stephenson et al (2012) study, the TLMs recognized the opportunities that such roles provided them in terms of their own professional learning. They also enjoyed the recognition by other colleagues as being “knowledgeable and competent in managing student learning and behavior” (TLM1).

Conclusion

This study of the process of TC development through mentoring and the development of communities of practice identifies some of the ways TLMs work with TCs in productive ways, and what strategies and approaches facilitate that work. The TLMs had similar
perspectives about the characteristics of teacher leadership described in the literature (Danielson, 2008; Stephenson et al. 2012; York-Barr and Duke, 2004). They were tactful, strong, yet caring and compassionate (Lieberman, Saxl and Miles, 2004) and were able to support TCs by acting as catalysts for change in TCs’ own practice, sharing instructional resources, helping them use curricula documents to plan instruction and implement new ideas and effective teaching strategies to improve student learning (Harrison and Killon, 2007). At the same time TLMs modeled several teacher leadership roles including mentor, advocate, guide, coach and critical friend (Koki (n.d); Portin, 2009) and demonstrated their commitment to lifelong learning (TLEC, 2010), the ability to influence teacher education programs and the education profession in general (Shah, 2006).

Teacher candidates clearly benefited from the school embedded learning experiences with TLMs to improve their classroom management, language habits and behaviors of professional practice. With support of experienced TLMs, TCs were able to blend practitioner knowledge with academic knowledge. As they gained expertise in the field and began to value their own instructional skills and those of others, through ongoing communication, individual learning became shared which instilled a greater willingness to try out others’ ideas (Stephenson et al., 2012). They valued the safety associated with TLMs sharing different teaching ideas with them and discussion of the successes and challenges of implementation. There was also some evidence of TCs becoming better able to plan to ensure intended outcomes were achieved, adapt and create new materials, use technology, differentiate, and use a range of assessment tools. They better understood the nature of teacher learning demonstrated by the way they continued to try to reflect more critically and deeply.

Despite some gains in their use of professional language and TCs’ ability to critically reflect on their teaching and their own cultural and linguistic habits made it an ongoing challenge for them to develop consistent use of child friendly language. This is an aspect that requires further investigation to identify ways to assist TCs to overcome such challenges. Furthermore, in order to better support TCs, we suggest that TCs are given more time in schools getting to know children and observing and using behavior management strategies. There should be a greater focus on improving TCs’ proficiency in English language and professional child friendly ‘teacher talk’. Teacher candidates should continue to develop professional behaviors – communicating with mentors and supervisors, punctuality, attendance, appropriate use of mobile phones and engaging with children throughout the day not just when they “perform” their lessons.

The country’s universities should continue to advocate for and play a significant role in teacher preparation, teacher professional learning and instructional content in support of the UAE’s ongoing educational reform efforts. One way to do this is to draw on teacher leaders in support of teacher education programs and professionalizing the field of teaching. The country’s teacher leaders must also have access to a range of job-related roles for growth within the profession, such as serving as mentors for new teachers, peer assessors, or adjunct university faculty (Koppich, 2001). We need to continue to develop partnerships between teacher educators and teachers so that individuals are supported, encouraged and required to be a community of learners together.

References


The Varieties of English and Other Factors Affecting the Online Academic Listening Ability of EFL Students

Supalak Nakhornsri, Ph.D., King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok, Bangkok, Thailand
supalak.toon@yahoo.com

Abstract
This study aims at 1) examining the target language use (TLU) domain of academic listening ability; and 2) studying the factors affecting listening ability, which include the availability of nonverbal communication and English accents. The former consists of two levels; a test with nonverbal communication or with video and a test without nonverbal communication or without video. The latter includes the accents of ENL, ESL, and EFL. This study also investigates the effect sizes of these two independent variables on test takers’ listening English proficiency.

The sample consists of 180 EFL university students who study in English-medium universities and international programs in Thailand and other countries. The instruments used are divided into three main sets: 1) English proficiency tests, 2) online academic listening tests (OAELTs) and 3) TLU questionnaires. The data were analyzed by the following statistics. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the TLU domain of academic listening ability. Two-way analysis of variance (2*3 ANOVA) was used to identify the main effects of the two variables. Partial Eta squared reported by SPSS program was used to measure the effect sizes of the variables.

The findings of this study can contribute to a better understanding of the TLU domain of academic listening comprehension. They also can yield data on the validity of such test score interpretations. The information on what constitutes listening abilities can assist language researchers and educators in designing and developing listening tests. Therefore, the developed OAELTs have the potential to be a useful instrument for several purposes such as for placement or proficiency tests in assessing the listening abilities of English-medium university and international program students. The use of computers in test administration can be practical in giving the test to thousands of students.

Keywords: Varieties of English, Factors Affecting Online Academic Listening Ability, EFL

Introduction
For decades, listening has long been the neglected skill, especially in assessment (Douglas, 1988). This neglect might be caused by the lack of a widely-accepted theory of listening comprehension. Buck states that, “It seems that in practice test constructors are obliged to follow their instincts and just do the best they can when constructing tests of listening comprehension” (Buck, 1991: 67), giving voice to misgivings about the validity of listening skills assessment.

Furthermore, listening is viewed as the most difficult skill to learn by Thai learners who study English as a foreign language (EFL) (Chidchoo & Wudthayagorn, 2001). The reasons given for this perception vary. In a study by Chidchoo & Wudthayagorn, students claimed that the listening skill was more difficult than the reading skill due to their having less control over the input. The intricate processes of decoding a listening input increased the degree of difficulty. Buck (2001) also claims that listening comprehension involves complicated
cognitive processing that required students’ knowledge in both linguistic and non-linguistic areas. In other words, both bottom-up and top-down processes are believed to play an important role.

However, regarding EFL students, research has found that many EFL students’ academic listening and speaking skills in English are not strong enough to cope with academic study in universities where English is the medium of instruction, particularly in understanding English lectures and expressing opinions and comments. Such students have not gained sufficient English language skills for their academic study (Bamford, 2006, Banerjee, 2001). Because of this lack of proficiency in listening, the EFL students’ expressed low satisfaction with their infrequent participation in the group discussion environment.

Furthermore, Han (2007), whose study is about an academic discussion task of EFL students, reported that ESL students expressed the need to have an additional oral/aural skill training course which would enhance their listening comprehension, conversation and formal presentation skills. The improvement of especially listening comprehension can help increase their participation level.

In recent years there has been an increased focus on academic listening ability especially in terms of assessment in order to have a valid test used to recruit students into English-medium programs.

In constructing a valid listening test, there are many aspects to be considered. The concept of listening comprehension is accepted, yet an adequate definition is still elusive, and there seems to be a general consensus that there is no widely-accepted definition (Brindley, 1998). Part of the problem is the many different processes and aspects involved in listening comprehension, perhaps making a global, comprehensive definition impossible. Richards (1983) describes how listening varies according to what learners are listening for (social interaction, information, academic listening, listening for pleasure, or for some other reason). Also, the process of listening varies with the proficiency level of the learner (Shohamy & Inbar, 1991), and the context of the situation (Buck, 2001).

Bachman and Palmer (1996) point out that it is much more useful to see language use being realized as learners perform specific language use tasks. Therefore, rather than considering listening to be a skill, they see it as a combination of language ability and task characteristics. Thus, when designing and using a test, it is necessary to define these listening language use situations in terms of their task characteristics and the language ability and topical knowledge needed to perform them (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Bachman and Palmer refer to the importance of authenticity and interactivity in creating tests that are constructively valid. Creating test tasks that have characteristics similar to those tasks in the target language use (TLU) domain gives the tasks authenticity. Creating tasks that require the test-taker to integrate his or her topical knowledge (and affective schema) with language ability in order to successfully complete these tasks makes the tasks interactive (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

Particular TLU domains have to be established and included in the test construct in order to increase the validity of an academic listening test. For listening tests, there are some important factors that might affect test-taker performance. These include the type of text and the role of nonverbal communication. The type of text used in a listening comprehension assessment is critical to the construct validity of that assessment. Historically, many listening comprehension assessments have used texts that were written and read aloud. While this
might be representative of certain aspects of the TLU domain, such as radio and television broadcasts, it is less representative of the academic listening domain. A text that is written and read is inherently different from a text that is extemporaneously produced and simultaneously spoken (Hadley, 2001). Hence, listening tests can vary according to the aspects of TLU domain.

An aspect of listening comprehension that is often neglected when choosing texts for listening testing is nonverbal communication (Kellerman, 1992). Tyler and Warren (1987), in their study of local and global structure in comprehending spoken language, describe nonverbal communication as an important aspect of understanding spoken language.

Nonverbal communication can be helpful for the listener to recognize the components of the incoming text and so, to chunk the input appropriately. It can be defined as all movements of the body (Kellerman, 1992). Both Kellerman (1992) and Brown (1995) describe how a speaker’s body movement and stressed syllables are linked. These movements are helpful for the listener because stress often coincides with items that are semantically salient, in that they often provide new information. Even without being able to hear the words, an observer can visually see where the stressed syllables occur. In a stress-based language like English, it can aid the learner’s recognition, and storage in short term memory, of the aural input and help the learner to chunk it appropriately (Kellerman, 1992).

The importance of nonverbal communication presents a challenge to second language listening comprehension test designers who have traditionally relied on audio recordings of listening texts. Audio recordings preclude test-takers from exploiting nonverbal communication to aid listening comprehension. If nonverbal communication does play an important role in listening comprehension, as numerous studies (Baltova, 1994; Dunkel, Henning & Chaudron, 1990) have evidenced, then it is necessary to account for this factor in the construct definition of listening comprehension, and to design tests that take this into account.

One important aspect of the input that might also affect test-taker performance on a listening exam is the variety of English accent. Since the English language is today well established as the lingua franca (a language used as a medium of communication between people who speak different languages) of the world and it is breaking new grounds and spreading, that means that more and more people now have English as a foreign language, which they know well and use. The fact that an increased number of people speak English makes the language a subject for influence from all users included.

It is common practice when discussing the spread of English to divide the users into three groups: ENL, ESL and EFL speakers. The first group, ENL, is the native language speakers. The next group consists of second language speakers (ESL), the language can in this case also serve as an official language when it comes to government, law and education. Finally, there are foreign language speakers (EFL), which means that the language serves no purpose in their own country (Jenkins (2003).

However, it is difficult to identify Standard English because of its worldwide use and, as a consequence, its many varieties. The three-way model provides a useful starting point from which to move on to the present, more complicated situation. English as a Native Language (ENL) is the language of those born and raised in one of the countries where English is historically the first language to be spoken. Kachru (1992) refers to these countries, mainly
the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand as the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English. English as a Second Language (ESL) refers to the language spoken in a large number of territories such as India, Bangladesh, Nigeria and Singapore, which were once colonised by the British. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is the English of those for whom the language serves no purpose within their own countries. Historically, they learnt the language in order to use it with its native speakers in the US and UK, though nowadays they are more likely to use it for communication with other non-native speakers.

Figure 1 shows the most frequently cited version of the three-way model, the circles are oval rather than circular, and presented vertically rather than concentrically.

**Figure 1: Kachru’s three-circle model of World Englishes (Kachru, 1992)**

Because of the spread of English, English is being used for international communication, and for formal and public intra-national interaction, and the basilect for informal intra-national communication. English accents also vary according to these varieties of English, particularly according to the three-way model defined by Kachru. Since accent is a characteristic pronunciation that reflects a national or local mode of utterance (Oxford, 1990), it is determined by the social or regional background and phonetic habits of the speaker’s native or first language (Dictionary.com, 2007). Any perceived oral deviation from the listener’s aural expectations and his/her interpretations of these deviations therefore creates meaning in relation to accent.

Accordingly, accent is an important factor for listening comprehension, as shown by previous research on varieties of English from the three-way model. Ortmeier and Boyle (1985) have cited studies by Brown (1968), Wilcox (1978), and Ekong (1982) as evidence of the existence of an own, or local, accent advantage; that is, that ESL listeners comprehend more when they hear English spoken in an accent that matches their own. Flowerdew (1994) also cites Brown (1968) and Ekong (1982) in support of a local accent advantage. When the findings of a string of studies purportedly support a certain notion, that notion is liable to be viewed as an acceptable fact.

However, Tauroza and Luk (1997) reviewed a series of studies on the effects of accent on second language (L2) listening comprehension. From the findings, it is argued that degree of familiarity is the crucial issue with regard to whether a particular accent causes listening comprehension problems for L2 listeners of English. In contrast, whether or not a speaker's
accent is similar to the listener's is a secondary issue, which is important only in so far as it relates to the issue of familiarity.

From the above, listening can be considered the most difficult skill especially for EFL learners of English who study in English-medium universities or programs in their own countries. This particular type of listening can be called academic listening. Regarding listening assessment, the TLU domain has to be well defined for particular types of listening such as academic listening or general listening. Accordingly, the score interpretation can be more meaningful. Of note is the fact that there are many aspects or factors that can affect listening ability. Nonverbal communication can help the listener to recognize the components of the incoming text and to chunk the input appropriately. According to this, there is evidence that it can aid the listener’s comprehension during listening. Another important factor is the different accents from varieties of English. Various studies report that different accents can and do affect listening ability.

Current technological advances have made it possible to deliver a test via computers with various sources of input such as text, visuals and audio recordings (Flewelling & Snider 2001). The candidate usually responds to preset questions presented with visual and/or audio input.

However, the implementation of computer-based listening tests has raised concerns about the validity of such tests (Chapelle, 2001). This is because little is known about the extent to which the test methods of such tests may alter the candidate’s performance, which in turn may affect the assessment of their listening language ability. Test method facets have long been acknowledged as one of the factors that influence language test performance (Bachman, 1990). Several research studies have reported the effects of test methods on test scores and attitudes towards several kinds of listening tests. Unfortunately, few studies have investigated how the characteristics of a computer-based listening test may impact on test performance and the attitudes of test takers. Thus, there is a need for a deeper investigation into the effects of the test methods to better understand the constructs of listening. This in turn would help determine the degree to which we can justify the interpretations that we can make of test scores from computer-based listening tests.

Therefore over the past decade, listening comprehension tests have been converting to computer-based tests that include visual input. However, little research is available to suggest how test takers engage with Computer-based Listening tests (Ariew and Dunkel, 1989). From the review above, the features of academic listening language assessment, computer delivered language assessment and factors influencing listening performance including nonverbal communication presented by video and English accents according to the three-way model: ENL, ESL and EFL are the focus of this study, due to the fact that test takers’ performance is influenced not only by their language ability but also by other factors.

Research methodology

1. Research design
1.1 Independent variables: The independent variables selected in this study are 1) the availability of nonverbal communication, and 2) the accents of English according to the three varieties of English. The former consists of two levels; a test with nonverbal communication or with video and a test without nonverbal communication or without video (audio). The latter includes the accents of ENL, ESL and EFL.
1.2 Dependent variable: listening comprehension score
1.3 The sample: 180 EFL university students who study in English-medium universities and international programs in Thailand and other countries.
1.4 Sampling: This experimental research employs the 2*3 factorial design. The selection criteria are their general English language proficiency measured by the Test of English Proficiency. First, the EFL students are categorized into three general English proficiency levels according to their scores. ± Standard deviation (S.D.) is used to set the cutting points for categorizing students into 3 groups: Lower intermediate, intermediate and advanced. The students whose scores are between -1 S.D. to -2 S.D. are grouped as the lower intermediate group, those between -.5 S.D. to .5 S.D. are the intermediate group, and those between 1 S.D. to 2 S.D. are the advanced group. The students who score lower than -2 S.D., and higher than 2 S.D. are not included because they may be extreme cases toward both ends. The sample was blocked into 3 groups: lower intermediate, intermediate and advanced. After that, the students were randomly selected and used as subjects. Then, they were divided into 6 groups of 30. In total, 180 students were used in this study. Figure 2 illustrates the 6 blocked groups.

Figure 2: Six blocked groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Group 5</th>
<th>Group 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
<td>Advanced n = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Intermediate n = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
<td>Lower intermediate n = 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were randomly assigned to each block. After that, students’ proficiency scores were tested in order to establish that their English proficiency was not significantly different at the level of .05. Lastly, the six groups were randomly assigned to take 6 forms of OAELTs as illustrated in Figure 3.
Figure 3: Four groups of subjects assigned to take six forms of online listening tests (OAELT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OAELT with ENL accent and nonverbal communication (video file) (OAELT: ENL&amp;VDO)</td>
<td>OAELT with ESL accent and nonverbal communication (video file) (OAELT: ESL&amp;VDO)</td>
<td>OAELT with EFL accent and nonverbal communication (video file) (OAELT: EFL&amp;VDO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>Group 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAELT with ENL accent but without nonverbal communication (audio file) (OAELT: ENL&amp;Audio)</td>
<td>OAELT with ESL accent but without nonverbal communication (audio file) (OAELT: ESL&amp;Audio)</td>
<td>OALT with EFL accent but without nonverbal communication (audio file) (OALT: EFL&amp;Audio)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the study
The findings were interpreted according to the research questions below:

Data analyses for research question 1
The first research question asked: What is the target language use (TLU) domain of academic listening ability in a computer-based listening test (CLT) for English as a foreign language (EFL) university students? The data analyses for this question consist of descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage).

The target language use (TLU) domain was defined by distributing the open-ended questionnaire to 15 students who studied in the international programs (master’s degree) of King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok in the academic year 2009 and 5 teachers who are in charge of teaching master’s degree students. This questionnaire aimed to obtain information about English listening in real life. The open-ended questions asked about their listening purposes, listening settings, listening topics, and listening materials in real life.

The findings obtained from this questionnaire are described below:
Listening purposes in real life: Communicating with others, studying in the classroom (listening to instructors in order to understand the lecturers), working, doing other activities that they want to do in their daily life, participating in classroom activities (group discussion) learning various English accents and improving listening skills when communicating with foreigners and for their work in real life situations, listening to research or academic reports, entertaining, broadening outlooks, updating news, preparing for tests, and getting particular information

Listening settings: Listening to English by means of participating both intentionally and unintentionally in situations around them, listening to either native speakers or non-native speakers including their friends, parents, lecturers, or even whoever they contact within society, on TV, on the radio, songs, movies, in their classrooms, at a conference and so on, listening to a lecture in the classroom, listening for pleasure at home, daily work in the international environment, general situations, course study, and in every situation including
listening to news, music, movies, gaining new knowledge, shopping, ordering menu, using the telephone, and greeting others.

From the answers, it can be concluded that their common listening settings are the library, computer room, classroom, around campus, the workplace or office, factory, home or residence, on the streets, the cinema, tourist attractions, banks, hospitals, restaurants, book stores, public transportation (i.e. bus, sky train), and at the airport.

**Topics:** The common topics that international students tend to listen might be such as general conversation, greeting, meeting, studying, working, entertaining, living, lessons, TV programs (i.e. documentaries), movies, activities in daily life, news (i.e. showbiz news, current world affairs and sports), cross cultural communication, shopping tips, travel, office works, movies, shopping, technologies, fashion, music, English in everyday use, business, news, movies, weather, food, hobby, games, students’ presentation, and the topics relevant to what they are studying.

**Listening materials:** Listening media that international students often listen to are such as CDs, radio programs, TV programs, listening comprehension tests or practices, internet (i.e. VDO call or Skype), everyday conversation, and telephone.

**Data analyses for research question 2 and 3**

*The second research question asked:* To what extent does the availability of nonverbal communication affect test scores?

*The third research question asked:* To what extent do the accents in the listening input affect the test scores?

Two-way Analysis of Variance (2*3 ANOVA) was used to identify the main effects and the interaction effects of the main study. The 2*3 factorial design will be conducted in this study because there are two independent variables.

**Data analyses for research question 4**

*The fourth research question asked:* What are the effect sizes of the availability of the nonverbal communication and the accents of the three varieties of English?

Partial Eta squared reported by SPSS program is used to measure the effect sizes of the availability of the nonverbal communication and English accents (Thalheimer and Cook, 2002).

To investigate the effects of the availability of the nonverbal communication and English accents in listening comprehension ability, a 2*3 ANOVA was conducted to find the main effects between two IVs (the availability of the nonverbal communication and English accents) on DV (listening comprehension score). The data for ANOVA were obtained from the six versions of the English listening comprehension tests: OAELT: ENL&VDO, OAELT: ESL&VDO, OAELT: EFL&VDO, OAELT: ENL&Audio, OAELT: ESL&Audio, OALT: EFL&Audio. The mean scores from these tests were used in the analyses for main effects. The results were used to test the hypotheses set for this study. The results of the analyses are shown in Table 1.
Table 1: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>5024.919(a)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1674.973</td>
<td>22.064</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>172355.326</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>172355.326</td>
<td>2270.44</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of NV</td>
<td>194.037</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>194.037</td>
<td>2.556</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accents</td>
<td>3732.130</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3732.130</td>
<td>49.164</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediums * Authenticity</td>
<td>1098.751</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1098.751</td>
<td>14.474</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>22470.137</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>75.913</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>199850.382</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>27495.055</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P< 0.05

The findings were interpreted according to the research questions below:

Research Question 2: To what extent does the availability of the non-verbal communication in the listening input affect the test scores?

Research Question 4: What are the effect sizes of the availability of the nonverbal communication and the accents of the three varieties of English?

Statement of Hypothesis 1: The mean scores obtained from the listening tests with video (with non-verbal communication) and the listening test with audio (without non-verbal communication) are significantly different at the significant level of .05.

Statistical Hypothesis: H1: X Video ≠ X Audio

The significant value of the availability of non-verbal communication value shown in Table 4.6 is .111, which is higher than p value (0.05). Therefore, the statistical hypothesis is rejected. This finding reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean score obtained from the tests with video (OAELT: ENL, OAELT: ESL and OAELT: EFL) and those obtained from the tests with audio (OAELT: ENL, OAELT: ESL and OAELT: EFL) at the 0.05 level (p> .05, F = .177). This means there is no difference between the listening scores obtained from the tests with and without non-verbal communication.

This effect size was calculated using Partial Eta squared, which is the typical effect size formula used for univariate design analysis. It is scaled like a percent and interpreted as the higher the number the larger the practical effect. The Partial Eta squared value can be interpreted according to the following criteria (Cohen,1988 cited in Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 2002:360):

>0.2 is large effect size
>?0.1 is medium effect size
>0.05 is small effect size

Accordingly, the effect sizes of the two independent variables: English accents and the availability of non-verbal communication results can be reported by using the finding in Table 1.
The effect size value illustrated in Table 1 of the availability of the non-verbal communication is .009. (See the values in column Partial Eta squared.) This means that the effect size was small (Cohen, 1988 cited in Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 2002: 360).

Research Question 3: To what extent do the accents in the listening input affect the test scores?

Research Question 4: What are the effect sizes of the availability of the nonverbal communication and the accents of the three varieties of English?

Statement of Hypothesis 2: The mean scores obtained from OAELT: ENL, OAELT: ESL and OAELT: EFL are significantly different at the significant level of .05.

Statistical Hypothesis: $H_1: \bar{X}_{ENL} \neq \bar{X}_{ESL} \neq \bar{X}_{EFL}$

Table 1 shows that the significant value of the accents is .00 which is lower than the $p$ value (0.05). According to this, $H_1$ is accepted. This finding indicates that there is significant difference between the mean score obtained from the tests with different accents at the 0.05 level ($p < .05, F = 49.164$). This means there is significant difference between the listening scores obtained from the tests with different English accents.

As illustrated in Table 1, the effect size value of the accents was 142. (See the value in column Partial Eta squared.) This means that the accent has medium effect size on test takers’ listening ability score (Cohen, 1988 cited in Ary, Jacobs and Razavich, 2002: 360).

Conclusion

The focus of this part was to report the results of data analysis. The data obtained from the six versions of English listening comprehension tests: OAELT: ENL&Video, OAELT: ESL&Video, OAELT: EFL&Video, OAELT: ENL&Audio, OAELT: ESL&Audio and OAELT: EFL&Audio were analyzed for main effects using 2*3 ANOVA. From the data analysis, the crucial results obtained revealed that there was a significant difference found among the tests with different accents (OAELT: ENL, OAELT: ESL, and OAELT: EFL). This finding can be explained by Ortmeyer and Boyle’s study (1985) which provided the evidence that accents affect students’ listening comprehension. The familiarity of the accents can be a key factor since the study illustrates that ESL listeners comprehend more when they hear English spoken in an accent that matches their own. Moreover, Tauraoka and Luk (1997) have studied on the effects of accent on second language (L2) listening comprehension and the finding is argued that degree of familiarity is the crucial issue with regard to whether a particular accent causes listening comprehension problems for L2 listeners of English. Hence, the listening test providing the listening task with more familiar accents to the test takers tend to allow more chances for them to get higher scores.

No significant difference was found between the tests with video and audio (the availability of the non-verbal communication). In terms of the effect sizes, Partial Eta squared revealed that the accents have a medium effect size and the availability of the non-verbal communication (video and audio) has a small effect size on the listening ability score.

Since the main effects of the accents on the listening ability is confirmed by the findings, the implications of which are set out as follows:
1. In terms of theoretical significance, the findings can contribute to more meaningful constructs of a listening comprehension test. Test developers have to consider the target language use in real life in the test items.

2. This study can contribute to theoretical knowledge in the area of language assessment regarding the predictive validity of the listening comprehension. This is because the test scores obtained from the test which is related to target language use in real life may predict some future behaviour of the test takers.

3. The findings which are about the effects of the factors affecting listening ability (nonverbal communication and variety of English accents) will provide information for educational practitioners to develop more effective listening comprehension tests to test takers.

4. The ways the test is designed and selected can affect the fairness of recruiting processes and also help determine the directions of English teaching in order to prepare the students with the ability required.

References


Han, E. (2007) Academic Discussion Tasks: A Study of EFL Students’ Perspectives *EFL Journal* 9,1: 8-12


Stereotypes in a Foreign Language Classroom – Modifying Negative Attitudes to Enhance Foreign Language Learning

Elżbieta Szymańska-Czapak, Opole University, Poland
ela@uni.opole.pl

Abstract
The aim of the paper is to present various aspects of the phenomenon of stereotyping in the context of foreign language learning and teaching and to discuss practical solutions to be used in a FL classroom to teach the world about the world by questioning the stereotypes learners have of other nations and languages.

Keywords: stereotypes, foreign language learning

Introduction
The researchers in the field of FL learning and teaching frequently postulate avoiding or questioning stereotypes. They evaluate teaching materials and discuss the teacher’s role in the process of FL learning, concluding that non-stereotypical elements introduced to FL education open student’s minds and shape the attitude of tolerance. On the other hand, students bring already formed and deeply set cultural and linguistic stereotypes into a FL classroom, which – considering the nature of stereotypes – makes a task of questioning them not an easy one.

Thus, the question arises if stereotypes are to be regarded as stable in the process of FL learning (as they seem to be at first sight) or a teacher’s influence can make them variable. The idea of stereotypes being a variable category seems to be a promising one, since a teacher, applying suitable techniques and creating favorable conditions could be capable of modifying student’s attitudes, changing negative into positive ones, at the same time influencing students’ motivation to learn a FL. Students’ initial reluctance, resulting from negative cultural and linguistic stereotypes they share, instead of prevailing for years of FL learning and resulting in almost no development of competence, could be turned into knowledge about other people and openness to appreciate differences.

The article presents some ideas how listening activities included in an EFL course book can be adapted to serve the purpose of developing students’ critical thinking, questioning already formed stereotypes and preventing others from being formed in the process of foreign language learning.

Stereotypes in foreign language learning and teaching
The concept of stereotypes is referred to in several disciplines, including psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics (Dyer 1999, Kunda and Thagard 1996, McGarty and Yzerbyt 2002). It is also used in a broad sense to denote a commonly held popular belief about specific social groups or types of individuals. Describing the nature of stereotypes, researchers in the field point to the fact that they are standardized and simplified conceptions of groups based on some prior assumption. In forming stereotypes, categorizing and labeling, otherwise being necessary and inescapable, turns into building exaggerated pictures of groups rather than seeing people as individuals (Brown, 2000; Macrae et al., 1996; Stangor, 2000). In foreign language learning and teaching, the individuals are seen as members of a group formed on the basis on nationality they have and the language they speak.
Researchers in the field of stereotypes distinguish between an *in-group*, which is described as the group that one associates with or aspires to join. In-groups are viewed as normal and superior. The term *out-group* refers to all the other groups and is perceived as inferior to the in-group. Stereotypes focus upon and thereby exaggerate differences between groups. Competition between groups minimizes similarities and magnifies differences (Brewer, 1979).

Research into stereotypes and foreign language learning and teaching is conducted in two main frameworks: in the context of foreign language culture, with immigrants as subjects of research, as well as in the foreign language classroom outside foreign language culture, with students as participants. Moreover, there are two periods of time taken into consideration: before learners start foreign language experience and within the process of foreign language learning. Research methodology frequently makes use of Osgood’s (1964) semantic differential scale. The related concepts studied together with stereotypes are attitudes, social distance and motivation.

The first modern reference to the term occurred in 1850, where *stereotype* was referred to as „image perpetuated without change” (stereotype, n.d). Thus, the question arises whether stereotypes are stable, deeply rooted in students’ minds or variable, possible to be modified with the help of a language teacher in the process of language learning. Studying the nature of stereotypes, the researchers notice that automatic subconscious stereotyping is quickly preceded by explicit conscious stereotyping. The original picture formulated quickly without noticing is followed by a check which permits for any needed correction. Automatic stereotyping is affected by explicit stereotyping because frequent conscious thoughts quickly develop into subconscious stereotypes.

Stangor (2000) points out that stereotypes and prejudice are the result of social categorization. Social categorization occurs when, rather than thinking about another person as a unique individual, we instead think of the person as a member of a group of people. One reason behind forming stereotypes is the lack of personal, concrete familiarity that individuals have with persons in other racial or ethnic groups. Lack of familiarity encourages the lumping together of unknown individuals (Hurst, 2007).

Interpreting behavior from the point of view of your own culture has severe consequences for shaping attitudes towards other people. Hofstede’s (2001) model of different cultures clearly indicates that different interpretations of seemingly the same concepts may lead to prejudging or misjudging groups of people that come from different cultures. That is why the teacher’s role as a mediator between the two cultures is unquestionable in the process of foreign language and culture learning.

What follows is an attempt to present some ideas of foreign language teacher’s role in developing students’ sociocultural competence with the aim of raising their cross-cultural awareness and questioning the stereotypes learners bring into a foreign language classroom. Although the material analyzed is adapted from one coursebook only, the idea can be generalized to various foreign language teaching contexts.
Foreign language and culture classroom

The research field of teaching a foreign language together with the target culture has developed enormously in the past decades. The researchers address the issue of developing cultural awareness (Kramsch 1995, Tomalin and Stempleski 1993, Tomlinson and Masuhara 2004) as well as teaching culture in various educational contexts (Byram 1987, Seelye 1993, Secru, 1998, Nieto 2002, Ho 2009). Following research results and implications for a foreign language classroom, educators and publishers offer teaching materials suitable for developing students’ sociocultural competence. However, it is the teacher’s role to use the potential the books offer.

The activities for developing students’ sociocultural competence are abundant. Foreign language course books are full of culture sections, pages or corners, teachers can make use of additional materials prepared by educational publishers all over the world. Even if explicit elements are lacking, teachers can develop students’ cross-cultural awareness in an implicit way. They can also adapt course book activities for their own needs, e.g. by discussing the topics students have just read about or listened to in reading and listening comprehension exercises. Such activities provide background knowledge and stimulate discussion, limiting prejudging and misjudging which might occur if a teacher just asked a question for the students to answer.

What follows is the analysis of fragments of tape scripts from listening comprehension activities taken from a course book preparing Polish secondary schools students for the school-leaving exam (Krajka and Mizak 2004, pp.112-118). Having completed listening comprehension activities in the form of true/false or multiple choice questions, the students might get involved in a discussion stimulated by the content of the conversations. The recordings chosen for discussing stereotypes follow the pattern of an interview conducted be a Pole (Marcin Mizak) with representatives of English-speaking countries (Phil Brown, Richard Smith and Martin Hopley).

The topics discussed concern opinions about, attitudes towards and judgments of various cultural aspects, be it tea drinking or discussing the weather, impressions people have about other nations or languages people speak. In this respect, all the fragments presented below refer to the topic of stereotypes. In the first example, the phenomenon of tea-drinking as a social occasion is discussed.

---

Marcin Mizak:
Is it true that English people drink a lot of tea?

Phil Brown:
Many Polish people have said to me „Do English people drink tea every day at 5 o’clock?” This is a myth. And to be perfectly honest with you this is a myth that I’m very new to. I’d not heard this before. I mean it’s true that when we come home from work the first thing we would do would be to have a cup of tea. Also, it’s the natural way of greeting someone. If someone comes to your house you’d say „Would you like some tea?” interestingly, unlike most tea drinkers in the world we take our tea with a dash of milk.
Describing the English phenomenon of tea drinking, the teacher may point out that contrary to e.g. milk-drinking or juice-drinking, which are just activities or routines, tea drinking may be regarded as a social occasion or cultural event. Polish people have the stereotype of English people drinking tea every day at 5 p.m. It would be interesting to check if it is still prevailing among English people in general or maybe young English people do not follow this custom. The teacher may point out as well that in Poland we also welcome guests offering them tea or coffee, without being stereotyped as a nation of tea-drinkers but rather as people who use a universal politeness strategy.

Further in the same activity, the Polish interlocutor, tracing the roots of the stereotype, mentions information found in the Internet:

Marcin Mizak:
Cecil Porter said, I found it on the net, that tea is much more than just a simple drink in Britain. It is an art, a way of life, almost a religion. It is deeply traditional, even more traditional than roast beef, fog, cricket or driving on the left. She says it’s like the life-blood of the nation. Do you agree with her Phil?

It would be interesting to observe the reaction of a native speaker to such a question but no answer follows since this is the end of the listening comprehension activity; however, the discussion may continue in the classroom, both teacher and students looking for the answer, e.g. conducting an online survey with English pen friends or searching the net for necessary information. Other forms include participating in cross-cultural projects, writing blogs or taking part in videoconferences.

Instead of referring to typical activities and topical issues for the representatives of a given nation, the following examples touch upon the perception of a group of people treated as collective identity of a given nation. The question arises about false impressions people may have about the British.

Marcin Mizak:
Have you heard of any of the false impressions people have about the British?

Richard Smith:
Yes, yes, for example I’ve been told by many Polish people that Polish people believe British people to be very reserved and even shy, when I know most British people believe this is entirely the opposite of the way they behave. British people even believe they behave in a rude manner sometimes, which is very far from being reserved and shy. So this positive opinion that some people have about the British is far from the truth.
Further in the conversation, the Polish interlocutor enquires about the characteristics of a typical Englishman:

**Marcin Mizak:**
What is a typical British man like? Is it true that he is patient, punctual, gentlemanly and polite?

**Richard Smith:**
This is the clichéd image of an Englishman. And I would say, without being offensive, I would say the only one of these characteristics that I know does apply is punctuality. As far as I know we have a very different attitude in Britain toward punctuality than people in Poland. Just from my teaching experience – students arrive late and to them there is nothing really wrong in arriving late and this is such a shock to my British sensibilities. There are many times when an Englishman is supposed to be somewhere but if they cannot be there on time they won’t go. There’s this famous phrase “Better late than never”. This is said in Britain ironically. If someone is late you will say to them “Better late than never”. But we don’t mean that at all.

Describing the British as punctual, the British interlocutor identifies himself as a representative of a nation with this positively valued trait. At the same time, he contrasts the in-group (the British) with the out-group (the Polish), adding that it is not his intention to offend any particular Polish person, especially his interlocutor. He explains that both groups treat the category of time differently and that is why literal understanding of the English proverb by Polish people brings sarcasm and irony on the part of the British.

He provides an example of how he, as a representative of British people, understands the notion of punctuality:

We try to be early for things. I know I do. I feel pretty stupid sometimes because I do this. For example, the first time I came over to Poland: The coach left London at 12.00 but the coach from my town to London arrived at 11.20 but check-in for the coach began at 11.00 so instead of arrive with 40 minutes to check-in I arrived at 7.00 in the morning because that was the first coach that arrived before 11.00 and I do a lot of things like this.

Switching from generalizations into personal experience may become a good starting point for a discussion on the nature of stereotypes – are they just useful generalizations or misjudgments and overgeneralizations, which may even offend the representatives of the group in question. Personalizing the topic by providing examples from students’ real-life situations may trigger the debate whether a given trait could be treated as a national characteristics or it is only an individual feature of some representatives of the group.
Asked about other qualities, the British interlocutor notices:

I would like to think that these are real British qualities but I feel that if you took an average Englishman you would just as likely find him a football hooligan as a gentleman. Maybe this stereotype of British people as being polite or patient has some truth but I still think they're generalizations.

Raising cross-cultural awareness implies concentrating on other cultures as well. The following listening exercise could stimulate a discussion on how the British see other nations.

Marcin Mizak:
How do the British see French people?

Martin Hopley:
The French we see as being very rude. That’s the stereotype we have in our heads – that the French are very rude. Mainly I think this is because the only part of France that most people visit is Paris and I’m told by most Frenchmen that Parisians are in fact rude.

It is essential to point out in here that many of us have a stereotypical picture of other nations from the perspective of the inhabitants of the capital city only. Many course books reinforce national stereotypes by presenting characters living and working in, as well as travelling to big cities.

Continuing, the British speaker refers to contrasting features which people admire in other nations:

Marcin Mizak:
Germans?

Martin Hopley:
We see Germans as being very efficient. That’s the one word I would have to describe Germans with and that’s the view we’ve always had. But it’s strange. Although, typically we say we don’t like the Germans we kind of admire that efficiency in them. I read a great article once that said that it’s a kind of an exchange where we admire the German efficiency and the Germans want to be a little bit more relaxed and good humoured like English people.
Usually people identify with similarities between the groups and it is differences that we are suspicious about. However, since we feel that there is some truth in negative stereotypes about the group we belong to, we somehow admire the things that are universally positively valued but are not much the case with our nation (see the discussion above on in-group/out-group relations).

The next example is an attempt to trace the origins of stereotypes and shows how deeply they are rooted in people’s minds.

Marcin Mizak:
Spanish people?

Martin Hopley:
It’s a terrible thing to say but we have er…, we have the opinion that Spanish people are lazy (…) „Manjana. Manjana.” Constantly tomorrow, tomorrow. And I think for English people that describes the Spanish attitude to things and it’s, yea, it’s, that’s … We find that very true especially when we go to Spain.

Since it is universally regarded impolite to say not nice things about others (threatening their face), we sometimes refrain from expressing negative stereotypes openly in formal contexts or distance ourselves by using phrases as the one above: “It’s a terrible thing to say but …”. Also the phrase “Spanish attitude to things” does not directly value the behavior negatively but instead points to the differences in the perception of time in other cultures. Earlier in the conversation, the speaker values the trait negatively (“Spanish people are lazy”) from the point of view of his own culture. The example shows how our first thoughts are polished when we have more time to think about the issue. In other cultures, Spanish perception of time may be positively valued and being on time at all costs may be perceived as negative (a sign of hectic busy lifestyle).

Similar explanation is possible for the next fragment:

Marcin Mizak:
Americans?

Martin Hopley:
Americans … Americans we see as being very loud. Very annoying, as well. I must admit we’ve got this … we have this picture of Americans as being very enthusiastic. Sometimes a little too enthusiastic. And this kind of offends our laid back kind of attitude.

The characteristics of “being very loud” is a matter of both fact and opinion. However, from the point of view of a relatively quiet nation the neutral trait can become perceived as annoying.

In the following excerpt, all Eastern European countries are grouped together on the grounds of their communist past and ascribed the same characteristics even if they differ intensely in
the eyes of their own citizens. Such grouping is perceived as very annoying, if not even offensive, especially by the younger generation for whom the communist past is history now.

Marcin Mizak:
Martin, what is the British perception of Polish people?

Martin Hopley:
In Britain, we, again it sounds very patronizing, but we, hm … we have this perception of Eastern Europe and we block it all together and take it as one block and it’s very difficult for us to kind of look beyond that. It’s a … I find constantly, in talking to people that I will make comparisons with people about when I was in Czech Republic and every time I do this I feel I need to pinch myself and say this isn’t Czech Republic, Martin. We generally think of Polish people as being quite hard, you know, able to deal with hard physical conditions. We think about history and we look back and we think well from 1949 through till 1990 it was totalitarian governments. (...) So we have this opinion of Polish people as being very hardy.

Again, the British speaker admits he knows it is not the right thing to do but at the same time he cannot help doing it. It is also interesting to observe how he develops his argument about Polish people being “hard” to survive hard conditions and immediately in the next thought he builds associations between “being hard” and “being strong”, introducing the idea of Polish people being drinkers:

Also we think of Polish people as being drinkers. We see Polish people as being so strong that they can poison their bodies like this and still walk away from it. It’s quite strange. That’s probably the British perception of Polish people.

Apart from people who represent the nation, also the language they speak gets stereotypical traits. Although linguistically all languages are equal, sociolinguists study prestige or lack of prestige attached to them. People value phenomena positively or negatively, and in this way stereotypes of languages and dialects are created. The following excerpt touches upon prestigious and non-prestigious British accents.

Marcin Mizak:
Are there any accents in Britain that carry prestige and others that are not liked?

Martin Hopley:
In terms of prestige the only accent that really has any prestige would be the BBC Received Pronunciation English accent. Accents that are not particularly liked are the Birmingham accent; the West-Midland's accent is looked down upon quite strongly. Some accents can come in and out of fashion. For example the Scottish accent is seen as being very desirable at the moment.

When accents get in and out of fashion, the time is probably too short to form a stereotype. However, when the period of time is long enough and there are other reasons behind, sometimes stereotypes are formed, e.g. German and Russian are negatively valued by many Poles for historical reasons and not chosen as eagerly for foreign language learning as other languages. Even if educated people are conscious there is nothing bad about the language itself, still they build associations which at first thought make them value things without prior knowledge of the issue. The teacher’s role in the foreign language classroom is to provide knowledge to prevent prejudging and open students to having second thoughts developed in vivid discussions stimulated by texts, teacher and peer students.

The next fragment supports the above argument and shows how stereotypes are formed.

Marcin Mizak:
So would you say that there are good and bad accents?

Martin Hopley:
I believe all accents are good. I don’t think there are any linguistic reasons for saying that one accent is better than another. All I meant was that some accents, for one reason or another are liked more than others. People connect Brummie, the Birmingham accent with criminals, it brings to mind a serious of unpleasant cultural associations, but the reasons for this are social not linguistic.

Students’ perceptions of dialects and languages may influence the process of foreign language learning. If the attitude is positive, students are highly motivated to learn. Just as they can benefit from positive attitudes, they may refrain from progressing due to negative perception of the language they have to study. Sometimes the students have no choice but they have to follow the foreign language policy of educational authorities of a given country or school. If they want to study one language but are forced to take another option they might never achieve positive results. Their negative or positive opinions about languages may be as vague as the ones below but at the same time may have huge influence on their progress.

Students’ opinions on chosen foreign languages:

(-) difficult, boring, stupid (based on the opinions of others, since it precedes the experience of learning a foreign language)
(-) sounds awful (based on subjective feeling, e.g. influenced by songs)
(+ ) sounds nice
(++) is nice
The above perceptions are mostly stereotypical opinions but their role cannot be underestimated offering students foreign language courses and later in the process of foreign language learning.

The activities described above involved adapting listening comprehension materials in such a way that they become stimuli for discussions on stereotypes. Apart from listening comprehension exercises, the teacher can use other texts to provide the starting point for a classroom debate. One of the ideas could be Internet materials on stereotypes about Poles. Since the students themselves belong to the group, reading about how others perceive them could work as a kind of shock therapy; after the lesson the students would think twice before expressing opinions which are just their first thoughts, based on no prior knowledge or just insufficient knowledge on a given topic. The following stereotypes about Poles can be discussed in the classroom:

Stereotypes about Polish people:

They do not know foreign languages  
They never smile and always complain  
They are intolerant  
They abuse alcohol  
They live in the country where car theft is part of everyday life

(adapted from Bogacz 2009)

The discussion may revolve around all the stereotypes but the author will concentrate on the first one, showing how providing evidence in the form of statistics may help students understand the nature of stereotypes.

People who declare in the national survey (2007) that they can communicate in some foreign language:

45%  in general  
77%  aged 18-24  
80%  of pupils and students

and of them

43%  at an elementary level  
14%  at an intermediate level  
6%  at an advanced level

(adapted from Okrój-Hernik 2006)
On the basis of the above data it is clearly visible that the stereotype “Polish people do not know foreign languages” is far from the truth. The reality is changing but the stereotype prevails. The reason might be the fact that it is just a stereotype but also the unwillingness of Polish people to get involved in conversations in a foreign language with strangers asking the way. Polish people often choose avoidance strategy rather than communicate with whatever language resources they possess. In contrast, if Spanish people are asked “Do you speak English?”, they reply “A little” and try to help the foreigner even if in fact they speak no English at all.

Discussing other stereotypes the students may conclude that it is hard to deny the problems exist. They do, like in any other country. However, they are being extremely exaggerated, especially by those who tend to ridicule the image of Poland in the public eye. In reality, the situation is not as dramatic as stereotypes suggest.

**Conclusion**

It is evident from the above considerations that stereotypes prevail even when reality changes. They are not harmful as long as people realize that they are just stereotypes and do not believe they depict every member of a given group. However, sometimes they might become offensive and then stereotyping turns into prejudice (Brown, 2000; Macrae et al. 1996; Stangor, 2000).

Foreign language classroom seems to be the right place to question stereotypes, modify students’ attitudes and develop their cross-cultural awareness. The teacher’s role in providing knowledge about other people and shaping students’ attitudes of tolerance and openness cannot be overestimated. In everyday classroom practice, the teacher may adapt the existing teaching materials to stimulate discussions about stereotypes, just as proposed by the author in the analysis of listening comprehension activities. In this way, the idea of teaching the world about the world could get deeper meaning.

**References**


Educating the Children of Immigrants: A Cross-Cultural Study Between Boston and Rome

Deana Bardetti, PhD, Language and Literacy Division, Lesley University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
dbardett@lesley.edu

Abstract
Teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) public school students in Boston, Massachusetts, and Rome, Italy, were interviewed about their work with this unique, growing subset of learners. The twelve teachers’ stories highlight myriad issues facing educators across the globe. Each teacher had recently participated in a research-based, government-sponsored professional development program focused on second language acquisition and culturally responsive pedagogy. Themes emerged through the analysis of individual interviews and classroom observations. These findings highlight teachers’ perceptions of effective professional development, along with identification of institutional barriers impeding the delivery of best practices to CLD students. Cross-cultural comparisons are made that suggest an inconsistency in educational services for CLD students, along with an urgent need for professional development courses for teachers and administrators. The educators’ voices shed light on both the challenges and rewards associated with this important work.

Keywords: Achievement gap, English language learners, professional development, second language acquisition, Italy

Introduction
Francesco, Natasha, Mohammed, and Maria,3 their names listed on the brightly colored chart outside the classroom, welcomed the students back to school. Inside the classroom, I heard multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Arabic, and Italian. Twenty years of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD)4 children taught me to relish the variety of languages and cultures students bring each autumn. However, on this day, I wasn’t in my English as a second language (ESL) classroom in Massachusetts. Instead, I was visiting a public elementary school in a middle-class neighborhood in Rome, Italy, where second-grade teacher Marina was about to greet her class one warm September morning in 2004.

As the students began filing into class, I learned many of these second-graders were the children of immigrants. It was evident that they were quite happy to greet their teacher. I turned to Marina and asked her to tell me about her pupils. She proudly explained that there were children from 44 countries enrolled in this school, and that the demographic change had occurred rapidly. Of course Rome has always been a cosmopolitan city, but it is now obvious that the permanent population of Italy’s capital city has changed. I asked Marina about the reaction of local Italian families. She replied that many Italian parents removed their children from this school in order to place them elsewhere in the district, in schools with fewer...
immigrant children. She pointed out that the number of Italian students was now approximately equal to that of students from immigrant families.

Marina told me the faculty had not yet received specific guidance on integrating these newcomers, but that the Italian minister of education recognizes the need for specific courses in this area. I explained that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education had recently developed a series of courses for public school teachers to learn about teaching CLD students. At that point, the idea of a cross-cultural research project was initiated, and after spending the morning with Marina’s students, I assured them I would see them again soon.

Research Questions and Background
This research project unites the perspectives of two groups of motivated and dedicated educators in the suburbs of Boston, Massachusetts, and the city of Rome, Italy. I interviewed six educators in Massachusetts and six in Rome who met two criteria: (1) they were directly responsible for their students’ second language development; and (2) they had chosen to participate in a professional development course about improving educational attainment for CLD students. Each educator had also indicated that being bilingual was a resource for her students, one upon which she wanted to build while providing the academic language needed to access the school’s curriculum. Though the distance between them is great, the everyday challenges and joys these two groups of teachers face are similar.

Investigating issues affecting the education of CLD students in two countries is challenging. However, on the topic of second language education, critical theorist Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) explains: “The topic of multilingualism, and the education of minority children, is fascinating to work with in several ways. It is a socially important—and controversial—topic, with immediate implications for most societies in the world” (p. 9). With this important message in mind, I proposed a research plan that would link the experiences of public school teachers on two continents, each of whom is devoted to improving the schooling of CLD students.

Supporting students’ language development is certainly a necessary skill for all educators, but for teachers of CLD students, a thorough understanding of second language acquisition methodology is essential. Research-based professional development needs to occur in order to prepare educators to prepare all students. According to literacy expert Judith Lindfors (1987):

There are different ways of looking at, and seeing, the children we teach. One prevalent perspective is to view schoolchildren as bundles of deficiencies, lacks, and problems. … But in the area of language, the child is an extraordinarily healthy organism who will continue to flourish in the rich environment we can provide. We are not trying to rid the child of language “problems,” but rather to enhance her remarkable continuing language environment. (p. 25)

The overarching questions that guided my work are the following:
(1) What do teachers perceive as barriers, at the school, district, and national levels, that prevent them from meeting the needs of CLD students?
(2) What are teachers’ perspectives on professional development courses designed to improve the educational experiences of second language learners?
(3) How do local and national language policies affect teachers?
What can be learned from a cross-cultural study and how can this new knowledge inform a teacher/researcher’s role in order, ultimately, to close the achievement gap for CLD students?

Using qualitative interview methods, these queries were embedded into semi-structured interview questions. The interviewees had each recently participated in a course on introductory methods for working with CLD students. In Massachusetts the course offered through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is titled *Category One: Second Language Teaching and Learning*. In Rome, a similar course, offered through the Italian Ministry of Education, is known as *Action Italian: Language of Contact, Language of Culture*.

Demographic statistics in the United States and Italy show a dramatic increase in the enrollment of CLD students. According to the U.S. Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA, part of the U.S. Department of Education), in the 2003 academic year, over 5 million English language learners were enrolled in public schools (grades pre-kindergarten through 12). This was an 84% increase in English language learner (ELL) K–12 enrollment over 1993 statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Over the past several decades, the influx of immigrants into Italy has dramatically altered the political, social, and economic landscape, making new demands on the Italian public school system. Politicians are currently in the midst of heated debates over how to educate and integrate these students. In addition to the political struggles over educational policies, the implementation of these policies depends on national and regional funding as well as the personal initiatives of school directors and teachers. For this reason, the educational of non-native Italian students is shaped by the complex interaction of ever-changing national politics, regional funding and policies, and the actions of local school officials.

Statistics from January 2008 show a 17% increase in immigrant students in Italy in comparison to one year prior (Istat, 2008). Data from 2010 statistics show foreign students represent approximately 9% of the student body at the primary school level, 8% at the lower secondary level, and 5% at the upper secondary level. Of those foreign-born students at the secondary level, 80% of them enroll in technical and professional institutes, while only 20% attend more academically rigorous scientific and classical high schools in preparation for higher education (Istat, 2011).

As the student population in both nations continues to become more diverse, teacher preparation does not reflect the changing classroom demographics. Presently, only 20 U.S. states require teachers to attend courses in working with ELLs, and less than one sixth of university teacher preparation programs include courses on working with ELLs (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). On the critical need for teachers with specialized knowledge in working with CLD students, researchers Dianne August and Kenji Hakuta (1997) state:

> A large and growing segment of the population of students in the United States comes from homes where English is not the primary language spoken. Many of these students live in poverty, their families do not have a deep history of formal education, and many are not yet proficient in English. At the same time, schools and more generally the educational system are not adequately prepared to respond to the rapidly changing student demographics. Such conditions combine and interact to produce educational outcomes that demand attention. (p. 1)
To further compound the lack of resources for ELLs in Massachusetts, in November 2002, an English-only ballot initiative supported by businessman Ron Unz was part of the Massachusetts state election. Voters approved the “Unz Initiative,” making sheltered English immersion (SEI)\(^5\) the default instructional approach for bilingual children (Reveille et al., 2007). The resulting law reads, in part:

> All children in Massachusetts public schools shall be taught English by being taught in English, and all children shall be placed in English language classrooms. Children who are English learners shall be educated through sheltered English immersion during a temporary transition period not normally intended to exceed one school year. (Massachusetts General Laws, § 71A-4, 2002)

The Unz Initiative passed with a 70–30 majority. The one-year provision was in direct opposition to significant research regarding the length of time needed—approximately five to seven years—to acquire academic skills in English (Cummins, 1981; Krashen, 1999; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

In Rome, as in Massachusetts, political decisions directly affect the quality of education CLD students receive. Dr. Mara Frascarelli, professor of linguistics at the University of Rome, addressed the fact that the national Action Italian professional development course she helped design was quickly unfunded due to government changes:

> I feel very sad. I mean, this is a situation in Italy when you have something that works well and then the government changes and you never know how it goes. Trying to get support for our training program, well, I feel as if it’s like a cry in the desert. No one is listening. (September 2008, personal communication)

In the city of Rome, with over 400 elementary schools, the Action Italian course included a group of only 80 teachers. These teachers were then expected to adequately train all of the other faculty members in their schools. Consequently, the percentage of CLD children in Rome who were affected by this important initiative is negligible, since presently the program is no longer offered.

**The Achievement Gap among English Language Learners in the United States**

The extent of cross-cultural contact within and across national boundaries in the past 40 years is unprecedented in human history. According to Cummins and Schecter (2003), one result is, “in many school systems, monolingual and monocultural students are the exception rather than the rule, particularly in urban areas of North America and Western Europe” (p. 1).

Due to increases in immigration in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe, the educational needs of diverse students are in the spotlight. Teachers who attend professional development courses on second language acquisition and culturally responsive teaching can gain essential knowledge for meeting the unique needs of the CLD students. On this crucial topic, researchers Cummins and Schecter (2003) assert:

---

\(^5\) Sheltered English immersion (SEI) means that grade-level content is made accessible for English language learners through a variety of research-based techniques. Teachers in Massachusetts attend professional development courses offered through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in order to learn this methodology.
New teachers have graduated into the educational system with virtually no knowledge of how to accommodate the needs of ESL students with their teaching practices. … For almost 30 years, our teacher preparation programs inadvertently reflected the image of the generic student in the school system as white, monolingual, and monocultural. (p. 3)

Data from the 2007 U.S. National Assessment of Educational Progress highlights a persistent achievement gap between ELLs and native speakers of English. On state-developed math assessments, the gap is 23% between ELLs and native English speakers, and the gap widens to 32% in state-developed reading assessments. Likewise, nationwide high school graduation rates show a 16% gap: 80% of native English speakers graduate from high school, but only 64% of ELLs graduate (Swanson, 2009).

The graduation rate of ELLs in Massachusetts is almost 10 points lower than the national average. According to 2008 data, only 54% of ELLs graduated from Massachusetts high schools, whereas 79% of native English speakers graduated; a 25% achievement gap. (Swanson, 2009).

The Achievement Gap in Italy

In Italy, National Law Number 40 of March 6, 1998, declares: “Foreigners have the right to education and they must attend compulsory schooling. The school community welcomes linguistic and cultural differences and protects the student’s culture and language of origin.”

However, the majority of programs and policies supporting second language acquisition focus on teaching native speakers of Italian a second or third European language, as opposed to supporting the development of Italian as a second language among immigrant students.

Mikael Luciak, professor of education at the University of Vienna, Austria, researched the achievement gap among CLD students in the European Union (EU). According to Luciak (2006), many different types of minority groups coexist along a broad spectrum of educational approaches targeting cultural and linguistic diversity. Lack of proper teacher training with regard to second language acquisition is one area of concern. On teacher training in Italy, Luciak (2006) states:

The training of language teachers in several old EU member states is of low quality. This concerns native language teachers as well as second language teachers, who are not qualified or licensed. For example, many schools in Italy have resorted to “cultural and linguistic mediators” as external language support providers for pupils who have been in the country for a short period of time. Frequently, the mediators do not possess the necessary competencies. There appears to be no common standard for educating Italian as Second Language teachers. (p. 78)

Maurice Crul (2007), a senior researcher at the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies at the University of Amsterdam, asserts: “The successful integration of the children of immigrants is now among the foremost policy challenges for Europe. Evidence shows, however, that their opportunities and life chances are significantly inferior to those of children born to non-immigrants” (p. 1).
To close the achievement gap, Crul (2007) believes that EU member states should be seen as a natural laboratory for identifying effective practices in improving education for immigrant children. Hence, the justification for my research is to address two essential issues in twenty-first century education: a persistent achievement gap among CLD students in both the United States and Italy and a dramatic shortage of qualified teachers who can address the needs of this increasing subset of public school students.

Methodology

A research study based on qualitative inquiry enables one to listen to teachers’ stories in an inductive and naturalistic manner, without subscribing to a predetermined hypothesis. According to Glesne (1999), qualitative methods are supported by the constructivist paradigm because they portray a socially constructed world which is complex and ever changing. On this point, Glesne (p. 5) concludes that the researcher becomes the main research instrument when observing, asking questions, and interacting with research participants.

Purposeful sampling was used to choose the interviewees and to gather the group variables necessary for conducting this research (Patton, 1990). The interviewees were directly responsible for teaching CLD students in their classes in either Greater Boston or Rome. Each recently had chosen to participate in their respective professional development workshops, Category One (Massachusetts) or Action Italian (Rome). Additionally, the professional development course curricula were analyzed. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Education Alliance at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, coauthored the participant manual for Category One. This course is still implemented across Massachusetts and is delivered in a face-to-face setting. In Italy, numerous professors representing each of Italy’s provincial universities contributed to the national Action Italian course curricula, which were then delivered in a face-to-face setting as well as online.

Semi-structured interviews focused on teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy and appropriateness of the professional development course, barriers to effective second language instruction at the school and district level, and understanding of local and national language policies. School visits were conducted in Massachusetts and Rome over the period of April 2006 to September 2008.

Qualitative methodology provided rich, ample data from which to extrapolate relevant themes. According to Patton (1990, p. 14) the greatest benefit of employing qualitative methods is that one can increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations studied. When the data was analyzed, several major themes relevant to teaching CLD students emerged. Overall, the findings of this project suggest the importance of further cross-cultural studies and increased collaboration between educators.

Findings

The amount of inclusion a CLD student experiences in her new school is profoundly affected by the teacher’s attitude toward second-language learners. The interviewed teachers in both Massachusetts and Rome recognize that their CLD students are rarely provided with adequate resources to achieve academic success. According to a Harvard University research team led by Marcelo and Carolina Suarez-Orozco (2001), the quality of the CLD student’s school matters a great deal in determining the child’s educational success. There are many factors that contribute to making a school a place where second language learners can succeed.
Unfortunately, each of the 12 teachers reported that the schools in which they teach actually contribute to the growing achievement gap between native-language speakers and CLD students, rather than eradicating the problem.

The two main institutional issues affecting the work of the teachers I interviewed are inappropriate distribution of teaching supplies and inadequate classroom space and technology equipment. The teacher of CLD students is often relegated to teaching in a hallway, supply closet, or lunchroom. Just as the CLD students are marginalized by their educators and the larger community, so too are those who teach them. In the words of Jessica, a teacher of first-grade ELLs in Greater Boston: “I feel like my kids are treated as second-class citizens because, as their teachers, we have to reinvent the wheel. We have to find odds and ends and fend for supplies more so than other, regular teachers.” Author Sonia Nieto (2007) states that teachers who work with CLD students “need to become familiar with theories and pedagogical approaches to second language acquisition and development and need to have positive attitudes about their language minority students” (p. 230).

The teachers interviewed reported challenges collaborating with school personnel, including general education teachers, special education faculty, and administrators. Authors Fillmore and Snow (2002) assert that, in order for all teachers to feel competent and invested in each student’s language ability, linguistic knowledge must be one of the major strands woven into teacher preparation programs. Otherwise, educators with limited understanding of second-language theory often question the rate of language acquisition for CLD students and (incorrectly) infer that the child has a cognitive disability requiring special education services. However, a teacher who has taken courses relative to second language acquisition and multicultural education will recognize that, while the CLD child is not learning disabled, he or she still may need five to seven years to acquire academic language proficiency (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Furthermore, it is common for teachers without specific training in second language theory to incorrectly assume that a child who has attained oral proficiency has also mastered the advanced cognitive academic language necessary to succeed in school (Krashen, 1999; Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). In the words of Lisa, a Massachusetts educator of ELLs:

Sometimes I feel like I’m the only one in the lifeboat here. I think most classroom teachers get in my way, because there’s very little understanding of the language process. There’s little understanding of where kids come from, what their needs are, and how long it takes.

Marina, the aforementioned second-grade teacher, enjoys a good rapport with her administrators. However, she had the following comments about the overall status of educational programming:

The Italian schools are undergoing a period of economic crisis, which does not allow them to adjust to the new needs and social changes. An intercultural mentality is not yet popular, there are not many intercultural initiatives; the corsi di aggiornamento [professional development offerings] for teachers are limited. The massive immigration that occurred in the last years is a new phenomenon, and the schools are only beginning to find new solutions to cope. (April 2008)

---

6 General education teachers are those teachers responsible for an entire class, such as first grade, sixth grade social studies, and so on. These teachers can also be referred to as content, curricular, or mainstream teachers.
Angela shared her thoughts on teaching Italian as a second language classes to middle school students:

If these foreign students do not know Italian, classroom teachers feel someone else has to take care of them. At the end, students are happy to be taken out of class to work in a small group with me. But, after those two or three hours a week, which are not enough, it is all up to the student’s effort, not the classroom teacher’s effort, so it is not going to work. It’s a problem the Italian ministry does not even think about it. In the future, it will explode. I am sure about this. (September 2008)

Angela makes a strong point when declaring that the Italian Ministry of Education must address the needs of teachers of CLD students or face serious consequences. Without proper background knowledge in the methods of instructing second language learners, educators often view non-native speakers of the school’s majority language through a deficit model, and have been found to devalue these students’ native languages and cultures (Ogbu, 1992; Valencia & Solorzano, 1997).

Finally, high school teacher Tina describes the struggle to convince her colleagues about the importance of providing an equitable education for all students in Italian schools:

I know fellow faculty members who have stated that immigrants should always start from the lowest social levels. They tell me, “We, Italians, did the same in the USA. Now it’s their turn.” Another common comment about these Ital2 students is: “They cannot make it. Unfortunately they will fail.” Meaning, we will fail them. Even young teachers share this opinion. (July 2008)

Tina’s observations are supported by research on teacher education which finds that those teachers lacking background knowledge on bilingual and bicultural children are not prepared to meet their needs effectively (Reeves, 2006).

**Conclusion**

I heard despair, frustration, and sadness in the voices of the 12 educators who participated in my study. However, I was impressed by their resilience in the face of these challenges. A strong desire to continue working with CLD students, while advocating for changes within their schools and communities, was expressed by all participants. Each teacher advocated for her students on the topic of additive bilingualism, or the addition of a second language without losing the first. Teachers described working diligently to educate colleagues about the positive aspects of bilingualism and biculturalism.

Outstanding professional development in the area of second language acquisition has many common attributes, according to teachers in Rome and Massachusetts, and several essential themes emerged. In both settings, ambitious education reform initiatives hinge on the effectiveness and qualifications of teachers, and therefore professional development courses need to be engaging and relevant. Both sets of teachers appreciated learning something new that could immediately be applied to their classrooms. They also spoke of the importance of courses being well-organized, innovative, and research-based. Additionally, teachers liked being provided with concrete objectives, resources, and real-life examples of CLD students’ work. Cooperative learning and group projects were mentioned as excellent activities in each setting. One teacher remarked that she enjoyed working with others in her course in order to
plan actual lessons for CLD students. A combination of theory and practical activities was a common perception of effective professional development among the research participants.

Several teachers in Italy commented that they appreciated being taught the major linguistic differences between Italian and another language, such as Russian. Teachers in both settings benefited from course presenters who asked them to reflect on and/or share their own cultural and linguistic background. Several teachers viewed the courses on second language acquisition as a powerful vehicle through which they could adjust their colleagues’ viewpoints on diversity in a non-threatening atmosphere. In general, the courses were well-received in both settings, and participants particularly enjoyed being taught words in foreign languages, which enabled them to put themselves in their students’ place as second language learners.

Culturally and linguistically diverse students need to experience learning in a supportive atmosphere, and numerous scholars have made significant contributions to what we now know to be effective practice for these children (Cummins, 2003; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Valdés, 2001). Research-based methodologies that have been proven successful for CLD students need to be implemented to a greater degree. Therefore, professional development courses, such as Category One in Massachusetts or Action Italian in Rome must continue, in order to enable educators to close the achievement gap among CLD students.

References


A Season of Discontent: The Use of Study Notes with First-year Undergraduate Bahraini Students

John McKeown, Senior Lecturer, English Education, Mevlana University, Konya, Turkey
jmckeown@mevlana.edu.tr

Abstract
The study, conducted at a new teachers college in the Middle East, establishes the relationship between the use of study notes and an increase in student performance in testing situations with groups of first-year undergraduate students. The research confirms that the use of study notes increases both the confidence and attainment of participants and results demonstrate an increase in the use of study notes and a positive change of attitude toward their use by the participants. The two groups who identified the greatest need of assistance were the groups who achieved the greatest gains: underperforming male candidates; and, female students who identify themselves as lacking confidence in English in order to take tests capably.

Using anecdotal student evidence, the author underscores parallels between the current situation of civil unrest, and grievances made by students in terms of the lack of opportunity to fully express their sentiments, didactic teaching methods, restrictions related to learning grounded in memorization, and on summative testing as an assessment tool.

The results are of significance to administrators and to other researchers investigating study skills and approaches to study at the college level, and for the implications of maintaining a status quo in assessment.

Key words: study notes; summative assessment; undergraduate teacher education; student note-taking

Background to the study - Bahrain Teachers College (BTC)
Bahrain Teachers College (BTC, 2012) opened to students in the academic year 2008-2009, and is the only 'professional' college in the University of Bahrain (UoB, 2012); that is, its emphasis is aimed at improving professional practice. The College of Education (CoE) which BTC replaces was an 'academic' college, in that it emphasizes theoretical learning over practice. BTC is a key part of a major education reform initiative, and part of the Bahrain 2030 strategic vision for economic reform, largely overseen by the Bahrain Economic Development Board (BEDB, 2011). BTC is therefore publicly committed to diversifying approaches to education and assessment in Bahrain state-sector education, and its programs are intended to emphasize constructivist, collaborative, and discovery-based learning, reflective practice, 'active' student-centered learning, and continuous assessment using a diversity of assessment methods.

This is indeed a radical departure for Bahrain, where as in other GCC countries the approach to education throughout the twentieth-century 'oil era' has been bureaucratic, 'passive', teacher-led, and assessed via formal examinations, in which rote memorization plays a large part. Much of this model was 'imported' from the non-GCC Arab World during the 1970s and '80s, and involves an unquestioning application to the principles of what Donald Schön has called 'technical rationality' (Schön, 1983:21-69).

BTC is also unique as it is the only officially 'bilingual' college within the UoB, with classes held both in Arabic and English. Although English has no legal status in Bahrain, it is widely
used for business and commerce, and is making rapid in roads into other areas of economic activity. Thus, advanced English language skills are seen as being important for a good education in contemporary Bahrain.

Another challenge faced by BTC is the Arabicization and indigenization of concepts and practices to which it is committed (Diboll & McKeown, 2011a, 2011b). While these are fairly well-trodden paths elsewhere, they are innovative in the context of Arab World state-sector education. The perceived newness and foreignness of these approaches presents BTC with serious challenges in getting its mission and vision understood throughout various constituent members of the community: the challenge is to communicate effectively why these changes are necessary.

The BTC offers a four-year B.Ed. and a one-year PGDE program. This study is situated in the B.Ed. undergraduate program of education studies.

In the first semester, students felt that their results from mid-term testing in three sections of a B.Ed. Foundations course in 2009-2010 first semester, neither reflected their progress demonstrated in class, nor their conceptual development. Students wondered aloud to the instructor about more effective ways to prepare for testing. In consultation with the instructor, it was decided to aim for a positive learning outcome, enhanced through the introduction of a strategy to raise student attainment and to bolster test-taking confidence in English. When informally surveyed on the results of mid-term testing, students related that they relied on instructor-produced handouts for study purposes, and that they didn’t have an alternative method by which to consolidate what they had learned in the course. Some students reported that they were not using study notes and lacked strategies for successful test preparation.

Study Notes

“Study notes” refers specifically to learner-prepared notes that students use to assist in preparing for summative assessments. These notes are not teacher handouts, lecture notes, or commercially prepared study guides. They are a compilation of main points covered in class, created in English and/or Arabic according to the needs of the learner, and specifically prepared by a student or group of students. More often than not, they are based on materials supplied by the instructor.

Review of Theory

1. Benefits of study skills

One key to post-secondary academic success is effective study skills. Researchers (Hughes and Suritsky, 1994; Kiewra, 1985; Ornstein, 1994) indicate that a learner’s inadequate knowledge of study skills can be a major reason that students encounter academic difficulty in college (Rafoth, et al., 1993). It has been suggested that learning strategies and learning content knowledge are both important elements to learning outcomes (Wittrock, 1974). The use of a strategy during the learning process can affect the encoding process (the process of putting the information into one’s memory system), which in turn affects learning outcome and performance (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986). These aspects of learning are particularly important in the Bahraini context where high school graduates’ study skills can’t be taken for granted.
2. Organization of information for study purposes

Research shows that many students have difficulty organizing information. In studies conducted in the United States, 61% of students surveyed reported having trouble organizing ideas and 52% admitted that their notes are disorganized (Rachal, et al., 2007). Students regularly organize information linearly, in lists or outlines, and studies have shown that such linear organization restricts learning (Robinson & Kiewra, 1995).

My experience, along with that of my peers, confirms that study skills are seldom effectively taught in state-sector schools. This condition is reflected in studies where researchers determined that the importance of this area is under-estimated. Educators believe college students should be expert learners since they have practiced learning for many years, when in reality, 73% of college students report difficulties preparing for exams, and this percentage of reported study problems is consistent across college years (Rachal, 2007).

Research shows that instructors omit processes needed to learn content, and tell students to study but not how to do it. Just 20% of teachers believe that teaching students study skills is a priority (James, 2006), and just 17% of college students report that their teachers help them learn or improve study skills (Saenz & Barrera, 2007). Additionally, students are often given a list of study tips but with no systematic study plan, or in other cases, students are taught a systematic study plan, but the plan is difficult to implement and not effective.

Research confirms that college students employ weak strategies while studying (Kiewra, 1991; Jairam & Kiewra, 2009). Weak strategies include poor note-taking, organizing ideas linearly, text-highlighting, and organizing information into lists or outlines. Students employ redundant strategies, such as re-reading and re-copying notes, that expose them to the same information repeatedly. One study reported that two thirds of students study for tests by simply re-reading their notes, with more than half of them only doing so minutes before the test (Bausch & Becker, 2001) and, when students study using class notes, 12% do nothing more than re-copy notes verbatim. These inefficient strategies most likely come about as students are seldom taught how to learn (Zimmerman, et al., 1996).

3. Approaches to preparation of study notes

There exists some debate as to whether students benefit more from studying their own notes or notes provided by the instructor. The advantage of personal notes is that they contain more familiar retrieval cues than the instructor’s notes (Van Meter, Yokoi, & Pressley, 1994). However, a disadvantage of personal notes is that they are often incomplete (Kiewra, 1985b,) compared to the instructor’s notes. Research confirms that the more notes students have available for study, the higher their achievement (Baker & Lombardi, 1985; Kiewra, 1985a, 1985c; Kiewra, et al., 1987).

Scholarly interest in study skills was encouraging. This breadth of research indicates that the experience at BTC is shared by higher education practitioners internationally.

Context of the study

The majority of BTC students are directly recruited out of state-sector high schools that BTC was founded to reform. Based on this fact and on student feedback, it was valuable to determine what test-related study skills they have in place, and if other alternative strategies are accessible for use that would not necessitate additional course work or assigned study time for participants.
Experience showed that reliance on memorization for summative assessments in English language produces high test scores only for a minority of participants.

Language use is an issue. Out of six required courses students undertake in the first year of the B.Ed. program, these sections of the *Social Context* course were the only ones where learning took place exclusively through the use of English, and with assessments conducted in English. Other courses were either taught completely in Arabic, or bilingually, in Arabic and English. As a non-Arabic speaking practitioner working in a Gulf region context, understanding linguistic challenges facing the learner is crucial (Diboll, 2010a).

**Description of the participants**

The sample was comprised of first-year Bachelor of Education candidates enrolled in a prescribed program of study, aged 18-20 years, at the BTC, a professional teacher training college at the University of Bahrain. Data was collected from two courses that each extended over one semester: from three sections of TCPB 111, *Social Context of Education in Bahrain*, in the first semester; and, from one section of TCPB 121, *Managing Classroom Learning*, in the second semester. There were 22-24 candidates in each of the sections for a total of 125 potential participants. Unusually for the Gulf Region, BTC is co-educational. There was a gender ratio of 70% female to 30% male.

Candidates are chosen for admission to BTC through a selective process including testing in English, Science/Math, and in Arabic, and additionally, are given an individual assessment of English levels and a personal-interest interview. As state sectors schools in Bahrain are gender separated, the Ministry of Education is under pressure to graduate appropriate numbers of females and males to teach in gender-segregated schools. In this case, some candidates were admitted unexpectedly with levels of English considerably lower than anticipated, particularly in writing. Males in particular had significantly lower levels of English proficiency, and reduced study skills experience. The preparation of study notes in English is of key importance in preparing students for testing situations conducted in English.

**Ethical considerations**

Throughout the process, students were informed of the intentions regarding the research and of their participation in the study. During the formulation of the project, students discussed openly their concerns and questioned what possible strategies were available for use. Once informed of the research process, they were asked if they would consent to participate. All students were willing to use study notes with the awareness that the use of study notes or other skills could otherwise affect their grade outcomes. They agreed to participate provided that all candidates received an equal opportunity to use study notes. This was done during sessions in both courses.

Participants enthusiastically agreed to complete a study note satisfaction survey at the end of the second semester as part of the data collection. They were pleased to learn that the instructor was interested in finding out more about their study skill development, along with their results.

Reporting to the BTC Academic Heads Council, the Research Committee deemed that researchers completing a study within the academic year 2009-2010 in the partial fulfillment of the Professional Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP) through York St. John’s University at BTC were not required to provide written consent from the participants.
Methodology
To investigate the effect of using study notes, data was collected from student mid-term tests and final exams in TCPB 111 in Sections 2, 5 and 7. Data was further collected from three quizzes completed in TCPB 121, Section 4. Results were compared between the use of study notes in Quiz 2 with results from Quiz 1 and 3. There was a choice for students to use study notes in the second semester, but not in the first, as their use was mandatory. As part of an end of semester study program in TCPB 111, each student was requested to produce a set of study notes. This was not the case in TCPB 121, where students could opt out if they had a significant rationale (no one opted out).

Section 2, 5 and 7, B.Ed. Year 1 candidates were asked to use study notes for the initial Cycle 1 investigation:
- TCPB 111 midterm 1 (November) – without use of study notes
- TCPB 111 final exam (January) – with study notes.

Section 4, B.Ed. Year 1 candidates were asked to use study notes for Quiz 2, as a limited control group:
- TCPB 121 quiz 1 (March) – without use of study notes
- TCPB 121 quiz 2 (April) – with study notes
- TCPB 121 quiz 3 (May) – without use of study notes

Sections 2, 4, 5, and 7, B.Ed. Year 1 candidates completed a student satisfaction survey, at the end of June, 2010.

Collection of Student Satisfaction Survey Data
The instructor created an online student survey for affective data collection, and analysis which was administered during the last week of courses at BTC, June 21-28, 2009. 82 students took the survey, 29 males and 53 females. The majority of respondents, 97%, were aged 18 and 19. The survey was composed of 10 questions including demographic data on gender, age, and total of study time completed for test preparation (e.g., “How many hours do you normally study for summative assessments?”). Additionally, candidates were asked to classify resources used while studying and to identify changes in test results due to the use of study notes. They were requested to select the perceived benefits of using study notes, if any, and to consider if they would use them in the future. Finally, they listed with whom they studied, and who prepared their study notes.

Analysis of the data
• Test Scores - overall results
Mean test scores in the first semester of TCPB 111 Sections 2, 5 and 7, and second semester TCPB 121 Section 4 results (considering changes from Quiz 1 to Quiz 2, and from Quiz 2 to Quiz 3) indicate an increase of 2.7% (for both male and female candidates). A rise in scores for all sections, over both semesters, is 3.3% for females, and for males, 2.1%. Females had a greater overall increase in results than did males.

Using comparative data gathered from mid-term tests and final examination scores, there is an overall increase of 2.2% for males, and 5.7% for females. There is an overall increase in scores of 3.9%.
Examining scores in more detail, a decrease of -1.3% is found in Section 2 of TCPB 111. This is likely due to four Year 1 candidates who reported that they “didn’t study at all” for their final exams and performed poorly. These scores affected the overall results downwardly.

In TCPB 111 Section 5, there was a gender-combined gain of 1.3%, and in Section 7, a gain of 3.9%. Males increased scores in Sections 5 by 0.1%, and in Section 7, by 3%. Females increased scores in Section 5 by 1.2%, and in Section 7, by 4.9%. The greater increase in Section 7 was predictable, as this section was the most enthusiastic about implementing the use of study notes.

Further investigation was needed to find if there were reasons to explain the substantial increase in the scores of the two groups most affected by the use of study notes:

- underperforming male candidates who struggle to produce sufficient high quality English to perform well in testing situations; and,
- females who identified themselves to me as lacking English proficiency to take tests confidently.

As anticipated, there was an overall rise in scores for all candidates. But, as the analysis of the data indicates, the two groups listed above benefit the most from the use of study notes.

**Results of the control group**

In TCPB 121 Section 4, there is an overall gender-combined rise in scores of +1.5%. This includes the increase of 2.7% from Quiz 1 to Quiz 2, followed by a drop of -1.2% from Quiz 2 to Quiz 3. This positive/negative result substantiates the impact on raising scores by the use of study notes. A corollary effect may also raise scores: the increased interest and motivation of the instructor.

As the mean doesn’t differentiate the impact of study notes across a range of students, individual scores were monitored to discover who had made the greatest gains. Two groups again are evident, underperforming male candidates, along with female candidates who had previously identified themselves as lacking proficiency in English to confidently take tests in English.

It is interesting to note that students who were achieving higher levels of test scores at the outset of the research, demonstrated marginal improvement or no improvement in their test scores.

**Study Notes Student Satisfaction Survey results**

**Time spent studying**

59% of students surveyed reported that they studied for quizzes for 1 or 2 hours, for midterms 54% indicated 3 to 4 hours, and for finals, 75% specified that they studied 5 or more hours. From student anecdotal reports, the number of study hours seems high. This may demonstrate the value that students place on studying when assessment weighting is higher. For example, in TCPB 111, the midterm was weighted as 10% of the final grade, and in TCPB 121, three quizzes were weighted at 15%, with each quiz of an equal value of 5%. However, in TCPB 111, the final examination was weighted at 30%. This weighting difference may partially account for the reported additional time spent studying.
• **Improvement in results**
For study purposes, 74% to 76% of respondents used notes from class, or handouts provided by the instructor. 31% of respondents thought they had improved their scores by 11% to 30% which mirrored their test scores. 35% believed that they had improved their scores by 41% to 50%. This percentage is a higher result than test scores indicate. This discrepancy could be due to students thinking that, perhaps their scores had increased when, in fact, they had remained the same. Or, alternatively in the response to this question, those students may have considered a rise of scores in other courses where they were also using study notes. Interestingly, students in TCPB 121 didn’t comment on the fact that their scores had decreased for Quiz 3. That response may be due to the fact that the quiz was out of 15 marks, and the previous two quizzes were scored out of 10.

• **Perceived Benefits**
97% of respondents reported that they now relied on study notes to help them prepare more fully for tests, and 78% thought that using study notes gave them extra confidence for testing. 45% supported the idea that study notes assisted them in using English for testing, and 65% agreed that the notes assisted them to memorize more easily. 77% of respondents indicated that study notes gave a better idea of time need for study and that preparing them was an efficient use of their time (78%).

• **Organization of study notes**
Most students compiled study notes on their own (59%) or with a friend (42%), and 33% reported that they compiled their study notes with the instructor. 63% of students described their notes as “a summary of main points”.
Overall satisfaction with using study notes to prepare for summative testing was high at 48%, to average at 50%. Between 70% and 76% of participants indicated that they would always use study notes in the future for mid-terms and final exams, with 60% reporting that they would use them to prepare for quizzes.
Given the data, students overwhelmingly accepted that study notes are an effective tool to enhance their study skills, and, in particular, to raise their grades under the current circumstances. This gives a window into their perceived benefits of using study notes and, additionally for the BTC. If study skills are deemed to be useful by the learners, then these skills ought to be taught more thoroughly in a variety of contexts by the majority of faculty.

**Limitations of the Study**
Long-term retention of information was not assessed. Participants completed tests soon after studying. Future research could examine what students would retain following a longer period of time.

A further limitation is that students could not, due to the ethical principles of the study, be entirely left without study notes: not using notes could have had a potentially negative effect on their performance. The use of a limited control group was addressed in the data collection.

It should be acknowledged that as the satisfaction survey results confirm, students study more for final examinations than mid-terms. This added study time may have had a consequent effect on the significant increase in their scores for the final examinations.

**Recommendations**
The results are of significance to the BTC and to researchers who are investigating study skills and approaches to study at the college level. If male scores increase with study support, then a genuine need has been identified. While it is easy enough to appreciate the political will to address gender balance, the data indicates additional support of males is required.

- There are a number of approaches that could be tried, either in specific courses, or in an additional and voluntary program of study skills, based on the success of some of the approaches tried elsewhere. It would be interesting to find which ones would be more effective and of practical use at the BTC.
- Perhaps the most important finding of the study is a need for more thorough application of study skills at BTC. Perhaps a remedial program available to students in need of additional support, outside of the existing program of English language skills remediation, could be piloted.
- Further investigation is needed to discover if memorization limits understanding or if there are alternative ways to support greater understanding with less memorization.
- Recent studies indicate a need for more concrete data on language development, particularly with males enrolled in the programs. Future research could investigate the ways in which the Arabic language supports the use of study notes by male candidates.
- Given that the BTC is intended to serve as a model of formative assessment, a further issue is the appropriateness of relying on summative assessment at the BTC.

**Afterword**

Using anecdotal student evidence, there appear to be parallels between the current situation of civil unrest, and grievances made by students including: a lack of opportunity to fully express their grievances; didactic teaching methods; restrictions related to learning grounded in memorization; and, on the consistent use of summative testing as an assessment tool.

The BTC context was ‘change-rich’ (Diboll, 2010a; 2010b) and reflecting from the perspective of the ‘Arab Awakening’ of 2011, the “revolutions of dignity” that are transforming Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, echo the assessment challenges faced at BTC; they present in microcosmic form the challenges being faced by Bahraini society and revealing the tensions within it. In Bahrain, these can be summarised as:

- Tensions arising from implementing reforms
- Rival visions of Bahraini identity and the limitations of those identities
- Goals of self-determination
- Human rights, civil rights and equality of opportunity issues
- The changing roles and aspirations of women
- Crises of representation and legitimacy.

Naturally, since education cannot be separated from its contexts, the ‘small p’ ‘political’ issues within the college reflected the ‘big P’ ‘Political’ issues in the wider society without. If Bahrain is to heal, the author firmly supports the continuation of education reform initiatives, informed by profound reflection upon its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats since its inception in 2008. Certainly, this research experience highlighted the need to give students a voice that would be heard, acknowledged and acted upon accordingly. Transparent, adaptive, shared, creative assessment offers a way forward to facilitate mutual respect and understanding, reform and development in teacher education.
Conclusions

The goal of the study was to determine if the use of student-generated study notes improves student achievement. The study establishes the relationship between the use of study notes and an increase in student performance in testing situations. Results of the student satisfaction survey show a positive increase in the use of study notes and a positive change of attitude toward their use by the participants. The research confirms that the use of study notes increases both the confidence and attainment of participants.

Students who identified the greatest need of assistance were the candidates who achieved the greatest gains. Two groups in particular: the first, underperforming male candidates who struggle to produce sufficient high quality English to perform well in testing situations; and, the second group of female students who identify themselves as lacking proficiency in English to take tests confidently.

References

Diboll, M. (2010a). How can data on language use and cultural context gathered from participants and tutors during Professional Development (PD) sessions delivered by Bahrain Teachers’ College (BTC) help better tailor BTC PD to participants’ needs and enhance their learning environment? Action Research written in fulfillment of PCAP, York St. John’s University.


Beyond Industry Placement: What Happens after the VET Business Teacher Returns to Work?

Annamarie Schüller, Business and Management Department, Chisholm Institute, Melbourne, Australia
Annamarie.Schuller@chisholm.edu.au

Roberto Bergami, School of International Business, Centre for Cultural Diversity and Wellbeing, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia
Roberto.Bergami@vu.edu.au

Abstract
In the VET system, in Australia, there is a high degree of focus placed on educating students about current industry processes, to facilitate their entry into the workforce upon completion of their studies. This requires teachers to possess knowledge of contemporary business processes (currency), so they may, in turn, use this knowledge to educate students. An effective means of acquiring currency is for teachers to participate in industry placements. An industry placement comprises a voluntary period of time spent by a teacher working within a host industry organisation. It is a form of professional development that enables the teacher to gain not only currency, but also develop networks and use industry as an additional teaching resource to enhance the student learning experience. The additional learning acquired by the teacher on placement may result in a desire to make changes to the content, structure and delivery of teaching practices in the future, but, does this really happen?

A series of in depth interviews with VET business teachers who have participated in an industry placement, explores what really happens in the post placement period within their educational institution.

The research concludes that whilst there may be opportunities for changes, there is a general lack of recognition given by management or colleagues to teachers who have pursued an industry placement and consequently there is little change achieved.

Keywords: industry placement, teacher professional development, communities of practice, workplace learning, VET teacher currency

Introduction

Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Australia is a competency based education system that sits between post-primary (elementary) education and university (higher education). VET encompasses both trade and non-trade education and training, but this paper only focuses on non-trade education and training. There is a range of qualifications available under the VET system ranging from basic Certificate I to Associate Degrees. Typically, the hierarchical structure of programs is such that the higher qualifications, such as Diplomas and above are awarded to non-trade programs.

One of the fundamental aims of VET is to produce graduates capable of ‘hitting the ground running’ upon entering the workforce. Indeed, what makes a graduate attractive to a prospective employer is the knowledge that the prospective employee (the graduate) possesses current knowledge and skills. Implicit in this is the notion of teacher currency, that is, that teachers themselves possess the latest knowledge and skills about the industrial processes they teach in the classroom.
As industrial processes are continually changing, there is a need for teachers to engage in regular professional development, to keep abreast of such changes and also become familiar with the latest innovations in the marketplace. One way of achieving this is through an industry placement program, as a form of professional development.

The paper firstly provides a description of the industry placement and the relationships that are formed from this activity. A brief literature overview is provided next. This is followed by a discussion of exploratory research findings on aspects of teacher industry placements, before reaching the conclusion. It should be noted that this research has been limited to business disciplines VET teachers.

By way of background, the VET system in Australia offers nationally recognised qualifications that are based on National Training Packages (NTP) under the Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF) NTP specify the contents of each unit of study, listing the performance criteria; the required knowledge and skills; the range of industrial settings the unit’s learning may be applied to; and the critical assessment criteria. NTP are meant to provide a somewhat standardised national qualification, although their requirements may be interpreted pragmatically to allow for some flexibility between different training providers.

**Teacher industry placement: definition and relationships**

For the purposes of this paper, a teacher industry placement is defined as a voluntary activity, whereby a teacher is seconded to a host organisation, for a predetermined period of time to undertake meaningful duties in a job role that was negotiated beforehand.

The teacher industry placement gives rise to a number of relationships between the key stakeholders: the teacher, the educational institution, the host industry and students, as shown in Figure 1. It can observed from Figure 1 that the industry placement occurs within a VET education context, within a government policy environment. In fact, this form of professional development is the subject of specific government funding in Australia. However, discussion on government funding is beyond the scope of this paper.

Central to the teacher industry placement outcomes is the notion of capacity building. As “education … [is] essential in the making of a people-centred nation” (Sivamurugan, 2010, p. 9), capacity building is achieved through a better educated and skilled community, more ably equipped to deal with future challenges in business in a globalised world that is constantly changing.
The relationships that are formed through this professional development activity may be a catalyst for the development of a community of practice (Bergami & Schüller, 2011; Schuller & Bergami, 2008), as shown in the conceptual framework at Figure 2 (briefly described below). This is particularly so, as the teacher is well poised to be the ‘connection maker’ between the key stakeholders, despite being in a workplace learning context that is often limited to a legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) role.

The conceptual framework at Figure 2 begins with the ‘industry placement’ box. This refers to the administrative arrangements and the negotiated job role and the placement duration that the teacher, the educational institution and the host industry need to reach agreement on, prior to the industry placement beginning (Gela, 2004; Meadon, 1990).

The ‘industry placement experience’ box follows. This represents the opportunity provided to the teacher to observe industrial processes and contextualise learning in practice (Arnold & Smith, 2003). This also enables the teacher to consider curriculum alignment to current industrial processes.

The ‘industry placement skills’ box refers to the additional knowledge a teacher may gain on placement. This additional knowledge ought to assist the teacher in the development of an enhanced learning experience for students by expanding the teaching and learning practices repertoire.

---

7 For greater discussion about the teacher industry conceptual framework shown at Figure 2, please see Schüller, A and Bergami, R 2008, 'Expanding the Profession - Industry Placement for Teachers', in Swaffield B. and Guske I. (eds), Education Landscapes in the 21st Century: Cross-cultural Challenges and Multi-disciplinary Perspectives, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, pp. 196-205.
‘Theory development’ relates to the opportunity to develop new theories or amend existing ones, based on the learning derived from the industry placement. It is recognised that this may not be possible for every placement, but conceptually this opportunity exists.

‘Classroom teaching’ may be more effectively enhanced by the teacher who has been on placement. They may be able to incorporate authentic workplace materials and case studies in educational matter, and may also be able to invite industry speakers to class.

‘Theory into practice’ relates to circumstances where new or amended theories may be discovered by the teacher on placement, and these may be able to be tested in the classroom setting before considering whether to pursue their external adoption by industry.

The conceptual framework is circular, recognising that industry placement opportunities should not occur only once during one’s career, but that indeed they should happen on a regular basis, to maintain teacher currency.

The centre of the conceptual model considers the other aspects that are inherent in an industry placement experience, that is: community engagement (between the teacher, the educational organisation and the host industry); the acquisition of knowledge and skills (to the benefit of the teacher, the educational institution and the students); and the development of industry networks (to the benefit of all key stakeholders). These aspects occur within an environment that fosters the development of a community of practice.

In the context of this paper, the focus is on the industry placement skills and classroom teaching aspect of Figure 2, where the teacher, having been on placement may be able to make changes to classroom teaching and learning practices, based on additional knowledge and skills learned in situ during the placement, as discussed later in this paper.
Literature overview

Industry placement schemes, as a form of professional development, have received attention by a number of researchers over the past three decades. This research has identified, among other things, a need to develop capabilities in business and government (Zuber-Skerrit, 1992); a greater alignment with industry standards (Barlow, 2007); and support for teachers to “maintain and extend their expert industry and pedagogic knowledge” (Wheelahan & Moodie, 2010, p. 5).

A number of benefits have been identified in existing literature, including: the creation of strategic links with industry between teachers, industry and the educational institution (Department of Education, 2010); a greater alignment between teaching and learning practices and industrial processes, leading to enhanced curricula by using industry resources (e.g. guest speakers and case studies); fostering communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Schuller & Bergami, 2008; Etienne Wenger, 1998; E. Wenger, 1998); developing teacher currency (Brown & Chalmers, 1990; Haigh, 1997; E. Ireland, Golden, & Spielhofer, 2002; Klein, 2001; McGavin, 1996); and workplace learning (Billett, 2001, 2004, 2010).

Billett (2004) proposes the notion of the duality of the nature of workplace learning, as illustrated in the conceptual diagram shown at Figure 3. He argues that learning is shaped by opportunities provided by the workplace/workspace, and by the kinds of participative activities individuals are permitted and/or encouraged to engage in. This author also notes the reciprocal nature of learning, evidenced through the interdependence between participatory practices, the extent to which workplaces afford opportunities to learn, and individual agency.

Figure 3: The duality of the nature of workplace learning
Billet (2004) analyses the nature of workplace learning and promotes the legitimacy of the workplace as a site for learning, as he claims that knowledge is socially situated through the contributions of the workplace. According to Billet (2004), learning is seen as an experience of participation in activities and actions that are mediated by the contributions of workplaces and individual agency. Learning is influenced by the opportunities the workplace provides for learning, and by the way individuals choose to engage in the “activities and interactions” (Billett, 2004, p.110) of their work environment.

Other authors highlight the fact that professional development opportunities are provided not for the primary benefit of teachers, industry or subject currency, but rather to meet management objectives (Reed, Forwood, & Reed, 2003; Smith & Lowrie, 1998). However, the literature points to a paucity of studies on professional development outcomes (E. Ireland, Golden, S., & Spielhofer, T., 2002) – the focus of this paper.

Methodology

After obtaining ethics approval, data was obtained through in depth voluntary personal semi-structured interviews held during 2010 with four VET business discipline teachers that had previously undertaken an industry placement.

Semi-structured interviews are considered to be a useful qualitative data gathering “tool for exploratory research” (Dudley, 2005, p. 164) and the “face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the respondent has several characteristics that help researchers obtain complete and precise information” (Zikmund, 2008, p. 199).

The interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participants’ workplaces, in separate private rooms, so as to avoid interruptions and distractions, as it is typical for VET teachers to work in open office spaces, and this is not a suitable environment. Prior to the interviews taking place, participants were provided with an information sheet explaining the research aim and purposes, highlighting the protection of identity of the participants and their organisations, as well as their ability to withdraw from the research process at any time without repercussion to them. A consent form agreeing to the research interview was also provided to participants and this required their signature prior to the semi-structured interviews taking place. In this form, permission to audio record the interview was sought. Only three of the four participants gave approval for the interviews to be audio recorded. The demographic data of the participants are summarised below.

Three females and one male participated at the interviews. Of the participants, one had a full time ongoing position, two had fractional appointments (50% and 75% respectively) and one was a casual employee. All participants had at least a Diploma qualification, with two holding a Master of Education. Every participant was more than 45 years of age, with a minimum of ten years teaching experience in the VET sector, as well as industry experience ranging from 6 to 37 years. The ages and experience of participants support the view “that VET teaching/training is nearly always a second or subsequent career for those employed in the sector” (Harris et al., 2001, p. 8).

The interview responses were thematically coded by the principal researcher, and these are discussed in the next section.
Interview findings and discussion

The discussion of the responses in this section focuses on issues relevant to the teacher’s return to work in the post industry placement period, through two principal interview questions:

1. Did the placement help you in your teaching and delivery of subject matter content?
2. What sort of recognition was received for having undertaken an industry placement?

In the discussion of the findings, pseudonyms (Margaret, Cynthia, Sharon and Patrick) are used to protect individual identities.

In relation to the first question, for Patrick, the industry placement experience was not highly beneficial in terms of classroom teaching and learning practices, due to the narrow job role he was assigned and the nature of the host industry where he did the placement. Whilst Patrick’s comments highlight the importance of negotiating meaningful placement arrangements, this aspect is beyond the scope of this paper.

Margaret, a specialist hospitality teacher, claimed her industry placement experience provided additional skills that may be applied to classroom teaching and learning practices.

I think in training you stand there and recite off a book, and basically you get the standard content, but when the passion and the empathy that you’ve picked up from the experience comes out, I think you just have a much better class... From my own knowledge perspective, I can theorise all my life, but once you get out there, it gives you a different set of skills and I think that informs everything you do ... I think it’s all about credibility – a student will be more engaged with you as a teacher if they believe you have got credibility.

The comments above highlight the practical nature of VET and the importance of being able to teach through an increased repertoire of knowledge (gained from the industry placement) to enhance the student experience.

Cynthia explained that at the right time, she may use the learning she acquired on placement in the classroom to “inform the presentation that I am making” – another example of an expanded repertoire. Like Margaret, Cynthia believed that the industry placement enhances one’s credibility in the eyes of students, as

...a student will be more engaged with you as a teacher if they believe you have got credibility. Now you may, or may not have, but they’ve got to believe you do, and I think that is informed by these experiences.

According to Sharon, during the industry placement she “didn’t acquire anything new technically in [her] teaching skills”, but she emphasised the “expansion of knowledge” in areas relevant to the disciplines she taught. This has helped her to inform classroom teaching practices, and increase her confidence to

...discuss HR issues that these [part-time] students currently working in various industries were experiencing... and convey [to them] what was going on in employer organisations.
Cynthia noted changes in the way she now manages classroom learning. For example she is more proactive in making students more accountable for time spent on activities.

If I do an activity in class now, I try to put tighter time constraints on it as well ...now I say “do this in five minutes because that’s all you’ll get” or, I’ll give them a training program to put together... [in] one hour to get it all ready, so in one hour, whatever one hour gives you, that’s it.

Consequently Cynthia now creates a classroom setting that more closely resembles the workplace, by replicating pressures commonplace in the workplace and, according to her, this appears to be

much more realistic in terms of what they’re capable of, in terms of how that’s going to translate when they are there in industry themselves.

The comments above demonstrate that the teacher industry placement has some impact on teaching and learning practices in relation to the management of classroom activities. What is also implicit in the comments above is the increased repertoire a teacher develops as a result of the placement, and in using such repertoire, the teacher enhances the student learning experience. It is highly likely this is achieved through changes to instructional material, with the addition of case studies and examples of industrial processes brought back to the classroom.

In relation to the second question, similar industry placement outcomes were reported by all respondents, with all of them commenting that this activity had not helped in lifting their profile at their usual workplace.

For Margaret, there was a glimpse of profile enhancement through a presentation she delivered to management, but, by its very nature this was short-lived. However Margaret did make an important point about the industry placement learning, claiming that “what comes out of it [the industry placement] is incidental learning ... you learn by absorption rather than by cutting it up and pouring it in”. However, she added that the industry placement experience helped make her a “more rounded and competent person in terms of managing the job here [at her workplace] in general terms”.

This did not appear to be the case for Patrick, who stated in a general sense that industry placements were “never something to develop a person’s industry skills or to bring VET and industry closer together”. Yet he could see the benefit of them (at least from a management perspective), as industry placements are reported, and thus meets part of management’s KPIs. In other words, Patrick is arguing that the real reason for the industry placement is one of audit compliance, and not of professional development of staff, and the building of long-term relationships with external parties. Patrick added that he

may be acknowledged at staff meetings, or make an announcement in front of other managers or directors at their meetings, that I had been on a placement, but it’s more about meeting KPIs, ticking boxes and looking good.
Conclusion

Industry placements have been identified as a form of professional development that, according to existing literature, ought to bring a number of significant benefits for the key stakeholders involved in this activity. Care needs to be taken in interpreting the data, as it is acknowledged that the sample in this exploratory research is very small. However, this paper makes a contribution to existing literature, in an area that is known to have received little attention so far.

The experiences of the four teachers who participated in this exploratory research indicate that there are benefits to be gained from an industry placement experience and in the context of the focus of this paper, these appear to be of a general nature, as far as classroom teaching and learning practices are concerned. Teachers are not reporting any specific benefit that may be directly correlated to a particular aspect of teaching, rather they are reporting they feel as though they have become ‘more rounded’, increased their activity repertoire and are better able at providing a classroom environment that more closely resembles an industrial setting, complete with time pressure to complete specific tasks. In the context of this paper, these benefits are recognised as important.

There are however dimensions of the post industry placement experience that are, perhaps, not as positive. Teachers report that their profile is not enhanced as result of pursuing this type of professional development and that there is little recognition or interest by management, other than they knowledge that the audit requirements have been met as a result of an industry placement activity. Respondents also reported that there was little interest of what they had done by other colleagues. This suggests that teachers who have gone on placement feel little appreciated for having undertaken this experience. Given that an industry placement activity, according to the literature, has the opportunity of bringing a wide range of benefits for all key stakeholders, it would seem that this ought to be a highly valued pursuit. However, the evidence from the research presented in this paper appears juxtaposed to the claims of the literature. One possible explanation for this is cohort bias, that is, the particular experiences of the four interviewees. This is possible because as the sample is so small it is unlikely to representative of the wider VET business teacher population in Australia. However, the comments made by the interviewees are nevertheless important as they indicate almost institutional indifference to the industry placement and its post placement opportunities. In this respect, it appears as though on the one hand, a reasonable number of resources are devoted to the pursuit of the industry placement, but on the other hand, there appears to be little done in the post placement phase, with the additional experience, knowledge and skills that a teacher potentially acquires during the placement. Consequently, it would appear as though institutional changes may be required to maximise any benefits that could be reaped from an industry placement activity. These changes could include funding outcome requirements and/or policy changes to remove or reduce any barriers that may preclude teachers from instigating changes in the context of classroom teaching and learning practices, and also in the context of nurturing relationships with industry partners. Educational institutions should also be more proactive in developing a strategic partnership network as a means of providing more opportunities for industry placements for their teaching staff.

There is scope for further research in the future through more rigorous research, by expanding the sample size, so as to obtain richer data for deeper analysis. There may also be scope to replicate similar research in other countries, to establish whether the issues and
challenges related to industry placement have common international applications, or whether country specific considerations exist.

References


