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# TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

*'One language sets you in a corridor for life.*

*Two languages open every door along the way'*

*- Frank Smith*

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# TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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# Introduction to Issue 2(3)

by Elena Malyuga

Editor-in-Chief TLC

Welcome to Issue 2(3) of Training Language and Culture.

In this issue, the crux of the matter has to do mostly with one of the key political, economic and sociocultural issues of today – the so-called refugee crisis and the corresponding issues faced by numerous communities across the globe. As multiculturalism continues to advocate equal respect to the various cultures in a society and promote the maintenance of cultural diversity, the matters of language learning and teaching come to the forefront highlighting the need for initiatives to support children and adult education in the context of the ever-shifting geopolitical developments.

As a foremost shelter provider, Europe is not only embracing the resulting cultural mosaic, but is also appreciating its linguistic wealth, which is explicitly evident in the language policy being adopted in the EU. Considering this issue, Bessie Dendrinou offers a study exploring the changes in EU language policy taking place amid the emerging reality that warrants carefully designed language learning and teaching practices to be implemented and monitored on an ongoing basis.

The paper features a detailed review of the key EU initiatives encouraging multilingualism, considers their implications and critical success factors, and suggests a new paradigm for linguistic diversity in Europe for years to come.

Following up on the problem of methodological support for refugee students, Tuncer Can and Irfan Şimşek approach the issue from the perspective of young learners who can be provided with better learning opportunities via the integration of technology in foreign language classes. The article entitled '*Fostering foreign language acquisition in young refugees using mobile devices: The YouRNI project experience*' covers the intermediate results of an Erasmus+ project focusing primarily on language learning, employability and the inclusive schooling of asylum seekers and migrants in vocational schools (age 15+) for successful integration. The authors offer a detailed recap of project progression, explore the local context, and highlight the potential of Erasmus+ initiatives paving the way for better integration opportunities for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers across the globe.

With refugee children, cultural and linguistic dissonance translates into hardship adding to the ordeal they are forced to experience at such a young and tender age. A teacher dealing with refugee children should therefore act in many capacities (as an instructor, psychologist, and a friendly figure) and tread lightly in order to ensure as seamless an integration as possible. In their article '*Teaching and learning in a multi-cultural*

*school in Thessaloniki: A case study* Vasiliki Santaridou and Luke Prodromou recap their experience as foreign language teachers dealing with school-age refugees and migrants in Greece. The paper should be a motivation and an inspiration for teachers struggling to navigate cultural and linguistic challenges in working with children requiring a special kind of attention and care as they go through the hardest time of their lives.

Another focus of this issue is translation methodology with two papers exploring general and field-specific methodology of translation training – *‘Translation as a subject of theoretical analysis’* by Elena Borisova et al. on the concept of philological approach to translation offering a number of comprehensive arguments to be considered by specialists in the field, and *‘Some basic challenges and strategies in teaching translation to Chemistry majors’* by Elena Aksenova and Svetlana Orlova on teaching translation to non-language majors in ESP classes offering a test run of relevant approaches assessed with

experimental and control groups at Moscow Technical University.

Enlarging on ESP methodology, Galina Parshutina investigates the issue of strategic planning of business discourse, spotlighting verbs of communication as agents of successful business interaction.

The issue concludes with reviews of *Spirituality and English Language Teaching* by Mary Shephard Wong and Ahmar Mahboob (Eds.), featuring case studies and discussions of the role of religion and spirituality in English language teaching but relevant to all languages, and *Breaking News* by Alan Rusbridger, a fascinating view of the challenge of online journalism by the editor of one of Britain’s leading newspapers, the Guardian.

TLC Editorial Board welcomes contributions in the form of articles, reviews and correspondence. Detailed information is available online at [rudn.tlcjournal.org](http://rudn.tlcjournal.org). Feel free to contact us at [info@tlcjournal.org](mailto:info@tlcjournal.org) or [info@icc-languages.eu](mailto:info@icc-languages.eu).

# Multilingualism language policy in the EU today: A paradigm shift in language education

by Bessie Dendrinou

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*The official rhetoric of the European Union (EU) describes the linguistic diversity by which it is characterised as ‘an asset for Europe and a shared commitment’, while it also represents languages as commodities for employability, mobility and economic growth. In the context of the EU embracing institutional multilingualism, promoting foreign language learning and suggesting ways of coping with the ‘new’ multilingual and multicultural classrooms, the management of its complex linguistic diversity is no simple matter. While its language policies reflect consistent efforts to cope with its unique multilingualism, they are often contradictory partly because they are not part of a cohesive overall strategic plan. This paper attempts a review of the EU’s commitment to institutional multilingualism, through policies, decisions, recommendations and actions aiming at the management of its multilingualism, focuses on language education policy in particular, and concludes by suggesting that a new didactic paradigm for language education is needed in Europe and beyond because in today’s interconnected world, the ability to speak multiple languages and communicate across linguistic divides are critical competences.*

**KEYWORDS:** *multilingualism, linguistic diversity, language policy, CEFR, plurilingualism, mediation*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION: EUROPE’S LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Linguistic diversity is rooted in the legal framework of the EU. The Charter of Fundamental Rights, adopted in 2000, which the Treaty of Lisbon made legally binding, mandates that the EU respect linguistic diversity (Article 22) and prohibits discrimination on grounds of language (Article 21). Respect for linguistic diversity is therefore a fundamental value of the EU. This paper intends to show that the policies generated by the EU and adopted by its governing bodies are articulated in

both normative and instrumental discourses in the attempts to secure linguistic justice for all EU majority and minority languages and to ensure that young people learn at least two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. The recommendations are usually too general and vague failing to adequately address the needs and interests of specific language groups, while the foreign language learning project is related to the dominant languages of Europe. At the same time, it should be understood that the EU functions in an advisory capacity to members states’ promotion of

multilingualism, resulting in a discrepancy between supranational level recommendations and decisions regarding linguistic diversity and language learning at member state level.

The EU aim and commitment to embrace the European cultural mosaic and promote the appreciation of Europe's linguistic wealth became even more challenging after the EU's enlargement with the new nation states that emerged in central and eastern Europe in the early 90s. The aspiration remained the same though: to establish a collective identity as Europeans (who are different but united), so that tensions and conflicts between national interests be resolved as they are within a family – where all members are equally important. And so it ought to be. The EU should regard everyone as equally important despite the obvious inequalities in geography, population size, GNP per capita, etc. But, it is not so. Therefore, it is common to hear member states with less economic and political power complain when the European Council and the European Commission (EC) act on the basis of the principle of equality along the lines that 'all states are equal, but some of them are more equal than others' on both symbolic and material level.

Adding to the complexity of Europe's rich cultural and linguistic diversity are now the immigration flows from across MENA, which have accelerated in speed and scale in recent years, impacting the

continent well beyond the initial stresses on the infrastructure and organisational capacity of the receiving countries. In reality, the immigration wave constitutes the most powerful driver of the changes that are remaking Europe at levels ranging from its ethnic and religious composition to its politics, challenging the ideas that are at the very core of reciprocity and the mutuality of societal obligation.

In the midst of all these changes, which are putting the inclusive European dream to the test, is the issue of the plurality of languages, cultural expression, and ethos of communication. The challenge of managing Europe's new multiracialism, multiculturalism and multilingualism, while facilitating integration and maintaining social cohesion, is now even more demanding.

The range of languages spoken in the EU, which is one of the most institutionally multilingual polities in the world, is not confined to the 24 national or official languages used in each of the 28 EU member states and recognised as official languages of the EU. Over 60 indigenous, regional or minority languages are spoken by some 40 million people including Basque, Catalan, Frisian, Gallegian, Saami, Welsh, Yiddish, as well as the languages that populations immigrating within or to EU states have brought with them: languages from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and from

*‘In the midst of all these changes, which are putting the inclusive European dream to the test, is the issue of the plurality of languages, cultural expression, and ethos of communication’*

European countries which are not in the EU, including Russian – the second or principal foreign language of migrants from the eastern European countries (European Commission, 2017).

Though the 24 official/national languages of the EU are supposed to enjoy equal status, three of these languages (English, French and German) have a higher standing, and they are the ‘procedural’ languages of the European Commission – i.e., used in the day-to-day workings of the EU institutions – while two more languages (Italian and Spanish) have special status as ‘support’ languages. The status of these five languages is contingent upon political and economic power, as these are the languages of the strongest economies in the EU.

Adding to this colourful and rich mosaic of Europe’s linguistic landscape are the foreign languages spoken by Europeans, as the educational systems in most member states require that students learn foreign languages as part of

their general education. As a matter of fact, according to Eurydice (Key Data on Teaching Languages at School, 2017 Edition) more primary school students are learning foreign languages from a younger age, and more lower secondary school students are learning two foreign languages compared to 10 years ago.

The foreign languages commonly included in school curricula are the five European languages with a higher standing that serve as commodities for economic development. The first foreign language most commonly taught is English – the language which has dominated the foreign language teaching and learning scene for the last three decades – and the most common second foreign languages are French and German. Specifically, according to the 2015 Eurostat information, 97.3% students in lower secondary schools across Europe are learning English, 33.8% French and 23.1% German. Spanish, Russian and Italian are far behind with 13.6%, 2.7% and 1.1% respectively. However, there is significant difference in the achievement of learning goals in school, between the first and the second foreign language, according to the results of the *European Survey on Language Competences* – a study conducted by the European Commission so as to afford comparable data concerning language learning in schools across the EU. On the basis of this large-scale project, which provided substantial information, not only about pupils’ competences

in the languages they are being taught, but also about the contextual conditions of foreign language study in European schools, the EC advises that more effort has to be put into foreign language teaching across the EU and that pupils' language competences will need to be significantly improved particularly where the second foreign language is concerned (Costa & Albergaria-Almeida, 2015). Nevertheless, EU officials maintain that the EU is moving closer to its 'Europe 2020' goals on education in general and language education in particular – whose utilitarian value is underscored – suggesting that:

- commodity languages are important for EU's economic growth and development;
- less 'important' EU languages are supported to the extent that the Union is bound by its official commitment to institutional multilingualism;
- the languages that children from immigrant families bring with them have no value as symbolic capital in themselves; their maintenance can be beneficial for the children, but the requirement is for them to acquire full proficiency in the language of schooling and to learn the commodity languages taught in school.

## 2. THE ROLE OF LANGUAGES AND LANGUAGE POLICY IN EUROPE

Language, in particular, has played an extraordinarily significant role in nation-building

in Europe since medieval times and has functioned as a strong symbol of cultural identity, shaping people's national identity and their allegiances. Language has served the purpose of construing social subjects in European countries, where there is an overriding feeling of being at risk for political, economic or military reasons and where ideologies of national language protectionism have been strong, sometimes leading to the assimilation of linguistic minorities and to language or dialect death. In countries whose economic and political power allows them to feel more secure, the attitude to minority or community language ranges from tolerating to supporting them and from respecting to legitimising them by including them in the educational system.

The so-called 'foreign' languages do not pose the same kind of threat that minority languages do. In fact, most people believe that learning a foreign language (having in mind a commodity language like English) is a plus, as revealed by the 2012 Eurobarometer survey on Europeans and their Languages: 98% believe that mastering foreign languages will benefit their children, 72% agree with the EU goal of all pupils learning two foreign languages in school, and 77% are of the opinion that developing foreign language skills should be a policy priority (European Commission, 2012a). This is because these languages are considered as cultural and especially economic capital. Of course, recently, a number of other languages are

on demand – languages such as Russian (the most popular non-EU language), Chinese and Arabic as they are languages spoken in fastest-growing emerging economies.

However, foreign languages other than English are rarely an obligatory subject in school nor a requirement for a degree in any subject area in either the sciences or the humanities, while proof of English language competence is required very often for entrance into postgraduate programmes of any discipline. In some parts of Europe, especially the Nordic countries, university studies are offered through the national language, but often access and production of knowledge (reading and project work) is in English, the language which has managed to take over and make the field of natural sciences monoglossic. English is used almost to the exclusion of other languages, which can and does have an impact on crushing different ways of thinking that are valuable especially in science, suppressing different theories or ways of theorising which undeniably comes with the use of different languages. Of course, science is not the only domain in which English has taken over in Europe (cf. Macedo et al., 2003) forcing many people to use a ‘lingua franca’ (Gazzola & Grin, 2013) and have a ‘false sense of mutual intelligibility’ (García & Otheguy, 1989).

How does Brussels deal with EU’s rich linguistic wealth and how are the ‘English-only’ tendencies

or English plus French (especially at government level) tackled? Which are its language policies, what sort of recommendations does it make and what kind of actions are taken to ensure that language diversity and multilingualism in Europe is secured?

The official language policy, as it is stated in the European Parliament Facts Sheet of the European Union is the following:

*‘Languages are an integral part of the European identity and the most direct expression of culture’ (European Parliament Facts Sheet of the European Union). In an EU, founded on the motto ‘United in diversity’, the ability to communicate in several languages is an important asset for individuals, organisations and companies. Languages not only play a key role in the everyday life of the European Union, but are also fundamental for respecting cultural and linguistic diversity in the EU’ (Franke, 2017).*

Two important statements, ‘respect for linguistic diversity is a fundamental value of the EU’ and the ‘respect for the person and openness towards other cultures’ are incorporated into the preamble to the Treaty on European Union, while Article 3 of the Treaty states that the EU ‘shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity,’ and Article 165(2) emphasises that ‘Union action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education,

*particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the member states’ (The Lisbon Treaty, 2007).*

In the aforementioned Facts Sheet, it is also stated that *‘in 2013 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on endangered European languages and linguistic diversity in the European Union, calling on the member states to commit to the protection and promotion of the diversity of the Union’s linguistic and cultural heritage’ (Franke, 2017).*

Also recorded in the aforementioned Fact Sheets on the European Union, is that *‘as part of its efforts to promote mobility and intercultural understanding, the EU has designated language learning as an important priority’* and that Multilingualism *‘... is an important element in Europe’s competitiveness [as well as] one of the objectives of the EU’s language policy is therefore that every European citizen should master two other languages in addition to their mother tongue’ (Franke, 2017).*

The EU’s interest in sustaining and efficiently managing multilingualism has been questioned and criticised by a number of language professionals (Kraus & Kazlauskaitė-Gürbüz, 2014; Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2011; Phillipson, 2016; Romaine, 2013). Certainly, since Mr Juncker’s cabinet was announced, Brussels has moved from having one entire portfolio on Multilingualism

(Leonard Orban, 2007-2010), to a Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth (Androulla Vassiliou, 2010-2014), to no portfolio on Multilingualism. This was just about the time that the Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism, launched in 2009 by the European Commission, stopped being financially supported and receiving mandates – a decision which led to the development of an autonomous NGO, i.e. the European Civil Society for Multilingualism (ECSPM), which is living up to its mission and growing with the inclusion of academic institutions (European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism, 2018).

During the time that Orban was European Commissioner for Multilingualism, the appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity was presented as a priority for Europe. At the launch of the Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism in 2009, he was quoted as saying:

*‘We should use this diversity to Europe’s advantage. A culture of multilingualism promotes a culture of openness and tolerance. These are crucial values not only for Europe, but for the entire world. Any realistic international vision for the future of our world has to be founded on acceptance and appreciation of different cultures – and languages are at the heart of any culture. In the Commission’s strategy on multilingualism I emphasise that multilingualism can play a key role*

*in intercultural dialogue; in creating more cohesive and more sustainable societies'* (Orban, 2009).

This was the time of the 'Multilingualism: An Asset for Europe and a Shared Commitment' communication, which was put forth by the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

By 2012 – the year that the 'Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes' proposal put forth by the Commission recommending the reform of education systems across the EU 'so as to meet growing demand for higher skills levels and reduce unemployment' (European Commission, 2012b) – the European Council's Conclusions regarding multilingualism and languages were articulating a more instrumental, utilitarian discourse than before. The 2011 and the 2014 Conclusions of the European Council recognised that *'linguistic diversity is a fundamental component of European culture and intercultural dialogue'*, but also that *'a good command of foreign languages is a key competence essential to make one's way in the modern world and labour market'* thus expressing the new political intentions to instrumentalise languages for market-oriented purposes (Council of Europe, 2011).

The condition of things with regard to languages in

the EU is indeed much too intricate to create conditions for multilingualism, especially with the EU's increasing emphasis on economic growth from a neo-liberal perspective. As a matter of fact, Kraus and Kazlauskaitė-Gürbüz (2014) claim that *'in the official discourse of the European Union, the approach to linguistic diversity has typically oscillated between two normative poles. On the one hand, linguistic diversity is seen as a central element of Europe's cultural inheritance, as an asset that is a pillar for achieving the intercultural understanding on which a trans-European civil society has to rely. On the other hand, multilingualism is seen as a challenge for creating an integrated market-cum-polity'* (Kraus & Kazlauskaitė-Gürbüz, 2014, p. 517).

It is, therefore, not surprising that the EU does not have a coherent approach for dealing with its wide-ranging and multi-levelled multilingualism. And, in truth, though the EU does support academic and hands-on research by language professionals with the aspiration that research will pave the way for a well worked-out approach, an across-the-board methodology for managing European multilingualism EC officials often find the results of significant large-scale research programmes such as D.Y.L.A.N. (Language Dynamics and Management of Diversity) and M.I.M.E. (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe), and smaller-scale ones like ATHEME (Advancing the European Multilingual Experience)

much too abstract and vague to implement. There is a lack of a coherent plan and strategy on multilingualism in the EU and all that this entails. The attempts to support social multilingualism and language learning seem to be incongruent. On the one hand, there is the EU's institutional multilingualism, which some consistently undermine, believing in a monolingual solution to Europe's 'Babel' and using English alone. Nevertheless, the EU has been supporting its multilingualism by maintaining its two cross-languages services and many are still convinced that a monolingual answer is not only a politically stormy issue, but costly also. There are several studies substantiating this claim, the most interesting one having been carried out by two scholars who showed that while there would be a reduction in the direct costs of European multilingualism through the imposition of a single language, this would merely shift costs towards citizens whose mother tongue is not the lingua franca (i.e. English). The use of translation and interpreting, though not free, remains more effective (and at a reasonable cost) solution for the EU, while *'it is also more fair than a monolingual regime which unavoidably privileges native speakers'* (Gazzola & Grin, 2013, p. 93).

One of the two cross-language services in the EU is the DG Interpretation, which services the Commission, the European Council, Council of the EU, and other EU committees and agencies,

provides support for multilingual meetings and conferences and is supposed to help put the Commission's multilingualism strategy into practice. The second service is the DG for Translation whose responsibilities include the translation of laws, correspondence, policy papers, reports, etc., drafted by or sent to the Commission, provision of help to the Commission to communicate with the public, thereby helping citizens understand EU policies, advice to the Commission departments on language and on managing multilingual websites, and help with the correct terminology in all official EU languages, as documented in the inter-institutional database (IATE).

Connected to the DG Translation's amenities is the Commission's machine translation service. MT@EC can translate texts and documents related to EU policy in the 24 official EU languages, but also allow (free of charge to public administration officials in the EU) rapid checking of the general meaning of the text inserted with a precision that the free Google or Microsoft machine translation services, for example, do not have.

Along the same lines, a new network was created, entitled 'European Language Resource Coordination: Supporting Multilingualism in Europe'. It is an interesting network developed to manage, maintain and coordinate the relevant language resources in all official languages of the

European Union, especially public service documents, so as to help improve the quality, coverage and performance of automated translation. An additional activity related to translation is the 'Juvenes Translatores' prize awarded to the best translation done by a 17-year-old student in the member states, translating from and into any official language of the European Union.

Another related plan of the EP's Committee on Culture and Education is to work on an own-initiative report on 'Language Equality in the Digital Age – Towards a Human Language Project', based on a study with the same title drawn up at the request of Parliament's Science and Technology Options Assessment Panel.

Supporting multilingualism from the point of view of language learning are several 'action programmes' aiming at facilitating multilingualism in the EU. One of them is the Erasmus+ Programme for Education (2014-2020) and its objectives include the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity. In supporting mobility, which offers students and working adults the opportunity to experience different sociocultural realities in education and work, it provides help via Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support (OLS) to programme participants to learn and assess themselves in the language of the host country.

From the beginning, in 2014 it has supported and up to the time it finishes in 2020, it will support a variety of actions in support of multilingualism in education and society. One of these actions is the 'Creative Europe Programme' in the framework of which support is provided for the translation of books and manuscripts under the Culture sub-programme. It should be noted that when the 'Creative Europe Programme' was adopted in 2013 by the European Parliament, a specific provision on funding for the subtitling, dubbing and audio description of European films was added so as to facilitate access to, and the circulation of, European works across borders. They also include the European Day of Languages, celebrated every year on 26th September, when all sorts of events to promote language learning throughout the EU take place, including the European Language Label, an award by the Commission designed to encourage new initiatives in language teaching and learning, to reward new language teaching methods, and to raise awareness of regional and minority languages.

Before 2014, when the Unit of Multilingualism was still operational, the management of language learning in Europe was viewed as a mission that was mostly linked to the 2002 Barcelona objective of 'mother-tongue + two', which entailed gathering information about language education and training in EU countries, collecting data to monitor school students' progress in language teaching and

learning with large projects such as the European Survey of Language Competence, mentioned earlier, in an attempt to make 'evidence-based policy' and also encouraging Member states to adopt 'innovative, scientifically proven methods of speeding up language learning' (referring particularly to CLIL and CALL). For the 2014 Report, where Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) referring to teaching subjects such as science, history and geography to students through a foreign language and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) are viewed as 'innovative' and 'scientifically proven' foreign language teaching methods, see European Commission (2014). See also European Commission (2014b) for another report having to do with 'Peer Learning Activity'.

### **3. FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE EU**

#### **3.1 Language educational policies, consultations and instruments**

Lack of human resources and expertise in the Commission itself invites consultations and collaborations which may lead to the development of a cohesive language education policy, built on a sound philosophy of language and language learning that results in a coherent strategy for language education in European schools and language learning as a lifelong learning project. Among its consultants are groups of experts on language issues, representatives from relevant

organisations of member states and civil society platforms.

An important consultant to and collaborator of the EC since 2014-15 is the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and the Modern Languages Division of the Council of Europe which is responsible for the production of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR). This document, initially published in 2001, after more than twenty years of research, is promoted by the EU to member states as a transparent, coherent and comprehensive reference instrument on the basis of which language educators may develop curricula and syllabuses for the teaching and learning of languages for the design of teaching and learning materials and for the assessment of foreign language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001).

#### **3.2 Immigration and language learning**

As the immigration flows to Europe grow, member states are invited to develop ways of helping children and adults with migrant backgrounds to learn the host country language(s), paying attention to subsidiarity and taking into consideration national circumstances.

Since the dissolution of the autonomous Multilingualism Unit, the language policy officers of the EC's DG for Education and Culture (EAC)

have been transferred to a new unit called 'Schools and Educators; Multilingualism', and they have begun focusing attention on the language management of classrooms which are increasingly multilingual, with a great range of cultural and linguistic variability across Europe – however unevenly spread the students from immigrant backgrounds are and they are indeed. According to *Eurostat* (*Eurostat Statistics Explained*, 2018), the total number of EU migrants was 18.5 million in 2015 and their proportion varies considerably across the member states ranging from about nearly 40% of foreign-born EU citizens in Luxemburg, to Poland that has 0.6%. Education systems must respond to this diversity.

A good deal of work has been done in a relatively short period of time in this domain, with a view to facilitating the EU's scope of integrating immigrants in European societies (though anti-right-wing governments in certain countries want them gone – not even assimilated). Therefore, the EC and specifically the DG EAC has outlined the goals, articulated policies and proposed ways of achieving them (see European Commission, 2015c). These are summarised in two reports published by the EC. Both describe the context, recommending ways of dealing with children of immigrant background in schools and the community (European Commission, 2015; European Commission, 2015b; European Commission, 2015c).

### **3.3 Meeting the challenges of a multilingual Europe**

The major challenges in today's multilingual Europe faced by the EU were outlined at a consultation meeting held in Brussels in early February 2018, in which I participated, along with other representatives from civil society organisations, academic institutions, and representatives from Ministries of Education of the member states. The purpose of the meeting regarding languages in education was to discuss a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages to be later submitted as a proposal to the European Council.

The Brussels meeting had followed the Gothenburg Summit for 'Fair Jobs and Growth' leading to the Heads of State or Government, which reiterated in the European Council Conclusions of 14-12-2017 its ambition to improve language learning so that children would speak at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue. It is to be noted, however, that for the first time, an EC delegate at the meeting clarified the 'mother tongue' issue, which has been a cause for concern and critique. It was explained that the 'mother tongue + two' objective refers to the EU's resolution to assist children in Europe to be able to speak at least two languages in addition to the language of schooling by the end of their upper secondary education. The level of fluency would obviously vary according to their needs and

interests. Also to be noted is that the EC delegate at that meeting clearly stated that the primacy of English in everyday communication and in education should not be questioned. It is the status quo.

To meet the challenges related to the linguistic diversity in the educational systems of member states, caused by first and second-generation immigrant families' children, the policy officer at the Brussels consultation meeting presented the participants with the following priorities: (a) to develop support mechanisms for immigrant children to learn the language of instruction in school so as to use it competently in daily situations alongside their home language(s) and have adequate literacy in the language of schooling; (b) maintain their mother tongue, and useful literacy in this tongue; and (c) learn other European languages.

With regard to the challenges facing foreign languages, the priorities presented were (a) creating common standards for the teaching, learning and assessment of languages by adopting the CEFR referred to earlier, (b) support for more effective teacher education and training – in collaboration with the Council of Europe and the ECML, (c) financing projects for languages and multilingualism through the Erasmus+ programme, and (d) supporting studies resulting to guidelines for education and training.

#### **4. DISCUSSION - CONCERNING LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY**

In May 2018, the EC submitted a Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (European Commission 2018a; European Commission 2018b). These two documents are important to the extent that they set goals and priorities which are likely to impact language education in the EU in the years to come. One of the priorities is the adoption of the CEFR as a guide for redesigning foreign language curricula across the member states and for assessment of language competences in ways that can have comparable results.

##### **4.1 Promotion of CEFR**

As noted above, the EU (by way of the EC) is promoting the Council of Europe's CEFR, as part of its overall approach to the teaching and learning of languages and is endorsing the Council of Europe's language education policy (Council of Europe, 2018b), which is committed to advocating plurilingual education (Council of Europe, 2018c). The CEFR is a comprehensive reference tool, which contains descriptors about what the learners of different foreign languages can do at six levels of proficiency (with A1 being the lowest and C2 the highest). The reference levels which are detailed 'can do' statements concern the comprehension and production of oral and written discourse at the six different stages of learning a

foreign language. Since its publication, the CEFR has been criticised by several scholars as needing to be substantiated by further research (e.g. Alderson, 2007; Little, 2006), and as needing to document its reference level descriptors on the basis of precise linguistic elements making the levels explicit for individual languages (e.g. Dendrinos & Gotsouliia, 2015) in order for them to be less vague and imprecise – to make explicit for example what it means to be able ‘write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects...’ at B2 level. It has also been criticised for the problematic effects it has produced when teachers attempt to implement it in various contexts.

However, it is the first and only document which has attempted to validate (though in an empirical way, rather than through linguistic research), on a European level, explicit referential levels for identifying degrees of language competences and communicative activities across languages, providing a basis for differentiated teaching in diverse educational environments. In providing objective criteria for describing language proficiency, the Council of Europe’s aim was to promote educational transparency and ‘*to facilitate the mutual recognition of qualifications gained in different learning contexts, and thus aid European mobility*’ (Council of Europe, 2001, p.1).

More importantly, however, because of its expansive use (and misuse) as an aid to defining

levels for teaching, learning, and testing, the Education Policy Division of the Council of Europe decided to commission an extended version of the CEFR. In early 2018, the CEFR Companion Volume was published (Council of Europe, 2018a). It contains illustrative descriptors that complement the original ones at both lower and higher levels, but also includes descriptors for the important concept of mediation that was defined in the original CEFR which, however, contained no validated-calibrated descriptors.

Specifically, there are descriptor scales provided for cross-language and interlanguage mediation, as well as for the related mediation strategies and plurilingual/pluricultural competences, which are absolutely essential in a multilingual Europe which claims a dominant role in a globalised world. As a concept, plurilingualism is significant because it shifts attention from the influential construct of the perfect ‘native speaker’ and focuses on the language user who uses all semiotic means available to him or her for the creation of meaning.

#### **4.2 EC investment in linguistic diversity**

Another priority included in the EC’s 2018 Council Recommendation, relates to member states investing in the initial and continuing education of language teachers and school leaders to prepare them to work with linguistic diversity in class and to encourage research into the use of innovative,

inclusive and multilingual pedagogies. The issue here, of course, is to define what constitutes a 'multilingual pedagogy'. A quick review of the relevant literature points to pedagogical practices with bilingual students, in US classrooms: e.g. accepting the hybrid language practices of bilinguals (García, 2011; García & Sylvan, 2011) and capitalising on bilingual students' linguistic and cultural resources (Catalano et al., 2016).

This raises the question of whether this is relevant in the European context.

It also raises the question of how it bridges the gap in the aforementioned division between managing the teaching and learning situation in classrooms with a small or larger percentage of bilingual students acquiring school literacy in a language other than their home language plus one or more additional languages and with a percentage of monolingual students acquiring school literacy in their home language and other foreign languages.

### **4.3 Languages in a globalised world**

While the aforementioned Recommendation does not specifically refer to the important role languages in a globalised world, it is a point raised in many EU documents, and it is at the core of Council of Europe language and language education policy. It is certainly understood that worldwide labour mobility, trade, social integration of immigrants, language policies in

*'It is certainly understood that worldwide labour mobility, trade, social integration of immigrants, language policies in multilingual countries and international competitiveness of businesses are about languages and communication first and foremost'*

multilingual countries and international competitiveness of businesses are about languages and communication first and foremost. A multilingual workforce, for example, is an advantage as it provides companies with a competitive edge and it is necessary for them to invest more in language and intercultural skills. The outcomes of the ELAN Report, a study commissioned by the EC in 2006 investigating the effects on the European Economy of the shortages of foreign language skills in enterprises, include that (a) amongst the 200 small and medium size enterprises that lost potential contracts for lack of foreign languages, 37 valued the lost business at £8-13.5 million, (b) a further 54 companies had lost contracts worth £16.5-£25.3 million for lack of communication and intercultural skills to capitalise on opportunities. However, languages also have a direct relationship to citizenship and the development of linguistic repertoires as a component of (language) education in a globalised

world. Research has shown the interconnections between multilingualism, globalisation, and identity, illustrating the multidimensional ways that youth invest in language learning and socially construe their multiple identities within diverse contexts while weaving in and out of particularistic and universalistic identifications.

But there are other aspects to consider when focusing on language learning in a globalised world, because it seems that the language proficiency demands of societies are different today. In the past, becoming fully proficient in a language meant becoming a social agent operating according to the formal properties of language as

designated by rules in grammar books.

Today's societies, however, who wish to be players in the global arena are in need of entrepreneurial social agents prepared for high-speed change – at all levels in social norms and institutions and in language and ways of using it. Language itself is a social institution, constantly developing to serve society, which is moving forward at an overwhelmingly accelerated pace today and is inscribed in language, discourse and texts.

Language changes brought about by technology in this digital age, for example, are encoded in new types of texts and textual forms, replacing older equivalents (Table 1).

Table 1

*Textual parallels*

PAST	PRESENT
Business card, resume	LinkedIn
Scrapbook	Facebook
Diary, newspaper opinion column	Blogs
Encyclopaedia	Wikipedia
Broadcast TV	Interactive TV, YouTube
Manuscript	Google Docs
Broadcast radio	Playlists podcast, iPod
Photo album, picture book	Flickr
Memo, letter	Email
Brochure	Website
Telegraph, telegram	Twitter, SMS

Language has a different role today for both communities and individuals. Within the autonomous states of the past, communities, identities, processes and practices are key concepts linked to the role of language in the construction of social identities and relations. Today, however, people experience a sense of community and identity away from autonomous structures in spaces – such as digitally created spaces – where linguistic and discursive variation are central to new forms of social organisation. Languages as bounded systems, identities in stable social positions and communities as uniform social formations are superseded by mobility and multiplicity. Social actors play an active role in the flows and transformations, contributing further to globalisation, transnationalism, and the new economy.

All in all, it is more than evident that the world has changed enormously in the last 50 years or so. The European continent has witnessed the EU's birth and its attempts to develop a supranational political and economic structure, without cultural and linguistic borders, but the paradigm of language teaching remains more or less the same and so do expectations regarding language learning.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The basic issue I should like to put forth as a conclusion to this paper originates from the

concern that while Europe and the rest of the world are changing, language teaching and learning are viewed in the same way and, as Butcher (2005) maintains, teachers and students continue to be domesticated subjects of the dominant foreign language pedagogy discourse. Foreign language teaching, learning and assessment still aims at 'native-speaker' proficiency. Emphasis is still on learning the target language as though it were a stable structural, semantic and pragmatic system and the focus is still on sentence-level grammar and vocabulary. There is little concern with the new discursive and textual meanings, with communicative effectiveness, through the use of multimodal texts, while the development of literacy in EU schools (and not only) remains a monolingual enterprise.

Alternatively, education for today's linguistically and culturally heterogeneous societies should perhaps be aiming at plurilingualism and the development of (multi)literacies in the languages and discourses which may be a part of learners' repertoires. The notion of plurilingualism has already been referred to, but I wish to make a distinction at this point between plurilingualism, which is a notion distinct from that of (individual) multilingualism that refers to someone who can use two different languages or more in different communicative events. Plurilingualism refers to the language user who has a repertoire of semiotic resources (be they different modes of

communication, languages, language varieties, media), which s/he is able to use effectively to design meanings – a repertoire which is dynamic, in the sense that it develops and changes throughout one's life. Having plurilingual competence means that one is able to perceive and mediate the relationships which exist among languages and cultures, that one is able to mix and shift from one language to another with ease (cf. Dendrinos, 2013).

What does this mean for schooling, which is changing in the framework of globalisation, technology and local cultural and linguistic diversity? It implies moving away from the monolingual paradigm in education, and recognising that semiotics is at the centre of all subject areas; that European schools become multilingual topoi, where a single language or a single mode of semiosis does not dominate the curriculum; topoi where several languages and multimodality come into play and are used as resources for meaning making; topoi where new pedagogic practices are employed for the development of students' plurilingual competences, associated with intercomprehension, translanguaging, and mediation.

As a matter of fact, a new pedagogic paradigm is needed: language pedagogy which prepares learners to use the languages they already know

(and which are their own but should be shared cultural capital) and those they are learning as meaning-making mechanisms, so as to increase the quantity and quality of their communication with speakers of other languages; a language pedagogy oriented toward developing in learners the competence to operate at the border between a number of languages, manoeuvring their way through communicative events; a language pedagogy that trains them to use the sociocultural knowledge and skills they have developed, by making maximal use of their communication strategies, their multiliteracy skills, their abilities to deal with the multimodality of texts, and of their translinguistic and transcultural knowledge.

Interestingly, a group of experts who were invited by the EC as consultants in laying out the new educational recommendations, prepared a very interesting contribution which was submitted as a proposal for education policy design. It is entitled 'Rethinking Language Education in Schools' and is available online for anyone interested (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission, 2018).

The experts' contribution is to make a case for change in current practices in schools from a human rights perspective, from an equity and inclusion perspective and from a public health perspective. They stress in their document that there is intrinsic value in developing and

maintaining the linguistic repertoire of multilingual children with a view to valuing their identity. Their basic point, however, is the proposal that, in order to address today's societal, economic and technological challenges, it is important to rethink the following basic concepts and they explain what each implies: rethinking literacy, rethinking

multilingualism and rethinking mother tongue. To do so, however, and to move from theory to practice, requires the EU's and member states' willingness not only to support action research, but also a major change in the programmes of initial teacher training institutions and in the support for teacher professional development.

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# Fostering foreign language acquisition in young refugees using mobile devices: The YouRNI project experience

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*Integration of technology into foreign language learning could extend the opportunities for language contact and better retention in the context of newly arrived refugees in the European countries. Research has shown that technology increases the motivation in foreign language learning and also fosters learner autonomy by allowing the learners to personalise the learning and enables them to self-regulate. The use of mobile technologies for language learning is also in accordance with a constructivist approach that caters for learner involvement and agency in the learning process not only in classrooms but outside the classroom as well. Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants readily have mobile devices at hand which could also be used in the classrooms where they are learning new languages. The teachers should also be able to exploit these devices to develop refugees' language skills. These reasons have become the driving force behind the YouRNI project that focuses on the refugee crisis in Europe, giving particular attention to inclusive schooling of asylum seekers and migrants in vocational schools (age 15+). This paper covers the initial findings of the project needs analysis as well as literature review to disseminate best practices on the use of mobile devices and apps in teaching languages of the host countries to the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.*

**KEYWORDS:** YouRNI project, migrant education, language learning apps, integrating refugees, individual learning, Erasmus +, vocational education and training (VET)



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The so-called refugee crisis is a challenge to governments, societies and citizens across Europe.

Leading European politicians emphasise that solutions and problem-solving strategies should rely on joint European approaches rather than stand-alone steps taken by any single country.

Erasmus+ is an important instrument in supporting

European policy agenda and promoting common European values, for example in order to prevent violent radicalisation.

Hence, the Paris Declaration has led to an add-on of the Erasmus+ priorities, and the YouRNI project addresses these updated priorities by focusing on the integration of young refugees in Europe, giving

particular attention to language learning, employability and inclusive schooling of asylum seekers and migrants in vocational schools (age 15+) for successful integration. The project aims at making the best use of technologies, i.e. learning apps for the host country's language, and addresses the English language as the European lingua franca to allow young refugees to play an active role in political and social life.

Schools and teachers are key agents supporting the settlement of refugee youths in their host country as they not only provide intensive language and learning support, but also promote a positive image of refugees and asylum seekers and oppose stereotypes and negative views of forced migrants. However, providing education and inclusion services for refugees is a big challenge, which is why teacher training activities are at the very core of the YouRNI project underlined by European values.

Current debate on the refugee crisis shows that a lot of European citizens and refugees need help, support, information exchange and reorientation in order to comprehend these values, especially in the context of a demanding situation. Everybody has to find their position, and teachers and teacher trainers are crucial players providing for the sharing of European values, because their beliefs will decide if and how these values are represented, discussed and transferred in the

classroom. They can promote cultural awareness, enhance intercultural understanding, and demonstrate that diversity should be seen as a chance, rather than as a threat to social cohesion. In this sense, the YouRNI project is of decisive importance in focusing on European values which form the foundation of the European Union and the Erasmus+ idea.

## 2. THE YouRNI PROJECT

The YouRNI project (2016-2019) aims at testing, evaluating, and spreading working methods and materials for disadvantaged pupils, specifically young refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. It will strengthen inclusive education by using and adapting a very popular and accepted tool of the target group, mobile devices, especially language apps, as an incentive and a driver to create better opportunities for young refugees. Learning apps will be used to improve language learning, and social partners and other VET (Vocational Education and Training) providers will be involved in fostering young refugee's employability. Participants will use their knowledge of regional structures and contacts and experiences of vocational schools to help young migrants enter the labour market.

The research conducted in the YouRNI project so far has focused on (1) selecting, evaluating, testing and disseminating language learning apps that have proven to be successful in the language

learning classroom; 2) enhancing the individual learning time of each learner and improving the usage of these apps by creating accompanying materials for learning outside the classroom, e.g. written materials, 'explain-it' videos or similar materials; 3) exchanging best practices of schools giving career guidance to young refugees, e.g. involving schools, employment agencies, Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders which show a particular interest in integrating young refugees into the labour market; 4) relevant career guidance; 5) starting a specialised network for teachers who work in this special target group of young refugees, asylum seekers or similar groups.

The main objectives are integrated into the project title: *'Integration of young refugees: Using mobile devices leading to better language acquisition and relevant career guidance'*. Thus, the key objective will lie in improving integration of young refugees by focusing on the following crucial aspects.

1. Using mobile devices in a two-tier approach: (1) learning-apps for better language acquisition, i.e. selecting, evaluating, testing and disseminating language learning apps that have proven to be successful in the language learning classroom; and (2) promoting apps and websites for career guidance.
2. Increasing the individual learning time of each

learner and improving the usage of language apps in order to make students continue learning their target language outside the classroom, e.g. by creating accompanying materials for learning outside the classroom, by written materials, 'explain-it' videos, free online language courses, links to Goethe Institut, BBC, Webinars, MOOCS or similar materials.

3. Exchanging best practice between schools giving career guidance to young refugees, e.g. involving employment agencies, Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders which show a particular interest in integrating young refugees into the labour market; different countries have developed various strategies on how to support refugees to enter the labour market. In order to cast light on these different strategies, YouRNI will use and spread the expertise of project partners on the regional, national and European level, e.g. with the help of the project's dissemination concept.
4. Focusing on the technical aspect of the project: using language apps means as a reliable IT-infrastructure at schools, concepts like Bring-your-own-device (BYOD) or Bring-your-own-internet (BYOI), and the use of refugees' hardware pose a challenge because of the different platforms being used (iOS, Android and their different versions).
5. Focusing on the legal aspect of free Internet

access for students. This causes security issues with different answers in different countries to be discussed.

6. Considering the Erasmus+ field of 'Strategic Partnership'. YouRNI wants to initiate a network connecting teachers who work with this special target group of young refugees, asylum seekers or similar groups. The exchange of best practice should be an everyday routine and not just a topic of an Erasmus+ project.

Project partners are Berufliches Seminar Karlsruhe Germany (coordinating partner), Education Group Austria, Escuela Profesional Otxarkoaga Spain, Veneto Lavoro Italy, Falun Borlänge Regionen AB Sweden, Istanbul University–Cerrahpaşa Turkey, Landesinstitut für Schulentwicklung, Baden-Württemberg Germany (associated partner), Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport, Baden-Württemberg Germany (associated partner), Pädagogische Hochschule Zug Switzerland (associated partner).

YouRNI addresses the Erasmus+ field of 'Strategic Partnerships for School Education'. The main target group are teachers, and the project's first and foremost goal is to support partners to develop networks for teachers involved in the education and training of refugees and asylum seekers and give their work a European perspective. The schooling, education and integration of young

refugees needs carefully selected teachers with a special knowledge of how to deal with diversified groups of learners. A deep understanding of intercultural competence, profound experience in integration training and the acceptance of diversity in our society is at the centre of these teachers' profile helping build more cohesive and inclusive societies. The applicant organisation and two more partners are teacher training institutions thus emphasising teachers' needs for further qualification to promote intercultural dialogue, improve L2-didactics of app-based language learning and foster the inclusion and employability of young refugees.

Project target groups can be identified as follows: (1) in-service teachers involved in the schooling of refugees; (2) teacher trainees of young refugees: three partners are teacher training institutions, and many teacher trainees are asking for extra-qualification in the schooling of refugees; (3) young refugees in VET-schools, mostly 15+.

The YouRNI project will have four transnational project meetings with a sequence of three questionnaires leading to the use and improvement of a learning package for learning inside and outside the classroom. A two-tier approach will be the guideline, looking both into app-based language learning and career guidance supported by mobile devices. The project applies a methodology that rests on six pillars: networking,

*‘The project applies a methodology that rests on six pillars: networking, needs analysis, development, collecting results, improvement, and presentation and dissemination’*

needs analysis, development, collecting results, improvement, and presentation and dissemination.

Six teacher training seminars will be organised around the topics covered by the YouRNI project:

1. Istanbul/Turkey: ‘English as the European lingua franca for young refugees in order to participate actively in European politics and develop a better understanding of European common values.’
2. Bilbao/Spain: ‘Examining and applying didactics of L2 acquisition for young refugees using integration training as a frame.’
3. Linz/Austria: ‘Reviewing media and materials for young refugees in German-speaking countries.’
4. Veneto/Italy: ‘Using educational biographies and Europass as a tool for career guidance to improve employability of young refugees.’
5. Zug/Switzerland: ‘Designing a teacher training

qualification course for L2-refugee classes using ECTS as a European instrument in state-controlled teacher training.’

6. Karlsruhe/Germany: ‘Developing a course on vocational language training for young refugees fostering intercultural competence.’

### **3. SYRIAN REFUGEES AND THEIR CURRENT STATUS IN TURKEY**

Throughout the YouRNI project, the Turkish team has contributed with solid information from the ‘kitchen floor’ in Turkey. It is reported that the number of Syrian refugees has exceeded three million (Şahin & Sümer, 2018). While some argue that Syrian refugees arriving in Turkey end up being registered multiple times as they move from city to city, the Turkish state persists with the number of 3.5 million refugees in its official statements.

As of March 2017, the conflict has led nearly five million Syrian refugees to flee their country. Among these refugees around three million currently reside in Turkey. Approximately 880,000 of the refugees living in Turkey are of school-age (between ages of 5 to 19), of whom 45% attend schools in Turkey (Aras & Yasun, 2016). Erdoğan and Erdoğan (2018) however argue that seven to eight million people fled from Syria and as of November 2017, the total number of Syrian refugees in Turkey amounted to 3.5 million. 33,3%

of the registered refugees in Turkey are reported to be illiterate and only 5,6% hold high school or higher diplomas.

A recent poll conducted in 2017 among Syrian refugees living in big cities found that 73% of all Syrian refugees will remain in Turkey. Aras and Yasun (2016) find that about 65% of Syrians (including approximately 572,000 children) are expected to remain in Turkey even after the war concludes. Integrating such a large number of students is going to be a critical component of Turkey's development trajectory. This has led Turkey to consider some solutions for the integration of Syrian refugees. It is estimated that over 300.000 babies have been born since the influx of Syrian refugees both in camps and in the cities where they currently reside.

In this context, education becomes very important in the integration and language acquisition processes. According to Aras and Yasun (2016), education benefits the refugee community, especially refugee children, by increasing socio-economic status and mitigating the psychosocial effects of conflict and achieving protection related objectives. Education is a useful mechanism to reduce the psychosocial impact of displacement and trauma. The personalities and coping skills of school-age children are being shaped almost daily. Due to the disruption of their physical, intellectual, cultural and social development

stemming from their refugee experiences, children often suffer from depression, engage in vengeful behaviour and conflict, and experience anxiety and loneliness.

Until 2018/2019 school year, Syrian refugees have two main options for the continuation of their education in Turkey, as they can choose to attend either Turkish public schools or temporary education centres. The Turkish Ministry of National Education opened Temporary Education Centres (TECs) for primary and secondary school students in 2014. These TECs provided educational opportunities for school-age Syrian children in Turkey. The schools offered lessons in Arabic as the medium of instruction and followed a curriculum designed by the Ministry of Education of the Syrian Interim Government and modified by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. The Ministry reported that approximately 78% of Syrian refugee students attended TECs, while the rest attended other schooling institutions, mainly Turkish public schools. Through government mandate, Syrian students at first grade and preschool level can only attend Turkish schools.

In 2013, the Turkish Ministry of National Education published a paper that marked the ground for the continuation of Syrian children's education. The paper stated that the Ministry of National Education is responsible for providing educational opportunities for Syrian refugee

children, and the Ministry of Education of the Syrian Interim Government is responsible for determining the curriculum for Syrian refugee education. The paper also indicated that Syrians who are high school graduates having passed the 'Baccalaureate' exam in Syria can enrol in universities in Turkey. Since then, 15.000 Syrian students have studied at 140 Turkish Universities (Bircan & Sunata, 2015).

In 2014, the government passed the *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* that identified the scope and implementation of the protection to be provided for foreigners seeking protection in Turkey. The law also broadly defined the educational rights of Syrian refugees by stating that applicant or international protection beneficiary and family members shall have access to primary and secondary education. According to the law, refugees could obtain an international protection ID with proper IDs from the home country and travel documents (Kibar, 2013).

While Syrian students were initially given the right to study at primary and secondary level institutions, the Turkish state later passed *Temporary Protection Legislation* in 2014. It stated that the educational activities of refugee students at primary and secondary schools were regulated according to the Ministry of National Education's guidelines. Afterwards, undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate level studies were regulated by

*'A recent poll conducted in 2017 among Syrian refugees living in big cities found that 73% of all Syrian refugees will remain in Turkey'*

the Guidelines of the Turkish Council of Higher Education. Successful students would receive certificates accredited by the Ministry of National Education and the Council of Higher Education. Following these laws and regulations, the Ministry of National Education published another paper in 2014. This provided the opportunity for Syrian students to attend either TECs or public schools in Turkey. In order to be eligible to attend an appropriate classroom at TECs, students need to provide their academic reports from Syria or take a placement exam. TECs generally use Turkish public school buildings in the afternoons or by night after the Turkish students are done with their classes, and sometimes office and NGO buildings. TECs located at office and NGO buildings conduct their classes in the morning until afternoon as they are flexible regarding the time for using classrooms.

McCarthy (2018) states that the Turkish government allowed the establishment of TECs that teach partly in Arabic although its regulations didn't allow for education in languages other than

Turkish. However, the Syrian curriculum was designed almost single-handedly by the Ministry of Education of the Syrian Interim Government with adjustments made by the Turkish Ministry of National Education on culturally sensitive subjects (Aras & Yasun, 2016). This created some discrepancies between the two curriculums. For instance, a subject might be taught at the 5th grade at TECs but at the 4th grade at Turkish schools, which could add extra challenges to the adjustment phases of Syrian students transferring to Turkish schools.

According to McCarthy (2018), *'TECs have become a part of an education system in which the traditional relationship between education and the nation-state does not exist, creating an anomaly in the centralised education system'* (McCarthy, 2018, p. 232).

She concludes that the curriculum followed in these centres does not reflect the socio-cultural values to be transmitted to the next generations to contribute to social cohesion in a nation-state.

However, as the conflict in Syria continues and the influx of refugees is repeated by every event in Syria, and observing that Syrian students could not acquire the Turkish language in those TECs, the Turkish state decided to close down all the TECs where the medium of instruction is partly Arabic and partly Turkish. In 2017, the number of Syrian

students in public schools in Turkey was 170.000 and in TECs it was 300.000 (McCarthy, 2018). As of 2018/2019 school year, all of the Syrian students will be enrolled to Turkish public schools and they will be mixed with the Turkish students and immersed into the language. TECs teachers reported that Syrian students cannot develop friendships with local students and this denies them the opportunity and the natural environment to acquire the Turkish language easily.

Aras & Yasun (2016) report that a debate among bureaucrats emerged concerning whether or not to place Syrian students in the 'fusion education' programmes in Turkish public schools. 'Fusion education' programmes are currently offered for students with certain identified deficits, such as lack of attention and hyperactivity. Through such programmes students receive private education in courses that they request help with. The extension of fusion education programmes to Syrian students could help them receive additional help in courses that they struggle with and help them catch up with their peers. McCarthy (2018) argues that the fact that language support programmes are limited and that teachers don't receive training for multilingual classrooms in public schools in Turkey is also detrimental for the Syrian students.

The Turkish Ministry of National Education has started appointing teachers for the Syrian refugees through the project called *Promoting Integration of*

*Syrian Children into the Turkish Education System* (PICTES). It was signed by Turkey and the EU and employed 6.000 teachers. The teachers were given training on how to teach Turkish as a foreign language and how to create materials for those students. Also 40.000 Syrian students who needed transportation to schools were provided with this opportunity. The wages were also paid by the project, which is due to finish this year (2018). Besides, there are other teachers who are appointed to work at the TECs. Most of them are former Syrian teachers who speak and instruct in Arabic. Their wages are paid through three main avenues, which are UNICEF, NGOs and donations. UNICEF pays teachers approximately ₺900 (Turkish Lira) per month (approximately 120 Euros). Some schools choose to pay wages to teachers through private donations and support from NGOs. Among the schools investigated, the wages for teachers provided as a result of private donations ranged between ₺1,000 and ₺2,000 per month, and the wages of teachers compensated by NGOs between ₺1,200 to ₺1,500 per month (Aras & Yasun, 2016).

#### **4. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION USING MOBILE DEVICES**

Smets (2018) has pointed out that recent studies show that there is indeed a high penetration of smartphones among Syrian refugees (see, for example, Xu et al., 2015). This is in accordance with the findings of the initial needs analysis

conducted by the partners of the YouRNI Project. The questionnaire that was completed by teachers of the refugee classes gathered responses from around 80 teachers from Germany, Sweden, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Turkey. 90% of respondents reported that their students were in possession of a smartphone. In this respect, the refugees around Europe are ‘connected refugees’ as pointed up by Smets (2018).

Savill-Smith et al. (2013) claim that mobile devices are acting as a bridge offering the opportunity to make links between (a) learning that takes place inside the classroom and the outside world, so it does not just stop at the school gates; (b) synchronous learning together with their peers; and (c) asynchronous learning at other times and places convenient to them (Savill-Smith, 2013, p. 129). They also stress that besides using mobile devices in the language teaching curricula, they can help refugees and migrants interact with the host community.

The high percentage of mobile devices ownership has led the YouRNI research into their use for language acquisition purposes. Project partners have created tools to evaluate apps to be used for this purpose, and these tools were translated into partner languages to be promoted to language teachers. Thus, teachers could use apps that they think could help their refugee learners acquire the language of the host country (see Table 1).

Table 1

*App evaluation form*

YouRNI Project. *'Integration of young refugees: Using mobile devices leading to better language acquisition and relevant career guidance'*

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DESCRIPTION

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Name of application  
 Release date / current version  
 Operating system(s) + OS version  
 Price  
 Download from

---

TECHNICAL DESIGN AND SUPPORT

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Offline mode available  
 In-app or online help, tutorial, support available  
 Privacy / data security (e.g. registration, Apple ID, e-mail address required)  
 Build-in adaptive learning mechanics (algorithm that considers user abilities and knowledge level)

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TARGET LEARNERS

---

Age (children, young adult, adult)  
 Proficiency level (CEFR level)  
 User language(s)

---

CONTENT AND FOCUS

---

Main purpose  
 Focus  
 Organisation of content

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Throughout the project, a body of literature on how to use mobile devices and apps for language acquisition has been accumulated as well. This paper shall describe some creative ways of using the mobile devices and apps for language acquisition. For instance, Gresswell and Simpson (2013) give specific examples of class blogging projects. They show how learners encountered, engaged with and used digital technology for productive learning experiences and how their use of digital media enabled them to overcome some of the literacy challenges they faced.

Mobile devices may also act as a communication bridge. For instance, if a teacher uses *Skype* (a voice-over-Internet protocol service) this may encourage students to communicate with their teacher and with each other. There are many other similar apps that allow for face-to-face communication from distance like *WhatsApp* and *Facebook Messenger*. This helps learners communicate with their peers outside the classroom walls. In addition, learners can create their own learning resources from videos they have made and use them to describe the process to their class. The teachers can use the learners' own resources to teach grammar points which could be practised repeatedly both in and outside the classroom by playing the videos on their mobile devices. The students may use the *Seesaw* app to create content and document their daily routines, which can be presented in the classroom

as well. There are many apps that allow learners to create visual digital stories from photographs or videos taken with mobile devices. These digital stories can also be used as visual prompts in an extension activity or sent to the teacher for analysis and feedback. Possibilities are truly endless when mobile devices and apps are considered. For example, learners can document their own experience anywhere from shopping and to museum visits. These can also serve as a basis for written work, where fellow learners can write descriptions or comments. Thus, a natural audience can be achieved for the class writing tasks as well.

Mobile devices and apps can also help refugee students and parents build links with different communities including their school administration, their workplace and their fellow students. For example, learners and their parents can benefit from search apps for their homework. Networking of this kind can ease the isolation that is often experienced by refugees. The use of social media like *Facebook* or *Instagram* can give voice and visibility to the refugees among their local peers. This can foster and maintain positive relationships and can enable cohesion, inclusion and integration into the community around them (Mallows, 2013).

Furthermore, mobile devices may help refugees maintain links with their country of origin. This in

return can help with the traumatic feelings of displacement, isolation and loneliness.

Mobile devices and apps can also enable refugees to be more independent. Search apps, journey planners and map apps can foster autonomy and independence. Refugees can access vital information to act on their own and plan their individual errands without help. Regarding foreign language needs, the refugees can use dictionary, grammar, spelling and translation apps. There are numerous encyclopaedias, such as *Wikipedia*, to learn about the local language and culture.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Although often presented as a crisis, training of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers from the conflict areas in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere actually presents educators with an exciting challenge. The challenge is to teach language and support integration of refugees into the community and prepare them for access to the labour market. Since most refugees possess mobile devices of

some kind, the opportunity exists for teachers, schools and educational authorities to use electronic media as a means of language and cultural education, using apps, *YouTube* and other social media platforms. This will require training for teachers in how best to use them for effective language and cultural education and training and support for students in how to exploit technology to the best educational effect.

The EU Erasmus+ initiative through the Paris Declaration of 2015 built a platform for the YouRNI project described in this paper to encourage integration and employability through language and cultural education and vocational training for students aged 15 and higher. Initiatives like this, based on the use of mobile devices as teaching aids and allowing greater interchange between students and between students and teachers, are paving the way for an advanced, accessible and exciting blended learning methodology for language teachers and students alike.

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# Teaching and learning in a multi-cultural school in Thessaloniki: A case study

by Vasiliki Santaridou and Luke Prodromou

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*Based on a presentation to the ICC (The International Language Association) conference in Greece in April 2018, this paper discusses the challenges of teaching English as a foreign language to refugees and migrants of school age in Greece and offers teaching strategies to improve motivation and meet the cultural challenges facing students in mixed classes of various nationalities, age ranges and language levels. It also explores motivation in the context of Maslow's analysis. It goes on to offer practical ideas for lesson plans and ways of avoiding possible cultural dissonance and offers key lessons for teachers, institutions and education authorities working to integrate refugees and migrant children into the school system.*

**KEYWORDS:** Maslow, migrant language education, English only, culture motivation, classroom management, mother tongue usage



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

I had heard the expression 'to be thrown in at the deep end' and I thought I knew what it meant. I have been teaching English for about thirty years and in my time, I have taught all levels, all ages, both in the private and the public sector, in big cities, small towns and villages all over the country. I have taught primary and secondary education, general English and special English: students preparing for exams to be mechanics, engineers and beauticians at Vocational Schools. I survived the challenging experience of teaching in a mountain village in Crete. I have had the pleasure of teaching well-behaved, highly

motivated students and I have seen them make real progress in acquiring English. However, I have also experienced the horror of coping with rowdy adolescent young men and a few rowdy young ladies, whose hormones seemed to be totally out of control and who seemed incapable or unwilling to learn anything. Their only reason for coming to class seemed to be to make my life difficult. There were times when I even felt genuine fear.

But no students I had ever taught before could have prepared me for my first classes at the Multicultural School in the centre of Thessaloniki at the beginning of the current school year. My

experience in this school would force me to rethink much of what I had taken for granted as a teacher and, in some cases, as a person.

## 2. EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Students' social background

My new school is one of the two in Thessaloniki which hosts refugees from countries at war (mainly Syria and Afghanistan) but also children of economic migrants from countries as diverse as China, Albania, Turkey, Pakistan and Russia. Some of my new students live in the school neighbourhood with their immigrant parents while others are brought in to the city centre on buses arranged by NGOs. There are some native Greek students too, all with difficult home backgrounds.

### 2.2 The cultural context

From the very first day in my new school, I was impressed by the fact that the prefix, 'multi-' was relevant to every aspect of the work done at the school. It covered a wide range of diverse people and situations. It literally contained 'multitudes'. Diversity was the name of the game and I would need to learn to cope with this diversity in all its dimensions in a very short time.

For example, I had students of various ages in the same class, ranging from 12-18, and in some cases even older. At least in the past, my classes were, more or less, homogeneous, from the point of view of age. But things were more complicated

than the age of the students. The really 'Big Issue' was Culture.

Cultural differences in Greek schools have always existed in mild forms and affecting a relatively small number of students. They had begun to appear towards the end of the 20th century as a result of increasing globalisation and the shifting populations in a world without borders or porous borders which could no longer 'keep out' the casualties of globalisation (Dörnyei, 2014).

Greece had for many years been a more or less homogeneous country from the point of view of language and religion, with the exception of the ethnic minorities in Thrace. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War and the sudden collapse of Soviet communism, Greece began to be more and more multi-cultural, with economic migrants from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and as far afield as China.

But the Arab Spring and the series of conflicts in the Middle East that followed led to new waves of political refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. This time, war and its consequences (death of loved ones, homelessness and exile) were not to be 'somewhere else', at a safe distance from our own daily routine. This time the impact of war was much closer to home and indeed reached our own classrooms. When these changes on the world stage are translated into everyday

reality on the ground, for teachers it means a uniquely different set of challenges. My new students come from different countries, cultures, religions and, in some cases, even when they come from the same country, they often speak different dialects.

It is vital not to forget that most of the students in these multi-cultural classes have fled from countries either engaged in war (Syria) or struggling to recover from war or civil conflict (Afghanistan). Quite a large number of them have lost their families during the war and have miraculously managed to survive and reach Greece on their own. As a result, they are vulnerable and traumatised and have had experiences that no child or teenager should ever have to suffer. Now, in Greece, they are striving to get by in a foreign country, some still alone with

no relatives or host families to support them. A large number of my students are living in refugee camps on the outskirts of the city. This means that they have a very early morning start. By the time they come to school, they are already tired and hungry and anxious for the 10 o'clock breakfast provided by NGOs.

### 3. MOTIVATION

These students need not only *physiological* support – food, water, warmth – but constant *psychological* and *emotional* support; they seem to welcome every word of praise. One encourages them to pursue their dreams and never give up. A simple word of encouragement, like ‘well done’ + the name of the student can have a significant impact on motivation (Prodromou & Clandfield, 2007). Maslow (1954) drew up the Maslow model of levels of motivation, reproduced in Figure 1.

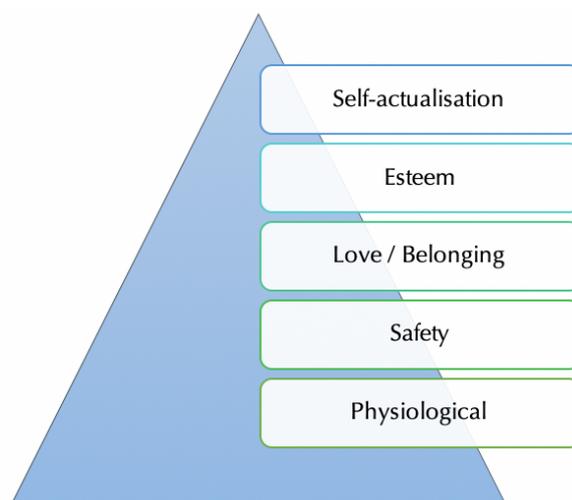


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs

In Maslow's (1954) model of motivation, the needs we have to meet are initially physiological but they also include the need to belong to a group and feel welcome in that group and the need to be loved and given self-esteem. All this 'theory', which I was familiar with from my University days, suddenly became urgently relevant.

Time and again, there are incidents amongst students which may undermine the cohesion of the group and their motivation. For example, the Afghans often complain more than the rest because they think the Syrians are being given preferential treatment over other nationalities.

Another peculiarity of refugee classes is the fact that the composition of the classes is constantly changing, since some of them leave when they are sent to other countries while new students are arriving all the time. This makes the classroom situation even more complex and perplexing to deal with. One has to start planning from scratch every so often.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH TEACHER**

Where does the school subject of English and the English teacher fit in to this mosaic of misery, diversity and resentment? The first week was really hard, as I tried to adjust to a completely new environment. I had had no previous experience at all in dealing with what turned out to be acute social and psychological problems. In some

cases, I was faced with the resentment and resistance on the part of the students, partly because of my insistence on using only English in the classroom. I discouraged them from using their mother-tongues during the lesson in the hope of promoting rapid language acquisition.

In fact, when they did use their mother-tongues it was sheer babel. Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Albanian, Georgian, Farsi, Turkish, etc. were often spoken simultaneously and serious discipline problems very quickly came to the surface.

Regarding the level of competence in English, most of my class of refugees and immigrants have very limited vocabulary but somehow manage to communicate. Forced by the circumstances they are faced with, they do use English with the other teachers, but they seemed reluctant to use English in my classes let alone pay attention to grammar and vocabulary exercises. Some of them even pretended not to speak English at all during the English lessons. I reminded them of the usefulness of English in helping them integrate into the new home country, whether they decided to stay in Greece or even more so if they migrated to northern European countries in search of better prospects. In this light, English was not just another subject but an essential tool for Greece and other European countries in dealing with the huge waves of settlers who could hardly communicate with members of the host

community. Command of a major western language and, above all, English as a Lingua Franca would help the refugees not only to blend into the local community but to find work and defend themselves against discriminatory practices (Richards, 2008).

## 5. MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

The situation was initially exacerbated by the complete lack of teaching material at the school. No textbooks were provided and no supplementary materials of any kind. The course books 'provided' by the Ministry of Education for Junior High School students are completely inappropriate. They are not suitable for my multi-cultural students since they are aimed at teaching Greek students of a specific level (beginners or intermediate). These are students who have attended Greek Primary School and have been taught English for a certain period of time through the use of specific course books. This situation demanded that decisions be made to remedy the lack of material. There was an urgent need to find material and organise a syllabus adjusted to the unique characteristics of each class. For example, I needed texts that would interest the majority of students, taking into consideration their differences in linguistic level, age, L1, cultural background, religion, previous experience and learning styles.

Lesson plans had to be drawn up, based not only on the students' ability but also their personal

aspirations and plans for the future. For instance, some of the refugees are planning to stay in Greece and to study, while others long to move on to other countries, especially western European countries like Germany or Sweden where jobs are available, or even further afield, such as the USA or Canada. Therefore, texts needed to be chosen that would meet their diverse needs and match their varied interests.

In short, lessons would have to be carried out in different 'gears', that is to say, pitched at different levels, with material chosen and organised according to the different contextual factors I have outlined. On the one hand, for lower level students, I would have to choose easier texts and exercises but my teaching skills would be stretched to enable me to present and explain the material in such a way that I would not discourage the students.

The last thing I wanted was to make them give up the effort to learn. On the contrary, I wanted to give them the feeling that, like all students, they are able to make progress in learning English. I had to gain their trust both as a teacher and a person.

So, for beginners I started to use simple tasks, drawing on everyday vocabulary items, which they may already use in their daily lives, often without noticing that they are doing so. This encouraged

them to believe in their potential to learn.

On the other hand, intermediate and more advanced students could be expected to work on texts with more complex vocabulary, including collocations, and to perform more complex tasks. So, I gradually started to ‘differentiate’ my teaching according to individual needs and styles.

In terms of classroom management and interaction, pair and group work seemed completely impractical to begin with but gradually, as the students grew more confident and rapport improved, we managed to overcome some of the difficulties and actually did carry out some of the tasks using pairs and groups. I will come back to the fundamental issue of rapport later in this article.

The lack of course book material meant that at first I had to use my intuition and make the lessons up as I went along. Apart from the lack of direction this gave my lessons and, consequently, the increase in discipline problems, I couldn’t just improvise from lesson to lesson. It was hard work and ineffective. Moreover, the insistence on the exclusive use of English in the classroom was also counterproductive. Hearing only English in class seemed to make them restless and frustrated. For some of them, their English was simply not good enough to benefit from an ‘English only’ policy and, of course, I could not draw on their diverse

*‘In short, lessons would have to be carried out in different ‘gears’, that is to say, pitched at different levels, with material chosen and organised according to the different contextual factors’*

mother-tongues. So, I had to rethink the use of ‘Greek as a lingua franca’ in the classroom.

## 6. STUDY AND RESULTS

### 6.1 The importance of lesson planning

I decided it was important not only to have a regular source of material but to have a lesson plan and *to be seen* by the students to have a lesson plan. Going in to class with handouts and a step-by-step strategy I hoped would give my lessons purpose and me, the teacher, confidence and increased authority. And so it came to pass.

First of all, I ransacked old textbooks in my collection and others contributed by a colleague to find appropriate texts for my mixed group of Arabs, Chinese and Russians et al. – any texts which mentioned the Arab world, China or any other country relevant to the group I considered potentially useful and earmarked it for future use. The level I considered appropriate was elementary to intermediate.

As an example, here is a lesson plan for Phase 1, the warm-up stage, in a lesson about China.

### **Lesson about China**

#### *Phase 1. Warm-up.*

AIMS: to revise countries and nationalities, to build rapport by using students' names and getting them to use each other's names, to focus on 3rd person grammar rules, to check difference between country and nationality.

ACTIVITY: Students give short oral responses to questions using vocabulary from previous lessons.

Patterns: *What is your name? My name is Alex.*

*What is his name? His name is Alex. Where are you from? I am from China. I come from China.*

*Where is X from? X is from China. X comes from China. What is your nationality? I am Chinese.*

*What is X's nationality? X is Chinese.*

It was important for me to have specific language aims – this gave my lessons a sense of purpose and direction which had a positive knock-on effect on discipline. Students tend to get swept along by a well-structured lesson, with clear aims. Above all, I wanted to create positive rapport, by making extensive use of 'nomination' techniques. When students are not sure of each other's names and rarely hear their own names, they tend to 'switch off'. I needed not only to know the students' names well and to know how to pronounce them

(not as easy as it sounds) but I needed to use the names with confidence. The rapid alternation of names and the choice of names from different parts of the classroom (front/back, left/right) kept students alert – as well as giving them ample opportunities to answer questions and get them right, a process which builds students' self-esteem and fuels further language acquisition. On hearing the names of students from other countries and cultures, the class was given a chance to learn each other's names and to get closer to each other, in a word, to 'bond'.

Phase 2 of the lesson was largely one of pre-teaching vocabulary.

### **Lesson about China**

#### *Phase 2. Presentation of new lesson.*

AIM: to pre-teach vocabulary before reading the text.

ACTIVITY: Write on board and ask students to copy: 'million' = 1,000,000; 'billion' = 1,000,000,000; 'population', 'border', 'capital', 'capital city'.

Patterns: *The population of Thessaloniki is 1*

*million. The population of Greece is 11 million.*

*Greece has a border with Albania, Bulgaria and*

*Turkey. The capital of Greece is Athens. The capital of China is Beijing.*

At this stage, I was still trying to avoid the use of

Greek as a lingua franca to explain 'difficult' vocabulary to students; it was, therefore, important to make my explanations in English clear and simple.

Secondly, I made a habit of asking students to write more, whether it was words from the board (as in this phase of the lesson) or dictation or short pieces of writing. There are two advantages of writing in classes such as my multi-cultural classes. First, the students will have a record of work done during the class and this over time would help them develop a sense of progress. This, in turn, should increase motivation. Secondly, writing – *any* writing – tends to be discipline-friendly. It helps to keep students quiet.

Phase 3 of the lesson focused on developing reading skills as well as dealing with the – by now – familiar classroom management problems.

### ***Lesson about China***

*Phase 3. Reading comprehension.*

AIM: to develop reading comprehension skills.

ACTIVITY: Look at questions 1-5. X (name) read question 1. Y (name) read question 2. Z (name) read question 3, etc. Now read the text and find the answers – silently! Elicit as many correct answers as possible (especially from Chinese students, but not only). Read the text again – aloud

– bit by bit, with students taking it in turns to read. Check answers as you go along. Make a point of including the weaker students at this stage.

I tried to involve the maximum number of students by naming them and getting them to read both the text and the questions aloud. I made use of the Chinese students a little bit more as they had previous knowledge of the subject (China) and this gave them a chance to shine and share their culture. But it was important to involve non-Chinese students in a lesson about China, so feelings of mutual exchange and respect would be reinforced.

In developing reading skills with any group (Phase 4), but especially a group as varied culturally as my new refugee/immigrant classes, it is vital to make the content of the text interesting and valued in the eyes of the students. The students' reaction to the text is, in this phase, crucial.

### ***Lesson about China***

*Phase 4. After reading.*

AIM: to generate follow-up activities after reading.

ACTIVITY: Before leaving the text, ask if there is something students don't understand. Any questions? Any comments? Involve other students to try to come up with the answers to any queries. Nominate, across the room, back and front and

side to side, and keep up the pace. Use the technique of 'surprise' nominating.

As in all phases of the lesson, I was attempting to keep a balance between teaching language and content on the one hand and effective classroom management on the other.

Thus, in the lesson notes above, I encourage students to learn from each other ('scaffolding') as well as from me, but I also make maximum use of naming techniques, to get the students' attention and, hopefully, keep it. I then concluded the lesson with a simple homework exercise.

### ***Lesson about China***

*Phase 5. Homework.*

AIM: to consolidate knowledge and skills.

ACTIVITY: Set the task to write 10 facts about students' country/Greece/Germany/the UK/any European country. Even if most of them don't do it, it looks good to give it and ask for it.

Giving homework adds to the seriousness of the course and sense of purpose. When students are taken seriously, as people who can work autonomously, even if they do not always respond by actually doing the homework, their sense of self-esteem is boosted. Teaching refugees and building self-esteem become parallel processes.

### **6.2 Managing cultural differences**

This was confirmed when I set them the task of translating a poem into their mother-tongue. This is the subject of the last part of the article.

It is winter. Christmas is approaching. Lessons are scheduled to end and the traditional festivities will have to be held. My classes are largely non-Christian. I will have to come up with something both festive and appropriate.

While searching on the Internet for suitable texts to teach at this time of year, I came across a poem by Mahmoud Darwish, a well-known Palestinian poet, which I decided to use in my classes. The poem is called '*Think of the others*', and, with its theme of pity for those less fortunate than ourselves, the text seemed to be appropriate for the festive season. Moreover, after having used the lesson about China and Chinese language I wanted to teach a poem originally written in Arabic (Darwish, 2013).

#### ***Think of Others***

*As you fix your breakfast, think of others. Don't forget to feed the pigeons.*

*As you fight in your wars, think of others. Don't forget those who desperately demand peace.*

*As you pay your water bill, think of others who drink the clouds' rain.*

*As you return home, your home, think of others. Don't forget those who live in tents.*

*As you sleep and count planets, think of others.  
There are people without any shelter to sleep.  
As you express yourself using all metaphorical  
expressions, think of others who lost their rights to  
speak.  
As you think of others who are distant, think of  
yourself and say 'I wish I was a candle to fade  
away the darkness.'*

## 7. DISCUSSION

Arab students were given the original in Arabic and English. The rest of the class were given the text in English translation. Students were asked to translate a verse or two into the L1 but to my surprise they were touched by the lyricism of the poem and offered to translate the whole poem each in his or her L1. Thus, we ended up with numerous translations – in Georgian, Turkish, Chinese and Albanian.

When two newly arrived refugees read the poem, they told me about the hardship of war and what they felt as the bombs were falling. Their only concern was to survive. Now, having reached the relative safety of Greece, their thoughts went back to those left behind in Syria and how lucky they themselves felt to be given a chance to restart their lives in Greece, including going to school and doing English – an opportunity to make a fresh start. The poem helped to make them see more clearly what they had been through and where they found themselves now.

The student translations were read aloud on the last day of lessons (23rd December) just before schools closed for the Christmas holidays and it was very emotional.

This task turned out to be very useful in another sense, too. As the mere mention of 'Christmas' among Muslims may be considered offensive by some, the choice of a text from the students' world allowed me to celebrate the Christian event in a culturally neutral way. In this way, in collaboration with the Religious Education teacher and the Music teacher, the Christmas celebrations were carried out successfully.

In addition to this activity, as part of the same series of 'Christmas' lessons, students were asked to write down a wish for the New Year. They were excited at the idea. Having written down their wishes in their L1, we translated them into English.

The most moving text was written by a Syrian girl who found it very difficult to make any wish than for peace in the world. Having experienced the atrocities of war at the sensitive, innocent age of thirteen, her words brought tears to everyone's eyes. The young Arab girl read it in English and Arabic: the text speaks for itself (original text).

*What I wish for The New Year, 2017*

*I feel awfully sad, when I think of the new year*

*that is coming; thinking about our life and about life in Syria... the way life used to be before the war – during the war – how life is now for Syrian people... How will it be in the future?*

*What can I wish for the new year with all the blood in Syria, with all the lost dreams for the thousands of kids that were killed? You can see it all over the world. The happiness of the children when they choose the trees, the cookies for Christmas while the Syrian kids are dying every day and those who survive are crying because they are left alone after the death of their family.*

*There is only one thing I can wish for. I wish for peace to return to Syria so that Syrian people can go back to their country – their homes.*

*Peace in the world in every country! Love and happiness for every human being and for Greek people who were so kind to us, showed us respect and support and proved that we can all be humans.*

## **8. CONCLUSION**

I began the new school year feeling shocked. The challenges of teaching in a multi-cultural school seemed insurmountable. The move from a Professional High School (EPAL) with its routine problems of discipline and motivation to a multi-cultural school with a pupil population made up largely of refugees from war and civil strife was

*‘After the first term, I now look back and see it has been a steep learning curve for me as a teacher and as a learner’*

overwhelming. The motivation of the students seemed to be non-existent and their respect for me minimal. After the first term, I now look back and see it has been a steep learning curve for me as a teacher and as a learner. In this article, I have tried to share my experiences with colleagues who may find themselves in a similar situation or be able to draw lessons from this special and unique situation to the teaching of English in more conventional contexts. I would like to finish by summing up what I have learnt and by making one or two suggestions for improving a very difficult situation for Greece and especially for the teachers who bear the brunt of the pedagogic consequences of a global problem with acute local consequences.

First of all, the problems inside the kind of multi-cultural classroom I have described can best be dealt with if teachers work together, not alone. In practical terms, this means team teaching would be a very useful strategy in dealing with the problems that arise when a teacher faces a large class of rowdy students. This problem is more acute when the teacher is a female and may have difficulty gaining the confidence of male students

for cultural or religious reasons. If there is no discipline there can be no learning.

At least occasionally, two teachers should be assigned to the same class. Not only will this reduce outbreaks of misbehaviour and disrespect towards the defenceless teacher but will make lesson planning more productive; two heads being better than one. The actual teaching can be shared, with each teacher delivering a different part of the lesson and the rest of the time helping with the considerable task of classroom management.

Evaluation is a very important component of the Greek educational system. This is another thing that worries me as the new four-month school term reaches its end. How am I going to deal with designing tests for different levels in the same class? What worries me the most is the fact that many of the students will be discouraged at their low marks and all the efforts we have been making to motivate them could be in vain.

Therefore, we must rethink the role of evaluation and the importance of awarding marks, grades and numbers and handing out potentially devastating reports to students like mine.

When I began teaching these classes, I treated the use of Greek and the students' L1s as taboo. Wanting to adopt a 'communicative approach', I

*'Therefore, we must rethink the role of evaluation and the importance of awarding marks, grades and numbers and handing out potentially devastating reports to students like mine'*

expected students to use the language not to *talk about* it; so, I refused to use Greek to give instructions or explain grammar and vocabulary. I ignored their protests, expressed in broken, but effective Greek. However, the disruption and demotivation got worse not better.

Having re-thought the role of L1 and the class lingua franca (Greek) in the light of the special characteristics of the classes (multi-lingual, multi-cultural, mixed age, mixed level, etc.) I decided to take a more 'creative approach' to the problem.

First, it came as a relief to most of the students when I made limited use of Greek to make sure they understood instructions and explanations of grammar and vocabulary. After all, some of them had so little English, they could not follow what was going on. It is true that a couple of the top students in my classes were not happy with my adoption of even limited Greek in the classroom. But I had to prioritise the interests of the majority

of students and in particular the weaker ones.

Secondly, as in the example of the translation of the Palestinian poem, the practice of English was facilitated by my activating the students' mother-tongues. We were moving from 'other tongue' (English) to the 'mother-tongue' (their L1s) and back again in a creative flow from one culture to another. This process I find is good for students' understanding of English but also good for building their self-esteem and respect for each other.

Most of my students are victims of hate and cruelty. The trauma of war, loss and alienation may

have taken from them the trust in their fellow human beings and, at the end of a long day, their will to live, let alone to learn English. As their teacher of English, I have found that if they come to believe that you are not there to punish them, but actually respect them, believe in them and like them, then pedagogic miracles are possible.

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# Translation as a subject of theoretical text analysis

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*The paper reviews research in translation as a special subject in linguistics and philology. The first part of the paper deals with the well-elaborated principles of the linguistic and literary criticism approach to translation, which has been applied to a wide range of studies worldwide. The authors offer a thorough investigation comparing different ways of rendering original texts into another language. In the second part of the paper, the concept of philological translation is explained to highlight the associated stages, methods, approaches, principles and categories. The concept of a philological approach to translation (the synthetic method) is contrasted with an analytical approach which violates the requirement of the unity of form and content of the translated text. The conclusion summarises arguments supporting the application of the philological approach to translation.*

**KEYWORDS:** translation theory, translation studies, philological translation, translation equivalent, linguistic theory of translation, functional similarity, corpus-based translation study



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The interest of philologists in the issues of translation is in many ways determined by the ongoing development of international contacts in all fields of human activity, as well as by a growing urge for the exchange of spiritual values. In today's world, peoples seek mutual understanding through communication. While fiction literature is undoubtedly one of the best means of human communication, the role of the translator gains ever more prominence. Despite extensive coverage of translation theory, the complex issue of literary translation is still relevant. On the one hand, the majority of translators, drawing on their

practical translation experience, are convinced that so-called literary translation is possible. Indeed, all languages boast translations of foreign works that have entered the archive of world literature and are a basis for communication among nations. For those who do not speak foreign languages, such translations are the only way they can be exposed to the works of foreign literature. On the other hand, philologists, as well as writers and poets at various times and in different countries, cast doubt on the very possibility of creating a work in another language that would match the original not only in terms of content, but also in terms of form. Martin Luther

saw an apparition of the devil when rendering the Bible into the German language and threw an ink-pot at him, so that to this day, in the German fortress of *Würzburg*, one can see a brown ink stain on the wall (Bainton, 2013). In this case, the 'devil' is the embodiment of the devilish difficulty Luther the translator had to face.

In modern philology, the negation of the possibility of translating from one language into another is based, inter alia, on the concepts of the American linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf who believed that as the individuals taking part in the cross-cultural communication have different ideas of the world determined by the structural discrepancy of their language systems, discussions of certain topics prompt situations of misunderstanding (O'Neill, 2015). Quite predictably, this area of philology sees a contradiction between theory and practice, as it is obvious that the practical work, i.e. thousands of translations into various world languages, far outpaces the development of the respective theory.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The paper relies on the diachronic analysis of related research shedding light on the evolution of translation theory in the 19th and 20th centuries to investigate the principles of the linguistic and literary approaches to translation and explain the concept of philological translation further opposed to analytical translation through comparison.

## 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 3.1 General notions and achievements of translation theory

The translation of fiction literature holds a special place in the hierarchy of translations. This is because a fiction text has certain specific features that differentiate it from other kinds of literary activity. Apart from an unusual semantic pithiness, national and historic traits and the writer's individual creative style, its unique creative identity manifests itself not only in the individual approach to the depiction of the world through imagery, but also in the choice and combination of the means of creating those images. As noted by Naitnik's (2006), *It is through the creative use of language that the writer reveals the subjective-objective attitude to the events described, characterises phenomena and objects and reveals his or her perception of the world. Therefore, the translation of such a complex structure as a literary text inevitably causes many difficulties'* (Naitnik, 2006, p. 3).

The term 'translation' is hereby perceived to have three meanings: 1) the comparison of two or several languages with the purpose of finding semantic correspondences between their units, usually for the dual-language lexicography, for the comparison of semantic studies, etc.; 2) conveying the information by means of another language; 3) finding in another language such means of expression that would provide not only the

*‘A practical interest in translation caused by the development of translated literature has evolved into a theoretic interest’*

rendering of information contained in this speech product, but also the fullest correspondence of the new text with the initial one in terms of form (external and internal), which is necessary in the case of a literary text, as well as when rendering into another language the notions that do not have a fixed expression in it.

Definitions 2 and 3 are directly relevant to this research.

It is understandable that in dealing with verbal-artistic creative activity, one cannot limit oneself only to conveying information (meaning 2), as is the case with the translation of scientific and technical literature. Having said that, what is defined under item 3 proves almost unfeasible. The cross-language transformations necessitate semantic losses which prevent the translated text from being the absolute equivalent of the original. Apart from that, the rendering of the stylistic and artistic idiosyncrasies of the original poses insurmountable difficulties. The ‘equivalents’ of the original resulting from the literary translation of the original cannot be considered translations in

the true sense (especially as applied to the poetic translation). They constitute certain variations of the main theme, with varying degrees of success, performed by translators who are in an adversarial relationship with the author of the original.

At the same time, in the last decades a new philological subject – translation theory, or translation studies, – has taken shape. A practical interest in translation caused by the development of translated literature has evolved into a theoretic interest (see, for example, Alekseeva, 2004; Komissarov, 1999; Retsker, 2004; Robinson, 2012; Fawcett, 2014; Fedorov, 1983; Schweitzer, 1988; Munday, 2013).

Translation scholars have made a number of valuable observations and generalisations and have formed the categories of this academic field. For example, an attempt has been made to define the notion of translation adequacy, which Fedorov (1983) calls ‘the full value’, by which he means *‘the exhaustive conveying of the semantic content of the original and the full-fledged functional and stylistic correspondence with it’* (Fedorov, 1983, p. 27). Fedorov has also formulated the principle of the original text’s translatability. Specifying the principle of translatability, he departs from the fact that *‘every highly developed language is a means mighty enough to be able to convey the content expressed in another language, in its unity with the form’* (Fedorov, 1983, p. 122–123).

The recognition of the strong connection between translation studies and comparative linguistics is another issue which is of an indisputable importance for the development of translation theory (see, for example, Alekseeva, 2004; Barkhudarov, 1975; Vinogradov, 1978; Gak & Roisenblit, 1965; Granger, 2003).

The most important achievement of translation theory has been the development of the concept of functional similarity. It stemmed from the ambition to prove the possibility in principle of text translation from one language into another. According to the concept, which is based on understanding language as a function and not a form, the information and stylistic function of certain linguistic elements of the original is studied and the language means are established that can perform the same function in the translation.

This theory was first developed in the works of the Czech linguists Mathesius (2013), Levý (2011) and others. Levý (2011) attaches the following meaning to the notion of functional similarity: ‘... *We are not going to insist on the identity of what the reader of translation receives with what the reader of the original does, but instead we shall insist that the translation and the original performed the same function in the system of cultural and historic ties of the reader of the original and that of the translation, we will depart from the necessity to subordinate the parts to the*

*‘The recognition of the strong connection between translation studies and comparative linguistics is another issue which is of an indisputable importance for the development of translation theory’*

*whole in accordance with the demands of functional similarity’* (Levý, 2011, p. 397).

### 3.2 Literary translation studies

At present, translation theory differentiates two trends – literary and linguistic. The literary trend emerged through works by Chukovsky (1964), Gachechiladze (1951), Kashkin (1955) and other scholars who promoted the literary approach to translation thus restricting its linguistic aspect. Until the 1950s, Russian translation theory developed along these literary lines. The proponents of this approach suggested focusing attention on conveying the ‘images’ of the original, considering translation a creative process and placing great importance on the personality of the translator.

The foreign school of literary translation studies is represented by scholars such as Bassnett (2002), Hermans (2014), Toury (2012) and Venuti (2017), whose studies are confined to the study of separate literary texts and their translations. They see

translated literature as an important cultural element of the language of translation striving to take its rightful place among other texts written in that language.

The approach of the representatives of literary translation theory is characterised by a tendency towards empiric study and description. Being a part of comparative literary studies, this area of research exploits all its methods and techniques with the only difference that the research material in this case is the translated texts.

Lately, the literary school has made considerable progress. Not only has it absorbed all the achievements in this academic field but has also expanded the perception of translation. In the past decade translation has come to be understood not only as a means of interaction between literatures and cultures of various epochs and nations but also as an opportunity to gain an insight into the original. So, for instance, it was established that different translations of the same work make a considerable contribution to the understanding of both the entire work and its parts, up to the lexical level units (Rose, 1997).

### 3.3 Linguistic translation studies

The emergence of the linguistic branch of translation theory is connected with the works of the Czech structuralists and primarily with Vilém Mathesius, who formulated the concept of

functional similarity as early as in 1913. The concept was to play an important role in forming the linguistic school of translation developed later in the works of Jiří Levý and Roman Jakobson. According to Mathesius (1967), translation is only possible via meticulous information, stylistic and aesthetic analysis of the functions of all the language elements comprising the original text. The translator has to identify which expressive means of the translated text perform the same functions as the elements of the original text (Mathesius, 1967, p. 239–245).

Linguistics has garnered extensive experience in contrastive-comparative language analysis, which helped draw a number of general conclusions that played an important role in the development of translation thought. In the mid 20th century the linguistic approach came to secure a leading position in translation theory. This period saw the emergence of fundamental academic schools pursuing this approach. The English-language school is represented by the English scholars Catford (1978), Newmark (1988) and Snell-Hornby (1995) and American scholars, the most influential of whom are Nida (Nida & Taber, 2003) and Jakobson (1960). Among the German researchers one can distinguish the works by Dressler (1972), Nord (1992), Reiss (2000), and others. As far as the French-language school is concerned, one should mention the studies by Canadian researchers Vinay and Darbelnet (1958)

and French linguist Mounin (1963).

In Russia, the founder of the linguistic branch of translation theory was Andrei Fedorov (1983). The linguistic branch developed mainly in the framework of general translation theory, mostly on the basis of non-fiction works. The overarching feature of the works in this field was the tendency to organically bind modern theoretical linguistics and general translation theory (Alekseeva, 2004). The establishment of types of translation equivalence was a tangible contribution of the proponents of the linguistic concept to the theory. The notion of equivalence was based on the above-mentioned criterion of the functional correspondence between the original and the translation (Komissarov, 1999). Researchers also attempted to 'construct' translation models. The linguistic theory largely contributed to the creation of the theory of machine translation. Since the 1950s linguistics has started to extensively exploit the precise methods of language fact analysis. The theory built around machine translation played a prominent role in the studies of the functional style of the scientific and technical literature and the issues of translation (Arnold, 1994; Schwanke, 1991).

### **3.4 Corpus-based translation studies**

At present, corpus-based studies of translations are actively developing as a field of the linguistic theory of translation. The representatives of this

field focus their attention on studying a great number of translated texts in their relation to the broad cultural, political and social context and the language of everyday use, which constitutes a considerable step forward in the development of translation theory. Scholars dealing with corpus-based translation studies include Baker (2011), Kennedy (2014), Kenny (2014), Laviosa (1998), Olohan (Olohan & Baker, 2000), and others.

Corpus-based translation has not yet spread wide enough in Russia, the likeliest reason for which is inadequate technical equipment. Nevertheless, research in the field of corpus-based linguistics is being successfully conducted by Gvishiani (2004). The corpus-based approach to translation studies has an immense potential. It involves studying a vast body of texts (including parallel texts) which can provide researchers with the necessary information for establishing and studying various stages of the translation process, identifying the principal translation unit, and determining the authentic nature of translations and their role in forming the literary tradition of a certain people. Apart from that, studies of bulky texts, including fiction, help identify the characteristic features of these particular translations and make an indisputable contribution to the development of translation 'universals'. Thus, in particular, the fundamental analysis of the parallel corpus of German fiction texts, along with their translation into English, was conducted Kenny (2014), who

*‘Apart from that, studies of bulky texts, including fiction, help identify the characteristic features of these particular translations and make an indisputable contribution to the development of translation ‘universals’*

considers translations from the perspective of the lexical aspects of the author’s language creative work.

### **3.5 The blended approach**

The linguistic approach was a definitive advance in the development of translation theory. However, the literary and linguistic trends, taken separately, cannot give a full picture of the essence of literary translation. The real possibility to blend the two lines in the approach to translation is borne out by an ever-increasing number of emerging works successfully combining the linguistic and literary approaches (Vinogradov, 1978; Levý et al., 2012; Naitnik, 2006).

Apart from that, translation should be considered as a form of cross-cultural communication, given the past decades of work in the field of cultural linguistics, as the interdisciplinary approach to the most complex issues of literary translation theory and practice allows us to look at the experience

gained from a new perspective and proceed to such equivalent versions of translation that are the most appropriate in terms of preserving the form and content. We share Shaitanov’s (2009) opinion that *‘translation requires the shift of accents: from the text in its correspondence to the original – to the cultural context, from the language of the original – to the target language, i.e. to the language and cultural situation in which the translation is performed’* (Shaitanov, 2009, p. 19).

Yet despite the important theoretical concepts which have undoubtedly raised translation to a new academic level, little has changed in practice. In many cases these concepts remain theoretical. Their application in practice, if any, is more or less intuitive, rather than conscious. As we know, a theory in any scholarly field is inseparably connected with practice and a gap between theory and practice can have an adverse effect on the development of translation theory.

## **4. STUDY AND RESULTS**

### **4.1 Current status of translation and translators**

At present, many private publishing companies in Russia are being set up, while the already released foreign translations of fiction literature are being republished. However, the management of many publishing companies, in their pursuit of cost-effectiveness, chooses to commission a new translation of the book in question instead of repurchasing the rights for the publication of a

certain translation. In this case, translation ceases to be a prerogative of extraordinarily talented and well-known literary artists and becomes a mass market service. As a result, new translations of classical literature emerge which are qualitatively different from the previous ones.

Undoubtedly, this is not the only reason for the release of new translations, including those of works published previously. Often, the translators who find a creative potential in themselves go on to translate already translated literary texts, striving to create their new version of improved quality. The ambition to make the translated text similar to the original has inspired many a generation of translators.

However, literary translation has not yet achieved the level of philological development which would allow the full recreation of aesthetic (linguistic-poetic) properties of the original. In most cases, it is based on translator's 'inspiration', on his/her intuition, talent, philological erudition, etc. In fact, the translator identifies the main content or idea of the 'source text' and passionately creates a text in the 'target language' in the course of individual independent creative activity without conducting a thorough philological dictionary research, thus making the translation diverge from the original by overlooking the linguistic-poetic idiosyncrasies of the original text.

While in scientific literature the translator is perceived as a slave, in fiction literature (regardless of whether it is prose or poetry) he or she acts as a rival, meaning that the translator is expected to reach the level of the original in his or her mastery of literary speech. So, the ideal translation is the fullest possible re-expression of the content of the original in the target language which complies with all the norms of the latter and performs the same function in the foreign linguistic and cultural environment. Therefore, we have every reason to view the translator as the author's co-thinker and friend, and not at all a slave or a rival.

Unfortunately, in practice, translated literary texts are considerably inferior to the original ones in terms of their artistic merits. They suffer from both 'awkward' word combinations and excessively complex syntax (as concerns translations into Russian). As a result, translated texts sound artificial, unnatural, 'not Russian enough'. Often, the language of translations is paler, drier, obscurer than the language of original texts; as a result, the imagery in parallel texts fails to be equally pithy. Translators confine themselves to household words, thereby impoverishing the translated text. This was pointed out by Chukovsky (1964): *'Translators often suffer from brain blood deficiency which makes their text so sapless. Their supply of synonyms is extremely sparse. Their horse is always just a horse. Why not a stallion, a dapple bay, or a racer?'* (Chukovsky, 1964, p. 123).

Having said that, it does not mean that this type of human activity should cease to exist in the never-ending anticipation of new scholarly discoveries. Sure, here will always be a difference between academic research and practical activity. However, there is a long-felt need to close the gaps between the results of academic studies in literary translation theory and the translation activity itself. Scientific study has an immense importance for understanding the essence of this process.

Prominent research in this field includes studies by Svetovidova (2000), part of which is devoted to the issue of metaphor translation, and Naitnik (2006), in which the author conducts analysis of the creative possibilities of the translator when working on the recreation of idiosyncrasies of the author's language creativity at multiple language levels. The material for the latter research is the English language literature of the 19-20th centuries. Naitnik (2006) views language creativity as '*a conscious deviation from the commonly used language norms for artistic purposes*' (Naitnik, 2006, p. 16) and sets out to identify the extent of the creative use of language by translators and the restrictions imposed on their activity. In her study, the author also made an attempt to answer a number of questions relevant to literary translation theory and practice, such as:

- Does translation involve neutralisation of the elements of the author's style?
- Which factors determine the choice of a

certain translation equivalent?

- Which translation techniques are most commonly used by translators in rendering elements of the author's style?
- How has the attitude to translation of the original's stylistic idiosyncrasies changed over the century? (Naitnik, 2006, p. 15-16).

#### **4.2 Translation as inspiration vs translation as a result of scientific analysis**

We believe that a distinction should be drawn between 'translation as inspiration', when the translator transposes the original text with the means of another language based on own knowledge, talent and intuition, and the translation which would be based on a meticulous, in-depth philological text analysis, that is 'translation as a result of scientific analysis'. The novelty of the present research is in getting an insight into the essence of translation by comparing parallel texts in two languages. The linguistic-poetic method of study applied in the comparative analysis is instrumental in interpreting the original text which is needed to understand the author's individual concept of the original and the recreation of equally pithy imagery in the target language.

The method of 'philological translation' can be viewed as the first step on the way to turn translation into an academic field. As studies have

shown, on a certain stage of the development of philological knowledge, the occurrence of new translations of classical literature cannot be a result of individual inspiration or taste. Every new translation of the classics should by all means take into consideration the previous translations. By means of thorough comparison of the original with the existing transpositions, based on philological generalisations, by critically processing and analysing the experience of the predecessors, one can move on to the creatively most appropriate options of rendering in another language of not only the ideas contained in the original but also of its verbal-artistic fabric. Translations of classical works aggregated over the centuries (e.g. translations of Shakespeare) and inevitably emerging translations of modern authors constitute material which philological study may create certain scholarly and philological 'calques' for new, improved transpositions. The use of translations created before is suggested as a scientific method and is referred to as 'philological translation' which is based on a thorough analysis of weaknesses and strengths of the original text and all of its existing translations. In developing this method, the main goal is to create a theoretic base which would allow scholars to make translation an actual part of philological theory, so that we would not be speaking about translation as just a product of creative inspiration.

The shift was then made from the ontological

(analytical approach based on a priori premises) level of study to the gnoseological level, i.e. an attempt was made to single out the overarching concepts underpinning this academic field. Gnoseology is defined as the philosophy of knowledge. In our case, this includes the notions of knowledge of 'word', 'image' and 'text'.

While in no way diminishing the importance of other language aspects, we can confidently state that the main power of verbal and artistic impact is contained in the words used. The understanding of a literary work depends primarily on the understanding of words. In fiction literature, the word tends to expand its semantic possibilities. In every use, it may simultaneously possess all its semantic potencies in an explicit or implicit form. When translators embark on transposing the literary text, apart from other difficulties they inevitably face the need to convey in another language the entire scope of the word. More often than not, translations impoverish the original, when only one of the meanings is conveyed, and the choice is determined by the context principle.

As was shown in the previous sections, imagery is an integral property of any work of art, including the verbal-artistic one. It is clear that understanding fiction literature is impossible without creating a corresponding image equivalent in the mind of the reader. The problem of 'imagery' in a literary text is resolved on the basis

of the 'verbal' (cognitive) and 'non-verbal' (metaphoric) aspects, which were initially studied from the point of view of artistic comparison.

This contradiction gains particular importance when we deal with comparative studies. The translator should differentiate the 'image'-containing parts of the text from those dominated by 'verbal/word' expression. In the first case, the translator is required not just to passively perceive the text of the original but to be able to 'grow into' the images and recreate them with the means of the language-object. In the second case, their task may be confined to the simple contrasting of words.

To render into another language the dialectic correlation between form and content of a literary work, one needs to learn to find corresponding 'texts' in the archive of world literature, as *'translation is not just the interaction of two language systems, but the interaction of two cultures, sometimes even civilizations'* (Schweitzer, 1988, p. 14). The translator needs to absorb the 'language atmosphere' of the epoch and find the equivalent to the 'source text' in the literature of the target language. This gains particular importance, for example, in the translation of parodies. There is no point in trying to find formal correspondences to the units of the original in the language of translation. The only right way to

*'When translators embark on transposing the literary text, , apart from other difficulties they inevitably face the need to convey in another language the entire scope of the word'*

render the complex correlation of content and form is to create a new (literary) work which is a parody of a work already well-known to its readers.

Apart from developing the method of philological translation based on the contrasting of different periods of the original both in one language (including the intralinguistic translation) and in various languages, a number of particular techniques of contrastive study has evolved, the most interesting and useful being the 'back-translation' method. With the help of the latter, the overlaps and disparities between the original text and the translated text are revealed (Ozolins, 2009).

Apart from that, the studies of the problem of rendering the elements of the so-called 'third semiological system' using another language are of relevance. The work in this field has yielded interesting results.

The problem is that the text of a literary work has

specific elements that cannot be adequately expressed in the language of translation. Such elements are traditionally called 'untranslatable', and the issue gains a solid theoretical underpinning if addressed in the context of the clash of different semiological systems.

As concerns the rendering of a literary work with the tools of another language system, we are dealing with two semiological systems, the language of the original and the language of translation. The translator is assigned the task of transposing the text from one system into another. These systems should be contrasted and brought to a common denominator. However, the language of the original often has elements which are not part of the initial semiological system but are instead somewhat foreign, undermining its integrity. Such elements have been generally called 'the third semiological system' which clashes with the first two. It may include foreign contaminations in the original text which are discordant with the neutral vocabulary of the literary language that the original is written in, including dialecticisms, aureate diction and archaic vocabulary.

Are there any ways of rendering the elements of the 'third semiological system' in all the richness of their meanings and connotations successfully through another language? In the majority of cases, the elements of the additional semiological system of the original refer to the 'untranslatable

elements' of the verbal-artistic works. Thus, the cognitive gaps in the text and the problem of the elimination of those culturally significant gaps through the language of translation still remains very relevant (Wu, 2008).

However, studies devoted to the development of typology of translation errors and elaboration of translation strategies have so far been sparse and based on non-fiction material (Hansen, 2010; Ordurari, 2007).

The philological approach to translation has been developed on the basis of and applied to the material of poetic works. In the present research, the foundations of this method of translation studies are extended to prose and applied to imagery studies. Thus, the paper extends the notion of 'philological translation', which prompts deeper understanding of the most significant means of creating an image that can be overlooked when analysing only the initial, national form of the existence of verbal-artistic creativity, i.e. in the language of the original.

### **4.3 Philological vs analytical translation**

A critically important methodological aspect is the fact that the concept of philological translation contrasts with the concept of analytical translation proposed by Rudnev (1994) and suggesting that traditional translation is synthetic and constitutes an interpretation of the original. According to

*‘Thus, the cognitive gaps in the text and the problem of the elimination of those culturally significant gaps through the language of translation still remains very relevant’*

Rudnev (1994), the interpretative nature of translation is bad, as the translator’s interpretation of the original deprives readers of the opportunity to assess the work by themselves and create their own interpretation of it. In this regard, the author proposes to give the reader a word-for-word translation of, say, the English-language original in the Russian language. In this case, Russian-language readers will receive the original in its ‘pure state’ without any interpretations attached and will be able to interpret it themselves, as they please. The scholar calls this type of translation ‘analytical translation’ (Rudnev, 1994, p. 48-56). Having published his own translation of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, he contrasted it with another translation by a Russian poet and children’s writer Boris Zakhoder, which he described as ‘synthetic’. However, Rudnev (1994) has overlooked one important factor. The building material of the verbal-artistic creative work is language. Different from the sculptor’s material (clay, marble) or painter’s material (pencil, paints), etc., language is not a neutral, ‘dead’ material. Even before the creation of a literary text the language is already

pragmatically ‘charged’. Unlike, say, clay, language contains the spirit of a nation and is not an interpretative system in itself. When, for instance, the English text of *Winnie-the-Pooh* is translated into Russian, this ‘new host’ material to a certain extent transforms the original despite the translator’s efforts. It is impossible to transpose a text from one language into another and maintain its initial state. The system of the language of translation will inevitably make changes to it, which will lead to the distortion of the artistic content. To avoid it, the translator should at some point ‘fight’ against the language of literal translation and find translation transformations to achieve a result.

When the sculptor first moulds a statue from plaster and then casts it in bronze using that pattern, the artistic form remains intact (although, obviously, even the very texture of the material influences the perception). Conversely, the language of translation definitely influences the original and it is philological translation that takes that fact into consideration, unlike the method of analytical translation proposed by Rudnev (1994). Besides, the author contradicts himself in his translation, infusing it with his own interpretation of the original, using verbs in the Historical Present, which Milne does not have, and trying to achieve similarity between Milne and Faulkner. Apart from that, in addition to making calques, Rudnev (1994) equips the text of the original with

a great number of verbose commentaries, the constant reference to which undermines the integrity of the perception of the literary text. Hence, the method of analytical translation does not allow the reader to perceive the content of the translated text and the emotional and aesthetic impact it produces to its full extent. The average reader undoubtedly needs the synthetic translation, while the analytical translation is useful only for a narrow circle of philologists who do not know the English language and cannot read *Winnie-the-Pooh* in the original. Analytical translation is, therefore, low-functional.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The paper argues that only the method of philological translation incorporates, on the one hand, the merits of the 'inspirational' (intuitive) translation, providing the conveying of the spirit of

the original, and, on the other hand, the analytical translation based on the theoretical approach. The philological approach to translation claims that only the contrastive-comparative analysis of the means and ways of creating an artistic image in parallel texts gives scholars the opportunity to conduct a complex research, as it is difficult to speak of a fully-fledged perception of the original image using the material of a translated text due to the unsuitability of a linguistic-poetic analysis of inauthentic language material. On the other hand, analysing a literary text within its initial form of existence only, the researcher risks overlooking the shades and nuances of the author's individual style, and consequently, its linguistic and poetic importance, which can be seen when contrasting the original with the translation. Analysing the latter reveals all the linguistic and cultural faults like a litmus test paper.

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# Some basic challenges and strategies in teaching translation to Chemistry majors

by Elena E. Aksenova and Svetlana N. Orlova

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*Efficient teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) requires substantial effort which includes fostering the skills of scientific texts translation. The study deals with the methodology of teaching translation to MA and post-graduate students specialising in Chemistry and possessing little or no knowledge of translation techniques, reviews discussions on translation theory and practice to illustrate their evolution and attempts to make a contribution to this discussion by offering some new perspectives of interest in the field. The study lists translation strategies to be applied with non-language majors and tests them out with MA and post-graduate students in the Chemistry Department of Moscow Technical University with experiment and control groups further evaluating students' progress via quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis.*

**KEYWORDS:** translation, translation technique, non-linguistic faculties, competence in translation



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades, many researchers have spoken in support of the idea that teaching translation to university students should incorporate both theoretical and practical components, taking this idea forward in numerous studies and textbooks intended for students majoring in linguistic disciplines (see, for example, Komissarov, 1997; Latishev & Semenov, 2003; Cook, 2010; Gambier, 2012). For one thing, lack of theoretical background was proved to somewhat devalue the practical skill, while beyond that, adequate translation proficiency at some point ceased to be perceived as an off-the-

wall competency or even art (Chukovsky, 1984), but came to be referred to as an altogether affordable skill to be mastered (Calvo, 2011).

While studies in translation have in many ways taken a quantum leap, translation as a discipline is still considered a priority of language majors, with non-majors enrolled in non-linguistic faculties and universities still lacking adequate translation training, for with them it only comes down to checking basic reading skills at best.

This poses an issue that needs to be addressed for a number of reasons. Most crucially, the

overwhelming expansion of international relations inevitably generates voluminous written communication, with research publications as one of its major constituents, and ongoing global networking more than ever before involves ensuring expedient translation services. As the 21st century has been dubbed 'the era of translation and translators', fostering the corresponding skills has become one of the priorities in higher professional education.

Both undergraduate and postgraduate university students are required to read and translate a fair amount of scientific papers in order to pursue their own research objectives, meaning that they also need to develop a range of skills underlying their ultimate translation competency, the latter including a number of sub-competences representing a range of skills to be developed in both their mother tongue and the foreign language.

Notably, ESP students invariably face a number of problems having to do with translating procedures. To address these, the teacher will have to be on the lookout for potential difficulties and be able to apply appropriate coping techniques. First and foremost, it is crucial to consider and analyse specific translation practices, define the skills that are of primary importance for ESP students, and make a practical distinction between bilingual and essential skills (Larson, 1984). Importantly, major

roadblocks can be associated with a cross-language mismatch giving rise to issues such as lexical interference, which remains relatively unexplored in terms of the methodological aspects involved (Malyuga et al., 2017).

This study explores how scientific post-graduates, Chemistry students in particular, can successfully manage foreign language texts and reviews the most recent perspectives in the field of translation.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper assesses the ability of Chemistry students on MA and other post-graduate courses at Moscow Technical University who are non-language majors and evaluates their progress in using quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis in translation. Quantitative evaluation was premised on a questionnaire completed by the students while delivering on their term task, and the qualitative method relied on scientific article analyses and students' short reports, which were due one week before the final test. The resulting data were summarised and analysed per group, revealing the key problems encountered in translation as well as the percentage ratio of common mistakes made in translation.

## 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Intensive research on translation got underway in the late 20th century with the studies by scholars such as Holmes (1988), Catford (1978), and Nida

(1998), the latter being one of the first scholars to define the concept of translation in a more systematic manner, claiming that translating involves reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message in terms of both meaning and style (Nida & Taber, 1982). The author referred to translation as a 'science', the statement being rather revolutionary for that time as it contradicted the so-called 'grammar translation' method which was widely used in the first half of the 20th century and focused on learning the grammatical rules of the target language as a cornerstone for successful literal translation (Munday, 2009). Translation exercises were considered critical for learning a foreign language and reading foreign texts. The method later lost its popularity as the communicative approach emerged in the late 1960s – early 1970s. The communicative approach focused on the natural ability of students to learn a foreign language and attempted to represent the daily classroom routine keying in on the spoken language instead of using sentences that were out of context. As a consequence, the new approach rejected the method of grammatical translation in its classic form.

In the second half of the 20th century, with a number of new linguistic achievements, a new generation of scholars managed to establish a more systematic analysis of translation (Jakobson, 2000; Fedorov, 2002; Mounin, 1963). Following

*'The theories on translation tried to give insight into the translation process and analyse the relations between thought and language, culture and speech'*

the new theories, a new discipline of translation studies emerged. By the end of the 20th century, communicative and sociocultural approaches were at the centre of attention, and so translation came to be viewed as nothing short of a cultural phenomenon. Thus, the concept of the 'cultural turn' was another crucial advance in translation studies that warranted further investigation. It was proved that translation could not develop without culture studies, since translations enrich nations with the cultural values of other peoples. The theories on translation tried to give insight into the translation process and analyse the relations between thought and language, culture and speech. While many theories are widely discussed in scientific literature, the argument is mostly concerned with the distinctions between texts types or genres and speech types within written or oral translation/interpreting.

The Russian school of translation studies appears somewhat distinctive as the Russian word *перевод* has a broader meaning referring to both translation and interpretation, whereby the process

of translation is inextricably connected with its result. Thus, developing a translation strategy implies defining the exact meaning behind the term *перевод*. Scholars dealing with the study of translation tend to consistently underline the dichotomy of this two-facet phenomenon, which represents both the process of transferring information and the result of this process – the

translated text. However, some scholars invest translation with extra characteristics indicating some special traits that make it a unique phenomenon. For example, Barkhudarov (1975) considers translation an interlingual transformation, a replacement of the source text (ST) by the target text (TT), with the meaning of the source text remaining unchanged (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Approaches to explaining translation*

RESEARCHER	EXPLANATION OF TRANSLATION	CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSLATION
Fedorov (2002)	Translation is effectuated through a number of transformations with comparative analysis prevailing	A process, outcome (result of this process), combination of linguistic & literature approaches
Barkhudarov (1975)	Translation is defined as interlingual transformation	A process, outcome (result of this process), content (meaning) as the most important aspect
Shveytser (1973)	Translation is part of intercultural communication	A process, outcome (result of this process), cultural aspect
Retsker (2004)	Translation is about finding a proper equivalent	A process, outcome (result of this process), dependence on context
Komissarov (1997)	Translation is bilingual communication relying on the use of translation equivalents (levels of equivalence)	A process, outcome (result of this process), special type of speech activity including listening/speaking or reading/writing
Minyar-Beloruhev (1996)	The key aim of translation is to transfer information	A process, outcome (result of this process), invariant
Latishev (2005)	Translation is bilingual communication which has to be referred to as monolingual	A process, outcome (result of this process), social factors
Lilova (1985)	Translation is a linguistic phenomenon with written or oral transformations constituting its main	A process, outcome (result of this process), phenomenon of culture

*‘Besides, scholars mention translators unwilling to investigate the theoretical basis of their work, thus reducing it to a ‘mere practical skill’*

Thus, translation is recognised as an act of culture-specific communication, in which case a translator is viewed as the ‘first reader’ of the other culture described in the foreign-language text that they need to present in the target language. With the target audience having no access to the original, adequate translation implies major responsibility in bridging the cultural gap, which is why a translator needs to be aware of both translation strategies and cultural specifics applicable to both languages.

The didactics of translation as a part of translation studies has received less attention as for a long time the ability to translate was considered a matter of natural skill, and the teaching of translation has been described in terms of general recommendations. Some researchers even mentioned a big gap between translation theory and practice (see, for example, Newmark, 2003; Burbekova & Nurzhanova, 2014; Bell, 1991). Besides, scholars mention translators unwilling to investigate the theoretical basis of their work, thus reducing it to a ‘mere practical skill’ (Shell-

Hornby, 1988).

Considering the dichotomy of translation, the process and its product, translation strategies can be divided into two major categories – strategies relating to what happens to the ST & TT and those relating to what happens in the process of translation. Examining the process of translation, it is crucial to factor in the transformations that need to be applied to secure adequate translation, while product-related strategies result in TT evaluation and can be described in terms of equivalence and the ways to achieve it.

By the 1960s, Western Europe had already developed a number of specialised institutions offering specialised teaching programmes, and Moscow Linguistic University (with its translation programme dating back to the 1930s) integrated translator training into independent foreign-language institutes, a model that still exists in Russia and some central European countries. In the 1990s, more and more educational institutions appeared in Russia to offer special translator teaching programmes. However, there is still high demand for qualified translators especially in certain fields of science. The current system of translator training in Russia can be divided into two educational trajectories – educational programmes offered by linguistic universities and educational programmes offered by non-linguistic universities (Figure 1).

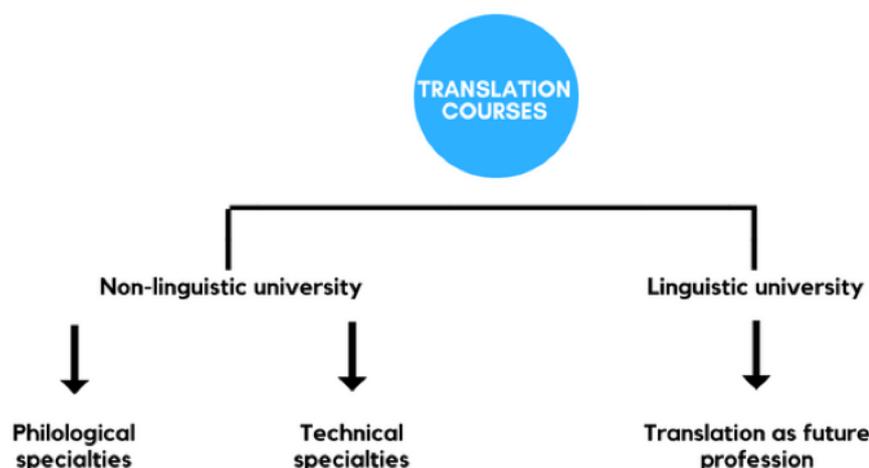


Figure 1. Russian system of translator training

One should distinguish between teaching translation for philological and technical departments, the latter being under-studied in scientific literature especially with regard to Chemistry departments. Teaching translation in ESP classes should be based on a specific methodology to be applied to Chemistry majors, as well as a specific curriculum, in order to equip both students and teachers with all the necessary facilities for adequate translation classes relying on the interdisciplinary principle and factoring in students' knowledge and skills. It should include a special guide to translation theory and practice, the teaching of chemical terminology, scientific text analysis, cultural studies, etc. The latter covers issues associated with organising and running research in Russia and other countries, familiarising oneself with the differences in academic writing in Russian and in English, and

getting to know the cultural differences within word/term formation. Thus, by and large, teaching translation in non-linguistic universities implies pursuing the key objective that brings to the forefront students' ability to use the language in the culturally determined professional dialogue.

Traditionally, scholars identify the grammatical, lexical and sociocultural difficulties in both translation teaching and studying. Grammatical difficulties result from the divergence in the language systems and require special attention from non-language majors in reading and translating scientific texts, the main challenge being the grammar forms not typical of the TL. To translate these forms, one has to compensate or restructure the sentence. Lexical difficulties are among the most discussed problems of translation and have to do with lack of direct correspondence

between English and Russian vocabularies. SL (Source Language) and TL (Translation Language) lexical units may interact in different ways and correspond to each other as mono-equivalents or regular equivalents, a mono-equivalent being a regular equivalent of the source language lexical unit that can either consist of a single word or constitute a phrase. However, as direct equivalents are hardly ever registered, the issue boils down to choosing adequate variable equivalents bearing the same meaning, as in 'essence' – (1) *СУЩНОСТЬ, СУЩЕСТВО; СУТЬ* (*core essence*); (2) *ЭССЕНЦИЯ* (*liquid essence*). Notably, it is also not uncommon for terms to be polysemantic or monosemantic and form word combinations with no direct equivalents, in which case a search for substitutes becomes ever more complicated. For example, the chemical term *oxygen* has only one direct equivalent in Russian – *кислород* – and does not cause problems in translation, while the word combination *oxygen bag* is translated into Russian as *кислородная подушка*, where the word *подушка* corresponds to English *pillow*, thus creating a mismatch.

Words lacking equivalents signify notions missing in the target language and culture and are sometimes called 'untranslatable'. Yet by the end of the 20th century, the problem of untranslatability was dethroned (Barkhudarov, 1975) as scholars demonstrated that any language was equipped with a sufficient number of

instruments to describe any cultural phenomenon even if it was not represented in the target language. Thus, when it comes to cultural gaps, the issue is reduced to addressing the so-called sociocultural differences (Byram & Zarate, 1994; Aldrich & Yang, 2012). Translation can be viewed as bilingual communication, whereby the translator is invariably affected by the system of another language, and this is where the phenomenon of interference emerges.

Interference, essentially referred to as the impact of one language on another in the context of bilingualism, can affect any level of the language and is most prominently pronounced in cases of asymmetric bilingualism (when one language dominates the other). Interference is most markedly manifested at the intonational level, being the first sign of the difference between a foreigner and a native speaker. Interference is also quite commonly registered at the lexical level, where it emerges due to the discrepancies in the relations between the signifying, signified and sign units in different languages, also manifested due to associative differences, discrepancy of lexical compatibility, etc.

Interference causes distortions of grammatical meanings in translation, also being the reason for incorrect choice of syntactic structures, word order and punctuation errors. However, the most fascinating and complex manifestations of interference are those emerging due to discursive

rather than systemic discrepancies, in which case a properly constructed speech in a foreign language does not incorporate the meanings or notions that are most likely to have occurred in a native speakers' speech and vice versa.

Translation is a special kind of bilingualism, a fact of conscious opposition to interference, for in translation the language does not emerge as a semiotic system, but rather as a text. The translator deliberately suppresses the attempts of the currently passive language system to put on a certain material form. For example, the so-called 'false friends of a translator' tend to reveal a clash of cultures in translation and pose a threat to overconfident language users prone to false cross-patterning of language elements typical of two different languages. This generates numerous semantic calques and cases of violations of lexical compatibility and stylistic agreement in the course of translation. Difficulties in translation have to do with the complex nature of the process and have to be taken into account in developing new strategies for teaching. Today, scholars consider translation strategies as a set of stages that help build a special model in compliance with educational tasks.

The key task of higher educational institutions is to ensure readiness, competence, professional integrity, and the ability of specialists to actualise their professional skills in practice using the

chosen model of training (Garbovskiy & Kostikova, 2012). Opposed to the former qualifications approach, a competence-based approach forms a methodological framework for lifelong learning (LLL) based on competences for the different undergraduate degrees offered in European countries, using comparable definitions of learning results, competences, abilities, and skills.

#### 4. STUDY AND RESULTS

While competence in translation can have a different number of components, most scholars agree that it should include a number of components that factor in special knowledge and skills representing each competence. Each skill is formed step by step, whereby students' training depends on their language competence and is interconnected with their basic chemistry course. Notably, competence in translation takes on different forms with language and chemistry majors, and so with the latter it is crucial to start the training with the so-called pre-translation period, which involves introducing pre-translation exercises in the native language in order to facilitate target-setting, operational, evaluating and written translation skills (Robinson, 2003). Thus, competence in translation can vary, depending on the tasks of training, and to understand the hierarchy of the corresponding skills one will have to consider three stages of the translation process, which are pre-translation, translation, and editing (Table 2).

Table 2

*Cross-reference of translator skills and translation stages*

SKILLS	EXERCISES/TASKS	SL/TL
PREPARATION		
Monolingual skills	Find the most adequate translation from several translations offered (both professional and student translations are acceptable)	TL
PRE-TRANSLATION		
Monolingual skills	Analyse the article (branch of science, type of investigation, etc.)	TL
Bilingual skills (reading, rendering, interpretation)	Think about the title of the article, try to guess what it is about Read the article, find key words and phrases Find information presented through the key words and phrases Translate the title, discuss the ideas it highlights Make a plan of the text Write your abstract	SL/TL
TRANSLATION		
Bilingual skills (overcoming grammatical, lexical & sociocultural difficulties)	Translate sentences with grammatical phenomena that are absent in Russian Find and translate the terms, explain your choice Find and translate sociocultural items (abbreviations, proper names, etc.) Translate the abstract Translate the text into Russian Make a summary translation	SL/TL
EDITING		
Monolingual skills (TT evaluation)	Edit your translation, explain your corrections Find mistakes in translation that break the norms of TL Change grammatical composition of the following sentences Check other students' translations Compare your work with your peers' translations Vote for the best translation	TL

All skills can be divided into monolingual and bilingual. Monolingual skills are crucial in evaluating the translation as a product and assessing its adequacy against the original text. They also correlate with translation quality consistent with the norms of the TL. Notably, chemistry majors encounter a fair amount of difficulty in the editing process, which might be

because they mostly deal with chemistry-related equations, figures, data, tables, etc. and don't have a solid language background. This is why, with non-language majors, it seems reasonable to introduce a comparative analysis of Russian and English scientific articles, as well as a special preparation stage to analyse and compare professional and student translations.

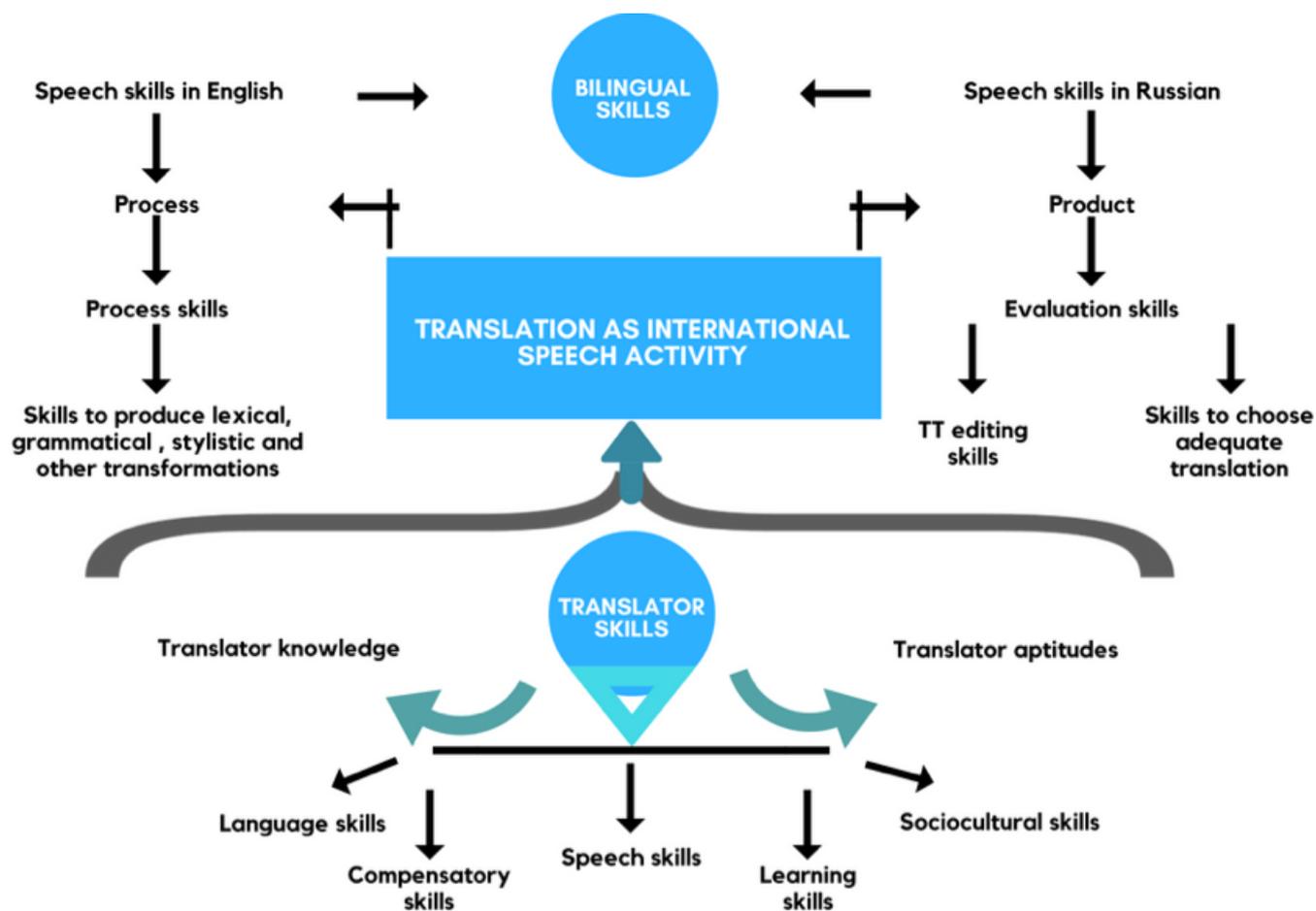


Figure 2. Hierarchy of translator skills

Figure 2 shows the hierarchy of translator skills whereby bilingual skills are accountable for the process, and monolingual skills are the ones 'responsible' for the end product and editing.

The above-discussed strategies were tested out with MA and post-graduate students of chemical departments (including the departments of Biochemistry, Organic synthesis, etc.) of Moscow Technical University. Students' progress was evaluated via quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. Quantitative evaluation was premised on a questionnaire completed by the students while delivering their term task (English-to-Russian translation of research papers published in recent issues of chemistry journals).

At the onset of the term, the students were asked to specify the difficulties they faced while reading scientific articles by listing their problems and marking them as grammatical, lexical, etc.

At the end of the term, students were asked to indicate the coping techniques they could now use to handle the specified difficulties.

The respondents were divided into groups of 10 to 12 students, and the study was conducted after the students had learned and practised the translation techniques, while two control groups followed the regular curriculum. The respondents were required to (1) translate a paper from English into Russian,

(2) make notes on the translation techniques used, (3) edit the translation and discuss it with other group members, (4) analyse translation strategies and procedures used and (5) record their analysis in short reports.

The qualitative method relied on scientific article analyses and students' short reports, which were due one week before the final test. The final test was taken by the students, including those not taking part in the experiment. Students were required to translate a short scientific article in the classroom (1800 symbols) with further analysis.

The experimental results showed that students taking part in the experiment made fewer mistakes (about 20-30%) as compared to students who followed the regular curriculum. Besides, students taking part in the experimental study appeared more capable of finding a proper translation solution.

The quantitative method also relied on data analysis summarised in Table 3 below. Upon translating the article, the students were asked to complete a questionnaire of 10 items addressing the problems they faced in the course of studies.

All respondents were divided into Group 1 (those having participated in the experiment), and Group 2 students (those having followed the regular curriculum).

Table 3

*Problems and percentage ratio of common mistakes in translation*

PROBLEMS	PERCENTAGE RATIO	
	GROUP 1	GROUP 2
Understanding the idea of the text	9%	13%
Choosing appropriate word meaning	31%	39%
Translating applied/new chemical terms	53%	69%
Translating long and complicated grammatical constructions	28%	41%
Translating proper names	36%	66%
Understanding and translating figures and schemes	15%	23%
Translating scientific words and word combinations	27%	36%
Translating/rendering sociocultural information	38%	64%
Finding Russian equivalents for English terms	41%	67%
Interpreting the text in Russian	29%	52%

Table 3 highlights some lexical, grammatical and sociocultural problems that ESP students may face, including translation of proper names (36% vs 66%), complicated grammatical structures (28% vs 41%), etc., the most common roadblock being manifested in polysemantic lexical units and terms. Prevalence of the referential function can pose another major challenge to the students who are expected to have a good command of the technical terms and a sufficient understanding of the subject matter. However, comprehending the key idea of the text was not marked as one of the greatest challenges and neither group experienced too many difficulties (9% vs 13%) as they knew the subject matter from their studies in chemistry

and applied sciences. All in all, the summary indicates that Group 1 students faced fewer difficulties of a lexical, grammatical and sociocultural nature. Thus, the most common problems faced by non-language majors in translating scientific texts can be overcome by implementing a special course in translation incorporating pre-translation, translation and editing stages.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Translation of scientific and technical texts has a very important role to play in the age of revolutionary technical progress, which is why an in-depth theoretical study of the specific features

of technical translation is one of the major tasks of translation theory, while training of technical translators poses a major practical problem. With the rapid development of science and technology, there is a new demand for specialists who are able to understand and, if needed, translate scientific literature from English into their native language. The current trend in translation teaching implies that these specialists are not professional translators but graduates of non-linguistic (technical) universities with special training in technical and scientific translation.

Since the late 1990s, Russian scholars have put forward strong arguments in favour of moving translator training away from general modern-language programmes to translator training as part of a special subject including technical subjects as well. However, it is often challenging to implement such a model of training in practice due to a number of reasons, one of them being department diversity within one university.

Thus, for example, Moscow Technical University houses 16 chemistry departments, each with its own field of study, and yet in practical terms they cannot have their own individual translator training programmes, which is why a cross-functional programme for non-language majors supported by the foreign languages department with possible participation of the technical teaching staff would be a reasonable solution to

the problem.

To understand the greatest challenges faced by students in translating scientific texts, it was imperative to consider lexical, grammatical and sociocultural types of challenge. While these are described in detail in scientific literature and methodological studies, ESP classes can pose specific challenges due to the type of bilingualism involved in teaching non-language majors and their academic curriculum with its dominant technical focus. To acquire competence in translation, they have to follow a special curriculum developed in view of their abilities and demands to incorporate stages of translation and the hierarchy of skills developed at each of these stages.

Although traditionally used in non-linguistic departments as a way of checking language skills, translation tasks have increasingly been seen as training activities in themselves, building special skills that are specific to a certain type of translation. In this respect, it seems reasonable to introduce an extra stage incorporating comparative analysis of Russian and English scientific articles.

The exercises and tasks offered in this study cannot cover all the range of problems faced by non-language majors but they can form a basis for developing translator competence comprising a number of skills and abilities. To develop these,

the teacher should always bear in mind that technical translation contains a set of specific terms making translation of technical documents a specific kind of work that rests upon students' knowledge of chemistry as a science.

As to the classroom activity, it is rather important to diversify classroom work. The basic model can involve individual students translating their articles and then reading them out for their peers for evaluation. This class activity should be supervised by the teacher, with other students proposing their alternatives. Students can also translate their articles in pairs or small groups working on the same subject in one of the fields of chemistry. This work is rather fruitful when students come across new or difficult terms as they can cooperate and

work out the proper solution. To make this class activity more efficient, chemistry professors can be invited to help evaluate students' translation and give some recommendations as to the terminology used. Another helpful alternative would be to invite PhD students working on the same problem.

## 6. CONCLUSION

A course in translation should be viewed as an essential component in training non-language majors taking ESP classes as it imparts knowledge relevant for their future professional activity. Despite a number of challenges that concern pedagogical practice, curriculum design, and other matters, students of non-linguistic universities can now be trained to use translation skills for the benefit of their future careers.

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# Strategic implementation of verbs of communication in English business discourse

by Galina A. Parshutina and Ksenia V. Popova

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*The study explores verbs of communication in terms of their functional and practical implementation in business negotiations, interviews and political debates. The study relies on corpus data and appeals to componential, comparative, contextual, semantic, pragmatic and functional methods of analysis to consider verbs of communication as a developing functional system. The authors suggest that verbs of communication act as strategic drivers of English business discourse and are involved in not only nominating speech acts, but also in generating contextually relevant interaction whereby a statement is placed in a wider context of external communicative settings. The study concludes that verbs of communication can help control and model verbal interaction, provide coherence of propositional structure, comprehend the distribution of roles, and create pragmatic dynamics of narration, which is why they present an integral part of the business discourse system and function as integrating components of a set of communicative tactics foregrounding diverse communicative strategies.*

**KEYWORDS:** *business discourse, communicative strategy, verbs of communication, functional analysis, pragmatics*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

While language in general functions as an integral part of a compound mechanism of social and interpersonal relations and invariably affects the way this mechanism is built and regulated, English, viewed as a lingua franca, appears most influential in maintaining and customising cooperation in times of globalisation. In the context of complicated political, economic and cultural headwinds, special emphasis is placed on the ability to use language intentionally and efficiently in order to achieve the intended effect

while addressing vital professional tasks (Schnurr, 2012; Hurn & Tomalin, 2013; Malyuga & Orlova, 2018). A sensitive matter in this respect has to do with the sociocultural implications of cooperation patterns within a certain society extending to gender, age, role, psychological, professional, and social parameters (see, for example, Covarrubias, 2002; Coates, 2015; Giles & Clair, 2018; Pennycook, 2017).

Addressing the issues of business discourse implies identifying cause-and-effect relations of efficient

and inefficient language behaviour, exploring the features of the communicative setting, and looking into the interconnection of communication results and the specific means of expression used to achieve them. This, in turn, generates interest in the study of strategic patterns of communication in business rhetoric (see, for example, Argenti, 2017; Meredith, 2012; Poncini, 2007; Ponomarenko & Malyuga, 2015; Radyuk & Khramchenko, 2014).

Following the ongoing evolution of mass media and information technology, the world is faced with the lack of time resources and information overload, which is why business skills extend, among other things, to efficient time management and productive use of language resources.

One of the key issues of efficient business communication is strategic planning of speech. While the notions of 'strategy' and 'tactics' are closely interconnected, they are not to be considered interchangeable.

A communicative strategy is implemented through a complex system of verbal and non-verbal means to achieve short- and long-term communicative objectives. A strategy involves understanding the communicative situation in its entirety including its external and internal factors, possible development trajectories, the key communicative aim, and a potential for revaluation and adjustment depending on the context. A strategy in

some way resembles a patch board housing a set of interchangeable constituent elements that might be modified or replaced for the purposes of a particular goal. Such modifications or replacements in the course of communication are what Van Dijk (2006) refers to as 'communicative moves', i.e. functional units of action sequence addressing local or global tasks within a single strategy. Thus, a communicative strategy is flexible in that it can change its structure as the parties move towards their communicative aims against the backdrop of changing contextual requirements. The pursuance of communicative goals will also imply creating a certain pragmatic space – the combination of notional and emotional components that, ultimately, inspire a specific response in the recipient's consciousness (Kasper & Kellerman, 2014).

To implement a strategy, one requires a number of tactical options, which inventory expands as a person's communicative experience grows. Communicative tactics thus refer to a combination of communicative and behavioural patterns implemented at a certain stage of a particular conversation for the benefit of the chosen strategy (Wilson, 2001). Adequately chosen, communicative tactics can help attract attention, establish contact and influence the addressee. Experienced speakers should be able to change tactics as the conversation progresses. Thus, communicative tactics are a part of a smaller

communicative process, i.e. they correlate not to the ultimate aim itself but to a set of communicative intentions that are usually reflected in verbs of communication (VoC).

VoC generally denote conveying and/or transferring a message or a piece of information to someone. While a typical act of communication involves at least three components, which are the speaker, the addressee and the issue addressed (Fellbaum, 1990), VoC differ subject to the nature of the message and the way it is communicated as they typically encode the speaker' intentions (e.g. confess, examine, preach, etc.) or the medium of communication (e.g. fax, e-mail, phone, telex, etc.). VoC have the capacity to promote such implications of the pragmatic-semantic potential which is important in pursuing specific communicative purposes (Rajendran, 2006).

Strategies can be classified per various criteria: type of intention (general vs specific), type of communication (cooperative vs argumentative), function (compensatory, organisational, or rhetorical), the level of manipulation transparency (strategies of transparent influence vs manipulation), etc. The number of criteria testifies to the existence of a wide range of classifications.

Studies show that depending on their communicative aim (creating favourable atmosphere; transferring new information;

changing the opponent's point of view; gaining reputation; destabilising or provoking the opponent into taking some actions; warning against rushed decisions; buying time; forcing events, etc.), interlocutors can organise the conversation in such a way so as to achieve effective results by applying the following strategies:

- cooperation (encouraging joint activities, providing consistency, success and efficiency);
- compromise (resolving differences by means of mutual concessions);
- adaptation (only one party sacrifices its interests in favour of the other party);
- suspension or exit (neither party makes concessions or imposes views);
- challenge or opposition (prevents understanding and harmonious cooperation) (Zeldovich, 2007).

Thus, strategic planning will call for registering the general vector of interaction. A harmonious way to do it lies in implementing 'good' strategies and its tactics, and this study argues that VoC can be instrumental in addressing this challenge.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The theory of functional linguistics argues that any speech act is based on the speaker-listener interaction. Arutyunova (1999) considers that the

verb 'tell', as in '*I tell*', has diverse shades of meaning depending on its particular form. VoC refer to the most frequently used lexis of language expressing these shades of meaning and filling up the pragmatic and semantic field of discourse. Due to semantics that characterises various aspects of communication, they structure speakers' speech activities. In addition, appropriate implementation of these verbs effectively improves understanding between partners, while inappropriate use can translate into failed interaction.

The functional (pragmatic and semantic) potential of verbs expressing specific aspects of communication is prominent in business discourse, as institutional communication initially assumes conventional regulations of partners' cooperation. VoC are frequently used in the business discourse of in-company representatives not least because negotiations are held on behalf of the company's owners. However, experienced negotiators consider that the potential of VoC is richer and more functionally productive than just the expression of somebody's will.

Due to extensive pragmatic and semantic potential extending to the characteristics of the communicative act, naming of feelings, evaluation and a wide range of emotional shades, VoC can function not only as equivalents of other functional parts of speech thus allowing the speaker to avoid repetitions and scale up

figurativeness, expressiveness and specificity, but also as units highlighting the volume of meaning required to achieve the communicative objective.

Looking into capacities of VoC will require resorting to linguistic analysis to comprehend the logical, factual and contextual contents of the message, as well as intent-analysis to restore the speaker's subjective take on a certain communicative purpose (intention). The methods of functional analysis can also be instrumental seeing that these treat language as (1) a functional system of expressive means applied to pursue a particular purpose; (2) a means of cooperation realising diverse pragmatic and semantic functions; (3) a means of extending goal-oriented rhetorical impact; (4) a tool that organises and systemises a person's mental activity (Ponomarenko & Malyuga, 2012). As functional linguistics moves from functions and goals of linguistic means to their actualisation in language, the methods of functional analysis can prove especially instrumental in analysing VoC as tools contributing to the strategic planning of English business discourse.

From the perspective of pragmalinguistics, successful achievement of a particular communicative aim relies on three principles, which are consistency, rhetorical efficiency, and compensation. Logical construction of discourse at the preparatory stage and communicative variation

*‘Imposing an opinion, implicit or explicit threat, encouragement and persuasion, countermotion constitute issues of verbal interrelation of opponents’ rhetoric’*

in the negotiation process include discussion and choice of the negotiation topic, the establishment of speech time limits, possibility and methods of partner’s interruption, change of topic, and choice of alternatives. Imposing an opinion, implicit or explicit threat, encouragement and persuasion and countermotion constitute issues of verbal interrelation of opponents’ rhetoric. In cases where discourse moves in an inappropriate direction, it is possible to correct speech errors, specify, generalise or differentiate viewpoints and discussion topics, search for compromise, and call for action (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009). However, even if the speaker gives consideration to the entire set of factors underlying proper perception of intentions and thoughts, misunderstanding can still take place, especially in the context of intercultural communication. Intercultural peculiarities can often make communication rather complicated, which is mostly evidenced in linguistic, behavioural and sociocultural aspects contributing to misunderstanding or even conflict. While linguistic errors are not considered by native speakers as something disrespectful or

offensive, the situation is quite different as far as behavioural and sociocultural errors are concerned.

While intercultural professional communication typically takes place in the context of distinct national and cultural mental and behavioural stereotypes, the problems that occur in such communication are especially specific and complicated. In order to ensure successful intercultural business communication, it is essential to perceive and interpret peculiar features of business language adequately within its communicative frameworks. Business vocabulary, in particular, can be of scientific interest from the point of view of its systematic structure, sustainability and variability of the linguacultural component as well as with regard to applied goals.

Correspondingly, in studying intercultural business discourse it is vital to focus on both the language proper and its communicative aftermath, i.e. its interpretative value and behavioural sociocultural peculiarities involved. This can prove helpful in distinguishing the most effective communicative strategies and rhetorical means instrumental in achieving specific communicative goals in business discourse.

### **3. STUDY AND RESULTS**

VoC act as operators that help implement communicative intentions by distributing

information in a strategically opportune manner, including via speech encoding to optimise (i.e. control) the interaction process. Training of qualified representatives of business communities should include the acquisition of these vital functions, especially those that are involved in interactive activities (cases, business games, etc.) (Bhatia & Bremner, 2012).

Obviously, understanding of the fundamentals of effective communication is sounder when theoretical conclusions are supported by practical results or at least can be analysed on the basis of relevant language material. That is why we suggest analysing several peculiar examples of business discourse from the point of view of the role of VoC as basic components of speech strategies using elements of functional analysis.

In the article *Try These Salary Negotiation Scripts* published in Time Magazine, Aubrey Bach (2016) gives advice for those aspiring to successfully pass a job interview with a potential employer and get the desired position with the desired salary:

*'If you have already been given an alternative offer with a higher salary: Thank you so much for the offer! I am really excited about the company and the role. However, as you know, I **have been talking** to other employers and do have another offer. If you're able to move the pay to [insert your number], **I'd be eager to accept**'* (Bach, 2016).

The author offers to implement the strategy of adaptation by persuading the employer to compromise and hinting at the previous conversation during the interview that can be seen through the usage of the Present Perfect Continuous. At the same time, the candidate would express the intense longing to 'accept' the offers in case of concession. Nevertheless, the contradiction sounds quite logical and is presented consistently due to the implementation of Continuous (it shows that parallel negotiations are still in process and they are not finished) as well as the communication verb 'talking' that also helps hide the manipulative impact – the creation of phantom competition considering the candidate's relevance in the labour market.

*'One more classical situation is when you want to agree upon bonus payments: Thank you so much! This role is really exciting, and the salary looks great. I would like **to follow up on** a couple of details though. How flexible are you with [name the benefit]? The written job offer included [details about the benefit], but I would like **to request** [the level of benefits you want]'* (Bach, 2016).

The candidate shows in a polite way that he/she 'would like to continue the discussion' and 'would express the desire' to have a certain bonus. Here, as in the previous examples, the speech is logical and coherent partly because of the use of locutionary verbs, which systemise the functional

prospects of discourse and develop the pragmatics of motivated investment in the discussion of labour conditions. Due to the tactics of contacting (implementation of politeness formulas and setting the stage for communication) and weakening of the pragmatic impact – in particular politeness and courtesy – a candidate has a chance of success.

These examples are samples of the strategic planning of speech, intermediates that can be used to organise bilateral negotiations on the topic the candidate is familiar with in reference to the labour conditions. However, the candidate understands that in terms of real-life conversation there is a possibility that something can go wrong, so it will be essential to adjust as the occasion demands in accordance with the aims and external circumstances.

It is no easier to perform speech activity unilaterally when each communicative action is to be considered, and each speech unit is to be carefully selected as in, for instance, public speeches, addresses, reports and presentations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). An extract from Donald Trump's speech when he was a presidential contender can be considered as an example. In his speech, he aligns with the strategy of pragmatic impact strengthening by means of tactics of appeal to the generally accepted standards and personal experience of each individual as well as a straightforward judgmental

assessment of President Obama's activities that clearly demonstrates the desire to present himself as an informed, interested and fair candidate.

*'Do you **remember** when the president made a long and expensive trip to Copenhagen, Denmark, to get the Olympics for our country, and after this unprecedented effort, **it was announced** that the United States came in fourth – fourth place? The president of the United States making this trip – unprecedented – comes in fourth place. He **should have known** the result before making such an embarrassing commitment. We **were laughed at** all over the world, as we have been many, many times'* (Trump, 2016).

During each new round of the discussion, the speaker implements verbs of speech activity: *'Do you remember'* – the personal address to each listener/viewer and the call to bring back to mind images of previous events together with visual and auditory images that is aimed at strengthening the effect of the following message. The use of the verb which transfers the nomination of the communicative act in a neutral and generalised way in combination with passive voice *'it was announced'* deprive the following message of subjectiveness that is a perfect example of implementation of the strategy of subtle influence with the help of euphemisation.

*'We **were laughed at** all over the world'* – a kind of

'cherry on top' after the weakening of the pragmatic impact – is an affirmation of a grim fact of disrespectful evaluation of the whole nation due to the actions of one representative. How is it possible not to be imbued with the respect for the speaker and not to be disappointed with the object of criticism?

VoC also take part in the formation of the general notional and pragmatic systemacity of discourse that is an integral feature of an experienced orator's speech. It is well-known that communication and mutual understanding between different people including communication between different generations would not be possible (Gaballo, 2012), and VoC take part in maintaining discourse systemacity as a regulator of the communication process. As far as their semantics reflects various characteristics of communication between the participants, these verbs in some way structure interaction channels between partners, infuse harmony to the functional prospects of speech and optimise the process of linguistic persuasion of a recipient, i.e. encourage cooperative strategy. For instance:

*'The middle class were growing stronger. Economists' theories echoed these changes. They wrote about the division of labour. They discussed the problems of population growth. They influenced thinking about social classes'* (Raitskaya & Cochrane, 2007).

Multiple uses of VoC in a structured system create the impression of the constant address of scientists to the current issues and persistent transfer of crucial ideas to society. Lexical and syntactic parallelism (*they wrote – they discussed – they influenced thinking*) strengthens the structural and semantic 'net' produced by means of verbs. It realises the systemacity of functional prospects of speech that intentionally form a particular notional and pragmatic effect. Systemacity means not only the consistency (frequency of implementation) but also the purposefulness of the developed functional prospects of discourse, the concurrence of the components' movement towards the intended communicative aim and the regulatory role of VoC in this movement.

The pragmatics of business discourse in terms of communicative strategies is aimed at productive cooperation, improvement of partners' relations, the convergence of goals and positions (Bargiela-Chiappini et al., 2007) that creates a certain linguistic-cognitive model of human behaviour. In order to accomplish communicative intentions, it is necessary to choose and distribute linguistic means in speech in such a way that all trajectories of the verbal and cognitive process are aimed at achieving the intended goals during the communication process. It requires a particular delicacy in the formation of the informational structure of discourse; as a result, general functional space of a text is supplemented by

explanatory components.

The potential of VoC from the point of view of the increase of rhetoric influence on the recipient is rather extensive as within the framework of business communication it is assumed that the speaker and the addressee not only provide a friendly environment for the joint activity but also express emotional perception of a situation (as in *'Abe's remarks struck me as total disorder of time and space, making no sense at all'*), try to induce a certain reaction (as in *'We feel sure you will agree this is a fair settlement, and shall appreciate your sending us a credit for \$10,000'*), defend personal interests (as in *'We have carefully examined your claim and we insist that the delay in submitting the documentation occurred through no fault of ours'*), etc.

The semantic potential of VoC covers nomination of speech, mentality, feelings, expression of will, etc. to implement diverse communicative and pragmatic functions (as in *'I would argue 90 percent of Americans don't have jobs'*).

In the conversation about the worry of Americans over the economic situation in the country, the information is questioned and the choice of verb 'argue' is determined to show the disagreement and determination of the speaker, however, the grammatical part – subjunctive mood (*would argue*) – modifies the subtlety of reaction of the

complaining person and the categoricity of the statement.

As for the verbs of mimicry, gestures, movement and onomatopoeia in this particular sphere of communication (classified as an institutional sphere), the preference is given to the neutral typical lexis:

*'Brooks mouthed 'thank you' after she was cleared of all charges, and exchanged a glance with Carter, standing next to her in the dock'* (U.K. phone hacking, 2014).

The verb 'mouth' expresses the articulation process of acknowledgements; thereby the recipient feels the tension of the situation as far as in the courtroom Rebekah Brooks cannot express her overwhelming feeling in a loud voice. Such semantic diversity or semantic overtones of meanings of VoC in English business discourse is connected with the generation of diverse shades of meaning. Intentionality, or in other words speech act orientation, expresses speaker's intentions, implies willingness to persuade, arouse interest, sound confident, express approval or sympathy that is revealed with the help of the corresponding verbs and verbal constructions (McCarthy, 2006). The success of business communication in a foreign language is not only contingent on the knowledge of lexis and grammar; the integral role in such interaction is given to the functional

component, i.e. the ability to act in accordance with the communicative intentions to activate verbal means to realise certain functions and format the speech adequately, which is impossible without the implementation of VoC.

VoC do not just state the speech act, but also allow the speakers to reorient the discourse, identify the communicative aim, ensure consistency in presenting available information, inform about the emotional state, indicate the level of upbringing, knowledge, previous experience, contribute to the emergence of notional augments which go beyond the pure nomination of partners interaction, act as means of interaction regulation and include the discussion of external circumstances influencing the communication process within a wider context.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Today, it is not enough just to acquire and apply

professional knowledge and skills wisely or just to possess the abilities and personal qualities of a businessman. Successful business communication requires focusing on operating objectives and a wide range of behavioural and speech models. The speaker should not only use them correctly but also identify them in the interlocutor's speech that, in its turn, influences the level of linguistic competence of a speaker, leads to the increase of relativity level, flexibility and adaptability of the discourse system.

In terms of business communication, VoC can help control and model verbal interaction, provide coherence of propositional structure, comprehend the distribution of roles, and create pragmatic dynamics of narration. These functions reflect the ability of VoC to model communicative activity, manage it and organise it in a particular way that is essential to the formation of competencies for the strategic planning of speech.

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## Spirituality and English language teaching: Religious explorations of teacher identity, pedagogy and context (a review)

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A valuable addition to teacher training literature, *Spirituality and English Language Teaching* contains useful background and information for all language teachers, not just English teachers. But what is spirituality and what is religion and how do they apply to teaching and learning languages? Mary Shephard Wong answers the first question by comparing a variety of definitions and concludes that spirituality describes the concept transcendence of the self, '*the eternal human yearning to be connected with something larger than our own ego*', and religion describes a set of practices and beliefs that seek to express spirituality. What has this got to do with teaching?

According to the foreword by Suresh Canagarajah, spiritual and religious belief is a core feature of

teacher identity. It means, as we saw in Alan Maley's article on Dr N. S. Prabhu entitled *The teacher's sense of plausibility* in TLC Vol 2 Issue 1, that language concepts and teaching methods may be mediated by teacher's beliefs as well as their language, and these may influence their pedagogic approach. In his opinion, the chapters in the book will encourage a more reflective, analytical and conscious awareness of how to draw on religion in teaching.

The book aims to address five core questions. How do language teachers view themselves and how they are viewed by others? What common values and practice do teachers from different religious backgrounds share and what can they learn from each other? How does faith inform their pedagogy

and their interaction with students? What is the role of religion, faith and belief systems in teaching and learning? And how do teachers' religious convictions influence their language policies? Theoretically, the book addresses important areas in teacher development, identity (religious, cultural and sense of self) and teacher cognition (awareness of one's own beliefs and values and how they influence teaching practice).

The book itself contains three parts, each with chapters written by different experts from around the world, representing all major religions and culminating in an afterword by Professor Henry Widdowson. The first part discusses Religious Faith and Teacher Identity, the second, Religious Faith and Pedagogical Practice, and the third, Religious Faith and the Language Learning Context. There are fourteen chapters in all plus the afterword. An interesting part of the book at the end of each section is entitled *Response*, in which an additional contributor pulls the different chapters in the section together and adds additional views and comments.

In Part 1 of the book discussing religious faith and teacher identity Mary Shephard Wong addresses what might be appropriate and inappropriate when discussing issues of faith and professional practice. She identifies the dangers and advantages of faith informed pedagogy and introduces questions teachers need to ask themselves where

ethical and moral choices might be applied in language education. MaryAnn Christison applies her Buddhist principles to language programme administration and offers an example of how faith, particularly in her case, Buddhism, can inform practice both in educational leadership and in day-to-day teaching. An interesting dialogue between Joel Heng Hartse (Christian) and Saeed Nazari (Muslim) explores interfaith dialogue in language learning, describing a two-year project to do precisely that. What they found was not so much a set of common values as a deeper understanding of their own faiths through the process of exchanging information. In her Response chapter, Ryuko Kubota addresses two key questions. If you use faith-based teaching are you imposing your faith on others and if others disagree with your views, how do you handle it?

Part 2 of the book focuses more on classroom practice and is addressed from Buddhist, Hindu, Christian and non-religious perspectives. Bal Krishna Sharma discusses the embarrassing silence in class in Nepal when he introduced an activity from a British textbook asking students to prepare a dialogue about whether they preferred ham or steak. He explains the importance of taking into account students' cultural, religious and spiritual traditions. He also found that Hindu Vedic traditional teaching and pedagogical practices advocated learner autonomy, debate and discussion – all modern teaching values. He

writes, *'Understanding Hinduism can help English teachers address some critical issues, such as respect for students as individuals and members of a particular culture or community, peace and social harmony, human relationship with nature and an awareness of environmental crisis'*.

Stephanie Vandrick did a survey of her peers regarding the influence of religious and spiritual beliefs on teachers and teaching. What she found was that not one but many religions may influence teachers and that teachers' views are not static but can change over time. She comes to three conclusions. Teachers may be influenced by religion without subscribing to a particular faith, they may be spiritual without necessarily being religious and they can be ethical without being religious. In his *Response* at the end of Part 2 David Smith notes the common features in all the essays both in terms of teacher identity and classroom practice. Spiritual belief affects the teacher's sense of self, ethical commitment and philosophy of life regarding education and worldview. It also influences personal interaction in the classroom and pedagogical practice. He concludes, *'The essays and this book as a whole are part of a welcome recovery of an honest naming of the faiths, practices and commitments, including 'religious' ones, that inform both scholarly and pedagogical practices'*.

Part 3 addresses the importance of the educational

language learning context, taking examples from Lebanon, Egypt and Canada. In a very interesting paper, Kassim Shaaban discusses the role of religion in the formation of Lebanese national identity. He shows how different groups in Lebanon view language choice, language learning and language use as a way of helping them define their particular identity. In Lebanon particularly, although Arabic is the mother tongue, learning one or more foreign languages helps define local group identity. He writes, *'What unites the Lebanese linguistically is not the Arabic language but rather multilingualism whose base is Arabic and at least one foreign language, a multilingualism motivated by political and economic interests'*.

Deena Boraie, Ata Gebril and Rifaat Gabriel explore Egyptian teachers' attitudes towards teaching Arabic and English. They interviewed four Muslim teachers and four Christian teachers. All recognised a clear relationship between faith and language instruction but had differing views regarding the influence of English. The Muslim teachers saw the spread of English as a threat to national identity unlike the Christian teachers. Examining church-sponsored teaching of English programmes in Canada, Carolyn Kristjansson found a clear socio-cultural link between the relations between the stakeholders (teachers, learners, administrators) and classroom practice.

So, what are the answers to the five questions the

editors pose at the beginning of the book? At one level, they are fairly obvious. Teachers like to align their teaching to their spiritual identity. Spiritual and religious identity are closely aligned with culture. It is important to recognise the importance of spirituality and religious belief in the classroom and the cultural background of students and not to hide differences. In this light, discussion of religion and values can be useful in helping the teacher connect with the lives, cultures and identities of students.

Many teachers will identify with Professor Henry Widdowson's '*admittedly agnostic point of view*' as he stresses the importance of humanistic and ethical values in teaching. In his afterword Henry Widdowson compares the way teachers' beliefs influence their work just as much as their background and teacher training influence how they react to new methodological approaches. He recognises that although many studies have focused on language background, linguistic and pedagogic training and background culture and experience, the influence of religion has not been fully explored. In terms of teacher cognition, previous studies focus how theories inform

teaching experience and classroom practice. As such it is a branch of applied linguistics. The influence of religious belief on practice might be described as 'applied religious belief'.

For Widdowson, any teaching inspired by religious belief must take local factors into account and must also show respect for cultural diversity and respect for individual identity. All teachers will identify with the key ethical qualities advocated by Henry Widdowson. He stresses the importance of teachers resisting dogmatism and accommodating to other ways of thinking and believing. Doing this, he believes, will encourage the humanistic principles of tolerance and willingness to understand and respect otherness rather than trying to convert people.

Overall, *Spirituality and English Language Teaching* is an excellent contribution to an area of language teaching of importance worldwide but still rather poorly represented in theoretical studies. By including case studies and viewpoints from different religious and cultural backgrounds, it offers lessons applicable to all languages and not just the teaching of English.

## Breaking news: The remaking of journalism and why it matters now (a review)

Original work by Alan Rusbridger published by Canongate Books 2018

Reviewed by Barry Tomalin and Humaira Patel

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Is it Trump and ‘fake news’? Is it the huge changes in journalism and how we receive and process news from around the world? Is it the way that journalism uses language that needs to be studied and understood as part of specialist language programmes? Maybe all of these, but a rash of books on journalism and journalistic language has appeared over the last year or so, some of which have been reviewed in these pages. All have been by eminent journalists, but Alan Rusbridger is especially so.

As editor in chief of the British national newspaper, the Guardian, for twenty years from 1995-2015 he was in some respects the guardian of the nation’s morals, campaigning for rights and ‘speaking truth to power’. If one of the jobs of the press is to publish what power wants to keep hidden the Guardian was one of the trailblazers.

In 23 reasonably short but immensely clear and entertaining chapters Rusbridger reviews his twenty years at the Guardian and the problems and crises the paper faced technologically, in business and politically. Its value to language teachers is its ability to highlight and explain how journalism is changing to meet online and international challenges and to learn language terminology related to journalism and media and see how it is changing. It will be of value to teachers of language for special purposes, particularly for journalism and is a significant contribution to an increasingly important subject in schools and universities, Media Literacy and Critical Awareness.

The key to the change in press and media reporting has been the movement from ‘vertical’ communication in which a relatively select group

of trained journalists investigated and reported stories from around the world, to 'horizontal' communication where anyone, anywhere can report anything they like. Their medium is no longer newsprint but online and social media. No longer are the people posting 'news' concerned with separating facts from opinions. Fewer and fewer people have time to find out what the facts actually are and are swamped by the amount of information they are offered every day from all over the world.

Rusbridger describes this situation as 'information chaos' and quotes the World Economic Forum in 2016 as identifying the rapid spread of information as one of the top ten dangers to society, alongside cybercrime and climate change. What caused this? Two things, technology and business.

When he took over the Guardian in 1995, people got their news once a day, or more frequently on radio and TV, from a newspaper paid for by sales and subscriptions and supported by advertising revenue. Because it was news printed on paper, it has become known in our digital age as 'dead tree journalism'. By the time he retired in 2016, only 6% of young (18-24 years old) readers were regularly getting news from newsprint and 65% mainly depended on online sources. Among older readers (over 55 years old) 55% prefer to get their news online. This means that the old model of newsprint subsidised by advertising is gone and a

new model of online journalism, some of it free and much of it protected by online subscription, known as a 'paywall', has taken its place. The costs of production and distribution may have gone down but the need for good journalists and correspondents to find and examine the facts remain and that is expensive. Rusbridger's job as editor was to oversee this development into online journalism without sacrificing the quality of reporting.

Much of journalism relies on 'newsfeeds' from news agencies, such as Associated Press and Reuters, which journalists then fashion into their own stories, using the agency as a source. This is known as 'commodity news', meaning the same basic story is available to anyone. The other big change was the move from 'reporting' to a 'conversation' between the public who could tweet or even broadcast their views on YouTube and WhatsApp immediately on publication of a story.

The value of this book to teachers is that it provides a journalist's eye view of the rise, opportunities and challenges of social media and its effect on more 'traditional' journalism from the point of view of the highly respected former editor of one of British journalism's most important publications. The challenge for what Rusbridger calls 'the legacy press' is that anyone now can publish information and opinion in a variety of

formats and platforms which can be manipulated by political and business interests and by parts of the established press itself. This has given rise to accusations of 'fake news' and in some cases the 'rubbishing' of so-called experts. The opportunity is that it has vastly expanded the scope for press organisations that have embraced online publishing and distribution.

Rusbridger describes how his own paper, the Guardian, took the first hesitating steps in establishing online media and how it has now become the paper's major outlet worldwide. At the personal professional level, he describes how experts have overcome the limitations of 140 or 280 characters on Twitter to develop Twitter threads which allow them to explain complex issues in short stages through a number of successive tweets.

Rusbridger is particularly good at explaining the role of social media in some of the major news stories of the last few years, such as Wikileaks, Edward Snowden's revelations of US data collection techniques, the role of Cambridge Analytica in collecting and passing personal data to Facebook for use in election campaigns and the use of phone hacking, highlighting and developing our understanding of the threat to personal privacy. He also covers environmental issues such as the 'Keep It in the Ground' campaign against the extraction of fossil fuels like oil and gas and,

above all, coal.

But his principal theme is the development of online journalism. He sees the importance of technology driving behaviour. For centuries, technology only allowed one-way communication but the development of online communication allowed two-way or multiple-way communication. Faced with the epoch-changing technology, it would be a mistake, asserts Rusbridger, to carry on as if the world has not changed. Not all journalists agreed with him. Guardian columnist and former Times editor Simon Jenkins, paraphrasing lines from Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*, said the Internet would '*strut an hour upon the stage and then take its place among lesser media*'.

Not only did the Internet liberate communication, it also changed the way we use language. Rusbridger, describes the emergence of 'netiquette', the use of symbols and phrases. Tweeters and bloggers initiated italics for quotes from previous posts, the use of bold type for emphasis and indented paragraphs for block quotes. In fact, a new grammar, a new vocabulary and new punctuation have been introduced to convey the narrative of the new technology.

A huge amount of work was put into building a regular subscriber base, even if there was no paywall. 'Clickbait', as it was called, was the packaging of news with racy headlines and

pictures, to attract your attention and click on an article which frankly didn't deliver. However, once you'd clicked there was a name and email that could be used for contact and advertising. The Guardian was one of the press organisations that tried to avoid clickbait but earned the soubriquet of being 'worthy' (i.e. overserious). As one zealous Guardian reader put it years ago, '*You don't get any news but you do feel awfully virtuous!*' Not true, as the Guardian breaks and comments on many important stories but tends to do it in a more serious and reflective way. However, Rusbridger also worries that the Internet creates 'filter bubbles'. In other words, you are only exposed to views you agree with and stories and sites that you 'like'. In this way, free debate can be stifled by the technology itself.

Even the most powerful news companies have felt under pressure from the GAFATs (the huge online media organisations Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Twitter). They have a broader scale of operation, direct customer relations, data, insights and they can connect the dots. This is the view of Axel Springer, founder of the German Springer publishing company and Chair of Germany's

popular newspaper, Bild.

At the end of it all there is a message, which all international press organisations need to heed. We are in a time of change. Rusbridger feels that during that change quality journalism which investigates, identifies and reports and interprets the facts is needed more than ever. Reliable, verifiable and independent sources of information uphold democracy. The volume of fake news makes even 'straight news' suspect, endangering democracy. Rusbridger's contribution is to offer from his experience an expert view of the development of the past, present and future of the press and the forces menacing its freedom. Maybe that's why he says that perhaps Donald Trump has done journalism a favour by creating or encouraging an environment in which it is ever more important to distinguish fact from fiction.

*Breaking News* offers a valuable case study and background resource for language teachers, teachers of media literacy and teachers selecting authentic materials to develop media analysis and critical thinking skills as part of the language learning programme.

# ICC News

by Michael Carrier

ICC Board Member

## ICC Conference 2019

ICC is now gearing up for the 26th annual conference in Berlin May, 3-5 on *Teaching and Learning Languages in the Multilingual World: Policies and Practice*. We have seen a huge increase in the number and nature of technological 'solutions' to learning languages. With the movement of peoples across the world, learners are more diverse than ever before. 'Clashes of culture' are ever more present. The challenges facing language teachers are becoming more numerous and more varied. The range of languages not only that students want to learn but also that learners bring into the classroom is increasing and becoming more fluid. How well prepared are we? What is being taken into account in teacher training? What kinds of pre-service and in-service support do language teachers need? This conference will examine the challenges faced by teachers across a range of classroom environments. It will offer reflections on planning, policy making and practical tips for those of us on the front line. It also examines how the training of teachers and the training of trainers can be developed if we are to adapt to the ever-changing needs of the language learning environment.

We are keen to consider proposals for presentations at the conference and invite you to

submit your proposals by October 30th to Ozlem Yuges at [ozlem.yuges@icclanguages.eu](mailto:ozlem.yuges@icclanguages.eu). Full details are available at [icc-languages.eu/conferences/26th-icc-annual-conference-2019-berlin](http://icc-languages.eu/conferences/26th-icc-annual-conference-2019-berlin).

## Certificate in Contemporary Arabic Programme

Are you interested in developing your Arabic? If so, the Sharek Centre, London, is offering a full scholarship for our Certificate in Contemporary Arabic Programme, starting October 8th, 2018. This immersive Certificate in Contemporary Arabic is a fully experiential, contextualised and communicative programme providing an intensive Arabic language and cultural experience. It prepares students for a wide range of professional, social and academic challenges. It will enable you to communicate effectively in both formal and informal, spoken and written Arabic. The programme is based on a unique holistic approach to the Arabic language which focuses on Language Unity of Arabic varieties (formal/informal; spoken/written; standard/colloquial). The programme emphasises the communicative competences required for effective use of Arabic in a variety of Arabic speaking contexts. The first programme starts on October 8th, 2018. Details are available at [icc-languages.eu/news](http://icc-languages.eu/news).

## EU Programme on Apprenticeships

In May, we announced that the EU had set out a programme of criteria for the quality and effectiveness of apprenticeships. The Council Recommendation of 15 March 2018 on a European Framework for Quality and Effective

Apprenticeships (2018/C 153/01) was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. The Recommendation aims at increasing the employability and personal development of apprentices and contributing towards a highly skilled and qualified workforce responsive to labour market needs.

Quality apprenticeships also help encourage active citizenship and social inclusion by integrating people of different social backgrounds into the labour market. The framework sets out 14 criteria in relation to working and learning conditions as well as to framework conditions. It provides a common understanding among Member States and it will support their efforts to reform and modernise apprenticeship systems that provide an excellent learning and career pathway.

### **ICC Participation in the Council of Europe**

On December 11th, ICC will be participating in the Professional Network Forum meeting at the European Modern Language Council in Graz (ECML), Austria. On the morning of December 12th, from 09:00 to 10:30, there will be a promotional part of the event involving additional experts. This session will focus on the Call for the next ECML programme. ECML are planning to broadcast this short session as a webcast. It will include a brief summary of the themes of the Call (which will have been adopted by the Centre's Governing Board by then) and 'voices' from experts (such as ICC) on why it is beneficial to become involved within an ECML project.

# **EUROLTA News**

by Myriam Fischer Callus

EUROLTA Co-ordinator

### **EUROLTA Certification Course for Trainers of German as a Foreign Language**

Summer is always a quiet period for EUROLTA, a time to review, reflect and plan for the coming academic year. The most exciting development was that on August 24th in Berlin, where All on Board launched its first EUROLTA certification course for prospective trainers of German as a foreign language. Demand for German as a foreign language continues to grow in Germany and around the globe. All on Board aims to give new trainers a solid foundation in the theory and practice needed to teach German to adults. It is a six-month, part-time course held at All on Board, Seestraße 27, 13353 Berlin Wedding.

Course schedule:

- September: 29-30.09
- October: 27-28.10
- November: 24-25.11
- December: 15-16.12 (if participants agree)
- January: 26-27.01.2019
- February: 23-24.02.2019

The course contact is Ms Kim Nguyen and the main EUROLTA trainer on the course is Justin Ehresman. Justin holds a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics and has extensive experience in teaching both English and German as foreign

languages, as well as years of teacher training experience. For more information, please visit the All on Board website at [allonboard.de](http://allonboard.de) or write to [info@allonboard.de](mailto:info@allonboard.de).

The EUROLTA – Eurovolt Diploma is a Certification for Online Teaching in Vocational Language Teaching to Adults via Virtual Learning Environments. Its aim is to improve teaching skills in developing and managing online learning in institutions or for private use, bringing new life into multimodal language teaching. To learn more, please visit [icc-languages.eu/component/attachments/download/2](http://icc-languages.eu/component/attachments/download/2).

# RUDN University News

by Elena Malyuga  
Editor-in-Chief TLC

## **Student Initiation Ceremony**

September 3, the Faculty of Economics and the Institute of World Economics and Business of RUDN University held a student initiation ceremony for the first-year students. This year, 500 students were admitted to the university, with 250 first years now studying at the Faculty of Economics and over 150 students admitted to the Institute of World Economics and Business. The first years were welcomed by Dean of the Faculty of Economics Prof Yuri Moseikin and Head of

Federal Service for Technical and Export Control in Russia Andrei Glaskov.

## **RUDN University Enters Yet Another Top List for Its Accomplishments**

RUDN University has been listed among top 20 universities in Russia in terms of salaries granted to young professionals specialising in Economics and Management. The study covers data on professionals residing in Moscow and indicates income thresholds to be expected by young experts specialising in the field of Economics and Management.

## **A Working Visit to Beijing**

July 16-17, representatives of RUDN University and the Russian Ministry of Education and Science arrived in Beijing (China) on a working visit to implement a state-governed initiative on Research, Methodological and Regulatory Support for Scientific and Educational Cooperation. The parties discussed preparations for the 19th meeting of the Russian-Chinese Intergovernmental Commission for Humanitarian Cooperation, the 18th meeting of the Russian-Chinese Subcommittee for Educational Cooperation, the development of bilateral academic exchange and scientific inter-university cooperation, and the forthcoming China Education Expo to be held in October in Beijing, Chengdu, Guangzhou and Shanghai in partnership with the leading Russian universities.

The delegation visited the headquarters of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to meet with

Deputy Secretary General of the SCO Aziz Nosirov and Resident Commissioner Bandar Wilsonbab to discuss member states' working group on education, as well as the regulatory and legal framework of SCO operations. RUDN University Vice-Rector for International Affairs Larisa Efremova and Mr Wilsonbab discussed cooperation opportunities and prospects for the inclusion of Indian universities as part of a network university.

### **Visit of Professor of University College London**

For the purposes of enhancing university reputation and implementing the programme of lead scholars' incoming mobility, RUDN University welcomed Professor Alex Krouglov of University College London in the framework of RUDN University Programme 5-100. September 16-22, Prof Krouglov delivered lectures and workshops on the theory and practice of specialised translation with a special focus on the economic aspect. The topics covered included approaches to the notion of equivalence in translation, terminological variation and specific application of the notion to specialised translation, the importance of coherence and cohesion in translation, cultural and multimedia translations, transcreation, translation of economic, business, marketing, advertising and PR texts.

### **Peoples' Friendship University Subway Station to be Opened in Moscow**

September 4, Moscow government adopted a resolution 'On assigning names to linear transport facilities in Moscow and the Moscow subway

stations', with one of the stations to be named after RUDN University. Subway exits will be located in close proximity to the university buildings.

### **RUDN University International Scholarship**

RUDN University International Scholarship is granted to BA and MA students studying in partner universities abroad in the framework of joint educational and academic mobility programmes in the first semester of the 2018/19 academic year. The screening process will be held in three stages.

- Stage 1 – receipt of applications (up to September 21, 2018);
- Stage 2 – processing of applications by the Contest Committee (up to September 27, 2018);
- Stage 3 – announcement of winners (October 3, 2018).

### **RUDN University Practices in Educational Internationalisation were Presented at the EAIE Conference and Exhibition 2018 in Switzerland**

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia is the national leader in internationalisation with the international students representing 155 countries worldwide and covering 27% of the university's student body. The university has an established system supporting student adaptation and talent promotion and is committed to increasing its share of international professors by 10.2% by 2020. RUDN University intends to share its best practices, bolster the network of international partners, expand inclusive training and double diploma programmes, and find new opportunities

for scientific cooperation.

RUDN University stand at the EAIE Conference and Exhibition was visited by the First Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Switzerland Sergey Smirnov. University experts also met with the representatives of South African, Chinese, French, Turkish and Irish top universities.

The conference of the European Association for International Education (EAIE Conference and Exhibition) is one of the largest annual world exhibitions and conferences concerned with the issues of higher education. Detailed information is available at [eaie.org/geneva.html](http://eaie.org/geneva.html).

### **Round Table with the Representatives of Associations and Alliances of International Graduates**

RUDN University is committed to cooperating with international graduates and their associations to promote Russian educational services abroad. The round table was concerned with the role of graduates in research, educational and industrial partnership of Russian and international universities and business bodies. Key aims included: (1) facilitating international collaboration; (2) improving the mechanisms of cooperation between RUDN University and international graduates' associations and alliances;

(3) improving relevant RUDN University project activities; (4) discussing on-the-job training and employment issues and opportunities. The round table welcomed the representatives of diplomatic missions in the Russian Federation, leaders of over 50 graduates' associations representing universities in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the CIS, representatives of state authorities, public organisations, Russian and international business structures, as well as RUDN University students and staff.

### **Erasmus+ Scholarships**

BA, MA and post-graduate students, as well as teachers and administrative staff of RUDN University can receive a scholarship as part of the Erasmus+ programme for inclusive teaching and training at the University of Porto, Portugal. The grant covers transportation costs and living expenses. University students, teachers and administrative staff can independently choose the departments and faculties for mobility transfer. All types of mobility will be implemented in the second semester of the 2018/2019 academic year. Candidates must complete their applications by October 15, to be further considered by the selection panel of the University of Porto in view of their academic achievements, motivation, language skills, etc. Detailed information is available at [mobileunlimited.up.pt/courses](http://mobileunlimited.up.pt/courses).

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