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TRAINING, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

*'There is a very close link between the life of a society
and the lexicon of the language spoken by it'*

- Anna Wierzbicka

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Introduction to Issue 3(3)

by Elena Malyuga

Editor-in-Chief TLC

Welcome to Issue 3(3) of Training, Language and Culture. This issue will leave no stone unturned in its search for some inspiring methodological, linguistic and cultural perspectives that will, hopefully, make a valid contribution to the corresponding fields of research.

This time, we are honoured to welcome a contribution from Richard D. Lewis, one of Britain's foremost linguists, writers and social theorists known for his Lewis Model of Cross-Cultural Communication and *When Cultures Collide* – his guide to world business cultures translated into 15 languages. In *The cultural imperative: Global trends in the 21st century*, Lewis explores how Western culture and economic power have grown to dominate the world, particularly through international business, international relations and social trends. Using the Lewis Model of three types of culture, he explains how traditional linear-active cultural dominance is declining in the 21st century and is being replaced by values of the new great powers. The paper identifies four key cultural influencers, China, India, Russia and the West and discusses the role of Japan and Canada in this era of change. The two key cultural values coming to the forefront are

Asianisation and feminine values, and Lewis discusses their implications for language teaching and learning and the development of cultural awareness.

Another cultural perspective, on the African cultural history and present, is the focus of attention in *Understanding African cultures and philosophies* by Jean Langlois. The paper explores the development of a pan-African philosophy and system of thought while relying on the premise suggesting that the values and attitudes of a community determine how it relates to individuals from outside and how it builds trust and loyalty both inside the community and beyond. The paper shows how the development of a pan-African philosophy was based on a wish by Western academics to impose their principles on Africa by positing a single system of thought representing all African societies. The author stresses the importance of understanding the values and attitudes and philosophies of individual countries and communities and shows how generalisation leads to stereotyping and dominance.

A methodological perspective is discussed by Isabelle S. Thaler in her article *Can a sociolinguistic perspective of Second Language Acquisition solve 'the longstanding human curiosity' of learning languages?* The paper looks into SLA research and seeks to show how a sociolinguistic approach contributes to the understanding of SLA, by pointing to gains as well as to limitations of applying only such an approach. To do so, the author critically analyses

a sociolinguistic approach about study abroad in Anglophone countries and argues that if sociolinguistic approaches seek a holistic account of the complexities of second language learning, they should adapt to new developments and collaborate with cognitive theories.

The linguistic perspective is covered in *The linguistic aspect behind the changing attitudes towards 'globalisation' and 'deglobalisation' of economic processes (a case study of the German print media)* by Tatyana F. Krivtsova and Valentina V. Kucheryavenko, and in *Intensifying adverbs in the English language* by Evgeniya V. Zhiber and Larisa V. Korotina. The former relies on the German corpus of material to explain how the perceptions of the economic processes are revealed in the language used by the media (specifically through the example of mergers and acquisitions), while the latter analyses the nature, essence, evolution and the current standing of intensifying adverbs in English spoken and

newspaper discourses.

The perpetual debate on the underlying reasons of interference and methodological mechanisms of coping with interference in language teaching and learning is discussed in *Grammatical interference in written papers translated by Russian and American students* by Alexandra Galkina and Alexandra V. Radyuk. This paper examines the key issues faced by Russian students learning English and English-speaking students learning Russian and suggests key areas of teaching needed in both disciplines.

As is customary, the issue also comes with recent news from ICC, EUROLTA and RUDN University.

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

The cultural imperative: Global trends in the 21st century

by Richard D. Lewis

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The information age, the current phase of globalisation and the influence of the Internet are changing the way we think about cultures and communities and, as language and cultural trainers, potentially about what and how we teach. This paper explores how Western culture and economic power have grown to dominate the world, particularly through international business, international relations and social trends. Using the Lewis Model of three types of culture (linear-active, multi-active, and re-active) the author explains how traditional linear-active cultural dominance is declining in the 21st century and is being replaced by values of the new great powers. The paper identifies four key cultural influencers, China, India, Russia and the West and discusses the role of Japan and Canada in this era of change. The two key cultural values coming to the forefront are Asianisation and feminine values and the author discusses their implications for language teaching and learning and the development of cultural awareness.

KEYWORDS: cultural awareness, language learning, teacher training, globalisation, the Internet, the Lewis model, Asianisation, feminine values



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1. INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2018 I was invited to speak at the 18th international Likhachov conference in St Petersburg, Russia, an event reported as the largest 'humanitarian forum' in the world, with 1500 affiliated organisations. The conference theme was *Contours of the Future in the Context of the World's Cultural Development*. This conference was being held at a time when cross-culturalists are engaged in a lively debate about the future course of humankind in the 21st century. In an age of developing globalisation, questions are being

raised about the importance and impact of cultural differences that in all likelihood will impede rapid progress towards the standardisation of rules and behaviour and uniform acceptance of mutual goals.

With the increasing internationalisation of trade and the ubiquitous presence of the Internet, are cultural differences on the decline? Or are the roots of culture so varied that a worldwide convergence of ideals can never succeed? Will the currently detectable examples of rising nationalism

continue to increase? Will considerations of gender, growing in importance, outweigh those of national characteristics? Will shifts and alliances among nations occur along civilizational fault lines, as Huntington (1996) prophesied, or will national traits continue to dominate? Did history really end in 1989, as Fukuyama (1992) suggested? Are cross-cultural universals, programmed into us by evolution, in danger of being eliminated by genetic engineering? These are the kinds of questions that educators need to address both in the selection and teaching of languages and the teaching of cultural understanding.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Genetic and economic determinism

When positivism took over the social sciences in American universities in the 1950s, cultural diversity was depicted as a 'soft' subject based on uncertain knowledge, itself culture-bound. It became fashionable in the closed world of academia to seek an explanation of human behaviour in two 'reliable' theories: genetic determinism and economic determinism. On February 12th, 2001, (Darwin's birthday, incidentally) genetic determinism received a deadly blow. Two groups of researchers released the formal report of data for the human genome, revealing that all humans, with all their evident diversity, were found to share 99.9% of their genes. According to this finding, all human beings

should be extraordinarily alike, if genetic code determines behaviours. But, of course, we are not alike. A study of economic determinism proved it to be equally irrelevant.

2.2 Cultural determinism

This leads us to a third recourse: cultural determinism. Harrison and Huntington (2001) reiterate assertions made by Hall (1959), Hofstede (1980), and myself (Lewis, 2018), namely that culture counts most in economic development (not the other way round). Can one not point to a cultural development emerging from Classical Greece and Rome, the Christian religion and the European Renaissance? Can this momentum of 2000 years be stopped that easily? Unbroken cultures have strongly defined modern humanity in China, India, France, Spain, Japan and elsewhere. Culture is passed on from a number of sources – parents, peers, social institutions – but governments have a vested interest in their citizens sharing cultural values in order to reduce the potential for cultural or regional conflicts. Education systems transmit and reinforce national culture (Hammerich & Lewis, 2013); history is taught 'thoughtfully', often being 'remodelled' in a concern for the consolidation of commonly shared values, even myths. Figures such as Napoleon, Peter the Great, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Queen Elizabeth I are depicted frequently in a favourable light, as part of the cultural heritage.

A nation's culture is its blueprint for survival and, hopefully, success. It is worthy of note that the current trends of rising nationalism are most evident in countries or peoples that have a traditional obsession with survival – Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Korea, Austria, Catalonia and the Kurds. Poland and Korea are vulnerably sandwiched between powerful neighbours; the Hungarians, Czechs and Austrians mourn the loss of territory; Catalonia is under pressure from Madrid, the Kurds – from Turkey. Nationalism, or populism, is also showing its teeth in the English-speaking world. BREXIT, which made no sense politically, and even less economically, was purely a cultural decision, reflecting British insularity and uneasiness with 'foreigners'. American working-class culture, with its growing feeling of insecurity and loss of agency, enabled Trump to champion nationalism ('America First').

One realises that if liberalism was a clear legacy of the Enlightenment, so was nationalism, successfully embedded more securely in global politics than ideological systems, such as communism, capitalism, even liberalism. The most energetic attempt at minimising nationalism was the foundation of the European Union, which, though eliminating war between its members, now lives with restlessness and criticism in the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Hungary and other Eastern European countries, not to mention Italy's

problems with the Eurozone and, of course, the Brexit body blow. A union seemingly on course for effective economic and political cohesion by mid-century may struggle to survive that long if popular parties continue to gain ascendancy (even in founder states such as France and Germany).

2.3 The three cultural categories

The Lewis Model (Dimensions of Behaviour) proposes a tripartite division of cultural categories, namely: linear active, multi-active and reactive. *Linear-actives* (e.g. Germans) are task-oriented, highly-organised planners, who complete action chains by doing one thing at a time, in accordance with a linear agenda. *Multi-actives* (e.g. Latins) are emotional, loquacious and impulsive people who attach great importance to family, feelings, relationships. They like to do things at the same time and are poor followers of agendas. *Reactives* (e.g. Asians) are good listeners, who rarely initiate action or discussion, preferring to listen to and establish the other's position then react to it.

3. THE FOUR KEY CULTURES DRIVING CHANGE

3.1 Driving forces of the 21st century

Which forces, cultural, civilizational or otherwise, are likely to mould the contours of human activity during the 21st century? History would seem to indicate that peaks of civilisation have proceeded with some consistency, in the direction of East to West. Cultures have flourished successively

‘A nation’s culture is its blueprint for survival and, hopefully, success’

through Ancient China and India to the Middle East (Mesopotamia, Egypt), Greece, Rome and the European Renaissance, Britain (in her Empire days), motoring on to 20th-century America. In the light of this momentum, it would seem that now it is the turn of China again. In view of recent economic developments in China, this prediction no longer appears so naïve.

The merits of globalisation notwithstanding, there is some evidence to suggest that the driving forces guiding human destiny will be limited in number (four, five or six) and will be linked to size (population, land area, wealth of resources or military power). The 21st-century stage will have a cast of Big Actors, with leading or dominating roles. Smaller, stand-alone nations will have lessened influence and be swept along with the major players (in possible alignment).

3.2 The four key cultures

The engines of power and progress in the present century have to be China, India, Russia and the West (Europe plus North America). China and India pick themselves by dint of their staggering populations and longevity of culture. Russia, if she holds on to her mind-boggling landmass, has the Eurasian breadth of vision and military prowess to

lead. The fact that Russian territory and governance embrace two continents – Europe and Asia – endows the intellect of many Russians with a Eurasian mindset unmatched by any other nationality. Russians have a long history in Europe therefore they possess a European breadth of vision responding to and often wider than western European nations. The West, though seemingly in decline, must not be underestimated. This is because of its belief in linear-active superiority.

3.3 The ‘dark horses’

No description or assessment of the contours of political, economic or world cultural development in the 21st century would be complete without a mention of two countries alongside the major players of China, India, Russia and the West. These are Japan and Canada. Japan’s influence on world events has been underestimated in the past and her record of economic stagnation over the last 20 years has cast a shadow over her current profile. However, in 2018 she ranked an easy third in world GDP. Her world role in the future is likely to be linked to her manner of alignment. Will she balance the scales, siding with East or West? Canada is more of a dark-horse. With a land area of 10 million square kilometres, her territory is second only to Russia. While much of this consists of frozen wastes, the rapid warming of the Arctic Ocean in the second half of the century will transform Canadian agriculture and resource exploitation, not least the vast reserves of Arctic oil

fields, which she will share with Russia and Norway. Canada is already tenth in world GDP and with a rapidly-growing population aided by a wise immigration policy is poised to become more active in world affairs. Her easy access to the huge US market is a unique advantage.

3.4 Religion as a cultural influence

The four largest religious groups in the world, ranked in order of adherents (2015), are Christianity (2.38 billion), Islam (1.8 billion), Hinduism (1.1 billion), and Buddhism (0.5 billion). Historically, conflicts and confrontation between religions have led to numerous wars throughout the centuries from the times of the Crusades, the Muslim 'occupation' of Spain from the 8th century to 1492, and the dominance of the Ottoman Empire, which ruled large parts of Europe and the Middle East for 650 years. Religious disputes have waxed and waned in different ages, and though Hindus and Buddhists have figured in prolonged struggles with Islam for centuries, the modern era has been characterised by the fiercely intensified confrontation between Christianity and Islam culminating in the 9/11 disaster, the subsequent American invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the rise of Isis (Daesh), affecting the lives of millions of people in Syria and elsewhere. The present-day antagonism of the two major religions contrasts sharply with the idyllic coexistence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism when Al-Andalus (Andalusian) society enjoyed its 'golden age' of

religious tolerance. Can we hope for reconciliation again between Muslims and Christians? As Wiatr (2017) points out, ideological conflicts are harder to resolve than those of opposing national interests. While skilful diplomacy can create acceptable compromise over a border issue or a trade war, it is extremely difficult or even impossible for zealots to abandon an entire philosophy or cherished creed.

If I may allow myself one final note of optimism with regard to religious or ideological altercation, I will take the liberty of referring to a factor I deem important, but seemingly overlooked, by political commentators and futurologists. Of the much-discussed, almost two-billion-strong multitude of Muslims in the world, about one billion of them are women. There are strong indications to suggest that the twenty-first century will witness a period of rapidly-rising female influence and empowerment, from which Muslim women cannot be indefinitely excluded.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The linear-active sense of superiority

Linear-active behaviour is an Anglo-Germanic phenomenon originating in North-Western Europe and rolling out through colonisation to North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Among non-Germanic peoples only Finns have joined this category and even they are partly reactive. Two continents – North America

‘While skilful diplomacy can create acceptable compromise over a border issue or a trade war, it is extremely difficult or even impossible for zealots to abandon an entire philosophy or cherished creed’

(minus Mexico) and Australia – are completely linear-active. The strikingly different destinies of North and South America (the latter colonised by multi-active Spaniards and Portuguese) are an indication of the yawning behavioural gap between the two categories. How history would have been different if Columbus had continued on a north-westerly course to Florida or if the Pilgrim Fathers had been blown off course (like Cabral) and settled in North-eastern Brazil!

It is important to note that, through a quirk of fate or historical accident, the Anglo-Germanic bloc from the 18th century onwards began to regard itself as superior in efficiency, both in commerce and ability to rule, than other cultural categories. This conviction of superiority, with its accompanying drive, may have had its roots in cold climate competence and energy, Protestant reforming zeal or German thoroughness. It certainly blossomed subsequent to the English Industrial Revolution, the rapid development of British and American manufacturing (fuelled by

the abundance of coal) and the continuous existence of democratic institutions in the Anglo and Nordic communities. This belief was, bolstered by the fact that the linear-active ‘powers’, though numbering only 700 million, leading up to and after two World wars, emerged with de facto world leadership based on military might and, even more significantly, over 50% of global GDP.

This sense of pre-eminence, particularly in the English-speaking world, but also shared in no small measure by the Germans, Dutch, Swiss and Nordics, has not yet subsided. Western complacency has not yet been eroded. There is still a lingering notion among the linear-active countries that their systems of governance, their concepts of justice, their attitude to human rights, their intellectually vibrant societies, cocktail of work and leisure, their right to lead and advise others, their business methods and ability to maintain levels of production and high living standards are viable for the future.

4.2 The non-linear-active majority and its consequences

However, there are other points of view. Around 2011 – 2012 statistics indicated that the GDP of the non-linear peoples of the world (multi-active and reactivities combined) overtook that of the linear-actives. After all, there are more than six billion who are non-linear and the rapid

development of the Chinese economy would suggest that the ratio of the West's contribution to world production will decline indefinitely. Predictions indicate that the Chinese economy will overtake that of the United States and that hungry India will become the world's biggest market (forecast population by 2030 is 1,500 million). Other burgeoning populations will create demanding markets in Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Brazil, Bangladesh, Mexico and Ethiopia, in that order.

4.3 Whither the West?

The demographics cited above are somewhat gloomy seen from a western perspective and Robert Samuelson (1999) questions the dominance of the West in the 21st century. He cites the dangers of nuclear proliferation, anti-Western terrorism, recessions, swings in financial markets and technological sabotage.

But it can be a mistake to write off the West. We must remember what happened in two World Wars when Western civilisation was threatened. Next time, it is likely that Germany will be on the team. The durability of a balanced West resides not only in its military and economic strengths, formidable though these still are, but also in the matured resilience of Western values. These values were forged in the crucible of the Greek city-states and were tempered through the centuries by the Reformation and the Renaissance,

'The durability of a balanced West resides not only in its military and economic strengths, formidable though these still are, but also in the matured resilience of Western values'

by embracing democracy and by vanquishing the bogeys of Nazism and Communism. An advantage of the West, in addition to these core values, is a plethora of social and semi-political institutions. They number in the thousands – between the bedrock of the family and the authority of the state. In many societies, there is a social vacuum between home and job. In Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries in particular, but also in Europe, clubs, societies, associations, activities, sports, courses and hobbies of all types keep people busy. This is the dense fabric of Western society – active, throbbing, inventive, in every sense self-perpetuating and indomitable, with a momentum all of its own. If such social vibrancy is Western in essence, it is epitomised in the United States, as journalist Hamish McRae wrote as he watched Americans rise phoenix-like from the ashes and rubble of Ground Zero, *'the future starts here'* (McRae, 2010).

4.4 Asianisation

The overwhelming victory of the Allies in 1945 led to main European (and other) nations accepting a

strong dose of Americanisation, imitating US business techniques in production, accounting, marketing and sales. It did not kill their cultures, and the material benefits outweighed the misgivings and disadvantages. Later, however, the negative effects of Americanisation began to be experienced in the gradual erosion or dilution of (European) values, as impressionable youth embraced many aspects of the American lifestyle.

American business and management techniques began to lose ground in the 1970s and 1980s, as the Asian Tigers adopted the successful Japanese model. In the 1990s, significantly, the West frequently demonstrated that it was ill-equipped to deal with Asian sensitivity.

4.5 A new modus operandi

Westerners need to establish a new modus operandi for the new century if they wish to be successful in globalising their business and exports. Linear-active (Western) societies have everything to gain by developing empathy with reactive and multi-active ones. Technology has now made East and West intensely aware of each other; some synthesis of progress and cooperative coexistence will eventually emerge. The size of Asian populations and markets suggests their eventual dominance. Just as there were obvious benefits to be obtained from Americanisation in 1945, there are now advantages to be gained from an Asianisation policy in the 21st century. Both

Europeans and Americans would do well to consider this. Acceptance of a certain degree of Asianisation would facilitate better understanding of Asian mentalities, and perhaps pre-empt future Chinese hegemony in the commercial and political spheres. The West should study Asian values, as well as patterns of communication and organisation, and learn from these. There are visible benefits in Asian systems. They should also study the 'Asian mind' and how it perceives concepts such as leadership, status, decision-making, negotiating, face, views of morality, Confucian tenets and so forth.

4.6 The rise of feminine values

Fortunately, the rise of feminine values in the West at cross-century smooths the way for a degree of Asianisation, as many of these values coincide with Asian values. Just as the Americanisation (of Europe) progressed from influencing business practice to permeating the social scene, a similar phenomenon may well occur with Asianisation. That is to say, Westerners can be influenced by and adopt aspects of Asian lifestyles that will have a lasting effect on their own behaviour.

4.7 Feminine values and gender equality

The implication of such a shift in Western thinking and comportment are mind-boggling, if not cataclysmic. Societies, such as the French, American, Swedish, and possibly the British and German, are successful in their own right and may

be less inclined to modify their cultures in an Asian direction than are less powerful nations. The Americans currently find little wrong with their economic model, nor do the French, with their cultural one. Nevertheless, a degree of feminisation has already taken place in most Western countries, and the growing distaste of the younger generation for the hard-nosed exploitation of people and natural resources will make Asianisation an attractive policy. After all, business is business, and there are billions of customers out there.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING AND INTERCULTURAL TRAINING

5.1 Cultural awareness in teaching materials

This topic demands a much longer and more detailed treatment than is possible here but certain trends are becoming clear.

First of all, is the danger that most international books on the teaching of European languages, especially English, are still far too western-based with an emphasis on 'international language use'. As well as teaching language, our textbooks can do much more to include African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American subjects of interest in our reading passages, teaching dialogues and tasks. This becomes especially important since globalisation stresses international communication and the development of trust between people of very different backgrounds.

One of the keys to building good international relations is showing interest in the country or cultural background of the person or people you are dealing with. However, our teaching materials still focus on the culture of the country or region whose language we are teaching. Our textbooks need to show how to build relationships with people from other cultures, as well as focusing on the 'transactional' functional aspects of language use. The feeling that the teaching materials relate in some way to the learner's experience and interests is also a tremendous motivation in learning a new language, as was illustrated, for example, by Santaridou and Prodromou (2018). We are doing better than we used to but we could do a lot more. Writers and editors take note.

5.2 Diversity and gender equality

In many countries throughout the world, gender equality and how it is understood is still a mystery. For over forty years writers of language learning textbooks have been assiduous in avoiding possible accusations of gender bias but we can still do more on diversity management and showing how people can change their lives, the culture of the organisations they work in and even the culture of the communities and cultures of which they are a part. We are not just talking about gender differences. Other diversity areas such as race, religion, disability and sexual orientation are all relevant. We know that materials content and marketing are frequently

dependent on the political culture of a community, which has an important role in determining whether a particular course or set of materials can be adopted for use in educational institutions. However, the question remains, in order to understand better the backgrounds and cultures of the people whose languages we are learning, can materials writers and publishers do more to cover these areas?

5.3 Feminine values

This paper mentioned the importance of ‘feminine values’ in understanding global cultures but particularly in ‘multi-active’ societies. However, there is a difference between feminine values and the feminist agenda, although the two overlap to some extent. In *The Cultural Imperative* (Lewis, 2007) I described the difference between societies expressing masculine and feminine values as follows.

‘Masculine societies focus on power, wealth and assets as opposed to the feminine focus on nonmaterial benefits. Similar masculine-feminine corollaries would be facts versus feelings, logic versus intuition, competition versus cooperation, growth versus development, products versus relations, boldness versus subtlety, action versus thought, results versus solutions, profits versus reputation, quick decisions versus right decisions, speed versus timeliness (doing something at the right time), improvement versus care and nurture,

material progress versus social progress, individual career versus collective comfort versus sense of proportion’ (Lewis, 2007, p. 194-195).

Although some cultures may be more masculine-values oriented and others more feminine-values oriented, we all as individuals and organisations have something of both. It is important to understand and teach the difference, as it influences leadership and decision-making in different economies at national, regional and organisational levels. For example, it means that people may approach international negotiations very differently according to where they are coming from. Given the way the world is currently developing, we could also suggest that the climate change debate also reflects the difference between masculine and feminine values. Once again, it is important that materials and teaching reflect the importance of feminine values in understanding other cultures.

5.4 Is the English language English anymore?

You can, of course, argue that English hasn’t been British English for many years; not since the USA became the world’s leading economy and a superpower, and the dominance of the British empire came to a close. And yet we have to recognise that British English is still important in large parts of the world. However, it is also important to know that the teaching of British English is moving beyond Britain to many

European institutions, for example in the Netherlands and Germany, and that the People's Republic of China now has more English speakers than the UK. Therefore, the English we teach is now world English, no longer British or US English. The structure of the language may be British or US vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax (with influences from other parts of the Commonwealth, including India, Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore) and different countries may focus on UK or US English as the key varieties to be used and taught, but we need to recognise that English, as the Indian academic Braj Kachru showed, has far more non-native speakers than native speakers (Kachru, 1992). This puts an emphasis on the markets that we are teaching in our materials and teaching activities, including China, India, Russia and the West. It does not nullify the importance of teaching US and British English, but it does suggest that we pay far more attention to the cultural context in which the language is taught.

5.5 Is Mandarin the new world language?

There is a strong possibility that China will be the world's leading economy in the next few years. Schools and universities are already increasing their teaching of Chinese language and culture through the Confucius Institutes worldwide and through individual schools and colleges. However, this paper makes the point that given the universality of the English language, the culture is

at the root of appreciating and building good international relations. The key to this in China, for example, is the concept of 'Asianisation', the recognition and understanding of values and attitudes incorporating '*values and motivating forces across a vast community stretching from the Indian subcontinent in the west and Indonesia in the south. China of course is the beating heart of this mentality*' (Lewis, 2007, p. 193-194). As I describe in *The Cultural Imperative*, Asianisation '*is not overly difficult to achieve but it has to be learned and it demands intense focus. Without internalising certain concepts, values, core beliefs and communication styles Westerners will never deal successfully with Asians. On the other hand, acquisition of a sound basis of understanding and cross-cultural competence will quickly elevate them to a position from which they can compete successfully with Asians*' (Lewis, 2007, p. 194). In brief, learn the language by all means, but the culture will come first.

5.6 Implications for teacher and trainer training

The UK and the US have pioneered new approaches to the way we teach the English language using the communicative approach and task-based learning as opposed to the traditional grammar and translation approach. This means in English teaching and the teaching of other languages that we have increasingly adopted an interactive classroom based significantly on group and pair work and focused practical usage rather

‘It is important that materials and teaching reflect the importance of feminine values in understanding other cultures’

than the traditional teacher-based ‘cours magistral’ or lecture-based approach, focused on theory and examinations. How will this style of teaching go down with more traditional ‘teacher-talk-led’ education styles? Evidence suggests that more and more education systems around the world are keen to adopt a more open and group-based approach to language teaching, due both to language policy changes and to teachers attending teacher training courses in the UK, the US and Australia. Patricia Williams-Boyd of East Michigan University showed how teachers in China were eager to adapt their teaching styles to a more interactive method as it dramatically improved students’ motivation for language learning. Her work (Williams-Boyd, 2017) shows that student

involvement in the learning process is a key motivational factor in successful education.

6. CONCLUSION

I am of the opinion that gender-liberation issues will be higher on women’s agenda than lending continuing support to the supposed destruction of the West, whose way of life embodies the social qualities and advantages they ultimately seek. However, as this paper argues, it is time for a rebalance. If we accept that the world is changing and that the dominance of the West will increasingly be balanced by the re-emergence of Asianisation and the increasing influence of feminine values (not just gender equality) on international business and culture, we can all work together towards a world not where cultures combine – our cultures are too long established and too rich for that – but where they harmonise to produce a better life for all and perhaps adopt a truly global approach to the greatest 21st century problem of all, our planet’s biological culture.

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Understanding African cultures and philosophies

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The study aims to explore the development of a pan-African philosophy and system of thought while relying on the premise suggesting that the values and attitudes of a community determine how it relates to individuals from outside and how it builds trust and loyalty both inside the community and beyond. The paper shows how the development of a pan-African philosophy was based on a wish by Western academics to impose their principles on Africa by positing a single system of thought representing all African societies. The article goes on to describe research by European and African thinkers and the emergence of studies recognising the individuality and originality of systems of thought in African communities. The author stresses the importance of understanding the values and attitudes and philosophies of individual countries and communities and shows how generalisation leads to stereotyping and dominance, and that teachers and trainers need to treat communities individually and recognise their values, especially in the African sub-continent.

KEYWORDS: *ethno-philosophy, national philosophy, pan-African philosophy, conceptual decolonisation, the Bantu, Tempels, Bidima*



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1. INTRODUCTION

For centuries, Sub-Saharan Africa was considered by Europeans the complete opposite of the West, a continent without 'culture' or 'civilisation'. The tragedy is that Africans themselves became infected with this mistaken belief, due partly to colonisation and their exploitation by white slavers. Westerners failed or refused to understand that Africans had an aptitude for conceptualisation and the practice of philosophy and that, as elsewhere, different communities had different attitudes and different philosophies.

19th century Europe was the kingdom of

philosophical thought and the history of ideas, the *telos* (goal) of Europe, which believed that its intelligence and knowledge authorised it to hold sway over other peoples. However, following the Second World War the movement towards decolonisation by the West was accompanied both in Africa and Europe by a change of thinking, constituting a rupture in the belief in the history of ideas that had gone before. In 1945, a book written by Father Placide Tempels (1945), a Belgian missionary, created a fundamental break with the past. As Diagne (2000) recalled, '1945 is considered to mark the beginnings of the spread of

a new theory: Bantu Philosophy by Placide Tempels published in one of the two main colonial languages, French, was seen as the first to acknowledge that an African tribe had a developed philosophy – the Baluba tribe of the Congo in Central Africa’ (Diagne, 2000, p. 44). However, Tempels’s work, which attempted to describe a ‘black ontology’ (Mangeon, 2010, p. 73-75) – defined as the philosophical study of being – aimed above all to characterise African philosophy as an inferior system of thought. Not only was there no single African philosophy, but rather a rich diversity of philosophies, each philosophy influenced by a history of oppression or forced to adopt concepts and categories imposed from outside. Without going exhaustively through examples, this paper attempts to present and explain the stages of the fight to establish studies of African culture and philosophy, examining the work of key African thinkers in the field. Unfortunately, their work is too little known in France and in Europe at large. This paper hopes to redress the balance and share some major lessons of their cultures and ways of thinking.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Ethnophilosophy or ‘Black Ontology’ explained

Bantu Philosophy was first published in 1945 and was the first to apply the term ‘philosophy’ to African thought. The author, Father Placide Tempels (1906-1977), is one of the most famous

but also controversial thinkers in sub-Saharan Africa. He lived in the Congo from 1933 to 1962 and his book was first published in Flemish, but translated into French and published in 1949 by Presence Africaine, a publisher whose name became famous through the Presence Africaine journal, launched in 1947 (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 26). The book was an immediate success in France and a number of intellectuals saluted its appearance, including Albert Camus. Translated into English in 1959, *Bantu Philosophy* is still in print.

After only a few pages it is clear that Tempels was less concerned with the Bantu peoples of the Congo than with using their philosophy as a generic African or ‘black’ philosophy. Tempels used the Congolese as a characteristic example of African thought. For Tempels, what mattered was the comparison between ‘Bantu thought’, as a microcosm of African thought, with European thought. For him, ‘African’ thought was not only structurally different to European thought, but also inferior to it.

In his first chapter Tempels, recognising his affiliation with Lucien Levy-Bruhl (1857-1939), attempts to ‘*dive into the Bantu mind, psychology and even the life of the Bantu ... to become a Bantu among Bantus*’ (Tempels, 1945, p. 9). His approach is based on the contrast between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in a series of opposites. For example,

he believed that European thought was based on the self, whereas Bantu thought was based on a dynamic relationship between the self, the natural world and the spirit. Europeans had Christianity, whereas the Bantus had their own Bantu philosophy, and as a result, *'Europe seemed to be the master of the natural world. It had to be admitted that Europe was senior, a superior human force surpassing the vital force of any African'* (Tempels, 1945, p. 45).

Tempels also compared the Bantu and European styles of talking. *'Their language,'* he wrote, *'is not like ours. They talk in such a concrete way, using words to express things. These people talk ontologically'* (Tempels, 1945, p. 173). Tempels's remarks apply to the way people talked about each other, describing their characters by the level of 'natural force' or vitality. A person with a perceived very low level of natural force was called *mufu* (dead). At the other extreme, a person perceived to have a high-level force was an *mfumu* (chief). Tempels observed that to be a chief was a natural state that might be confirmed by institutional recognition or through self-awareness (Tempels, 1945, p. 101). A *mntu's* (human being's) force and power was internal (not external) according to Tempels, but also depended on a person's relationship with the divine, the family, the descendants and the clan to which he or she belonged, as well as the value of ownership of land, used for farming or animals. A *mntu's*

force or power could increase or decrease according to the extent and value of land ownership, not just in social status but in personal value and self-belief. Using this ontological ladder determining personal force and power, Tempels built it into an ethical and finally a legal code. If something was ontologically good, then it was ethical and also just in legal terms.

In no way was Tempels describing the role of 'vital forces' among the Central African Bantu as an anthropological or cultural study. His aim was to demonstrate that Bantu philosophy was primitive and inferior and that this inferiority was characteristic of all African thought. In doing so he ignored the importance of community and of respect for nature, virtues we sorely need to be able to call on today. The sign of Bantu primitivism, for Tempels, was that their philosophy was elevated to the status of a legal system whereas more 'evolved' societies placed the law above the workings of society. The notion of an 'internal name' perfectly illustrated for Tempels the concept of the 'word' itself being the essence of what was described. A Bantu could have different types of names, a European name, a baptismal name, a name given during initiation ceremonies, and an 'internal name' (Tempels, 1945, p. 101). The 'internal name' was considered a person's real name. So Tempels identified a number of key features of African culture and thought, namely: (1) the importance of the

concrete above the abstract; (2) the importance of self-image and self-awareness expressed through the internal name; (3) the importance of social group, family, descendants and clan; (4) a respect for nature; and (5) a recognition of the divine.

He also stressed the importance of the abstract in European philosophy and described it and the people who followed it as more evolved, and the Bantu peoples' thinking as more 'primitive'. Tempels, as well as many of his followers, such as Mulago, Lufuluabo, Kagame and Fouda, believed that the beliefs, attitudes and values of the societies they studied and for which they represented themselves as spokespersons was not just a permanent and unchanging set of beliefs but was common to all African societies. If Africans aren't aware of these facts, it is because they 'live' their philosophy rather than 'think' it (Hountondji, 1977, p. 58-60). The role of researchers therefore was to understand this unconscious philosophy and to explain it, since Africans themselves could not.

Many of Tempels's African followers were members of the Christian church, who saw philosophy as a system of permanent belief, a perennial philosophy. According to them, the existence of an African philosophy was of advantage both to the Christian church and to lay people. It allowed the church to define a psychological and cultural identity that made it

'African philosophy was present in proverbs, fables, folktales and poems of all types. African culture, explained Kagame (1966), rests on a substructure, which is permanent and unalterable'

easier to root Christianity in African spirituality. For lay people, it allowed a comparison between 'African' traditional philosophy and the Western approach.

Alexis Kagame (1912 -1981), a Rwandan philosopher, historian and linguist, explained that African philosophies were invariable and unchangeable: *'It doesn't matter what is analysed, as African philosophy will be present in everything'* (Kagame, 1966, p. 17). Language, he said, was one such area of analysis. African philosophy was present in proverbs, fables, folktales and poems of all types. African culture, explained Kagame (1966), rests on a substructure, which is permanent and unalterable.

2.2 Ethnophilosophy – the counter attack

In 1969, the Beninese thinker and writer, Paulin Hountondji, launched a personal attack on Tempels and his followers, describing their work as 'ethno-philosophy', a term still used by African thinkers and in Western universities. Criticising

'ethno-philosophy', Hountondji described it as *'imaginary research into a collective, unchanging system of thought, common to all Africans, although in unconscious form'* (Hountondji, 1977, p. 14). The limits of the definition of an African system of thought by ethno-philosophers calls into question the scientific rigour of the definition: African philosophy being seen as a collective system of thought common to all Africans yesterday, today and tomorrow, a collective and unchangeable way of thinking.

Ethno-philosophy shouldn't be considered a simply methodological error or the result of a taste for the exotic among Western ethnologists or certain Africans seeking Western institutional recognition. Ethno-philosophy is a serious blow to African dignity. Tempels, but also Brelford (1965), Nkrumah (1973) and Danquah (1928), all had their brief hour of glory before they were faced with an avalanche of criticism from all over Africa, gradually convincing Westerners that their taste for the exotic had led them not to interpret African philosophy but to create something which didn't exist (Mudimbé, 1988, p. 27).

In *Négritudes et Négrologues*, the Beninese writer Stanislav Adotevi saw what he called 'ethno-anthropology' simply as a 're-duplication of primitivism' (Adotevi, 1998, p. 27). Ethno-philosophy was developed for a European public and to improve the status of some African elites

(Africa too has a philosophy) based on western ethnocentricity that sought to 'mummify' African civilisations, with the objective of making them a 'commodity for public consumption' (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 32).

The ethno-philosophers aimed to prove the difference and originality of African philosophy, studying it with methods and concepts derived from Western philosophy. One can ask, as does Mudimbé (1988), whether this was a construction rather than a re-construction. Formulated mainly in European and American universities, the ethno-philosophers developed their own discourse about Africa, using language, concepts and grammar they had learned at their own universities (Mudimbé, 1988, p. 27). Hountondji (1977) explains it like this.

'They believed they could reproduce pre-existing philosophies in the same way as they produced them. They believed they were retelling a story when they were actually creating one.

Commendable modesty, without doubt, but also treason. The self-effacement of the philosopher in his own discourse is inseparable from a projection which attributes to people their own theoretical choices and their own ideologies' (Hountondji, 1977, p. 60).

For the first president of an independent Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, it was above all important to have

an African voice to explain African thinking.

'I know that there are lots of thinkers and readers who would be happy to hear the African point of view. At the same time, I don't ignore that it is impossible for me to discuss this subject objectively without upsetting my professional African friends. They are ready to assure us of their undying friendship on the one condition that the African continues to assume the role of the ignorant savage which will allow them to continue to interpret African thought and speak in the name of Africa. An African who speaks of Africans undermines their prerogative. It's a rabbit becoming a hunter' (Kenyatta et al., 1960, p. 25).

The multitude of African thought systems contains huge riches. It is not evident that the analysis of supposed mechanisms of a system of thought relies on an ethnological enquiry criticised by Hountondji (1983) when he launched his attack on Tempels (1945) and his followers. Blyden (1994), Horton (2011) and Sarbah (1904), all brilliant thinkers and pan-African militants, who completed meticulous studies of different African tribes. Later on, philosophers like Abraham (2015), Idowu (1966), Gyekye (1987) and Gbadegesin (1991) based their work on detailed anthropological investigation. As a result, contrary to Tempels's ethnological investigation into a methodology which represented a universal model of African thinking, these enquiries shone light on

a wide variety of ways of thought.

3. NEW PERSPECTIVES ON 'AFRICAN' THINKING AND VALUES

3.1 'Philosophical Sagacity' project

In this respect two more recent pieces of research have profoundly marked the recent history of African philosophy. First was the Philosophical Sagacity project of Odera Oruka in Kenya in the early nineteen seventies, studying traditional philosophy among the Kenyans. Oruka (1990) consulted the councils of elders, who he termed *the sages*, and published his records of discussions on the nature of God, liberty, justice and equality in *Sage Philosophy and the Modern Debate on African Philosophy*. In their book *Knowledge, Belief and Witchcraft*, Hallen and Sodipo (1997) worked with Yoruba traditional medicine specialists called *Onisegun* in Ekiti state in southwestern Nigeria, studying the Yoruba language to understand concepts of Yoruba philosophy. Their aim was to propose a complementary course in Yoruba philosophy for Nigerian universities. Their study compared the criteria regulating the use of certain terms in Yoruba with their equivalents in English, in consultation with the *Onisegun*. In a subsequent book, Hallen (2000) revealed the extremely original Yoruba thinking on how to construct and interpret one's individual destiny (*ori*). In these two books the authors demonstrated the original traditional thought among different peoples and

‘Ethnophilosophy failed not just because it failed to address the multiplicity of African societies and cultures, but also because it reflected purely European values and methods of investigation, ethnocentric and, frankly, racist’

also showed discrepancies in points of view between the ‘sages’ in the community regarding the same subject.

3.2 Conceptual decolonisation

‘Ethnophilosophy’ failed not just because it failed to address the multiplicity of African societies and cultures, but also because it reflected purely European values and methods of investigation, ethnocentric and, frankly, racist. However, following this period, African thinkers began to distance themselves from European thinking and writing about Africa and Africans and refocus the debate upon themselves and by themselves and the first step was ‘conceptual decolonisation’ (Wiredu, 1996). Decolonisation deals with politics and economics but also technology, science and philosophy. As Mudimbé (1988) explained, decolonisation should allow former colonised peoples to escape from ‘Western ideology’. Social sciences should be decolonised because *‘up to now both Western and African analysts have used categories and conceptual*

systems depending on a Western ethnocentric epistemology, which is not acceptable’ (Mudimbé, 1988, p. 15). *‘We have been experiencing ‘an epistemological hiatus’, which is no longer acceptable. It is time for Africans to examine African thought and culture with their own philosophy’* (Orika, 1972, p. 23-24).

Orika (1972) and Wiredu (1996) both exposed the ‘demons’ of neo-colonialism, that is neo-colonial thinking that opposes the real freedom of different African thinkers and provokes a process of acculturation by African communities to western values. African societies had to rediscover their own cultures, which needed to emerge through the study of African thought and cultures through philosophical investigation (Orika, 1972; Wiredu, 1996). However, as Kodjo-Grandvaux (2013) wrote, this was no easy task as the philosophical concepts and methods involved in this process of deconstruction and conceptual decolonisation were based in African universities which were themselves based on US and European universities (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 109).

3.4 The influence of deconstructivism

African thinkers have seized on one school of western philosophy which some Europeans and Americans have used to distance themselves from the epistemology they inherited. Conceptual decolonisation has been nourished by the work of thinkers such as Althusser (2006), Derrida (1997),

Dewey (1991), Foucault (1988) and Rorty (1989) in the movement known as deconstructivism. Lucius Outlaw, Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University in the US, for example, has been largely influenced by Rorty but also by Foucault and Derrida. In a chapter on deconstructive and reconstructive challenge in Oruka's *Sage Philosophy: Indigenous thinkers and modern debate* (Oruka, 1990), Outlaw explains how he uses western authors' tools to launch himself on a vast enterprise of deconstruction and creates parallels between his African 'conceptual deconstruction' and Derrida's work (Outlaw, 1990).

Outlaw proposed inverting the metaphysical oppositions by over-estimating what had up to now been underestimated in order first to neutralise them and then to replace them with new concepts. We have to 'get past the western dichotomy which divides reality into a binary opposition between civilised and primitive, modern and traditional, written culture and oral culture, etc.' (Outlaw, 1990, p. 228- 230).

Outlaw takes up the idea that concepts are constructs inscribed in a particular context of production. He explains that it is possible to disentangle the texts to entangle them in a different way, to 'de-sediment' them and to 'radiograph' them to re-construct them differently and elsewhere. It may be thought, however, that

these attempts at deconstruction function mainly as counter-constructions in that they sometimes react epidermically to European constructions, but do not necessarily attack the foundations of these Western characterisations and would tend to reproduce them but differently. African philosophy seems to find the weapons of its emancipation in Western philosophy itself. Mudimbé, who made Foucault the essential reference of *L'Autre Face du Royaume* (1973) to deconstruct Western thought about Africa, was fully aware of this dependence and wished to distance himself from Foucault in *L'Odeur du Père*. He explains:

'Really escaping from the West presupposes knowing, in what allows us to think against the West what is still Western; and of measure in which our recourse against it is still perhaps a ruse which it opposes us and at the end of which it waits for us, immobile and elsewhere' (Mudimbé, 1982, p. 44).

According to Wiredu (1980), the pragmatism of Dewey draws inspiration from experimental science methodologies to perform philosophical exercises. More concretely, it proceeds through an applied work of deductions, hypotheses and logical reasoning. If Wiredu (1980) claims a scientific methodology, it is to show that in his attempt to build a new African philosophy he would return to the very foundation of the methodology capable of producing a

philosophical discourse.

It seems to me that Wiredu is actually less concerned here with what Western philosophy says about Africa than about the mechanisms of production of this discourse, which he considers irrelevant and oppressive. The attack is likely to be all the more powerful. Thanks to 'conceptual decolonisation' Africans could shape tools to empower themselves. African philosophy had the wisdom to take into account the limitations and weaknesses of Western philosophy in its substance and its mechanisms to design coherent epistemic systems.

Western philosophy had a very difficult time trying to apprehend the essence of contemporary African philosophy.

'These counter-speeches have shaken university institutions for at least twenty years, they have challenged conceptual certainties and situations acquired. But the strength and relevance of these texts has probably more to do with their status than with their content. They are, indeed, problematic: the official institution cannot integrate them into the scope of its reflexivity but cannot, at the time, disregard them. This was very well illustrated by the intense efforts invested to refute C. A. Diop's work' (Mudimbé, 1988, p. 94). Thanks to the 'conceptual decolonisation' of African philosophy, it has been possible to observe

and examine how the works of great Western philosophers have been received in Africa and how African philosophers have been able to analyse and enrich these works. I am convinced that it is possible to 'read Africa with Foucault' but also 'read Foucault with Mudimbé'. African philosophy is not only the recipient, the analyst and the critic of the great Western philosophers, it is also a fantastic source of original philosophical reflections that Western philosophers can use in their own work. Obviously, the value of these works is not limited to their origin, and they can be a source of inspiration and innovation.

4. AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AS A 'CROSSING POINT'

In his article *L'idée de 'philosophie nationale*, that has received a lot of attention, Crépon (1998) explains that the idea of national philosophy could actually be the necessary condition for a reflection on the diffusion of philosophy through languages and cultures. *'National signs are not to be taken as marks of cultural allegiance or replication of an identity, but the vectors of the transfers, the conditions of a passage between a point of departure and a point of arrival'* (Crépon, 1998, p. 254).

National or continental philosophy is not considered here as an enclosed space but rather as a 'land of welcome'. For Bidima (1993), African philosophy must prevail not as an original

ethnographic object, but rather as a necessity for the enrichment of philosophy. It is impossible not to mention Bidima's concept of 'crossing'. This concept itself, according to Bidima, is the fruit of an exchange, since he designed it following the seminars of Louis Marin at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences in Paris. If the concept of 'crossing' is present in a large part of the work of Bidima, it is in his second book *La philosophie négro-africaine* (1995) that this concept is largely developed.

Bidima proposes to capture what he in his work calls *le mouvement de la rencontre* (the movement of encountering) to fight identity drifts that are eventually turned to the idea of both 'the origin' and the 'sacred past'. He appropriates the past without criticising because he is convinced that that there is, in reality, no such thing as original African purity. Therefore, his philosophy 'does not privilege assignable places, but non-places, interstitial spaces, transient displacements, the mobility of passages and the ultimately transpicuous fleetingness of events' (Bidima, 1998, p. 267). For all intents and purposes, the notion of 'crossing' is conceptually the tool to free African philosophy from certain African philosophers' obsessions with essentialism. The movement, the encountering, the fusion and the emotional overflows are more important than 'the origin (*unde?*), the place (*ubi?*) and the destination (*quo?*)' (Bidima, 1998, p. 267).

5. DISCUSSION: VIEWS OF LAW AND LANGUAGE

5.1 African and Western attitudes to law

What does Bidima invite us to do if not to nurture the immense treasures of African philosophies? It seems to me personally that our reflection on justice would have everything to gain from the experience and success of African traditions. It is estimated that between 75% and 90% of the population in Africa uses an informal mode when it comes to conflict resolution.

What if we accept that we too can learn and can apply elements of African thought? There is a deep gap between Western and African logic, both of which have a different conception of justice. Le Roy (2004) explains that differences in Africa are commonly resolved through the groups in which the differences arose. '*Justice is dealt within the group where the problem started* (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 130-134). On the whole, the interests of justice are best served by cutting the dispute, that is to say, separating the parties in a conflict and re-establishing links between them. '*Judgement is linking and separating at the same time*' (Murungi, 2004, p. 523). What matters is not placing blame, but preserving social cohesion. The preservation of the common good is an absolute imperative. The appeal of this approach is that the search for consensus is a very rich source of ideas and innovation and is being put together in France in the law of MARC (Alternative Methods for the

‘There is therefore a deep divide between the African legal elites, trained in the West and basing their legal practice on western codes, and people who see a rupture between traditional western and traditional practice’

Resolution of Conflict) and is also being explored in Anglo-Saxon countries through ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution). It is an important development which shows the influence of African cultural traditions of mediation.

5.2 The symbolic code and the role of the judge

The symbolic codes used in Western lawsuits are not the same as those used in large parts of Africa where people have little respect for it (LeRoy, 2004). The perceived hermeticism and elitism of European law in Africa, particularly in the former French colonial territories, is unacceptable to African populations who are in large part non-literate and for whom it is difficult to understand over-complicated and out of date opinions emphasised by judges' uniforms (wigs and gowns) and their objectives. A Western judge's aim is to interpret the law. They are above all legal specialists and technical experts. The perception of the African judge is completely different. As Kodjo-Grandvaux (2013) explains, *‘for African judges to be credible they have to show honesty*

and morality in their judgements. Traditional law produces a level of efficiency that is not true of the legal system today’ (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 132-134). The traditional judge's credibility depends on each case as viewed by those assembled. There is therefore a deep divide between the African legal elites, trained in the West and basing their legal practice on western codes, and people who see a rupture between traditional western and traditional practice.

5.3 The role of the defendant

Finally, the two approaches see the defendant in a case very differently. As Bidima (1997) explains, traditional African justice sees people less as individuals than as members of communities growing in size. This is why an individual brought before a tribunal is almost always accompanied by his or her family. Sometimes family members can intervene in the trial and actually speak on behalf of the accused. There is something cathartic about this process not just at the level of the individual, but also of the community. African societies *‘are not more conflict-oriented or more consensus-oriented than western societies. They seek to establish harmony not just for the individual and property or goods, but for the cohesion of the community as a whole’* (Kodjo-Grandvaux, 2013, p. 132-134).

Murungi (2004) explains that whereas Western justice seeks above all to compensate the plaintiff,

African justice seeks to repair social damage. Collective rights are extremely important as they are seen to protect individual freedoms.

5.4 The importance of language

Language plays a particularly important role as it is seen as *'a way of reducing conflict by expressing disagreement humanely through discussion'* (Bidima, 1997, p. 37-40). What many Westerners may see as a disorganised exchange of words without obvious aim or intent is actually the use of language to reflect true social organisation. Language serves the purpose of slowly elaborating and explaining the complexity of the situation to dissolve conflicting viewpoints and find a single path. Eboussi-Boulaga (1993) recognises the use of language to reduce conflict but rejects the concept of 'consensus language', preferring 'the language of Aporia', meaning *'the ability to uphold the values of society while also representing the positions of those involved in the case'* (Eboussi-Boulaga, 1993, p. 153). We can understand the importance of language use that aims at compromise while respecting differences and specifics. In this sense, we need to allow for a 'dissensus' or disagreement which allows us to respect the 'resistance of singularities' (Bidima, 1997). Language is pre-eminently a civic phenomenon which involves all of us, those who speak, those who stay silent and those who just observe. Language is where our sense of the collective is constructed and maintained.

'Language is pre-eminently a civic phenomenon which involves all of us, those who speak, those who stay silent and those who just observe. Language is where our sense of the collective is constructed and maintained'

6. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to contrast Western and African cultures by looking at modes of thought, attitudes towards law and the community and the use of language. It establishes that mainly through the work of a generation of African thinkers and writers in the second half of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries an understanding of some of the underlying cultural values and attitudes of African communities has been reached which allows to rethink African society and how it works on African rather than Western terms. The discussion particularly contrasts the conflict between legal practices and principles imported from the West and traditional African legal practice, which supports communal harmony and cohesion. It also examined the way the use of language supports the different approaches to justice. It is also important to understand the move towards MARC (Alternative Methods for the Resolution of Conflict) and ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) in the West directly reflects

African community legal practice. The paper also dwells on the patronising and in many cases even racist attitudes of some Western writers on Africa, including the breakthrough 1945 study of the Bantu peoples by Father Placide Tempels, and how it gave rise to criticism by African scholars writing after Africa's independence from colonial rule. Generally, the paper makes the point, through the study of some African cultural

traditions, that European and American scholars must pay much more attention to what Africa and other societies say about themselves and about the world, not what we say about them. Only then can we hope in a globalising economy dominated by the information age to build better world understanding and to help Europe and America build better institutions and more harmonious practices.

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NOTE: This article has been translated from the original French by Barry Tomalin and Jean Langlois, which includes the translations of authors' quotes.

Can a sociolinguistic perspective of Second Language Acquisition solve ‘the longstanding human curiosity’ of learning languages?

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The present paper looks into SLA research which has been overwhelmed with multitude of competing theories, thus making it plausible that none of them alone can explain the complex issue to a satisfying extent. Following the search for complementarity, this study seeks to show how a sociolinguistic approach contributes to the understanding of SLA, by pointing to gains as well as to limitations of applying only such an approach. Responding to the appeal for an enhancement of using sociolinguistic as well as socio-cognitive theories, this paper pursues this endeavour by critically analysing a sociolinguistic approach and zooming in on research on two articles – by Soltani (2018) and Anderson (2017) – about study abroad in Anglophone countries. The author argues that although the two studies are focused on a specific group of learners in specific circumstances and might not have contributed to an improvement in a narrow view of SLA, they have highlighted the need to put cognitive theories into a socialisation perspective and to recognise that similar issues might arise when other target groups such as EFL secondary school students go abroad on a school exchange and are confronted with socialisation into family, school or peers. The paper concludes that if sociolinguistic approaches seek a holistic account of the complexities of second language learning, they should adapt to new developments and collaborate with cognitive theories.

KEYWORDS: SLA, second language acquisition, language socialisation, social turn, study abroad



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1. INTRODUCTION

How are languages learned? This ‘longstanding human curiosity’ (Thomas, 2013, p. 26) has ignited perennial debates and given birth to a plenitude of theories. There are, according to Long (1993), between 40 and 60 theories of how people acquire languages in addition to their mother tongue(s). Yet, he also acknowledges that some of

them should rather be called ‘theories in, not of SLA’ (Long, 1993, p. 226) and be placed in inverted commas as some resemble more models or hypotheses than theories (Long, 1993, p. 225). In the following, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to both the research field as well as the process and product of acquiring a second language (L2). Whereas this abundance and

diversity is appreciated by some researchers (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Ellis, 2008), it was already criticised by Long (1993) 25 years ago who cautioned against eclecticism and thus argued for a reduction based on a 'rational approach for theory assessment' (Long, 1993, p. 228).

According to Ortega (2013), this diversity arouses different feelings among scholars. Whereas some criticise it as theory proliferation, others appreciate it as 'intellectual ethos', and yet others see the need for reconceptualising the field (Ortega, 2013, p. 4). The number of theories has not dwindled, and therefore Myles (2013) seeks to group them into three 'main theoretical families', each highlighting a different focus: the linguistic theory with its focus on the formal system of learner language; the cognitive theory centring around the mental processes and psychological composition of individuals; and the interactionist, sociolinguistic and sociocultural theories focusing on the interactional and social context in which the learning of an L2 occurs (Myles, 2013, p. 52-70).

This classification contrasts slightly with the one put forward by Lightbown and Spada (2006), which lists behaviourist, innatist, cognitive/developmental and sociocultural perspectives. Yet, although any classification might run the risk of being too artificial, too simplistic, and not encompassing the whole picture, it allows a certain degree of orientation within the research

field of SLA (Myles, 2013, p. 53).

Given the fact that many researchers have been grappling with this conundrum of SLA and the multitude of competing theories, it could be plausible that none of them alone can explain the complex issue to a satisfying extent. Instead, each approach might have a certain right to exist and together they should rather try to complement than compete with each other. Notably, there are also SLA theories which are 'oppositional', not 'complementary' due to different domains or choice of variables, for instance (Long, 1993, p. 226).

Following the search for complementarity, this study seeks not to swing the pendulum of theories into the sociolinguistic area for good, but to show how a sociolinguistic approach contributes to the understanding of SLA, by pointing to gains as well as to limitations of applying only such an approach. As part of the search for complementarity, one also needs to be aware of the need for reconceptualising dated concepts and narrow terminology, of constant development of new theories and of the potentially detrimental dichotomy between cognitive and socially-situated theories.

In terms of future SLA research directions, Lafford (2007) calls for an enhancement of using sociolinguistic as well as socio-cognitive theories.

This paper will pursue this endeavour by critically analysing a sociolinguistic approach and zooming in on research on two articles – by Soltani (2018) and Anderson (2017) – about study abroad in Anglophone countries. Within this context, both studies are grounded within the broad framework of language socialisation, but the authors develop new adaptations of it by combining it with philosophical concepts. The underlying explanation is that language socialisation is the ‘overarching theoretical paradigm’ and that it will be ‘interpreted from a social space perspective’ (Soltani, 2018, p. 21). Thus, Anderson (2017) coins the term *the doctoral gaze*, drawing on Foucault’s (1995) notion of *panopticism*, whereas Soltani (2018) invents the phrase *the academic social space*, inspired by Lefebvre’s (1991) *production of space*.

In these two articles, in short, different developments of the same sociolinguistic framework are applied to roughly the same target group, i.e. postgraduate students at Master’s and PhD levels in similar research and practice sites (Anglophone universities, but in different continents). This promises more depth in the analysis of their common aim, i.e. shedding light on international students’ varying success in second language socialisation at Anglophone universities. This analysis of insights into language learner, language learning, target language and context is embedded in the social turn and in two

‘As part of the search for complementarity, one also needs to be aware of the need for reconceptualising dated concepts and narrow terminology, of constant development of new theories and of the potentially detrimental dichotomy between cognitive and socially-situated theories’

of the latest social developments, i.e. ongoing globalisation, which is the ‘intensification of worldwide social relations’ (Block & Cameron, 2002, p. 1), and the increasing internationalisation of universities (Kingtoner, 2010). Globalisation and the social turn have influenced sociolinguistics tremendously (Hornberger & McKay, 2010). Furthermore, research in the field of language socialisation within study abroad settings is still a new and infrequent enterprise (Kingtoner, 2017). Study abroad is defined as ‘a temporary sojourn of pre-defined duration, undertaken for educational purposes’ (Kingtoner, 2009, p. 11). These sojourns thus highlight academic objectives (Duff & May, 2017) and are by and large considered one of the major means of producing foreign language speakers and enhancing foreign language learning, which goes hand in hand with the focus of field of SLA, i.e. learning and learners (VanPatten & Benati, 2015).

2. SOCIOLINGUISTICS MEETS SLA:

SOCIOLINGUISTIC THEORIES OF/IN/TO SLA

2.1 Limits of sociolinguistic approaches

What is sociolinguistic theory of/in/to SLA? Which preposition is more appropriate: of, in or to?

Theories *in SLA* might stress the variety of theories, whereas *of SLA* could sound more exclusive and prescriptive, and *to SLA* might stress the process of the language acquisition. But these are only personal perceptions and ideas, and in the following, they will be used interchangeably. The adjective 'sociolinguistic' is a derivation of adding the prefix 'socio-' to the noun 'linguistics', thus, appending a semantic modification and specification to the vast field of linguistics. As a result, sociolinguistics is concerned with the '*relations between the use of language and the social structure in which the language users live*' (Zhang & Wang, 2016, p. 830). But what exactly is the intersection of SLA and sociolinguistics?

In his article *Sociolinguistic Approaches to SLA*, Young (1999) encapsulates the problem. Although a certain popularity of sociolinguistic approaches to SLA in the last couple of years can be seen, which has led to researchers adopting '*by and large the methods of mainstream sociolinguists*' (Young, 1999, p. 106), these sociolinguistic approaches lack an all-embracing, coherent and explicit theory. This ties in with what Ellis (2008) says almost ten years later. He

concludes that sociolinguistic SLA does not possess 'a single, homogenous line of enquiry' but rather numerous various approaches (Ellis, 2008, p. 280). Some of them are variability in second language use, power relations, second language socialisation, communities of practice and situated L2 learning, learning and the (re)construction of identity, and the impact of affect and emotions (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2013). In spite of the different foci of interest, their common denominator is the social context in which learners learn a new language, hence the prefix. In the book *Second Language Learning Theories* (Mitchell et al., 2013), the chapter *Sociolinguistic Perspectives* – note the use of 'perspectives' instead of 'theory' and the choice of plural – also fails to provide a definition. It only refers to it as '*the relationship between sociolinguistics and second language learning theory*' (Mitchell et al., 2013, p. 250).

In sum, due to the lack of one overarching theory and the occurrence of a plenitude of approaches with different foci, it might be more appropriate – even almost 20 years after Young's (1999) analysis – to use the plural as in perspectives, approaches or theories.

2.2 Framing the context for perceived imbalance

The expression 'perceived imbalance' is taken from Larsen-Freeman's (2007) review of Firth and Wagner's (1997) postulation. The field of SLA has

been coloured by the ongoing discussion over whether acquisition is an individual/cognitive or a social/contextual endeavour, i.e. focusing on whether it takes place in the mind of the learner or by using the L2 with other L2 interlocutors in social contexts (Larsen-Freeman, 2007). The rivalry of the different ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of these theories, also called the cognitive-social divide (Geeslin & Long, 2014), peaked in 1997 when Firth and Wagner criticised the dominance of cognitive-oriented approaches at a conference. Furthermore, they called for redressing this (perceived) imbalance in order to increase the *'awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use'* (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 285), pursue a *'more socially and contextually situated view'* (Larsen-Freeman, 2007, p. 773) of learning an L2, and adapt an *'increased emic sensitivity towards fundamental concepts'* (Lafford, 2007, p. 736) – the view which is followed by the sociolinguistic theory of SLA.

Even though Firth and Wagner did not initiate this debate, as research into previous publications has shown (Lafford, 2007), and received varying reactions (Larsen-Freeman, 2007) to their postulations, this day kindled an increased interest into the impact of social circumstances on the learning and use of L2, widened the hitherto epistemological limitedness in the SLA field, raised awareness of these contrasting theories and

opened the door to the social turn. The social turn welcomed disregarded concepts such as *context, agency, variability, self-in-the-world, and power* (Ortega, 2017, p. 289), hierarchy or access to language exposure, which are tackled by sociolinguistic theory. The learner is not stigmatised as the deficient opposite of the native speaker anymore.

Still today, however, the relationship between socially-oriented and cognitive SLA scholars is described as one of *'competition and controversy'* (Véronique, 2013, p. 253). Might Firth and Wagner's call to redress the imbalance have in fact been a disguised challenge and attempt to swing the pendulum in the other direction and achieve a dominance for socially-oriented theories? There are some researchers who impute it as *'making a bid for the supremacy of an entirely different approach to SLA'* (Larsen-Freeman, 2007, p. 773). Yet, it must be noted that it is rather unclear what Larsen-Freeman means by saying *'entirely different approach'*. The adverb *'entirely'* could also hint at a theory not yet seen in the field of SLA.

2.3 Language socialisation as theoretical framework

Both studies I chose draw upon language socialisation (LS) as their overarching theoretical framework. According to Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2003), LS adds *'the most to an*

‘The adjective ‘sociolinguistic’ is a derivation of adding the prefix ‘socio-‘ to the noun ‘linguistics’, thus, appending a semantic modification and specification to the vast field of linguistics’

understanding of the cognitive, cultural, social, and political complexity of language learning’ (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2003, p. 155). This citation already hints at the variety of issues LS deals with. This paper will especially stress the last three complexities as they are highlighted in the studies, but it will also demonstrate the necessity of considering the cognitive aspect.

LS is best summarised by the quite poststructuralist phrase ‘socialisation through the use of language and socialisation to use language’ (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 163), which rejects a purely cognitive approach to language learning and highlights the inextricably intertwined nexus of sociocultural and linguistic knowledge and practices. It is closely linked with Communities of Practice (CoP) described by Lave and Wenger (1991), which stresses the fact that the process of language learning is socially situated in communities sharing a common interest. Ellis (2008) remarks that these concepts cannot be clearly distinguished from each other. Lave and

Wenger (1991) argue that by participating in typical routine activities of the community novices have increased possibilities to use the language of the community and by using language they become familiar with these practices. As a result, they not only acquire communicative competence, but also legitimacy and membership in this group (Duff, 2007). This is the desired case, however. The worst case is that either the experts are reluctant to socialise the newcomers and confront the learners with gatekeepers, or the latter group is not fully invested in the process. When successful, this process leads to re-conceptualising identities, hierarchies and cultures and is thus a constant site of struggle and development.

3. RECONCEPTUALISING OLD SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONCEPTS

3.1 Coining new sociolinguistic concepts

In the following, the two previously mentioned studies from the same journal *Linguistics and Education* will be presented. First, they will be compared across some very basic categories, and the different interpretations of language socialisation theory will be elucidated. In a second step, these findings will be discussed within a broader context as to how they contribute to new insights or confirm old insights into the learning of L2, language learners, target language and context through the lenses of a sociolinguistic approach. The following table serves as an overview to compare the key features of the studies (Table 1).

Table 1

Comparison of the key aspects of the two studies

	STUDY 1	STUDY 2
TITLE	The doctoral gaze: foreign PhD students' internal and external academic discourse socialisation	Academic socialisation as the production and negotiation of social space
AUTHOR	Tim Anderson	Behnam Soltani
YEAR OF PUBLICATION	2017	2018
CONTEXT	Research-intensive university in Canada	Research-intensive university in New Zealand
PARTICIPANT(S)	7 PhD students, Chinese	Kevin: international student,
DURATION	16 months	3 semesters
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	- Language Socialisation - Community of Practice - Internal/External Socialisation - Panopticism (Foucault)	- Language Socialisation - Community of Practice - Production of space (Lefebvre)
NEW CONCEPT	Doctoral gaze	Academic social space
DESIGN	Multiple-case study	Ethnographic, qualitative, multiple case study
DATA	- two semi-structured interviews with every participant - participant-generated written narratives throughout the study - voluntarily submitted samples of written feedback from supervisors	- weekly observations of classes (video/audio taped) - weekly self-reports - weekly/fortnightly interviews (semi-structured, open-ended)

Both scholars resort to French philosophers of the 20th century to modify the socialisation theory and create new concepts. Anderson (2017) refers to post-structuralist Foucault's notion of 'panopticism' and coins 'the doctoral gaze' in order to uncover '*real and imagined disciplinary*

powers that influence doctoral students' internal and external socialisation in their desired academic discourses and community' (Anderson, 2017, p. 3). Soltani (2018), by contrast, modifies Marxist Lefebvre's concept 'triads of space' (perceived, conceived, lived) and invents 'the academic social

space', i.e. *'where academic socialisation gives shape to social space, which is the interplay between physical and mental spaces wrapped around all socio-economic relations'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 22). Lefebvre's 'perceived' refers to the design, concept and arrangement of the university and the classrooms, i.e. what furniture is used and how it is organised. Conceived refers to 'conceived space', which includes the notions of space which are built on dominant systems of knowledge. 'Lived' space refers to *'Kevin's lived experiences in which he negotiates his identity and desires in the context of complex and often unequal social relationships'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 24). This combination of SLA and philosophical tenets shows a transdisciplinary endeavour.

Anderson's (2017) framework seeks not only to voice the actual, explicit and observable behaviours and influences of doctoral students' socialisation but also the implicit, perceived and imagined. He demonstrates how much power the omnipresent unseen gaze has on their internal socialisation processes. The frequent use of 'imagined', 'imagining', 'unseen', 'hypothetical' and 'perceptions' shows that the power of imagination has a tremendous impact on students' feelings and agentic behaviours. Hence, Anderson brings to light the hidden pressure on students. Soltani's (2018) framework aims at a holistic view of the multiple stakeholders – visible and invisible – involved in the learning process.

The interdependency of all participants is brought to the fore, and thus language learning through socialisation is not a one-way street. He explores how space and power relations (visible and invisible) are either gatekeepers or door openers for success in academic socialisation and thus makes the top-down hierarchy obvious. Hence, it broadens the horizon of SLA and sociolinguistic theories by voicing the inaudible and invisible of the backstage, i.e. those implications and influences that the students are not often aware of. Especially, as an example of the 'backstage' the interviews with the EAP director, which are not the focus of Soltani's study, offer rich insights into the invisible influences behind learning.

Soltani (2018) illustrates the interrelationship between identity, hierarchical powers and agency, which are illuminated and influenced by his three kinds of space, whereas Anderson (2017) sketches the interdependency between doctoral gaze, identity and agency. Both frameworks consider academia as a community of practice and both scholars track the development of their students over a long-time span and are thus process-oriented.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Language learner

'Opening the Pandora's box of the social dimension of language acquisition' (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007, p. 918) does not imply negative

repercussions, but has in fact contributed to our understanding of the learning of second languages viewing it through sociolinguistic studies.

In the following, the two studies will be analysed and discussed – not necessarily in equal measure – along four specific lenses that I have called: language learner, language learning, target language and context. I acknowledge that these four areas are sometimes hard to separate from each other, which, however, results from their interrelatedness. These thematic units will serve as tools through which the thinking behind sociolinguistic theories is portrayed. They will also allow me to try to develop insights into second language learning further.

Both studies reveal an emic perspective, as requested by Firth and Wagner (1997). Soltani (2018) tracks the particular language learning process of Kevin, and Anderson (2017) uses a multiple-case study to study *'unique people with individualised experiences'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 3). For the purposes of this analysis, Kevin will always refer to Soltani's (2018) study, while the other first names (e.g. Sissy, Qui, A-Ming, Polar Bear) refer to Anderson's (2017) participants. Playing devil's advocate, the following question has to be asked: is not everyone unique and individual? Yes, but this has not come to the fore for a long time within cognitive theories. Therefore, sociolinguistic theories or scholars might seek to distance

themselves from cognitive theory by putting even more emphasis on the uniqueness of the individual and removing other foci. In this way, Soltani's sentence could be seen as an example of a Firth-and-Wagner-led paradigm shift.

Another aspect in common is their focus on the active part of the learner who does not only react, but also acts. Kevin initiates discussions or seeks ideas from his classmates (Soltani, 2018, p. 25). He seeks as much language exposure as possible and thus talks English even during breaks. This ties in with Schieffelin and Ochs' (1986) notion of a learner within the socialisation context who is described as *'not a passive recipient of sociocultural knowledge but rather an active contributor to the meaning and outcome of interactions with other members of a social group'* (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 165). This social group is the community of practice, the university.

Yet, Kevin also reacts – but to difficulties or gatekeepers in order to reshape his learning process. Having difficulties with oral communication skills, he resorts to Facebook, which circumvents the immediateness of spoken language and allows him more time and opportunities. This shows that he makes choices and looks for solutions. He employs *'various strategies to deal with his problems'*, e.g. asking tutors (Soltani, 2018, p. 29). This is not only

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closely related to the concept of learning strategies but also to the sociolinguistic concept of agency, i.e. the speaker is 'someone who acts through speaking and thus becomes a social actor' (Kern & Liddicoat, 2010, p.19). Kevin made use of 'his agency to (re)position himself more favourably' (Soltani, 2018, p. 29) and by contributing to conversations, he won 'membership and audibility' (Soltani, 2018, p. 28). Therefore, the learner shapes himself and is shaped by others and social space. He is influenced by social context (indirectly and directly). A-Ming also demonstrated a high amount of agency, which facilitated his self-socialisation into categories that prove beneficial for overcoming problems and increasing academic success (Anderson, 2017, p. 8).

The studies acknowledge that learners are affective social beings and possess emotions, feelings and perceptions which impact their learning process positively as well as negatively. Jojo felt happy and valued when a researcher was interested in her work, which boosted her confidence and

encouragement (Anderson, 2017, p. 5). This hints at motivation, one of several individual learner differences. Polar Bear, for instance, suffered enormously from imagined pressure that is exerted upon him by his colleagues (Anderson, 2017, p. 9). When Kevin had language problems and did not have friends in his mainstream programme, he lacked confidence and became silent which contrasts with his feelings in his EAP course (Soltani, 2018, p. 26).

Furthermore, identity is in constant flux and hybrid (Myles, 2013, p. 66). Therefore, it is comprehensible why Soltani uses the plural *identities* (Soltani, 2018, p. 26-29). Even Kevin says about himself that he is 'another Kevin' (Soltani, 2018, p. 26). Analysing Kevin shows that identities can even be oppositional: talker vs listener (Soltani, 2018, p. 26-28). These identities are constructed by oneself but also by others; 'others constructed him as ...' (Soltani, 2018, p. 25). Several instances of internal sources of socialisation and thus identification due to the omnipresent unseen gaze (Anderson, 2017) can be explained. In Anderson's (2017) study, Sissy embodied the 'identity of inadequate writer' (Anderson, 2017, p. 8) and included herself in the imagined collective international student group also called 'we', that were inferior to domestic students, named 'them'. This projection of her own flaws onto a larger group reduces her own responsibility and might be a way to

circumvent the pressing doctoral gaze (Anderson, 2017, p. 8). Also, Polar Bear compares himself to the others by positioning himself into the 'category of non-expert or lesser-expert' (Anderson, 2017, p. 7). These instances of self-ascribed deficit identities highlight that the dichotomy of non-native speaker (NNS) and native speaker (NS) seems still alive in international students' minds. Within cognitive theory, learners used to be stigmatised as the deficient non-native speaker (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007, p. 908), which was criticised by Firth and Wagner (1997). However, it is no longer in the heads of sociolinguistic scholars of SLA. For example, Soltani (2018) tries to avoid negative labelling by using 'social agent' or 'Kevin'. Also, external sources of socialisation can contribute to new identities. Sissy felt discriminated by being identified only in terms her being Asian (Anderson, 2017, p. 6). Even a university can have an identity. Soltani's (2018) research site identifies itself as 'western' and expects its students to adopt this identity (Soltani, 2018, p. 24).

Both studies show that language learners vary inter- and intrapersonally, which, I think, hints at sociolinguistic theory embracing the notion of individual learner differences. This ties in with what Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) say, i.e. people's *'perceptions and conceptions of entities are grounded in their subjective experiences and that members bring somewhat different realities to*

'Language learning is using the language with interlocutors, and thus, it is not an individual, but an 'interactive' endeavour, which can be dialogic or polylogic'

interpersonal encounters' (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 165). This is portrayed by the different reactions to negative feedback when Qui does not take it personally, but appreciates it as constructive feedback (Anderson, 2017, p. 7). Not only do learners' proficiencies vary between each other, but also within one person. Kevin has *'oral communication problems'* whereas he is good at writing and thus, acts as *'an effective member of his online social space'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 28).

This view of language learners contrasts starkly with cognitive theory, which portrays them as, using deliberately my very provocative description, identity-free computers, automatically internalising linguistic knowledge without negotiating meaning or considering context.

4.2 Language learning

Language learning is using the language with interlocutors, and thus, it is not an individual, but an 'interactive' endeavour, which can be dialogic or polylogic (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 165). It may take place between Qui's and her supervisor

(Anderson, 2017, p. 7) or between Kevin and his classmates (Soltani, 2018, p. 25), which shows that it is not only between novices and experts but also between non-native novices. Also within the CoP of novices, there is socialisation where one helps the other and a new hierarchy is established. As Soltani points out, Kevin '*constructed himself as a more knowledgeable member of his classroom*' (Soltani, 2018, p. 25).

Language use is seen as the 'driver of language development' (Myles, 2013, p. 67). Kevin used English as a means to communicate even 'during breaks' (Soltani, 2018, p. 25) and consequently increased his output.

It is considered a process, rather than a product, which can be inhibited by social factors, context or linguistic difficulties. Kevin struggles to understand the New Zealand accent and to communicate 'with the locals' (Soltani, 2018, p. 25). This prevents him from accessing language exposure and learning possibilities. Thus, he misses on the culture being transmitted through local practices and language. As Véronique (2013) puts it, as soon as second language learners are 'estranged from the target society', they are confronted with 'gate-keeping procedures' (Véronique, 2013, p. 261). Also 'unfamiliarity' with the academic discourse can impede the process and thus, motivation is not sufficient anymore (Soltani, 2018, p. 27). These

inhibiting factors lead to a lack of group membership and to a marginal and silent position within academia. Yet, membership and audibility are important and show in Kevin's case that the more these two aspects are fulfilled, the more language is negotiated in this community of practice. '*Membership and audibility refers to 'the degree to which language learners are regarded as legitimate'*' (Soltani, 2018, p. 28). This might hint at language level and atmosphere in the classroom being influential and being somehow interconnected. This would tie in with Wang's (2010) findings that '*language socialisation, identity, and academic achievement are closely interconnected*' (Wang, 2010, p. 58). But what exactly is academic achievement? Is it perfect socialisation into the CoP? Is it obtaining a first-class degree? Is it measured cognitively? Wang's statement implies that academic achievement is mediated by the sociolinguistic concept of agency and the institution, i.e. social academic space.

The variety of contextual influences and individual differences make language learning unpredictable and subject to constant fluctuation and variation. Soltani's study shows a complete change of language investment due to a change of social spaces (Soltani, 2018, p. 28). Further, it is difficult to isolate which of the contextual factors contributed most to language learning or whether it was the interplay of many social and individual factors.

L2 learning and use can be concerned with *'becoming a member of a new social community not about the internalisation of linguistic patterns'* (Véronique, 2013, p. 254). This strong, thought-provoking statement is in opposition to the cognitive view of acquisition as an *'internalisation of linguistic system'* (VanPatten & Benati, 2015, p. 89) and SLA as *'the study of how learners create a new language system'* (Gass et al., 2013, p.1). Soltani (2018) describes second language learning as *'a process of identity negotiation in social space where individuals struggle to learn the norms of their new social space by taking part in the practices of their new academic social space'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 29). This new academic space, academia, is also their new community of practice. Looking at Soltani's definition, he positions himself as a sociolinguistic theorist for whom identity building and social dimensions are of utmost importance for language learning. This is also true for Anderson – both stress the fact that learners encounter problems when embarking on their language journey in studies abroad.

4.3 Target language

Both studies explain that English has many faces due to diatopic, diastratic or diaphasic variation, which can be best studied from a sociolinguistic view. Diatopic variation is present in both studies – Canadian English and New Zealand accents – which poses problems for learners. Though not

explicitly stated, Kevin's language problems during his mainstream programme might be ascribed to diastratic and diaphasic variation that native speakers use in oral communication. This shows that language use is embedded in and changes through social context. The English language is also affected by the medium, whether it is a written or an oral discourse.

When teaching English as a Foreign Language, teachers are often obliged to use either BrE or AmE and thus, students face many new Englishes during their stay abroad. Therefore, curricula and teachers should raise awareness of the different faces of English. World Englishes are on the rise and with the increasing early study abroad in countries like Singapore the norm will get blurred. The demystification of the homogenous native-speaker-norm is essential.

4.4 Context

Context encompasses many aspects. Of course, it refers to the dichotomy instructed vs. non-instructed setting or to instances of blurring which can be seen in the two studies that are set within studies abroad. But it also includes human and non-human aspects.

The quality of relationships with people in the class and the resulting atmosphere can either boost or hamper language learning, performance and identity construction. When Kevin felt

comfortable among his classmates, who were his 'friends', he was perceived as an effective member (Soltani, 2018, p. 25) and felt confident. Yet, in his mainstream programme he was not able to bond with the other students who he described as 'them' and had language difficulties which led to negative effects on his performance. Furthermore, native speakers are not a warrant for successful language learning if they do not nurture the newcomers properly. They may even be hindering the L2 learners through the doctoral gaze, the omnipresent disciplinary control that leads Sasha to her 'obsession' with writing English texts without any errors (Anderson, 2017, p. 9).

Soltani (2018) adds another dimension, and illuminates hierarchies omnipresent in learning contexts. His triads of social space are a fine tool to analyse the power and impact of space on learning possibilities.

His first space is classroom as perceived space, which shows how the arrangement of furniture can create different learning situations. In this university, the arrangement of furniture should not resemble a testing situation but be set-up in U-shaped forms or groups so that the students could communicate with each other. The teacher moved around and was not static, which portrays him as the guide on the side, not sage on the stage. But also, course material belongs to this space. Kevin admits that *'facilities make people more willing to*

study' (Soltani, 2018, p. 26). This shows that objects can regulate learner's behaviour such as a syllabus or programme.

His second space is the university's conceived space, which *'implies how experts think and imagine the place to be and explains what needs to be done to produce the kind of students to build the kind of society that is expected by the dominant people'* (Soltani, 2018, p. 24). In my opinion, this shows a top-down hierarchy and the underlying implications and thoughts that students are often not aware of – teachers and especially students only see the frontstage behaviour, but not the backstage (thoughts, laws). To me, Soltani makes the invisible visible and explains that also teachers are restricted in their offer of learning possibilities by policy makers, or the university. It seems as if everyone is expected to perform a certain role that he has been given. Anderson's doctoral gaze brings a new touch to it.

International students also feel as if they have to perform a particular role and show constantly good performance. They have internalised the pressure and expectations of the conceived space. The university expects its students to adopt the Western way (Soltani, 2018, p. 24). I think, the conceived space also hints at the difference between which aspects of these expectations are articulated and which not, thus, what reaches the bottom of the line (i.e. learner) and what not. Effects may be pressure or helplessness – and

‘To me, Soltani makes the invisible visible and explains that also teachers are restricted in their offer of learning possibilities by policy makers, or the university’

Anderson’s concept of the omnipresent doctoral gaze. Thus, expectations must be laid on the line and explained. Soltani (2018) notes that each department has its own rules and norms. Cultural knowledge is needed to decipher them.

Soltani’s third concept of space is lived space, which centres around students’ lived experiences in which they negotiate their identities and aspirations while being surrounded by *‘complex and often unequal social relationships’* (Soltani, 2018, p. 24). To sum up, *‘asymmetrical distribution of knowledge and power influence the interactions in particular ways’* (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 166). Anderson’s (2017) study portrays this, as international students feel inferior to their domestic colleagues due to their lack of language proficiency, and thus power – language is (still and will always be) power. Anderson’s doctoral gaze can be analysed within Soltani’s concept of lived space.

The context of pursuing a degree at a foreign university might not be fitting for improving one’s

grammar skills (Soltani, 2018, p. 25) since the interactions in this setting focus on meaning instead of form. Yet, this is a bit contradictory as having a proper grammatical knowledge often helps in becoming a legitimate member of the community, especially in academia.

5. SYNTHESIS: NEW FRAMEWORK?

These two studies offer rich and holistic views of international graduate and PhD students at Anglophone tertiary institutes. They bring to light aspects of language learning unseen by different people. Soltani (2018) shows what students often do not see, i.e. decisions of policy makers or the university, whilst Anderson (2017) sheds light on the processes of international students’ internal socialisation that are usually invisible to teachers and peers, especially domestic fellow students. These scholars thus raise awareness of these invisibilities so that everyone involved in the language socialisation process can bear them in mind when interacting with other people of this specific setting and evaluating their behaviours.

When analysing socialisation of EAL graduate students at Anglophone universities using this new framework, employing longitudinal and ethnographic methods, it is important to consider the macro-context of the country, the university and the programme as well as the micro-context of interpersonal (between professors, fellow students) and intrapersonal relations (e.g. individual

differences). The combination of the new notions of 'academic social space' and 'doctoral gaze' might be a good tool to highlight both visible and invisible forces and implications of socialisation that impact the language learning process of this specific group in this particular setting. For this setting, the four areas – language learner, language learning, target language and context – are essential when aiming at the big picture of language learning through sociolinguistic lenses. Insights from these four themes could contribute to improvements in teaching second languages and lead to better understanding of possible reasons for successful or unsuccessful learning. Although SLA focuses on learning and learners (VanPatten & Benati, 2015, p. 1), I think that teaching and supervisors, lecturers and professors in the setting of the studies, should not be excluded in research on SLA. Since sociolinguistic theories consider language learning strategies and learner differences, it is important to discuss whether it could be useful to think about 'language socialisation (learning) strategies' (as I would call them), which would help international students socialise into their new academic social space.

A new framework would also have to end the 'schizophrenic situation', as Ushioda and Dörnyei (2012) describe it, between cognitive and socially-oriented scholars and instead seek collaboration to find solutions to limitations of the sociolinguistic approaches such as the explanation of the

individual mental processes of language learning (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012, p. 405). This would embrace the complexity of SLA which is described by Duff (2008) as an interplay of linguistic, cognitive, affective, and social processes.

6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the sociolinguistic theory of SLA, and LS in particular, have not yet been fully exploited by far and could offer a more holistic account of how students struggle to become a legitimate member of the academic community of practice at foreign universities. Although the two studies are focused on a specific group of learners in specific circumstances and might not have contributed to an improvement in a narrow view of SLA, they have reminded us to put cognitive theories into a socialisation perspective and to recognise that similar issues might arise when other target groups such as EFL secondary school students go abroad on a school exchange and are confronted with socialisation into family, school or peers. Thus, these sociolinguistic studies have also reacted to new societal developments such as globalisation and increasing internationalisation of education. For example, the recent growth in Early Study Abroad already hints at new challenges of the future. As Song (2011) puts it, '*when these families return to their home EFL context, they also transport practices and views that they have adopted in their hosting ESL context*' (Song, 2011, p. 753) and thus, they blur the distinction between

EFL and ESL. This, however, reveals that policy-making, teaching and research have to assist these learners and their teachers. It also implies that a narrowness of definitions is not always useful, i.e. FL vs SL, SLA of/in/to or instructed vs naturalistic, for instance.

How can sociolinguistic theories cater for this and other developments? In general, sociolinguistic approaches have the distinct advantage of offering a wide range of foci such as variability, identity, power relations and socialisation – concepts that are essential for the ever-growing diversity of L2 learning. Nevertheless, it has also been shown that sociolinguistic approaches cannot really account for internal processes of learning and should therefore engage with cognitive-oriented scholars and theories. Furthermore, it has been illustrated that reconceptualising old concepts can make them more fitting for present and future developments.

Yet, caution is advised. The two studies are not the first to illustrate that researchers tend to create new models and theories – by building on and combining previous concepts – in order to advance the field as well as to advance their own status within the research field. However, theories are not written for researchers but to meet the demands of language learners and to improve their language learning. Nevertheless, this theory proliferation and coinage of new models illustrates

that the field of SLA in general and of sociolinguistic theories in particular will always be (and need to be) reconceptualised.

Soltani (2018) and Anderson (2017) have shown with their studies, which have clearly engaged in the social turn and reacted to Firth and Wagner's (1997) requests, that sociolinguistic theories are able to describe as well as explain second language learning and that sociolinguistic theories could thus, according to the definition of Myles et al. (2013), be entitled to be theories. They illustrate that social contexts may offer a wide range of learning opportunities that can or cannot be seized by social agents. This reciprocity of social context and social beings, summarised as 'socio-', is negotiated through the target language (i.e. 'linguistic') and can lead to linguistic as well as non-linguistic outcomes. These negotiations ultimately and consistently influence the context, the interlocutors and the outcome as well as vice versa – they are invariably interrelated and interdependent.

To conclude, I will not propose a new model but come back to the beginning. If sociolinguistic approaches seek a holistic account of the complexities of second language learning, then they should adapt to new developments and collaborate with cognitive theories – otherwise, they might not be able to satisfy 'the longstanding human curiosity'.

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The linguistic aspect behind the changing attitudes towards 'globalisation' and 'deglobalisation' of economic processes (a case study of the German print media)

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The study uncovers the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation by studying the language of German print media ranging between 1999 and the present time. The authors provide descriptive interpretations of the two concepts, while focusing primarily on their two underlying aspects: the expansion of corporate activities, and people's prosperity. In particular, the study looks at the linguistic aspect of the dynamics of media coverage of major company mergers and the subject of the top management's financial liability. The authors discern some of the major linguistic indicators of the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation, including the use of attributives, often expressed through superlative adjectives, metaphors, allegory, and irony.

KEYWORDS: *globalisation, deglobalisation, merger, acquisition, mass media, German*



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1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation is best described as 'a form of strategy taken up by globally operating companies with a view to create competitive advantages by using favourable locations and the achievements of the Economies of Scale' (Feess et al., 2009, p. 1041). This definition points out the universally impactful outreach of corporate business activity, stressing their global, supranational, worldwide range of operation. While this interpretation is neutral due to the restraints of the academic style standards, print media texts – such as interviews,

commentaries, notes of explanation and newspaper articles – tend to contain connotations reflecting the authors' attitudes towards the notions described (Boukes et al., 2016, p. 61). This article attempts to show the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation processes by studying the language of print media describing the corresponding notions and related economic realia. The paper analyses German print media publications by renowned journalists, analysts and economists ranging between 1999 and the present time. To better understand the attitudes towards

globalisation and deglobalisation, the study provides descriptive interpretations of the concepts at hand, which is also imperative for the purposes of adequate comparison: since the two notions reflect the interconnected processes, one cannot be explained independently of the other. In analysing the examples reflecting the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation in print media texts, this study gives primary attention to the two aspects of this process: the expansion of the company's activities (surpassing the boundaries of a national state) and people's prosperity. In particular, the study will look at the language describing mergers, acquisitions and the liability of the management of large-scale transatlantic companies – topics that hold sway to this day.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study relies on the continuous sampling of German mass media texts related to the problems of globalisation and deglobalisation and covering the issues of mergers and acquisitions. Contextual and linguistic methods of analysis and interpretation are utilised to establish the linguistic patterns within narrative descriptions and quotes most vividly explicating the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation.

3. STUDY AND RESULTS

The first step is to consider the positive aspects that characterise the attitudes towards

globalisation and trace the way prominent economists saw its impact. The following passage may serve as an example (hereinafter translated by the authors).

'Im Prozess der Globalisierung wird die größte Chance der letzten Jahre gesehen, die Fortschritte der Menschheit bis in die entlegendsten Winkel der Erde zu transponieren und allen Menschen zugute kommen zu lassen' (In the globalisation process we see the greatest chance of the recent years to spread progress to the remotest places of the world and use it to the benefit of all people) (Oster, 2006, p. 1).

This perspective confirms the optimistic expectations regarding the impact of globalisation. The progress (meaning the progress in the real sector of the economy) will embrace the entire world, reach the remotest places of the planet, and serve to the benefit of all people. The positive image of globalisation is created via the superlative adjective *the remotest*, the pronoun *all*, and the word combination *use to the benefit*, while the superlative adjective *greatest* points to its grandeur.

The prominent economist Ottmar Issing in his policy essay *Globalisierung ist nie Gemütlichkeit* (*Globalisation is Not About Comfort*) written for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung in 2001 uses the expression 'benedictory

influence' (*segenreiche Wirkungen*) to characterise the influence of globalisation on the population's prosperity (Issing, 2001). This choice of words, as applied to the results of the impact attributed to globalisation, is comparable with superlative adjectives in terms of expressiveness, as it was borrowed from the religious rhetoric and compares the impact of globalisation with the manifestation of the actions of supreme forces.

However, even at the outset of globalisation processes, the economists pointed to their probable negative consequences. As globalisation develops and expands, new processes emerge that have a major impact on the economy and inevitably effect other domains of the social life as well. Language of print media bears the imprint of the attitudes towards globalisation processes that have forced large enterprises in the leading industrial states to merge into a transnational concern which plays an important role in the economies of those states. Case in point – the merger of the German Daimler-Benz, the American Chrysler and the Japanese Mitsubishi, which resulted in the appearance in 2001 of *'the most successful and respectable seller of cars, transport products and services'* (Kutsche, 2010). The merger was covered amply in the German print media. For example, Rüdiger Jungbluth, a celebrated German journalist, penned an article in the year of the big merger (Jungbluth, 1998), while Dietmar Hawranek and Dirk Kurbjuweit produced

'As globalisation develops and expands, new processes emerge that have a major impact on the economy and inevitably effect other domains of the social life as well'

an award-winning coverage of the 'marriage made in heaven' two years after the event (Hawranek & Kurbjuweit, 2001). This particular piece was praised for exposing globalisation and its pitfalls, and the coverage itself for being exciting (Kaever, 2002). These articles obviously affected public opinion and are, therefore, of interest for the purposes of this analysis.

Notably, as far as the linguistic perspective is concerned, within the media community the upcoming merger was described with an abundant use of superlative adjectives, as in:

'Zum weltweit rentabelsten Auto-Hersteller der Welt fusionieren' (*It was expected that after the merger the enterprise would be the most economically viable automobile maker in the world*) (Schmitt, 1998).

The next example showcases the adjective *furchterregend* as used by Daimler's head Jürgen Schrempp. The first component *Furcht* of the adjective *furchterregend* can be translated as *fear*

or awe, which is why within the general context it may be correlated with the English *awe-inspiring rival*:

'Wir werden ein furchterregender Wettbewerber sein' (Both enterprises would turn into an awe-inspiring rival) (Jungbluth, 1998).

The merger's scale is emphasised with the metaphors 'marriage made in heaven' (*Hochzeit im Himmel*), 'the wedlock of the auto giants' (*die Ehe zwischen den Autogiganten*), 'mega merger' (*Megafusion*), 'transatlantic dream wedding' (*transatlantischer Traumhochzeit*), 'a nascent colossus' (*der entstehende Koloss*). The word *colossus* borrowed from Greek conjures up associations with a gigantic statue, a formidable figure and possibly even someone from the Ancient Greek pantheon of deities. After almost a decade since the 'marriage made in heaven' took place, the result is summed up:

'Neun gemeinsame Jahre – jetzt ist es endgültig vorbei: Daimler und Chrysler sind geschieden. Das Abenteuer USA hat Daimler fast 40 Milliarden Euro gekostet. Fusionen sind riskant und scheitern meist. Das wusste auch Daimler-Benz-Chef Jürgen Schrempp – doch er wollte es besser machen als alle anderen und schloss sich mit dem US-Automobilkonzern Chrysler zusammen. Es war die erste deutsch-amerikanische Großfusion. Und sie endete als gigantischer Flop' (Daimler-Chrysler: a

hell of a marriage. Nine years spent together – this is finally a fact of the past: Daimler and Chrysler broke up. The American adventure cost Daimler almost 40 billion euro. The mergers are risky and often result in a failure. Daimler-Benz head Jürgen Schrempp was aware of that, yet he wanted to do it better than the others and joined forces with the Chrysler automobile concern. That was the first major German-American merger. However, it ended in a great breakdown) (Gammel, 2010).

The quoted text demonstrates the change in the assessment of the 'marriage'. Now it is referred to as a costly, if not loss-making, *American adventure*, or a *giant breakdown*. The marriage that started with the *wedlock of automobile giants*, as portrayed nine years ago, has *finally ended in a great breakdown*, the authors observe. The adverb *finally* implies that the 'divorce' was predictable and the marriage was not a happy one. Thus, the assessment of the 'wedding' changes to the opposite – a *transatlantic dream wedding* turns into the *hell of a marriage* and a *great breakdown*. It may well be supposed that coming down to earth will be accompanied with a bump.

As far as the collapse of the Daimler-Chrysler concern goes, when reporting about it, the authors use stylistic means, primarily attributives, to characterise the scale of the bankruptcy – 'a gigantic failure' (*Gigantischer Flop*) – with the attitude to the event being defined as 'a hell of a

marriage' (*Hochzeit des Grauens*).

Notably, Mercedes employees were concerned lest people should find out that Mercedes was equipped with the Chrysler and Mitsubishi parts, with the colloquial emotionally-charged 'primal fear' (*Heidenangst*) being used to reflect the feeling of dread. Further in the article the author utilises irony comparing the merger to a wedding when the future spouse says, '*Ich heirate dich, aber du darfst mich nicht anfassen*' (*We are going to marry but you must not touch me*) (Gammelin, 2010).

A big merger such as this one was sure to attract the attention of mass media: the event itself and its protagonist are emblematic and, in a way, symbolise a certain stage of economic development, which is why it can be beneficial to look into the language used by the main actor in the merger, the head of Daimler Jürgen Schrempp. Notably, the purpose here is purely to analyse the language means used by the article's author in describing Mr Schrempp, as it was him who fulfilled one of the most large-scale mergers and is therefore a symbolic figure of the mergers and acquisitions era. To create Schrempp's image, Jungbluth (1998) uses the metaphor 'a genius architect of the concerns' (*genialer Konzernarchitekt*), and a comparison with the Ancient Greek heroes suggesting that 'Schrempp took a Herculean task upon himself for the next

years' (*eine Herkulesaufgabe hat er sich für die nächsten Jahre aufgeladen*). While these two comparisons could be stylistically attributed to the domain of literary language use, expressions such as *superstar*, *macho manager*, or *a Rambo heading the flagship of German industry* come from show business and the movies starring Sylvester Stallone.

Schrempp's quotes are also a valid object for the analysis as a person's characteristics stand out more comprehensively through the language they use. For example, by quoting Schrempp as stating that Daimler-Benz needed him more than he need it, the author utilises the full quote followed by the response to that statement in mass media. A full quote seems to be the best option to give assessment to a character based on their own statement, an assessment that was clearly explicated through linguistic evaluations such as 'exorbitant self-glorification' (*grenzenlose Selbstüberschätzung*) and 'the arrogance of someone who has risen too high and too fast' (*die Hybris eines zu hoch und zu schnell Aufgestiegenen*). Schrempp also wishes to see himself 'an absolutely ordinary guy' (*ganz normalen Jungen*), but the author slips out that the character himself 'does not believe that' (*aber das glaubt er selbst nicht*). The author comes to the conclusion:

'Er ist kein Intellektueller und auch kein kalter Kapitalist, vielmehr ein lebensfroher und offener

Typ, der vor Energie zu platzen scheint. Ein kettenrauchender Macher, immer unter Strom, vom Ehrgeiz getrieben' (He is no intellectual but no cold-blooded capitalist either, he is much more of a cheerful and easy-going bloke, bursting with energy. He is a chain-smoker macho, always under pressure, moved by ambition) (Jungbluth, 1998).

The authors of the 2001 article write of Schrempp that 'he emits an aggressive spirit' (*Er sprüht vor Angriffslust*) (Hawranek & Kurbjuweit, 2001). And further:

'Er ist laut, angriffslustig, ist Boxer, Bulle, Cowboy, alles gleichzeitig und im Wechsel. Seine Schultern schwingen, links, rechts, links, als wolle er die Fragen abfedern. Er lacht, er grinst, er hat so viel Spaß, Jürgen E. Schrempp zu sein, Chef von Europas größtem Konzern' (He is loud-voiced, aggressive, a boxer, a bull, a cowboy, this all is present in him concurrently and flows into one another. His shoulders surge to the left, to the right, to the left, as if he wants to shake off the questions. He laughs, grins, he is so much enjoying being Jürgen E. Schrempp, the chief of Europe's largest concern) (Hawranek & Kurbjuweit, 2001).

Süddeutsche Zeitung quotes Business Week that referred to Schrempp as 'the bulldozer of Daimler-Benz' (*Der Bulldozer von Daimler-Benz*) (Gammel, 2010). In this case, a bulldozer is

symbol incorporating all of Schrempp's key features, along with the three adverbs used to describe the impression of Schrempp's statement when he was announcing the companies' merger: 'too exaggerated, too loud, too boastful' (*zu groß, zu laut, zu prahlerisch*), with the particle *too* emphasising the exaggerated nature of Mr Schrempp's statement in terms of form and content. Jungbluth's article ends with the remark:

'Und wenn er dann noch von der Firmenhochzeit spricht als Ehe, wie im Himmel geschlossen wird, dann beschleicht einen das Gefühl, hier hebt einer ab' (And when he speaks of the concerns' wedding as of the marriage made in heaven, then the listeners start having a feeling that someone has ground slipping away from under their feet) (Jungbluth, 1998).

The article came out the year the 'concerns wed'. And it was the same year that Jungbluth in the last remark of his article about the marriage made in heaven metaphorically predicted the career collapse for Schrempp, who, in his opinion, had lost touch with reality. The author's thought prompts a conclusion that coming down to reality may be something of a rude awakening.

In Schrempp's image, the positive connotations characteristic of his image in the period of the concerns' merger were replaced with the opposite ones, with the attributives being mostly superlative

'Language of print media bears the imprint of the attitudes towards globalisation processes that have forced large enterprises in the leading industrial states to merge into a transnational concern which plays an important role in the economies of those states'

ones: 'the worst manager of the year' (*der schlechteste Manager des Jahres*), 'the biggest capital killer of all times' (*der größte Kapitalvernichter aller Zeiten*), 'whipping boy' (*Prügelknabe*) (Ramge, 2007). Characterising Schrempp's manner of actions, the authors use the particle 'too' (*zu*) and it was the same pattern that was used to describe Schrempp's actions before the collapse, with the same negative connotations: 'too loud' (*zu laut*), 'too pushy' (*zu aufdringlich*). The authors of the article point out that he has a penchant for exaggeration:

'Zu laut hatte er große Erfolge angekündigt. Zu weit hatte er auf Hauptversammlungen die Arme ausgebreitet, um für seine Global-Visionen zu werben. Zu aufdringlich hatte er sein Ego in der ersten Reihe platziert' (He ushered in the great successes too loud, stretched his arms too wide at the general shareholder meetings when advertising his global vision and positioned his Ego in the first

row in too pushy a way) (Ramge, 2007).

The coverage by Hawranek and Kurbjuweit (2001) contains stylistic techniques which are not common for the average texts of that genre. It describes a service in the basilica of Saint Peter's Cathedral in Rome, where Mozart's Requiem is performed by celebrity artists and a star is shining above all that, however not the Bethlehem star as is normally the case in a church, but the one from Stuttgart. Daimler-Chrysler sponsored the premiere of Mozart's The Requiem. This description contains an allusion to the Bible. The Mercedes star replaces the Bethlehem star. That S-class service was sponsored by Daimler-Chrysler. The S-class service is also an example of an allusion to the S-class Mercedes. The authors call this service a symbol of omnipresence of Daimler-Chrysler. Omnipresence (*Allgegenwart*) is a yet another allusion to the Bible.

Along with allusion, the authors utilise allegory. Thus, in 2000 even a question about the stock rate was not able to prevent Schrempp from enjoying his Cohiba cigars (*Im Frühsommer 2000 konnte ihm nicht einmal die Frage nach dem Aktienkurs den Genuss seiner Cohiba verleiden*). The theme of cigars appears again when the situation with the concern worsens. Then Schrempp constantly chain-smokes thin cigarillos and is always running out of them (*Schrempp raucht dünne Zigarillos, und die gehen ständig aus*). In this case, the

authors readdress the theme of cigar, but in a different situation, thus pointing out to the recent changes (undesirable for Schrempf).

Mergers and acquisitions in the era of globalisation get much attention in academic literature, which can be explained by the highly pressing problem of transnational companies. More often than not, the mergers of major concerns have resulted in a failure, in a loss of thousands of jobs, and exorbitantly huge severance pays for bosses of bankrupt enterprises. At one of the symposiums on the subject, Thomas Minder said that it was not only bank and insurance companies' managers who personally benefited in the case of merger and acquisition deals. Daimler, Siemens and Novartis, as well as other major industrial companies all have displayed such excesses and enrichments (*Auch bei Daimler, Siemens und Novartis und vielen weiteren Industriegesellschaften finden wir solche Exzesse und Bereicherungen*) (Müller, 2009). Thus, Mr Minder speaks not just about enrichment, but the egregious examples of the enrichment of industrial concern managers.

The study will further on suggest some more examples of the language explicating the attitudes towards the large-scale concern mergers, to the role of top managers in the operation of transnational concerns, and to the prospects of economic development in defiance of the

financial liability principle.

'Vor allem auf der Ebene der grossen börsennotierten Unternehmen gab es Beispiele eklatanten Versagens. Das Spektrum reichte von einer unverantwortlichen Selbstbedienungsmentalität bis hin zu regelrechten Missbrauchstatbeständen. Das Fatale hieran ist, dass das Fehlverhalten einiger weniger Top-Manager auf alle rechtschaffenden Unternehmer und Manager übertragen wird. Damit nicht genug: das Handeln der schwarzen Schafe wird der sozialen Marktwirtschaft selbst angelastet. Das liegt auch daran, weil die öffentliche Wahrnehmung einseitig von nicht haftenden Manager-Unternehmern vor allem der grossen DAX-Konzerne dominiert wird. Vergessen wird darüber, dass weit über 90% der deutschen Firmenlenker vollhaftende Eigentümer-Unternehmer sind' (First of all, there are examples of eye-catching failures at the level of major publically traded companies. They ranged from the mentality of irresponsible self-service to the facts of real abuses. The fatality of that all is that the vicious behaviour of few managers is now attributed to all the managers and entrepreneurs working in the legal field. And there is more to it. The very social market economy is accused of actions of the 'black sheep'. This is explained by the fact the perception of society is one-sidedly dominated by the image of manager-entrepreneur who bears no financial liability, first and foremost,

the managers of DAX concerns. But what is forgotten is that over 90% of companies' heads are company proprietors) (Schulhoff, 2009, p. 14).

In this statement, which we are quoting in full, the lexemes chosen by the author to characterise the activities of the managers of large transnational companies are marked with distinctly negative connotations. Those lexemes include the French borrowing 'eklatant' preceding the word 'Vorsagen' (*failure, breakdown*). Further in the text we have the word combination 'the mentality of irresponsible self-service', which is a clear case of irony. 'The mentality of irresponsible self-service' is nothing else but stealing. The range of the managers' 'sins' starts with the mentality-ingrained habit to use the company's finance for personal purposes and ends with blatant examples of one's position's abuse. The component of the lexeme 'Missbrauchstatbestand (Tatbestand)' is a legal term, so in this case the legal language is utilised. The statement starts with irony and finishes with a legal term (the fact of abuse).

The next example speaks of the self-purification in the economy:

'Wer hier auf die Selbstreinigungskräfte der Wirtschaft vertraut, verschiebt das Thema auf den Sankt Nimmerleinstag' (*They who rely on the forces of self-purification in the economy, postpones the issue until the cows come home*)

(Schulhoff, 2009, p. 15).

This statement used the colloquial *Sankt Nimmerleinstag* which translates as put off until a day that will never come, postpone infinitely, i.e. it contains a relatively pessimistic forecast regarding the changes in the liability culture of the major companies' management. Köster (2009) sees the way out in the return to the basics of social market economy:

'Soll uns das Aufwachen aus dem Dornröschenschlaf nicht eines Tages böse erwischen, müssen wir uns endlich rückbesinnen auf die Grundlagen unserer Marktwirtschaft und sie konsequent zum Tragen bringen' (*To prevent ourselves from being taken unawares after waking up from the Sleeping Beauty dream, we should go back to the basics of our market economy and make them work*) (Köster, 2009).

The *Sleeping Beauty* here is an allegoric figure characterising the contemporary state of society that does not see danger in departing from the principles of social market economy. The result of the liability principles violation is summarised by Prof Schulhoff:

'Das Fehlen bzw. das Nichtanwenden jeglicher Haftungstatbestände brachte für einen Teil unserer wirtschaftlichen Eliten eine beneidenswerte Ausgangsposition mit sich, eine

'More often than not, the mergers of major concerns have resulted in a failure, in a loss of thousands of jobs, and exorbitantly huge severance pays for bosses of bankrupt enterprises'

Ausgangslage, die jeden gewöhnlichen Hinterzimmerzocker vor Neid erblassen laesst: Mitspielen und nur gewinnen, den Verlust tragen andere, was übrig bleibt, wird sozialisiert. Wohin uns das geführt hat, wissen wir; ich will das hier nicht näher ausführen' (Their absence and non-implementation have put a part of our economic elite in an envious starting position, in a situation where any small-time profiteer would go green with envy: to play and only win, let others pay for the loss and the remaining debt be socialised. We know where this has taken us; I shall not labour the point further) (Schulhoff, 2009, p. 14).

Prof Schulhoff likens an ordinary profiteer, living cooped up in a tiny room behind the counter, to a part of the economic elite. The relations between these two extremes are defined by one word – envy, and an envy so strong that it makes one go green. The envy can be explained by the fact that a representative of the elite, unlike a petty profiteer, only wins, no matter how successfully or unsuccessfully they play. Their loss, unlike a petty

profiteer's loss, does not get socialised. The words about the socialisation of the loss are followed by a short remark suggesting that 'we know where this has taken us'. This comment contains no comparisons, legal terms and even complicated words, yet it startles us with its brevity. It states a fact of life (we do know where this has taken us). The author does not wish to elaborate on this sensitive subject for the German society in a circle of people who are aware of the state of things ('we know').

The Neue Zürcher Zeitung reports about the similar problems of Swiss banks (Fischer, 2017). The financial crisis has shown that the managers of major banks have demonstrated 'a reckless joy of risk' (*unbedachte Risikofreude*) and 'a criminal behaviour' (*kriminelles Fehlverhalten*). An exorbitant level of bonuses is also mentioned in the headline of the article (*masslose Boni-Kultur*). The article came out in 2017, yet the attributives (*exorbitant, reckless, criminal*) could have been applicable to the Daimler-Chrysler merger.

As globalisation processes evolve, the downsides predicted by some economists back at their onset stages are becoming increasingly palpable. Based on the events in the world of finances and economy, one could, perhaps, imagine such an associative flow: globalisation, financialisation, hedge funds, mortgages, toxic securities, bankruptcy, global financial and the economic

crisis. The list of the negative sides to globalisation is dominated by the lexemes which, coupled with economic terms characterising the state of economy, are depicting reality in gloomy shades: *reduction, slowdown, breakdown, decline, slump*. The lexeme *growth*, when used with the *unemployment*, is a yet another element creating the negative image of globalisation. An important role in conveying negative attitudes towards globalisation in the German print media is played by attributives, such as ‘enormous’ (*enorm*), ‘uncontrollable’ (*unaufhaltsam*), ‘inevitable’ (*unweigerlich*), ‘unjust’ (*ungerecht*), ‘pointless’ (*sinnlos*), ‘oppressive’ (*deprimierend*).

Former Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt compared the financial markets of the globalisation era with a monster (Schmidt, 2007). Professor Niko Paech called globalisation ‘irresponsible’ (*verantwortungslos*) and ‘vulnerable’ (*verwundbar*) (Paech, 2019). An article devoted to the results of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre quotes a renowned third world economist Walden Bello, who believes that a historic chance has arrived to further weaken the hierarchical, undemocratic institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO (Dilger, 2001). The negative attitude to the typical institutes of globalisation era is expressed through the words ‘hierarchical’ and ‘undemocratic’. In the context of Bello’s statement, the lexeme ‘hierarchical’ has a negative connotation, as he is talking about the

‘The concept of deglobalisation includes such traits as orientation towards national markets and allies in the economic region, the visibility of interconnections among business entities, and ensuring democratic control over their activities’

stale, hierarchically structured, bureaucratic financial institutions, highly influential yet hardly controllable. Bello calls deglobalisation an alternative to globalisation, speaks of the decrease of dependence of national economies from such processes and of the development of national economies oriented towards domestic and regional market. Deglobalisation is not an aspiration for autarchy and breaking up with international markets. The concept of deglobalisation includes such traits as orientation towards national markets and allies in the economic region, the visibility of interconnections among business entities, and ensuring democratic control over their activities (Dilger, 2001). Some authors refer to the process of deglobalisation as ‘Entglobalisierung’. The prefix *de-* is borrowed from Latin, while *ent-* is a German one, yet both prefixes mean *departure, removal, withdrawal*.

The attitude towards globalisation is controversial. Some economists warn about the possible

'The postulation of the positions of deglobalisation as the negation of globalisation may be based on the opposition, too: declining prosperity – growing prosperity, production slowdown – production growth, establishment of supranational connections – rupture of supranational economic interlacing, etc.'

unpredictable consequences, as in *'Auch die Entglobalisierung produziert Verlierer'* (*Deglobalisation will have its losers, too*) (Schaffner, 2017), or *'Vorsicht, Entglobalisierung!'* (*Watch Out, Deglobalisation!*) (Müller, 2009). In listing the characteristic features of globalisation, it is important to mention the essential properties of this concept such as justice, security, solidarity, protection of own national state. These properties are different from the features normally used to characterise the notion of globalisation in that they do not belong to the economic vocabulary which shows the shift in the systems of values towards moral and legal aspects. The difference between globalisation and deglobalisation manifests itself in the attributives 'local' and 'regional', instead of 'world economic' (*weltwirtschaftlich*), supranational

(*grenzüberschreitend*), 'globally operating concerns' (*weltweit operierende Konzerne*) and 'domestic producers' (*heimische Produzenten*). The postulation of the positions of deglobalisation as the negation of globalisation may be based on the opposition, too: declining prosperity – growing prosperity, production slowdown – production growth, establishment of supranational connections – rupture of supranational economic interlacing, etc. The same trend towards counterposition can be traced on the level of attributives: 'supranational' and 'transnational' are replaced with 'national', 'regional' and 'local'.

4. CONCLUSION

The article looked into the language explicating the attitudes towards globalisation and deglobalisation in the German mass media, and highlighted the shift from the positive or reserved to negative stances. The global nature of the processes is emphasised by the attributives, such as 'worldwide', 'all-embracing', 'reaching the remotest corners of the world', 'supranational', 'boundless'. The expected positive effects of globalisation are indicated by words and word combinations, such as 'benedictory', 'spread prosperity', etc. One of the consequences of globalisation was the emergence of transnational concerns. Such mergers and their architects were often discussed in mass media, as exemplified by the 'wedding of the giants' Daimler-Chrysler, spearheaded by the head of Daimler-Benz Jürgen

Schrempp. The marriage made in heaven was described using the superlative adjectives, expressive vocabulary, comparisons and metaphors. Along with the topics of mergers and acquisitions, the subjects for discussion include exorbitant pays of managers in large-scale joint-

stock companies and transnational concerns. The process of globalisation associated with the process of mergers and acquisitions, the earnings of managers bearing no liability for the results of their actions have received a distinctly negative assessment.

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Intensifying adverbs in the English language

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The article provides an analysis of various aspects of intensification in the English language (colloquial and newspaper), intensifying adverbs in particular. The processes of grammaticalisation and delexicalisation observed in the evolution of intensifying adverbs are described. The author also looks into the renewal and boundedness of intensifying adverbs, provides an overview of modern classifications of intensifying adverbs, and offers statistics on the frequency of occurrence of intensifying adverbs to illustrate their usage in spoken discourse and newspaper language. The findings assume that less intensification is used in written discourse whereas more intensification is employed in spoken discourse, which suggests that the decline in intensification is higher as the formality of the register increases, and vice versa.

KEYWORDS: *intensification, intensifying adverb, grammaticalisation, delexicalisation, spoken discourse, newspaper language*



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1. INTRODUCTION

The article aims to look into various aspects of intensification in colloquial and newspaper English, focusing on intensifying adverbs in particular, and describe the processes of grammaticalisation and delexicalisation observed in the evolution of intensifying adverbs. The study also considers the issues of the renewal and boundedness of intensifying adverbs, provides an overview of modern classifications of intensifying adverbs, and offers statistics on the frequency of occurrence of intensifying adverbs to illustrate their usage in spoken discourse and newspaper language. The findings assume that less intensification is used in written discourse whereas

more intensification is employed in spoken discourse, which suggests that the decline in intensification is higher as the formality of the register increases, and vice versa.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Various aspects of intensification and means of its expression in written language and speech has recently drawn the attention of a great number of linguists. The status of intensification remains one of the most discussed issues in modern linguistics. From the 20th century onwards, numerous studies have been conducted to study the use of intensifying adverbs (Tagliamonte, 2008; Fries, 1940; Bolinger, 2013; Ito & Tagliamonte, 2003;

Quirk et al., 1985). These studies have greatly contributed to the structural description and semantic categorisation of intensifying adverbs. Huddleston and Pullum (2002) argue that intensifying adverbs are not to be viewed as a primarily grammatical or lexical category: they possess grammatical properties, although are insufficiently defined unless we describe their functional significance. Some of these early studies already referred to the processes of grammaticalisation and delexicalisation, which underlie the development of lexical intensifying means. According to Beltrama and Bochnak (2015), intensification helps highlight what is being said and is related to the basic human need to make an impact on the interlocutor. Wierzbicka (1972) connects intensification both with objective features of an object and the speaker who distorts the worldview in their mind.

Intensification is closely linked with the concept of the Intensity Scale (sometimes referred to as Intensity Range) which is described as a continuum of quantitative characteristics existing in our minds (Lebedeva & Pavlova, 2016). Key to this continuum is the starting point where the quantitative characteristics are either amplified or toned down; the starting point can be the word which is an object of intensification. The number of the markings on the scale is subjective and depends on the interlocutors' language competence.

Recent studies predominantly focused on the constant change (renewal) of intensifying adverbs in the course of the last decades. Renewal takes place when '*existing meanings take on new forms*' (Hopper & Traugott, 2003, p. 122). This process is usually characterised by the appearance of new ways of intensification. For instance, the meaning *to a high degree* can be expressed by older, completely grammaticalised forms, such as *very* and *newer*, as well as more expressive forms, such as *extremely* and *tremendously*. The more a linguistic item is grammaticalised, the more it collocates with a variety of adjectives and verbs, which increases its frequency. The development of intensifiers is a good example of renewal as this process demonstrates how older and newer layers can coexist and display different meanings (Hopper & Traugott, 2003, p. 121). A large inventory of intensifiers allows to avoid repetition and increase expressivity. Méndez-Naya (2003) notes that since the main function of intensifying adverbs is expressive, they are inclined to undergo renewal, as their function of boosting decreases over time, due to, for instance, overuse. Hopper and Traugott (2003) state that over the past centuries *very* has alternated with e.g. *terribly*, *really*, *pretty*, *surprisingly*, *extremely* and *highly*, depending on which word was in vogue at the time. The renewal of intensifying adverbs can be explained by the speaker's urge to 'achieve expressivity' (Lorenz, 2002, p. 143). The more unexpected and unusual an intensifying adverb is

in a given context, the more expressivity it produces.

The fact that numerous intensifying adverbs have been added to the intensification system at different times allows grammarians to describe this system as having many 'layers' of intensifiers. Thus, according to Ito and Tagliamonte (2003), the use of the intensifying adverb *so* goes back to Old English, while the intensifier *right* was one of the most popular in Middle English. Other intensifying adverbs have been added to the system in recent years, as, for instance, adverbs built from adjectives through *-ly* suffixation. Hopper (1991) foregrounds that in spite of the fact that new layers keep emerging, it is not necessarily that the old ones disappear: they may remain to coexist with the new ones. Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) highlight that despite the coexistence of the older and relatively new items, intensifiers are subjected to the influence of sociolinguistic factors.

The meaning of intensifying adverbs depends on the context in which they occur. Their individual connotation depends on the quality and type of the linguistic item that is modified, primarily adjectives. Recent intensifying adverbs have ambiguous meanings. For instance, intensifying adverbs such as *terribly* and *awfully* still retain their meaning of 'terror', although they have gradually acquired a more grammatical meaning of intensification (Paradis, 2008, p. 338).

According to Stoffel (1901), at the beginning of the 20th century the intensifying adverb *awfully* was not yet considered part of normal conversations. Partington (1993) claims that *terribly* and *awfully* used to have a negative connotation while now they have completely disposed of this meaning and are fully delexicalised, functioning only as intensifiers of propositional content. Nevertheless, the study of the adjectival collocations of *terribly* in the British National Corpus (BNC) and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) proves that the similar collocations still retain a negative quality. The most popular adjectives collocated with *terribly* in the COCA are *wrong*, *important*, *sorry*, *difficult* and *sad*; the BNC – *sorry*, *important*, *difficult*, *wrong* and *hard*.

Tagliamonte (2008) states that intensifying adverbs are an ideal choice for a scholar because of their versatility and capacity for rapid change. Although intensifying adverbs are unable to change the semantics of the utterance, they can considerably modify its meaning. Incorrect usage of intensification could have an unexpected pragmatic outcome. For example, Long and Christensen (2008) state that overuse of intensifying adverbs (*very*, *clearly*, *obviously* and the like) negatively affects the credibility of a legal argument. The authors measure intensifier use against outcomes and prove that excessive intensification in appellate briefs is directly related to adverse outcomes.

‘The fact that numerous intensifying adverbs have been added to the intensification system at different times allows grammarians to describe this system as having many ‘layers’ of intensifiers’

Intensifying adverbs differ by their degrees of intensification on the intensity scale (Biber et al., 1999, p. 20). They indicate a point on the intensity scale which may be high or low. Lebedeva and Pavlova (2016) note that according to the degree of intensification intensifying adverbs are divided into emphasisers, boosters, and maximisers.

Emphasisers indicate a high degree of the modified proposition, as in: I was never *really* fat, but I always struggled with just being kind of on the verge. She *actually* called these hearings a charade and a farce when she wrote. She’s following this procession, *clearly* encouraged. Well, I think Dole is *frankly* in the better position right now. I *honestly* think that we do need some type of change.

Boosters denote a higher degree of the modified proposition, as in: Both groups *strongly* supported making English the nation’s official language. A *badly* beaten Stefan claims he was attacked by a creditor. A State Department spokesman last week

called Teng’s case ‘*deeply* disturbing’. Reports of Tony Hart’s second death are *greatly* exaggerated. Immediately, though everything else remained as before, dim and dark, the shapes became *terribly* clear. People are saying it’s going to be *bitterly* cold tomorrow tonight. Simpson is *intensely* depressed.

Maximisers denote the upper extreme on the intensity scale, as in: It’s an old-fashioned, down-to-earth club that operates *entirely* contrary to the grotesque excesses of the 1990s. It’s polarising and creates the illusion that the clash of *utterly* biased accounts produces the truth. Many analysts and policymakers focus *most* closely on the so-called core CPI. I believe that he is *fully* aware of it. I was *extremely* ashamed of my situation.

The problem with intensifying adverbs and their classification lies in their ability to be used for both purposes – amplifying and toning down the pragmatic influence depending on the speaker’s intention (Quirk et al., 1985). Such difficulties often arise with the intensifying adverb *quite*, which can be used to indicate both functions, depending on the context. *Quite* usually means *fairly* if used as an amplifier, as in *The film is quite good*. British speakers also use the intensifying adverb *quite* in the meaning of *absolutely* before adjectives which express an extreme degree of quality. In similar cases, *quite* is stressed, as in *His contribution to the science is quite remarkable*.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

To see what tendencies can be observed in the use of intensifying adverbs in the world Englishes and if they correspond to what scholars suggest, two corpora were used in the present study: The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the British National Corpus (BNC). The analysis was conducted on spoken discourse and newspaper texts. The study presented in the present article was restricted to the analysis of the combination *intensifier + adjective* which is conditioned by its frequency. Bäcklund (1973) came to the conclusion that 72% of intensifying adverbs were used with adjectival heads. In addition, recent research on amplifiers by Barnfield and Buchstaller (2010), Reichelt and Durham (2017) also focuses on the study of intensifying adverbs modifying adjectives. A similar approach can be observed in most investigations of intensification. On the basis of previous research conducted by Biber et al. (1999), Ito and Tagliamonte (2003), Tagliamonte and Roberts (2005), Tagliamonte (2008), and Barnfield and Buchstaller (2010), nine most common intensifying adverbs modifying adjectives were chosen for this study, namely: *absolutely, so, totally, entirely, pretty, very, extremely, completely, and really*. The part-of-speech feature available in the COCA and BNC helped make the search more precise. The present study takes into consideration the combination *intensifier + adjective* as a base for searching the most frequent

‘Intensifying adverbs differ by their degrees of intensification on the intensity scale’

intensifying adverbs modifying adjectives. For instance, the intensifying adverb *so* was searched for as *so_j** to obtain results covering its frequency with adjectival heads, and this procedure was repeated for each intensifying adverb.

4. STUDY AND RESULTS

After the initial search of intensifying adverbs in question was completed, all the occurrences of intensifying adverbs were listed. To restrict the list of intensifying adverbs that would meet the aim of the research and to increase precision, the collocates section of COCA and BNC with an improved search string (*intensifier + adjective*) was used allowing to see what words occurred near other words, which helped find only those intensifiers that were in the adjectival pre-modifying position. Thus, other cases which do not respond to the aim of the study were excluded, e.g. verbal intensification (examples 1, 2), as well as examples where the search word did not serve as an intensifying adverb (example 3).

(1) I *totally* support the administration with respect to that (2017, SPOK: CNN: Anderson Cooper).

(2) And I agree *entirely* with my esteemed colleague Joe that we should focus on the people

who plunged this country into recession (2011, SPOK: NBC_Matthews).

(3) So what are the options, then? (2017, SPOK: Morning Edition 11:00 AM EST).

During the study of intensifying adverbs in the combination *intensifier + adjective* 211,335 tokens retrieved from COCA were analysed. Examples of the chosen intensifying adverbs are given below in the order of their frequency in COCA:

(1) 'The Turner Diaries' is a horrible novel, racist novel that became a – it's almost a talisman to this movement, a *very* important motivating force (2017, SPOK: PBS NEWSHOUR 6:00 PM EST).

(2) Give it a try for dinner. These – these things are *so* easy (2017, SPOK: NBC).

(3) And, you know, it brings back *really* wonderful memories to me (2014, SPOK: Fresh Air 12:00 AM EST).

(4) It's a *pretty* cool story, actually, Terry (2017, SPOK: NPR).

(5) One of the *absolutely* beautiful songs ever written (2016, SPOK: 20/20 10:01 PM EST).

(6) These are all three *extremely* good judges (2017, SPOK: EDITORIAL REPORT 2:00 PM EST).

'Emphasisers indicate a high degree of the modified proposition. Boosters denote a higher degree of the modified proposition'

(7) I keep going back to that first – to the first 'Pirates' movie because this guy comes along, and he's not what people envisioned, and he created this *completely* crazy pirate (2007, SPOK: CBS_Early).

(8) And for this to happen and put our workers potentially at risk is *totally* unacceptable (2014, SPOK: PBS NEWSHOUR 6:00 PM EST).

(9) It's going to have an agreement where nobody is *entirely* happy with the result, but everybody is obviously happier with the result than with the alternative (2011, SPOK: PBS NEWSHOUR 6:00 PM EST).

The calculations for each of the intensifying adverbs clearly illustrate the proportion of the items under study (Figure 1). Table 1 gives an insight into the comparative frequencies of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words. Since the corpora used in the present research contain unequal numbers of words, a normalisation of word frequency per 100,000 words is required to obtain comparable results.

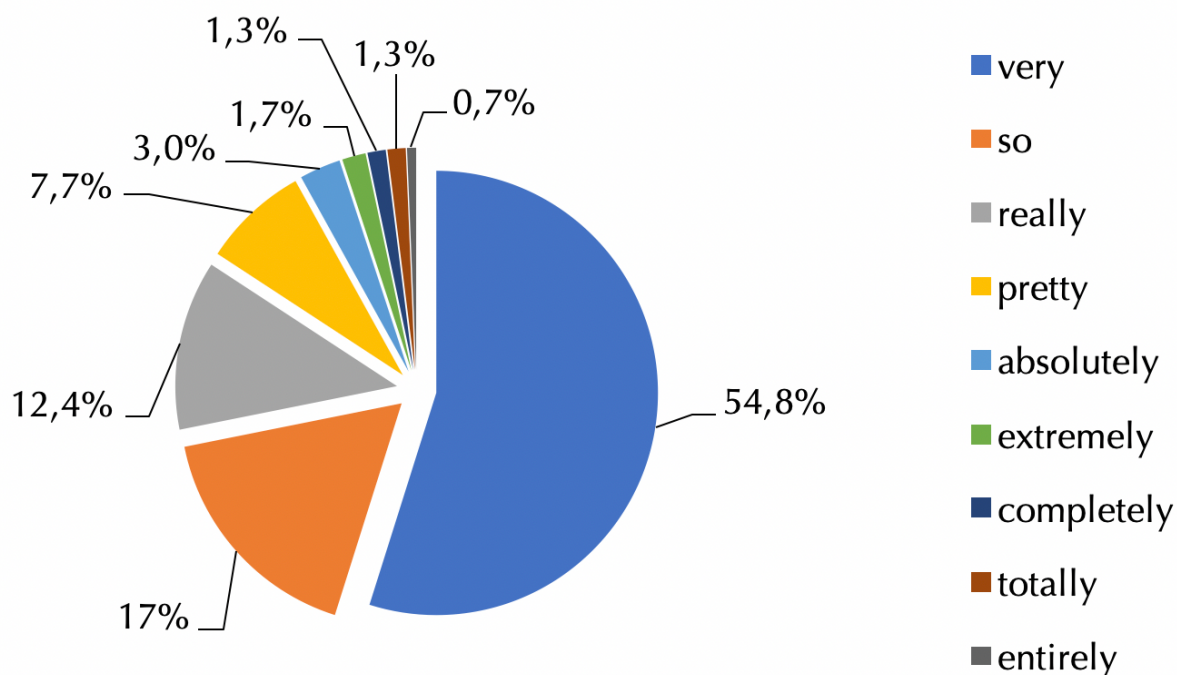


Figure 1. Frequency of intensifying adverbs in American English (spoken data)

Table 1

Comparative frequency of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words in American English (spoken data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY PER 100,000 WORDS
very	98.14
so	30.36
really	22.09
pretty	13.84
absolutely	5.38
extremely	3.09
completely	2.39
totally	2.37
entirely	1.18

The results seem to partially conform to previously conducted research. Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) found that the three most common intensifying adverbs in the adjectival pre-modifying position were *very* (38.3%), *really* (30.2%) and *so* (10.1%). However, these findings do not fully correspond to our COCA findings in terms of the order of the intensifying adverbs and their frequency.

According to Fries (1940), in American English of the 1940s the intensifying adverb *very* was the most frequently used function word of degree, though in the 1980s this opinion was contested by Labov (1984) who proved that the intensifying adverb *really* was one of the most frequent markers of intensity in colloquial conversation. In his opinion, the focus shifted from *very* to *really* over that time period, but COCA does not support this tendency. For instance, according to our findings, *so* comes after *very* and constitutes 16.9% of the sample, and only then comes *really* with the percentage of 12.4%, which places this intensifying adverb in the third place. Tagliamonte and Roberts (2005) suggest that *so* has become the 20th century favourite for Americans, which was also confirmed by the present research. In contrast, according to Rickford et al.'s (2007) study on the Stanford Tape Recorded Corpus, *really* is the most popular intensifying adverb in American English.

In Tagliamonte's (2008) data, the most frequent intensifying adverbs are *very*, *really*, *so* and *pretty*,

which is the most frequent among them.

The frequency of the intensifying adverb *very* outnumbers all the *ly-* intensifying adverbs *absolutely*, *extremely*, *completely*, *totally* and *entirely*. This could be because these intensifying adverbs are relatively new forms. First, they were used as intensifying adverbs with verbs and participial heads, but later they came to intensify adjectival heads as well (Nevalainen, 1994, p. 24).

In newspaper language 68,823 occurrences of the combination *intensifier + adjective* were analysed in COCA. Examples of the chosen intensifying adverbs are presented below in the order of their frequency in COCA:

- (1) Overnight Tuesday, Israel took the *very* unusual step of imposing a curfew in Jerusalem itself, in the Arab neighborhood of Issawiyah (2011, NEWS: New York Times).
- (2) Their belief in the product is *so* strong, they could almost boost its market outlook themselves (2015, NEWS: USA Today).
- (3) Financing projects is *really* tough (2009, NEWS: Denver Post).
- (4) His pre-work ritual is *pretty* typical of any suburban Houston dad (2009, NEWS: Houston Chronicle).

(5) The project started in 2010 when Chow Tai Fook, a Hong Kong jewelry company, acquired an *extremely* rare, unpolished 507-carat diamond found in the Cullinan mine in South Africa, reported by Associated Press (2016, NEWS: Columbus Dispatch).

(6) Car drivers are *completely* unaware of vehicle safety issues or of their own ability to drive on a highway, as the recent survey suggests (2005, NEWS: Denver Post).

(7) The position that these individuals take jobs that Americans will not perform is politically

correct, but *totally* ridiculous, which is why the question remains open (2006, NEWS: Atlanta Journal Constitution).

(8) The comedown was sobering, if not *entirely* unexpected given the expectations foisted upon them (2017, NEWS: USA TODAY).

(9) One of the greatest accomplishments of American democracy is that, throughout our history, the nation’s leaders have usually risen to the occasion when it was *absolutely* necessary, and this is what unites all our parties (2017, NEWS: Omaha World-Herald).

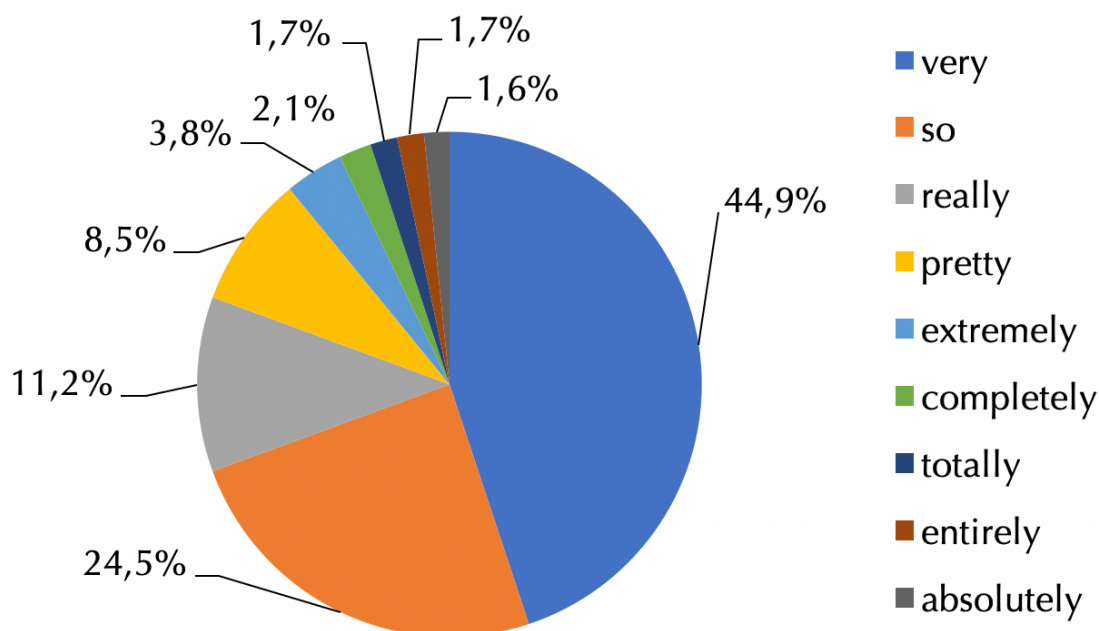


Figure 2. Frequency of occurrence of intensifying adverbs in American English (newspaper data)

Table 2

Comparative frequency of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words in American English (newspaper data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY PER 100,000 WORDS
very	20.028
so	14.745
really	6.745
pretty	5.101
extremely	2.26
completely	1.258
totally	1.045
entirely	1.029
absolutely	0.979

The present research shows that the four most frequent intensifying adverbs employed in newspaper discourse are the same as in speech: *very*, *so*, *really* and *pretty*. These four intensifying adverbs dominate in newspaper discourse as they account for 89.1% of the sample. As is seen from the data, intensifying adverbs are three times as frequent in spoken discourse as in newspaper language (178.844 and 53.19 instances per 100,000 words respectively). For this reason, we can assume that the decline in intensification is greater as the formality of the register increases, and vice versa. The study of intensifying adverbs in newspaper language and speech in British English gives results that differ from American

English. The number of occurrences obtained in the course of the research is 17,048. Examples of intensifying adverbs are ordered according to the frequency of occurrence in BNC:

- (1) Hundreds of millions of business can be *very* expensive indeed (The Money Programme: television broadcast. Rec. on 10 Oct 1993).
- (2) He did a wonderful job on it! And he was *so* nice to her when he was doing it (4 convs rec. by 'Enid' (PS08Y) on 27 Feb 1992).
- (3) I was in a *really* bad mood at school (3 convs rec. by 'Brenda' (PS04U) on 4 Dec 1991).

(4) But my middle son in law is *absolutely* marvellous (46 convs rec. by ‘Ginny’ (PS0CG) between 28 Nov and 6 Dec 1991).

(5) I hate to tell you this but the er (pause) the forecast for the weather is *pretty* awful this year (4convs rec. by ‘Kitty’ (PS563) on 19 Oct 1993).

(6) Erm, the report is extremely valuable, the work of the archive service is *extremely* valuable (Wiltshire County Council: committee meeting).

(7) I feel that the density, thirty-six in there, is *totally* unacceptable (Town council planning meeting. Rec. on 20 Feb 1993).

(8) Er, generally and for the most part and for the most part at the end of the day they’ll come up with *completely* irrelevant er things (unclear) (King’s College London: philosophy discussion class (Edu/inf). Rec. on 9 Dec 1993).

(9) Now, my view is (pause) it’s *entirely* wrong (pause) it’s cheating, it’s doing everything wrong! (Mental health: television discussion (Leisure)).

The number of each of the selected items is listed in Figure 3 below, that clearly illustrates the proportion of the intensifying adverbs. Table 3 gives an insight into the data (in %) on every intensifying adverb under the analysis.

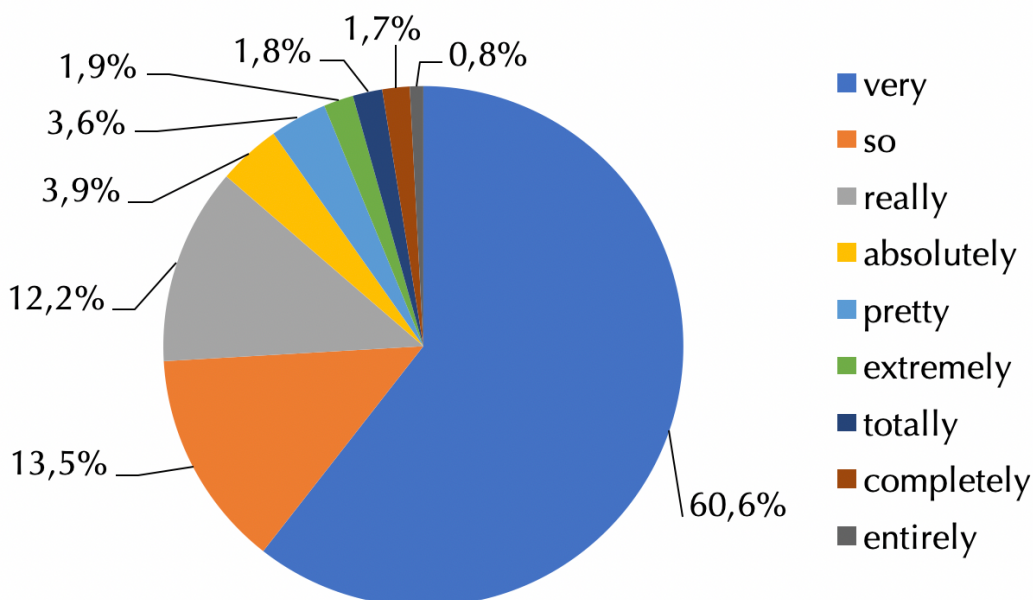


Figure 3. Frequency of occurrence of intensifying adverbs in British English (spoken data)

Table 3

Comparative frequencies of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words in British English (spoken data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY PER 100,000 WORDS
very	105.57
so	23.58
really	21.34
absolutely	6.79
pretty	6.2
extremely	3.23
totally	3.19
completely	2.97
entirely	1.46

Judging by the distribution of nine intensifying adverbs in British English studied in the present research, the most frequent of them are *very* (60.6 %), *so* (13.5 %) and *really* (12.2 %). These findings do not fully coincide with the results obtained by Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) in terms of frequency and the number of tokens. On the one hand, *very* appears to be the most common intensifying adverb, but its proportion proved to be one and a half times higher than in Ito and Tagliamonte's (2003) research – 60.6% and 38.3% respectively. In contrast, the proportion of *very* in British English is almost the same as in American English – 60.6% and 54.8 % respectively. This leads us to suggest that *very* is not becoming redundant: even though

the system of intensifying adverbs is continually undergoing renewal, it still occupies the dominant position, which is also proved by Fries (1940), Bäcklund (1973), Biber et al. (1999) and Ito and Tagliamonte (2003). In addition, the frequency of *very* is more than five times as great as the frequency of *so* (13.5%) and *really* (12.2%). Thus, its frequency is notable.

The difference between the proportions for *so* and *really* is insignificant and it is likely that *so* as well as *really* are gaining popularity in both British and American English. Barnfield and Buchstaller's (2010) study on intensifying adverbs shows that *so* has gained popularity relatively recently as in the

1960s the most frequent intensifying adverbs were *very*, *really* and *rather*.

The next most frequent intensifying adverb in the present research is *absolutely* (3.9 %), which makes it stand out from other *-ly* intensifiers in this research (*extremely*, *completely*, *totally*, *entirely*). This result contradicts Ito and Tagliamonte's (2003) research where *pretty* (3.2 %) was the fourth most popular intensifying adverb. This leads to the conclusion that nowadays *absolutely* is also becoming more popular in spoken British English discourse. Besides, these findings differ from those obtained during the present frequency research in American English with *pretty* (7.7 %) as the fourth popular intensifier. Thus, *absolutely* is more common in British English, which is proved by Biber et al. (1999) who compared the British and American varieties of English using the Longman Corpus and found that *absolutely* had a higher frequency in British English.

The intensifying adverbs *very*, *so*, *really* preponderate in the present research as the total number of the three of them constitutes 89.3%. Thus, they outnumber the rest of the intensifying adverbs subjected to analysis – *absolutely* (3.9%), *pretty* (3.6%), *extremely* (1.9%), *totally* (1.8%), *completely* (1.7%), *entirely* (0.8%).

For the analysis of intensifying adverbs in newspaper language in British English 7,169

tokens were obtained from newspaper texts in BNC. Examples of the chosen intensifying adverbs are presented below in the order of their frequency in BNC:

- (1) There's a move to slow them down, but the hauliers say it could lead to a *very* dangerous situation (Central News autocue data).
- (2) The Rambler's National President is *so* angry, he'll be leading a mass protest here in two weeks' time (Central television news scripts).
- (3) There's enough explosive power in a *really* big display to make the twenty kegs of powder Guy Fawkes planted below the Houses of Parliament look like a damp roman candle (Central television news scripts).
- (4) Interviewed by The Scotsman about the planned local government changes, Mr Lang acknowledged that costs were an *extremely* important element of the reforms (The Scotsman, Leisure material).
- (5) They each need other but some are *absolutely* vital to a successful production (Central television news scripts).
- (6) President George Bush yesterday angrily denounced followers of Gen Aoun and said a partition of Lebanon would be *totally*

unacceptable to the world community (The Guardian).

(7) The boats are designed with weights in the keel so they can't capsize. The disabled sailor can be *completely* confident (Central television news scripts).

(8) Even they could consider themselves lucky compared with the shackled Italians torpedoed on the Arandora Star on their way to Canada, or other internees beaten and robbed on their way to Australia by British officers and NCOs on the

Dunera who gave a *pretty* good imitation of Hitler's Stormtroopers (The Guardian).

(9) His reluctant agreement to append an *entirely* unconvincing happy ending to the show is a coup de theatre that still seems strikingly modern more than 250 years after the premiere of this bracing comedy (The Daily Telegraph).

The frequency for each item is given in Figure 4 below. Table 4 gives an insight into the average frequencies of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words.

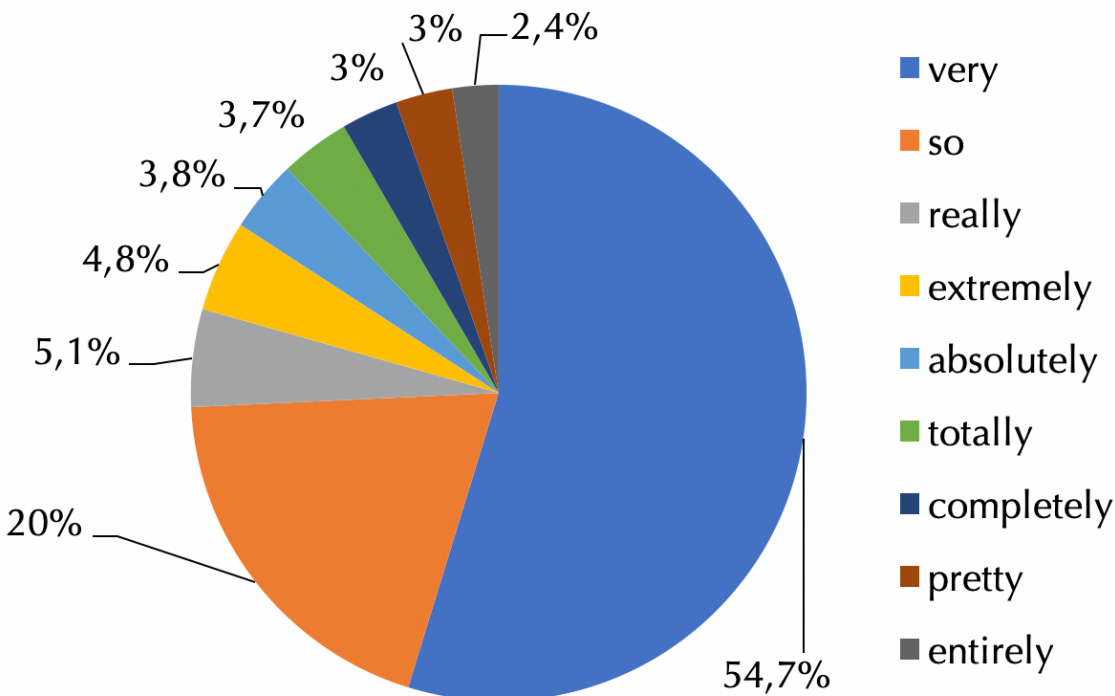


Figure 4. Frequency of occurrence of intensifying adverbs in British English (newspaper data)

Table 4

Comparative frequency of intensifying adverbs per 100,000 words in British English (newspaper data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	COMPARATIVE FREQUENCY PER 100,000 WORDS
very	38.66
so	13.77
really	3.63
extremely	3.38
absolutely	2.67
totally	2.58
completely	2.11
pretty	2.101
entirely	1.71

The present research proves that in British newspaper texts the most frequent intensifying adverbs are *very* (54.7%) and *so* (20%), which is different from the spoken discourse in British English where the three intensifying adverbs *very*, *so* and *really* dominate.

On the whole, as is seen from the data, intensifying adverbs are two and a half times as frequent in spoken discourse as in newspaper language (174.33 and 70.61 instances per 100,000 words respectively), which proves the assumption made in the present article – the degree of intensification declines as the formality of language increases, and vice versa.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the research are presented in Table 5 illustrating what intensifying adverbs are common both in British and American English. Notably, in spoken discourse the intensifying adverb *very* is the most frequently used out of nine selected intensifying adverbs (*very*, *really*, *pretty*, *so*, *absolutely*, *extremely*, *totally*, *completely*, *entirely*) in the two varieties of English, since approximately half of its usage is found there (COCA – 54.8%, BNC – 64.6%). The most popular intensifying adverbs in American English are *very*, *so*, *really* and *pretty*. The British variety presents a little difference concerning the most frequent intensifying adverbs: it was found that the

Table 5

The most frequent intensifying adverbs in American and British English (spoken data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	AMERICAN ENGLISH	BRITISH ENGLISH
very	54.8%	60.6%
so	17.7%	13.5%
really	12.4%	12.2%
pretty	7.7%	3.6%

intensifying adverb *pretty* is not one of the top four popular intensifying adverbs as it constitutes only 3.6% of the data, which is not enough to be considered one of the most frequently used. On the contrary, the intensifying adverb *absolutely* is becoming more common in British English occupying the fourth position in the frequency distribution, whereas in American English it is only the fifth popular intensifying adverb.

The present study has revealed that for the time being *very* is still the most popular intensifying adverb and its frequency is over five times as great as the frequency of *so* and *really*. On the whole, in British English *very*, *so* and *really* predominate, and in American English *very*, *so*, *really* and *pretty* outnumber all the *ly*-intensifying adverbs discussed – *absolutely*, *extremely*, *totally*, *completely*, and *entirely*.

Table 6

The most frequent intensifying adverbs in American and British English (newspaper data)

INTENSIFYING ADVERB	AMERICAN ENGLISH	BRITISH ENGLISH
very	44.9%	54.7%
so	24.5%	20%
really	11.2%	
pretty	8.5%	

Table 6 illustrates that in American English the four most frequent intensifying adverbs used in newspapers – *very*, *so*, *really* and *pretty* which dominate among the selected intensifying adverbs – coincide with those employed in spoken discourse. Their total frequency of occurrence accounts for 89.1% of the sample. However, the British variant differs in the number of the most popular intensifying adverbs as it was observed that *very* and *so* are the only intensifying adverbs which dominate in British newspapers and account for 74.7% of the sample. The third and

the fourth intensifying adverbs in the frequency distribution are *really* and *extremely*; however, their frequencies (5.1% and 4.8% respectively) are not high enough to be considered the most common. It is assumed that genres can affect the choice and frequency of intensifying adverbs. To test the validity of this statement, two types of discourse were compared: spoken discourse and newspaper language. It was observed that there is a tendency towards lesser intensification when the style becomes more informational and formal (see Figure 5).

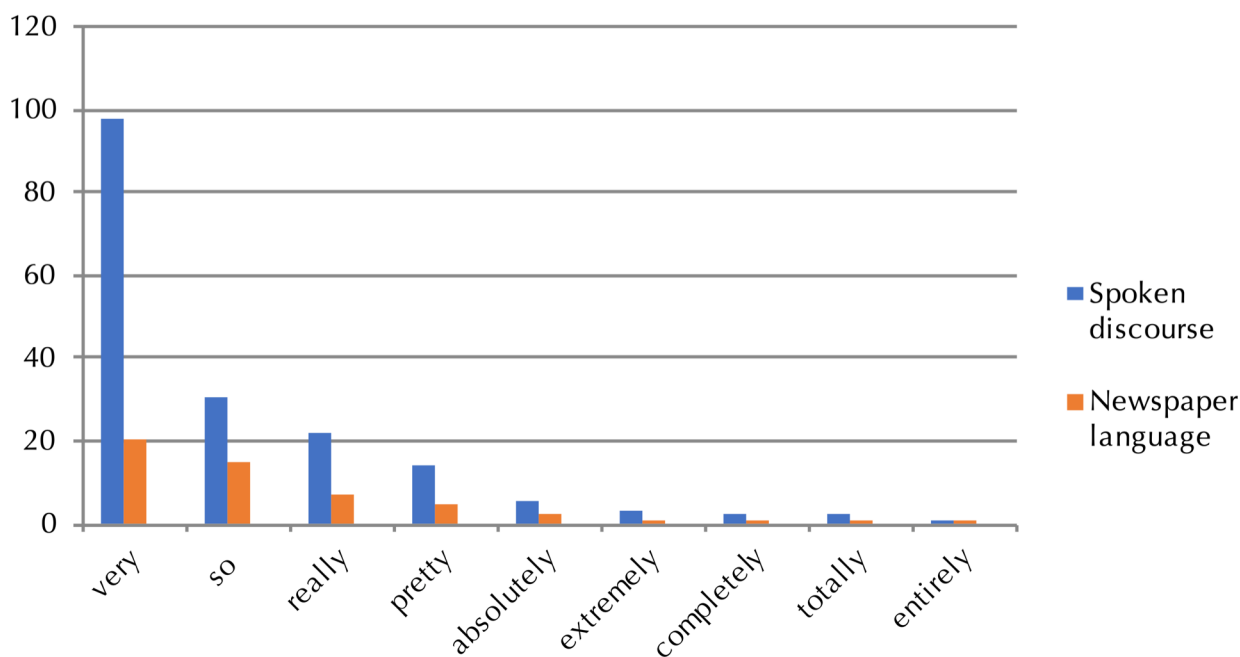


Figure 5. Comparative frequencies of intensifying adverbs in spoken discourse and newspaper language in American English

Thus, intensifying adverbs are from 5 to 1.5 times as frequent in spoken discourse as in the newspaper language. The present findings suggest that less intensification is used in written discourse

whereas more intensification is employed in spoken discourse, which leads to the conclusion that the decline in intensification is higher as the formality of the register increases, and vice versa.

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Grammatical interference in written papers translated by Russian and American students

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Language interference is one of the most common problems in foreign language teaching. Language learners inevitably apply knowledge of their native language to a second language, which leads to linguistic interference. The more differences there are between the two languages, the more prominent the interference between them will be. This paper examines the key issues faced by Russian students learning English and English-speaking students learning Russian and suggests key areas of teaching needed in both disciplines.

KEYWORDS: *interference, Russian, English, grammar, translation, to-infinitive, modal verbs*



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1. INTRODUCTION

The differences in the Russian and English languages pose problems for students studying Russian or English as a foreign language. This problem of language interference is most frequently caused by a misunderstanding of the foreign language grammar and, particularly by Russian students, a tendency to translate word-for-word. Interference can be broken down into a number of areas, analysed in detail below. The five areas are grammatical, lexical, phonological and orthographical. Based on the author's experience of teaching EFL in Russia and teaching Russian in the United States this paper focuses primarily on grammatical interference between the two languages. It analyses key factors causing problems in translation, including *there is* and *to*

have, the use of infinitives, aspect, gender categories, modal verbs and negation. In doing so the paper recommends that greater attention should be paid by teachers in correcting student errors in speaking and writing.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Transfer and interference

Researchers analysing the processes occurring in second language acquisition first started analysing the phenomenon of linguistic interference in the second half of the twentieth century. In 1957, linguists subscribing to the theory of behaviourism were the first scholars to come up with the term *transfer*, which is defined as 'the set created by the first language habits' that affect the learner's use of a foreign language (Lado, 1957). They view

foreign language learning as a process of transferring the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to a foreign language and culture. According to them, this transfer is governed by language learners and they decide based on their linguistic perceptions what can be transferable and what cannot.

In the 1980s, more definitions of the linguistic phenomenon of interference emerged and more terms were coined by linguists. Dulay et al. (1982) defined it as the automatic transfer of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface structure of the target language. They also used the term *interlingual errors* referring to the same process of interference. Lott (1983) believed that interference mostly represents the errors occurring in the speech of language learners that can be traced back to their mother tongue. Sharwood-Smith and Kellerman (1986) introduced the term *crosslinguistic influence*, believing that it might refer to such phenomena as *transfer*, *borrowing* and *avoidance* encompassing all these notions in one. However, the term *interference* first appeared in the mid-80s when Alderson (1984) proposed to use it over the then commonly used term *transfer*. Selinker (1972) sticks to the term *transfer* and distinguishes two main types: positive and negative. In the positive transfer, the knowledge of the mother tongue or another foreign language facilitates the acquisition of a second/third language, whereas in the negative transfer it, on

‘Since in Russian word order is not fixed, many Russian learners of English alter the sequence of subject, predicate and object, which inevitably leads to interference’

the contrary, has a negative effect resulting in errors and mistakes. This negative transfer is otherwise known as interference.

2.2 Types of interference

One of the most widely accepted classifications distinguishes the following types of interference (Thorovský, 2009). The examples of these types of interference are indicative of the interference between the Russian and English languages.

Grammatical interference influences FL in terms of tense categories, mood, sentence structure, word order, use of pronouns and determiners, etc. Since in Russian word order is not fixed, many Russian learners of English alter the sequence of subject, predicate and object, which inevitably leads to interference. Weinrich (1953) distinguishes three types of grammatical interference: 1) the transfer of morphemes from the source language to the recipient language (s- ending in the English third person singular forms); 2) grammatical relations in a particular word order; 3) functions or meaning of grammatical forms (singular-plural agreement).

‘One of the most widely accepted classifications suggested by Martin Thorovský distinguishes grammatical, lexical, phonological and orthographical interference’

Lexical interference is typical of spoken and written speech when language learners translate word-for-word some of the vocabulary items that make perfect sense in their native language, but for FL do not seem to be the best choice due to differences in collocability, the polysemous character of words, false friends, literal translation, etc. A very common example might be the Russian phrase *Прости(те) / Извини(те)*, which is typically translated in English as *I’m sorry*. However, its English counterpart has another meaning that comes into action when people wish not only to express gratitude but also to express sympathy. Unfortunately, many learners of Russian neglect this peculiarity of the use, hence while speaking Russian they say *Прости(те) / Извини(те)* in order to be sympathetic, which by Russian standards is considered as an erroneous utterance.

Phonological interference is more frequently manifested in word stress, intonation, or speech sounds that are typical of a native language and that are influencing the acquisition of FL. For example, the phonological process of aspiration is

non-existent in Russian, hence many learners of Russian tend to aspirate voiceless stops at the beginning of words (*tiger – murp*). Another vivid example is different types of rhotic consonants in Russian and English (retroflex approximant in English vs trill or rolled ‘r’ in Russian). It becomes problematic for students who are not used to the phonological system of another language; hence, they make phonological errors that might complicate their comprehension.

Orthographical interference occurs in spelling and is characterised by the alteration of spelling words under the influence of the native language. For example, the Russian equivalent for English *standard* is *стандарт*, or *salad* becomes *салат*, which often creates confusion and leads to spelling errors.

3. RESEARCH MATERIALS AND PROJECT

Despite such a diverse typology of linguistic interference, the purpose of this research was to study the most common instances of its grammatical representations that are typical of American and Russian students learning the Russian and English language. The students’ written papers such as essays and translations serve as material for the analysis. Since I am currently teaching English for Russian learners and had a year-long experience teaching Russian to Americans, I have been witnessing the reversed process of grammatical interference when Russian

grammatical structures influence significantly the students' English sentences. Working as a Russian teaching assistant in an American university in upstate New York I had ample opportunities to observe the students' writing samples (essays, translations) and I have traced a number of recurrent mistakes that are the results of linguistic interference or all sorts of lacunae between the grammatical systems of the two languages.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the most common recurring mistakes I made a survey that was distributed among American students learning Russian and Russian students learning English in my class. It included sentences that had to be translated from a mother tongue into an appropriate target language. Below are the sentences that students had to translate (Table 1).

Table 1

Sentences for translation suggested in the survey

TO BE TRANSLATED BY AMERICAN STUDENTS	TO BE TRANSLATED BY RUSSIAN STUDENTS
The city has five good restaurants.	В кафе можно столько всего попробовать!
Every day I have three Russian classes.	У меня есть к вам несколько вопросов.
The museum has twelve rooms.	Джону нужно выучить стихотворение.
The girl has a dog.	Возможно, я приду вовремя на занятие.
It is a bad question to ask.	Ты должен быть очень внимательным.
There are so many places to see in Moscow.	Ей следовало позвонить раньше. Может он бы не уехал.
The cafe has so much food to taste.	Он не знает, как это работает. По правде говоря, я тоже.
I flew to Saratov.	Я тоже не хочу ехать на конференцию.
I will have written an article by tomorrow's evening.	Уилу тоже интересно это предложение. Напиши ему!
It's not a good idea to buy food on the street.	Его голос звучал смущенно.
Russia invested much money in education.	Этот пирог так хорошо пахнет!
She went to Moscow to learn more about its culture.	Я плохо себя чувствую.
I knew that he worked in a foreign company.	Он сказал, что вернется в субботу.
She told us that she was going to the library next week.	Том просил передать, что все занятия отменили.
I always thought that my sister was beautiful.	Они сказали нам, что идут в библиотеку.

In the course of the research, I ended up with several major recurring mistakes that represented different instances of grammatical interference. As far as American students are concerned, the most common mistakes included the constructions *there is/there are* and the verb *to have*, aspect forms, masculine and feminine endings of verbs, nouns and adjectives, sequence of tenses and infinitive structures. I also checked on the use of the constructions *there is/there are*, the infinitive constructions and the sequence of tenses used by Russian students learning English. Also categories such as linking verbs, modal verbs and the use of negation were added to the list. Each group consisted of three to four sentences to be translated. As a result, the survey helped detect major problems that students were dealing with while subconsciously translating sentences from their mother tongue into the target languages. Since the research is just the starting point of the analysis, the paper includes a fairly limited number of categories that seemed to be of interest in my professional experience.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

4.1 There is/are vs to have

While translating impersonal sentences indicating location or descriptions of certain objects very few American students were using the constructions *there is / there are*, preferring to use a combination of a subject and predicate (such as the verb *to have*). Therefore, they would keep the same

‘Phonological interference is more frequently manifested in word stress, intonation, or speech sounds that are typical of a native language and that are influencing the acquisition of a foreign language’

structures while translating similar sentences into English, as in: *The city has a bunch of good restaurants* - Город имеет много хороших ресторанов; *The museum has twelve rooms and 700 meters* - Музей имеет 12 комнат и семьсот метров.

However, in Russian it is not always the best option as Russians are not likely to make a city or a museum animate and they would rather use the preposition *в*, which would sound more natural to a native speaker, as in: *В городе много хороших ресторанов; В музее есть 12 комнат.*

That is why it is clear that Russians are so fond of the constructions *there is / there are*. It perfectly fits into most Russian sentences as it also requires the preposition *в* or any other adverbial modifier of place and largely imitates the English sentence.

Many researches claim that the constructions *there is / there are* are not so frequently used in modern

English and native speakers would rather rephrase such sentences with verbs, as in *The picture hangs on the wall* (instead of *There is a picture on the wall*). Moreover, it is often recommended to avoid using *there is / there are* at the beginning of the sentence as these constructions make the sentences sound too bulky. So linguists recommend rephrasing the sentences and avoid, if possible, using the construction altogether, as in *Four characters in this story are very important* (instead of *There are four characters in this story who are very important*).

As the verb *to have* is very frequently used in English sentences in context where Russians would use either a different verb or a different construction, American students who learn Russian end up producing weird Russian sentences because of the word-for-word approach to translation, as in: *Ямал имеет национальные праздники, соревнования, фольклорные фестивали, костюмированные игры; Затем невеста имеет девичник, где обмениваются подарками*. The loss in translation is also due the absence of a predicate in a similar Russian sentence, which turns into an adverbial modifier of place (*в городе, в комнате* instead of *у города, у комнаты*): *У этой статьи есть только одна писатель; У Ямала есть так много мероприятий в природе*. Another common tendency is an excessive use by American students of the verb *есть* when in Russian sentences it can

be omitted. This might be explained by a fixed word order in the English language, which requires the presence of both the subject and the predicate. In Russian, however, it is not necessary and the use of *есть* is redundant. This verb is likely to be omitted when the idea of possession is not emphasised: *Том больше не играет в хоккей, потому что у него есть два сотрясения* (instead of: *У него два сотрясения*); *У меня сегодня есть два занятия по биологии* (instead of: *У меня сегодня два занятия по биологии*).

Overall, Russians are overusing the constructions *there is / there are*, considering them as the only possible way of translating sentences dealing with location, whereas modern tendencies indicate that native speakers of English prefer using verbs to impersonal sentences with *there is / there are* even though they are absolutely correct from the grammatical point of view.

4.2 Infinitives

The Infinitive is a form of verb that is not limited by person, tense or number. The English language has two distinct ways of realising the infinitive, the form with the participle 'to' (*to do, to play*), and the bare or zero form without 'to'. Even though the present infinitive is the most common form, the English language has in total five forms of infinitive: the present infinitive, the perfect infinitive, the perfect continuous infinitive, the

‘The problem that English to-infinitives cause are mostly related to translation because the infinitive is a very compact form conveying a wide variety of different meanings, which is not always the case for Russian’

continuous infinitive, and the passive infinitive. This section, however, focuses on the complex and multifunctional character of the English infinitive and situations in which it may be used by native speakers and the way it differs from the Russian infinitive. The problem that English to-infinitives cause are mostly related to translation because the infinitive is a very compact form conveying a wide variety of different meanings, which is not always the case for Russian.

Therefore, the infinitive structures in English do not have a direct equivalent in Russian and such phrases are usually translated with the help of modal verbs, rephrasing or complex sentences with subordinate clauses: *Там можно было столько всего попробовать; В Ялте можно увидеть столько необычных мест; Я думаю, что России следует прощать внешние долги.* It is also possible to resort to the infinitive omission because some of the ideas are already implied without a specifying verb or add a subordinate clause to a sentence making it complex: *Это был неудачный (плохой)*

вопрос; Я думаю, что было бы неплохо, если бы все перестали врать.

In this respect, Russian seems more complicated because there are many ways of translating sentences with complex objects, whereas in English it is done in a very compact and simple way. In my experience, I have never seen any of the textbooks for learners of Russian include at least one chapter on infinitive structures. When I was teaching Russian, American students would often translate similar English sentences that included infinitives exclusively by means of using either infinitives or the particle *чтобы*, which would create very confusing sentences. Here are some authentic examples of translation: *Есть много мест, чтобы увидеть в Ялте - There are so many places to see in Yalta* (instead of: *В Ялте можно увидеть столько мест*); *Я считаю, что это хорошо для России, чтобы прощать внешние долги - I think it's good for Russia to forgive external debts* (instead of: *Для России было бы неплохо прощать внешние долги*); *Это сложный вопрос, чтобы ответить по нескольким причинам - It's a difficult question to answer for a couple of reasons* (instead of: *На этот вопрос сложно ответить по нескольким причинам*).

Such instances of erroneous translations are numerous in my teaching experience. I also noticed that Russian students prefer bulky and

lengthy sentences with several clauses to very compact infinitive structures that are described in this chapter. That suggests Russians are either unaware of them or prefer to use direct word-for-word translation from their native language which is a clear example of grammatical interference.

The purpose of the research was to confirm or to deny these assumptions in the course of the empirical analysis. The research showed that of all the problems that both American and Russian students face while learning a foreign language, the infinitive constructions prove to be one of the major stumbling blocks. It is especially relevant for American students, since their direct translations of the *to*-infinitive lead to grammar mistakes and wrong Russian sentences. Even students with a very high level of language proficiency, including heritage speakers, would stumble at the infinitive sentences and fail to use them properly.

4.3 Aspect in English and Russian

Aspect is a grammatical category that denotes the development of an action over time. It is the form of the verb that shows how the meaning of that verb is considered in relation to time, typically expressing if an action is complete, repeated or continuous. In English, the category of aspect goes along with the grammatical category of tense, which specifies the time when a certain action takes place. Aspect, on the contrary, emphasises if an event is ongoing or if it is already complete. In

other words, it expresses how an action is extended over time. English possesses a large variety of tenses and tense-and-mood forms and only two categories of aspect; progressive (continuous) and perfective (perfect).

The verbal category of aspect in Russian, however, seems to be more complicated. It is believed to be one of the most unpredictable and one of the most characteristic grammar features of the Russian language. Even though the Russian verb presents a relatively simple structural picture with only two tenses (present and past, as future is formed with the help of a perfective verb in the present), it possesses a complexity in terms of forming aspect forms. Most commonly, there is no universal way of forming a perfective or imperfective aspect. Almost every Russian imperfective verb is paired with its perfective counterpart, which significantly complicates life of the learners of Russian. These are two sets of verbs with identical lexical meaning but different in terms of their grammatical usage.

English sentences where one single action takes place against the background of another action in progress also causes difficulties for American speakers. Russian sentences often have verbs of motion that are used in the imperfective aspect, while the other one is in the perfective aspect: *Куда вы шли, когда мы вас встретили? Where were you going when we met you?*

‘When it comes to Russian students learning English, mistakes caused by the grammatical interference of aspect forms are also frequent but it is mostly due to the fact that English has a very elaborate system of tenses that students sometimes fail to memorise’

The preposition can often create perfective verbs of motion (*идти – пойти*) but in the past tense they form sentences with slightly different meanings. In this case, the function of aspect is not only grammatical but also lexical: *Вики нет, потому что она пошла в бассейн; Вики нет, потому что она ходила в библиотеку*. In the first sentence, we describe actions that started in the past and have not finished yet. In the second sentence, Vika is gone but she has come back already. These are the differences that cause a great degree of interference.

Finally, the prefix *по-* in Russian is not only responsible for creating perfective verb forms, it also has its lexical meaning, indicating either not very significant actions or brief actions: *Мне захотелось походить по залу; Я погуляла сегодня*.

When it comes to Russian students learning

English, mistakes caused by the grammatical interference of aspect forms are also frequent but it is mostly due to the fact that English has a very elaborate system of tenses that students sometimes fail to memorise. It is specifically related to compound verb forms such as perfective forms because the distinction between Past Simple and Present Perfect or Past Perfect is non-existent in Russian, therefore Russian students are likely to use the Russian regular past without distinguishing the shades of meaning that every tense form entails: *I will write an article by tomorrow evening* (instead of: *I will have written an article by tomorrow evening*); *Я ему дала книгу - I gave him a book - I've given him a book - I'd given him a book*.

Nevertheless, Russian is definitely more complex as there are no universal rules that can be applied to each and every verb and this greatly complicates the life of American students learning Russian, hence we can trace so many instances of interference.

According to the results of the research, the following should be noted.

The phrase *I flew to Saratov* had more than five variants of translation in terms of aspect. Of course, the context was not provided, which gives certain freedom to the students but not all their variants might be considered appropriate.

Я летал в Саратов. (1)

Я летел в Саратов. (2)

Я полетел в Саратов. (3)

Я слетал в Саратов. (4)

Я прилетел в Саратов. (5)

Я долетел до Саратова. (6)

Я полетал в Саратов. (7)

For example, (2) might be considered incorrect because in English the continuous tense is required as the action is clearly in progress (e.g. *I was flying to Saratov*). (7) is also wrong as the prefix *по-* with the imperfective verb usually means *a little bit, for a short while*. The rest of the variants might be accepted in case the context is provided. The prefix *по-* denotes the beginning of motion (perfective aspect) in (3). The prefix *до-* in (6) implies that the destination was reached by the speaker and the prefix *при-* hints at somebody's presence in the given place. All these differences are very subtle but it is necessary to know all the shades of meaning to use the verbs appropriately.

The Future Perfect Continuous generally conveys the idea of action complete by a certain point in time in the future. In Russian, the same idea of completeness might be expressed with the help of the perfective aspect. In the course of the research sentences including the Future Perfect Continuous such as *I will have written the article by tomorrow evening* were translated in the following way. The

most difficult sentence that had to be translated was: *It's not a good idea to buy food on the street*. Although it has an infinitive construction that was described in the previous section, it also has the verb *to buy* that needs to be used in the imperfective aspect but with the prefix *по-*. This might be confusing for the students because normally the presence of the prefix implies the perfective aspect of the verb.

4.4 Gender categories

Mixing up masculine and feminine endings falls into the category of grammatical interference (transfer of morpheme of a source language, according to Weinrich (1953)). In Russian, gender is a grammatical category because it governs the grammatical forms of different parts of speech that refer to masculine, feminine or neuter gender because nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives are governed by it. Since gender is not always treated as a distinct grammatical category in English as it does not change the grammatical structure of a sentence and only deals with lexical meaning, learners of Russian often fail to use gender forms properly. One of the most common mistakes related to gender occurs when female learners use masculine endings of verbs, adjectives, and participles: *Я не ожидал знать что ВИЧ, в России, такой большой проблем что цифры не регистрируются совершенно правительством. Я также был удивлен, что телепрограммы и ролики, казалось, самым популярным методом стратегии*

‘Since gender is not always treated as a distinct grammatical category in English as it does not change the grammatical structure of a sentence and only deals with lexical meaning, learners of Russian often fail to use gender forms properly’

профилактики в России (written by a female student).

It makes sense as in English there is no such distinction because the same word forms are used, regardless of the gender in all parts of speech. However, male learners of Russian also fail to use gender forms properly and, for some reason, they add feminine endings when speaking about themselves. This seems very unusual but remains a common mistake that I (the lead author of this article) observed on a regular basis in students’ written papers and translations: *Я ездила этим летом в Россию и прежде чем я пошел, я должен был получить визу* (written by a male student).

In English, gender is not a feature of nouns but it is a reference to the biological sex. If a gender assignment for human beings is more or less clear, Russian nouns and their gender type tend to be more tricky and complicated. Assigning gender to inanimate nouns and notions is the most

inexplicable process in a language and while memorising vocabulary language learners are supposed to learn the gender that a word belongs to. Nevertheless, the absence of formal differences of gender in English entail the same assumption for Russian – hence very often students make mistakes in gender use especially when it comes to countries: *Россия также простил долг Кыргызстана в суммой \$500 миллионов. Тем не менее, когда я думаю о случае Америки, который дал странам так много денег.*

The category of gender in English is not as clear-cut as it seems. It is very common for the speakers of contemporary English with certain inanimate nouns to use masculine or feminine gender with corresponding endings and pronouns. This tendency, in its turn, contributes a lot to grammatical interference for students learning a foreign language while they are translating English sentences into Russian.

4.5 Modal verbs

Modal verbs proved to be a problematic area for Russian speakers. What is important is that modality in Russian and English is expressed in different ways. English modals verbs in a very concise form are capable of expressing all sorts of attitudes to a situation. Mastering expressions of modality requires a great deal of language proficiency because these expressions are often polysemous or multifunctional. Russian learners

often tend to use lexical ways of expressing modality prioritising them over modal verbs because the system of their language is programmed this way: *Probably he will come* (instead of: *He may / might come*).

Therefore, we can single out two major problems related to modal verbs that language learners face while learning Russian or English. First of all, Russian students often translate sentences using modality exclusively using words such as adverbs or adjectives because the structure of their language focuses predominantly on a lexical means of expressing modality. Secondly, American students often lack enough vocabulary to render all the expressions of modality from English into Russian as there is no direct correlation between the forms.

In this research modal verbs are analysed exclusively in the speech of Russian students learning English. The research proved that modal verbs are still viewed as a stumbling block for students. The sentences given for translation were: (1) *Возможно, я приду вовремя на занятие.* (2) *Ты должен быть очень внимательным.* (3) *Ей следовало позвонить раньше. Может он бы не уехал.* As was expected, most of the students preferred adverbs or adjectives as a way of expressing modality over using modal verbs. Even though, it cannot be counted as a mistake, it is still viewed as an instance of interference. In (3), however, the

‘Since gender is not always treated as a distinct grammatical category in English as it does not change the grammatical structure of a sentence and only deals with lexical meaning, learners of Russian often fail to use gender forms properly’

situation is more complicated as almost a half of the students failed to use the predictive infinitive. This might be explained by the absence of such an infinitive in Russians.

6. Negation

Negation is universal in all languages. According to Lindstad (2007) negation always involves ‘adding an overt morpheme to an affirmative clause’ (Lindstad, 2007, p. 24) and it can negate certain parts or the entire sentence or clause. While the meaning of negation is simple, the formal realisation of it seems to be more complex as it significantly varies in different languages. The sentences given for translation were:

Он не знает, как это работает. По правде говоря, я тоже. Я тоже не хочу ехать на конференцию.

In the research, most of the Russian students (including those who are believed to have an

advanced level of proficiency) made mistakes in translating negative sentences. The reason for such a high percentage of wrong answers is the grammatical interference between Russian and English structures due to the presence of double negation / negative concord or its absence in the system of language. Even students of an advanced level of language proficiency fail sometimes to use negative particles according to the rules of the language.

5. CONCLUSION

The research into grammatical interference between Russian and English proved that Americans are likely to use stative verbs instead of impersonal *there is / there are*, whereas Russian students tend to use them a lot while translating Russian sentences into English. Even though such translations are grammatically correct, they are not always treated as the best possible variant.

Therefore, the study analysed the use of *there is / are* and the verb *to have* in the paper in order to see the frequency of their use. Americans, in their turn, often use verbs in sentences indicating locations attributing animate characteristics to inanimate nouns. This does not always sound correct to Russian ears and the level of interference between Russian and English seems to be significant.

The study showed that the most common mistakes that Americans learning Russian make are the *to-*

infinitive sentences that are non-existent in Russian, aspect forms that differ significantly in the languages in question, and the category of gender.

The category of aspect turned out to be one of the most challenging for American students taking Russian classes. The students mix up Russian aspects trying to trace similarities between English and Russian, which does not always make sense due to the structural differences between these languages.

Seeking simplification, Russian students prioritise word-for-word translations, which are not grammatically incorrect but which are, at the same time, not considered by native speakers as the best ways of conveying the same meaning. This particularly the case in compact English sentences comprising the *to*-infinitive that are substituted by literal translation and modal verbs that are generally translated by Russian students using lexical forms.

Areas of grammatical analysis such as the sequence of tenses, double negation, and the use of the perfective infinitive turned out to be problematic for Russian students, which can be easily explained by the absence of such grammatical phenomena in Russian. This means that teachers should pay more attention to these grammatical phenomena in class to make sure that students use them properly in speech.

The study thus highlighted some problematic areas that teachers of Russian and English as a foreign language should keep in mind in the course of their teaching practice. There could obviously have been more categories analysed in the paper since the arsenal of the two languages is constantly increasing. However, this article sheds

light on the most common grammatical mistakes which occur in written discourse due to language overlap. Further research into the issue of interference and its impact on the utterances produced in the target language is necessary to clarify its mechanisms and explain the possible pitfalls to improve the learning process.

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Don't believe a word: The surprising truth about language (a review)

Original work by David Shariatmadari published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson 2019

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'Don't believe a word' is usually a phrase meaning you shouldn't believe something you hear or read.

David Shariatmadari, an editor and columnist on the Guardian, a British daily newspaper, uses 'word' in its literal sense to mean vocabulary and extends it to other aspects of language analysis including grammar, punctuation and pronunciation. The result is a 'myth busting' exercise, puncturing common misconceptions about language and its use, using linguistic theory explained in a way non-linguists can understand.

Each of the nine chapters identifies and examines 'language myths', using arguments from linguistics to debunk them. Topics covered include language decline, changes in the use of language over time, the use of individual words, pronunciation, grammar, the understanding of communication patterns between humans and the animal world, translation, why some languages may be

considered 'better' than others and the theories of language and how it is learned. It is an informative, enjoyable and fascinating account of language and linguistics based on the study of individual words and expressions.

Shariatmadari dismisses accusations of the decline of language or 'language obesity' as British broadcaster, John Humphrys, once described it, by asserting that the use of words is constantly changing and renewing itself to meet new circumstances and incorporate changes in technology and lifestyle. Older generations may find adaptation difficult and accusations of language decline have existed in English since the 17th century, in German and Arabic as well. Shariatmadari makes no reference, however, to the appearance of fake news, or post-truth, or the decline of public language and the appeal to emotion rather than to facts.

In Chapter 2, *A word's origin is its true meaning*, the author attacks the concept of original meaning, citing the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's insight that *'the meaning of a word is its use in the language'*. He goes on to cite the philosopher, Isaiah Berlin, who wrote that *'words, by connecting passions with things, the present with the past and by making possible memory and imagination, create family, society, literature, history'*. In other words, changes in language use reflect changes in the culture, as Anna Wierzbicka points out, saying, *'there is a very close link between the life of a society and the lexicon of the language spoken by it'*.

Chapter 3 explores the role of changing pronunciation in the use of words and explains how we change our pronunciation to suit the social circle we are in or aspire to belong to. Stressing De Saussure's importance of parole (language usage) as opposed to langue (the system of language rules), Shariatmadari uses social psychologist Howard Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory to show how we alter our speech when we interact with others. *'Using variables including accent rate, volume, pitch, word choice and even syntax we either converge, diverge or carry on'*. Among many examples, he cites the 'parsley massacre' in San Domingo in 1937 when the then president, Rafael Trujillo, seeking to ethnically cleanse his country of the French-speaking Haitians, told soldiers to carry

sprigs of parsley and get people to say what it was. San Domingo Spanish speaking citizens would say the word with a rolled 'r' but French speaking Haitians would use a French 'r'. If they did so they were liable to be shot dead on the spot.

In a fascinating chapter, Shariatmadari examines the ability of the animal world to communicate, including whales and dolphins, and in particular the work of researchers who have taught animals to understand and even produce human speech, albeit at a limited level. In doing so he examines the work of researchers who trained Alex (a parrot), Kanzi (a bonobo monkey) and Koko – a guerrilla who was said to be able to understand 2000 English words. Interestingly enough, Shariatmadari cites the results of 2008 research into 1,129 American pet owners as to whether their pets understood them. 19% of those interviewed answered 'Yes, completely' and 49% answered 'Yes, mostly'. Asked whether they felt they could understand when their pets communicated with them, for example by mewing (cats) or barking (dogs), the result was 18% 'Yes, completely' and 49% 'Yes, mostly'.

Chapter 5 revisits the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that the language you speak determines the way you think, a hypothesis that has since been largely debunked by linguists such as Ekkehart Malotki and replaced by Chomsky's research into common deep structures of grammar.

Interestingly enough, the key lies maybe in 'linguistic relativity' and its effect of culture. Cognitive scientist, Lena Boroditsky, conducted experiments to check on the effects of the gender of similar nouns in German and Spanish on cultural perception. The results are revealing. A word like 'key' (masculine in German but feminine in Spanish) revealed very different associations in German and in Spanish. German speakers chose words like 'hard' and 'jagged' whereas Spanish speakers chose words like 'lovely' and 'shiny'. The word 'bridge', which is masculine in German and feminine in Spanish, received similar responses. The Germans associated the word 'bridge' with 'pretty' and 'elegant' while Spanish speakers used 'strong, sturdy' and 'towering'. Shariatmadari also uses lexical field theory to explain how, as new words enter the language, other words in the same lexical field may shrink in usage. As an example, he suggests that the English word 'alt-right' (extreme right wing) has diminished the use of 'reactionary', 'fascist' or 'neocon.' Finally, in the chapter, Shariatmadari explores the idea of metalanguage, selecting basic terms to form a natural semantic metalanguage. This is the work of Anna Wierzbicka who identified 65 words from which more complex words can be formed. She describes them as 'primes' and there is no language in which these basic expressions do not exist. This will help translators reflect the exact meaning of words in a foreign language.

After a chapter on dialect, Shariatmadari addresses the notion of language and artificial intelligence (AI). To do so he cites Alan Turing's 1950 experiment comparing a conversation with a computer character, Mitsuku, with a real person. In 2018 Mitsuku won a prize as the most human-like AI, displaying conversational skills and identity but failing sometimes with less predictable questions and statements. For example, in answer to the author's statement, 'I am clothed and fed', Mitsuku replied, 'I don't know anyone named Clothed'.

The issue of AI and comprehension raises the question of politeness and empathy in conversation. Paul Grice, a British philosopher, identified the co-operative principle in conversation, which broke down into four maxims: quantity (informative), quality (truth), relation (relevant) and manner (clear). However, Grice also pointed out that people would often flout these maxims by mistake or by intention. Geoffrey Leech, the British linguist, added the politeness principle to Grice's maxims. The politeness principle included the use of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy. It remains to be seen whether AI can match the subtleties of language evoked in the politeness principle.

The final chapter looks at how language is learned and examines the theory of Noam Chomsky on

Universal Grammar (UG) as a brain function and how it has been modified by subsequent research. According to recent research, the key important factor in the development of language ability and language development is not a brain function but a cultural one – the need to communicate. As Shariatmadari summarises, *‘the crucial evolutionary advance that enabled language was the ability to identify with others, and put ourselves in their shoes. There is no isolated language module that allows linguistic competence to ‘grow’ in the brain as a result of a genetic blueprint. Language is the fruit of both the biological evolution of social thinking and the long cultural evolution of human societies. Two decades into the 21st century linguistics is entering an exciting phase. Those drawn to the subject as a*

study of communication, culture and history need no longer feel quite so unorthodox’. Shariatmadari describes language as a ‘schatzkammer’ (treasure house) and concludes: *‘Nearly twenty years after I first opened the door myself, I’ve found that – however much you study it – language is a subject that will never exhaust your capacity for wonder’*.

This is an academic survey written for lay people. That being said, the references are all in place and the theories and research of such thinkers as Chomsky, Pinker, de Saussure, Whorf and many others are clearly and interestingly presented. All teachers of languages and those interested in language theory and language change, both academically and recreationally, will find it enjoyable and illuminating.

Because Internet: Understanding the new rules of language (a review)

Original work by Gretchen McCulloch published by Riverhead Books 2019

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Gretchen McCulloch is a Canadian linguist, podcaster and blogger who writes extensively about language use on the Internet. Unlike many commentators, she is a qualified expert (with a Master's in Linguistics) and so can base her insights on theory and research as well as her own opinions.

The thesis of the book is that the English language is changing faster than before, because of the influence of the Internet. She suggests that online communities develop their own slang and jargon and this spreads much more rapidly (especially through social media) than previous linguistic changes ever could. In addition, we consciously change the way we express ourselves in order to fit into new media systems – like character restrictions on Twitter, abbreviations in texts, and emoji in WhatsApp and Messenger. The book explores these changes and new forms of

expression, and looks at the interaction between language use and the development and spread of memes, the rapid spread of new types of message. For example, she explains how tildes (~) become a new punctuation form to express irony. Or how certain emoji reflect physical gestures in the real world. And when people are likely to be more careless or more precise in spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, etc. when composing messages.

How is the Internet changing our language? The book's 8 chapters range widely over language, writing, stylistics, memes and new ways of expressing ideas.

In the chapter on *Informal Writing*, McCulloch makes an interesting distinction between formal and informal writing. We have mostly seen writing as a formal activity – writing letters, reports, essays – and informal communication was mostly oral.

Now, most people communicate informally by writing texts, messages, emails, Facebook posts. And this Internet-informal text is much more informal in terms of spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, tone and lexical choice than the formal writing we teach in schools. In this new informal writing we use a lot more acronyms, not just the technical acronyms like *NATO* but new social acronyms like *btw*, *lol*, *afaik*, *tl:dr*, etc. This is another example of the changes in the language that have developed through wider Internet use. McCulloch's view is that these changes – which may seem small and even unimportant now – will in the future be seen as a major shift in the language.

In the chapter *Language and Society*, McCulloch suggests how the Internet has changed linguistic research. Linguists are now using Twitter archives as a linguistic corpus, searching for uses of informal forms and looking at their geographical distribution. Did you know that the usage *hella* as in *it's been hella hot recently* is concentrated in Northern California? This research is focused on informal writing, not formal edited texts (like newspapers or books) which were previously the main source of linguistic research on written forms. This allows for a new kind of dialect mapping, showing we are still local as well as global.

In the chapter *Who Are the Internet People*,

McCulloch explains that people are now writing more (and using phone calls less), and she gives an interesting quote from technologist Jenny Sunden, saying '*you are writing yourself into existence – how you write is who you are*'. This may always have been true for authors and journalists – but until the rise of the Internet this was rarely true for ordinary people leading everyday lives. Suddenly, so much of one's life is based on writing via the Internet – not just sending email and texts, but building friendships through Facebook and meeting new partners through dating apps. All of these modern social activities are more writing-dependent than 25 years ago – when they would have been more likely to be oral interactions.

McCulloch categorises different kinds of 'Internet people' by the way they first learned the Internet and what they do with it. Along the way she very effectively demolishes the myth often spread in ELT that there are 'digital natives' (young people born into Internet use) and 'digital immigrants' (older people who have had to learn it more explicitly). This distinction, coined by Marc Prenz but not intended to be so all-encompassing, has done a lot to damage the confidence of older teachers who are afraid of technology – they feel it tells them that they are not really expected to learn the technology, whereas young people just 'get it'.

There is no evidence for this distinction, though,

as McCulloch quotes a survey about younger people that found there was no significant difference in their ability to do things like edit a spreadsheet or create a digital photo. Even further, quoting the British Journal of Educational Technology, *'a critical review of the evidence for and against digital natives describes it as a myth, the academic equivalent of a moral panic.*

An interesting related point is that we should no longer assume who knows what. *'Rather, computer skills have become as meaningless a category as electricity skills,'* suggests the author. Thus, many people familiar with the online world and seemingly ultra-tech savvy may still need to learn how to organise files into folders, use a spreadsheet, code a programme or build a website. Being proficient at Facebook, Twitter, etc. does not mean you are able to do these other technical things – and may still need in-depth training. This is relevant for ELT teachers using technology in the classroom – it is clear that those skills their students have – and those they don't have – is not a factor of age.

There are fascinating insights in the discussion of the *Typographical Tone of Voice* which may seem an odd concept, but it will be clear to anyone who has had one of their emails misinterpreted by a recipient, because there was a perceived negative or crucial 'tone of voice' in the email that the writer hadn't noticed or intended. She defines it

thus: *'HOME in a message like 'ugh I want to go HOME' is a typographical tone of voice'.*

The author reflects on how people perceive written messages, search for emotional content in them and react accordingly. So, using all capitals is interpreted as SHOUTING, using the 3-dot ellipsis (...) is used for pauses, but also to indicate that some other information might be forthcoming. It's interesting to learn that whole academic articles have been written on how the ellipsis is used and how people perceive it in online messages as 'passive-aggressive'. There is even an add-on programme for Gmail, *Emotional Labor*, that promises to 'brighten up the tone of any email'.

McCulloch sets all of this in historical context, outlining in a scholarly and knowledgeable way the development of informal writing from the age of typewriters and early computers. Other 'emotional' usages include repeated letters such as *yayyyyyy*, *craaaazy*, which she calls 'expressive lengthening'; exclamation marks to add a friendly tone; using HTML coding to indicate a tone, such as *<sarcasm>* and *</sarcasm>* to show the beginning and end of a sarcastic remark, or */rant* at the end of a passionate speech.

The introduction of Twitter meant that writers now included the hashtag (#) into messages to indicate meta commentary, such as *#awkward* after

quoting someone's embarrassing speech or action. Interestingly, this has even passed into spoken interactions: McCulloch quotes a parent delighted that her child used the phrase '*hashtag mom joke*' when teasing her. Incidentally, I was fascinated to learn that the # is actually a Latin abbreviation of the 'lb' meaning 'libra' or 'pound'.

Many more examples of how sarcasm and irony have been expressed in writing are given: '*The Internet didn't create informal writing, but it did make it more common, changing some of our previously spoken interactions into near real-time text exchanges*'.

As one might expect, there is a detailed discussion of the current fascination with the use of emojis. Personally, I find emojis greatly overused and although I do use a handful in messages, I cannot see why anyone would need so many. But we are all different, and many people enjoy sending messages consisting mainly of emojis. It's a 21st century form of Egyptian hieroglyphics, and can be richly expressive in its own way.

McCulloch takes the interesting approach of comparing emojis to the physical gestures (e.g. hand gestures) that some are based upon. And explains the derivation, which is purely Japanese, from 'e' meaning *picture*, and 'moji' meaning *character*.

Other sections of the book delve into the ways that conversations are changing, how we have shifted our metaphor of language from thinking of it as a book (a formal written resource), to thinking of language as an Internet resource.

An engaging section deals with how we use memes in Internet culture. Of course, everyone now knows what a meme is – when they see one. But it's harder to define or to explain. (If you have never heard the word 'meme', go to the back of the class, get out your typewriter and send a fax to Encyclopaedia Britannica for an explanation....).

Does the book hold implications for language teaching? There is little explicit reference to the teaching of languages (or English specifically), but it is clear that teachers of English would probably benefit from having an overview of the issues that McCulloch raises. If learners are using language in a different way online, then making reference to this, using examples of this, would serve to enhance motivation and perceptions of relevance in the classroom.

The book is recommended to anyone fascinated both by language and the development of online communication systems – and how these interact. McCulloch has thought hard about how new technologies lead people into new forms of communication, and provides many new and interesting insights.

A minor niggle (for some readers) may be the occasional over-informality of the writing, often introducing sentences with 'Sure' as in 'Sure, it can be useful to...'. There is also a lot of reference to North American lifestyles with the assumption that we all share the experience of high school life

– jocks, teen culture, etc. It's of course just a matter of taste, but some readers outside North America might find this a little grating or even puzzling. Despite this, there is a lot to learn from this detailed and accessible study of language on the Internet.

ICC News

by Ozlem Yuges

ICC Co-ordinator

New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members to the ICC and EUROLTA family: International Institute for Studies and Cooperation, JSM Language and Innovation Centre, Pepperdine University, and Volkshochschule Hanau.

ICC 2020 Conference in Belgrade, Serbia

The ICC 2020 Conference will be held May 8-10 in Belgrade, Serbia. The conference will include workshops and poster presentations encompassing ways of enriching teaching and learning. The theme of the conference is *Innovation in Language Teaching – New Ways to Learn and Teach More Effectively*, focusing on the new methods, new technologies, new materials, new assessment, and new CPD opportunities. The conference will offer speakers and delegates the unique opportunity to meet educational experts in their specialised fields to exchange ideas with fellow colleagues.

The concept of innovation in language teaching (subject of the 2019 Berlin conference) has generated much interest as a result of globalisation and technological developments. As a consequence of increased mobility, the challenges for language teachers are becoming more diverse. New challenges often require innovative solutions. What kind of innovative teaching methods, approaches, resources and materials are needed

for the contemporary language teaching world? The purpose of the ICC 2020 Conference is to create a platform for teachers and trainers to share good practice and to take away valuable innovative ideas for teaching and learning. Some example fields that the conference will cover are: digital platforms in teaching and learning; innovative teacher development programmes; innovation in virtual learning environment and communication technologies; mobile learning and learning through gamification; integrating refugees into formal language teaching environments; the importance of intercultural communication in training; barriers facing innovation in language teaching; assessment methods to test different abilities; creative approaches to efficient learning; practical and hands-on ideas for the classroom.

The conference will enable its guests to find out about the best teaching and learning strategies and to help individuals utilise their previous learning experiences to more open up new ways of learning. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is extensively recognised to be of great importance in language teaching and this conference offers a certificate for attendees. At the conference, you will have a chance to maintain and broaden your knowledge in addition to gaining the skills needed to use appropriate tools in teaching. It will give you the chance to develop an awareness of current developments in language teaching and cultural learning to create a substantial impact on learning. More information will be coming soon on ICC website. Details are available at icc-languages.eu/conferences.

Important dates for the 2020 conference: call for papers will be posted on the website at the end of October 2019; speaker proposal deadline is 31st January 2020; speaker conference registration and payment deadline is 30th March 2020. Looking forward to seeing you in Belgrade!

EUROLTA News

by Myriam Fischer Callus

EUROLTA Co-ordinator

New EUROLTA Centre

The Adult Education Community Centre VHS Hanau (Germany) has become a new EUROLTA training centre for language teachers. Volkshochschule Hanau (VHS) was accredited in May 2019 by the ICC (International Language Association) as a EUROLTA Training Centre. In July 2019, the first eight graduates who completed their qualification at the VHS Hanau received their certificates. The Mayor Axel Weiss-Thiel, VHS EUROLTA Coordinator Patrizia Stöhr and ICC EUROLTA Project Manager Myriam Fischer Callus congratulated the first accredited teachers.

‘The quality of teaching is reflected in learners’ success. This is why we attach great importance to furthering teachers’ qualifications and supporting these courses financially. Our wide range of 20 languages at VHS Hanau shows that our success proves us right,’ said the Mayor.

‘In the context of EUROLTA qualification, course

participants learn the basic qualifications in methodology and didactics through a modern multisensory training. This unique training gives the future language trainers the tools they need to teach languages. EUROLTA is practice and theory at the same time,’ said Patrizia Stöhr, VHS Hanau EUROLTA Coordinator.

Myriam Fischer Callus, ICC EUROLTA Project Manager, explained: ‘The ICC has made it its business to promote and improve the quality of teaching of foreign languages. This is why EUROLTA was created in the first place. The ICC has made an impact at local, regional, national and international level through the involvement of all member organisations. The ICC is particularly happy to accredit VHS Hanau and hopes that EUROLTA will grow beyond its borders’.

EUROLTA Certification Courses in Greece

Two organisations from Greece are members of the ICC – the Panhellenic Federation of Language School Owners (PALSO), and the Hellenic Culture Centre (HCC), a language school and teacher training organisation, specialising in Greek as L2. The HCC offers different EUROLTA programmes.

EUROLTA Certificate in English (online course, coming soon). This new course will start January 2020 and will be offered online. Teachers and practitioners of English, French, Greek and other languages can be certified through this training course, which will provide teachers with a wide range of knowledge and skills to empower students’ language learning.

EUROLTA Certificate in Greek (face-to-face and online course). This programme is intended for teachers of any foreign language and of Greek as a foreign language, and is offered in Greek. It includes an extended 9-month Blended Learning programme offering 250 hours of total training, 6 face-to-face training days in 2 weekends (Fri-Sun), online training, 6 observation sessions, and 4 teaching sessions.

EUROLTA Diploma in Greek (face-to-face and online course). This programme is intended for teacher trainers, language school directors, and experienced teachers of any foreign language and of Greek as a foreign language, and is offered in Greek. It includes an extended 9-month Blended Learning programme offering 250 hours of total training, 6 face-to-face training days in 2 weekends (Fri-Sun), online training, 10 observation sessions, and 4 teaching sessions.

EUROLTA Certificate on How to Teach Languages Online. This course has been offered since 2014 in Greek and will be offered in English too in 2020.

For more information please contact Ifigenia Georgiadou at ifigenia@hcc.edu.gr. Tel: +306944105484. Details are also available online at hcc.edu.gr/en/are-you-a-professor-2/teacher-certification-euroлта.

Saarbrücken University Conference

Myriam Fischer Callus, the ICC EUROLTA trainer, will be attending the 5th Foreign Languages Conference in Saarbrücken, and will be hosting a

stand for EUROLTA teacher training. Details are also available online at 5saarbrueckerfremdsprachentagung.blogspot.com.

Quality Assurance

The ICC European Language Network has its own Certificate of Quality Assurance recognising excellence and best practice in materials, products and services related to language training. The Certificate of Quality Assurance aims to improve and publicise quality in language learning materials, products and services Europe-wide and between Europe and the rest of the world. The scheme is administered by the Quality Assurance Committee (CQA) in conjunction with the board and head office of the ICC International Language Network. You may read more at icc-languages.eu/accreditation/quality-assurance.

RUDN University News

by Elena Malyuga

Editor-in-Chief TLC

RUDN University is Awarded with the Jose Acevedo and Gómez Order of Civil Merit

This month, RUDN University was awarded with the Jose Acevedo and Gómez Order of Civil Merit. The highest award of the capital of Colombia was handed to university Rector Vladimir Filippov for the civil merits of the institution for the benefit of Bogotá.

'It is a great honour and a responsibility to receive this order. RUDN University has been training Colombian students from its very foundation. Since then, 663 Colombians have become university graduates. Today, 71 Colombian citizens are studying for undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate degrees at RUDN University. We are happy to maintain cooperation between our countries and train highly qualified specialists for the benefit of the future', said Vladimir Filippov.

The Jose Acevedo and Gómez Order of Civil Merit is awarded to people and organisations that have been actively collaborating with the District of Columbia for at least 25 years.

RUDN University to Host the International 'I Want to Work in Africa' Festival

The festival will include round-table discussions, master classes, business games and other exciting

events. The purpose of the festival is to support communication between potential employers and the target audience – students and graduates from African countries studying in Russia. The festival will welcome Russian companies developing business projects in Africa; African companies with interests in the Russian market; international holdings; business associations; public organisations; alumni associations; Russian and foreign universities.

The festival is organised by the International Club of Employers (ICE), an association created at the initiative of RUDN University to systematise the tripartite interaction between universities, graduates and employers. ICE is the first national project in Russia uniting the spheres of business and education, which is being formed through the existing and future potential of graduates of Russian universities. Details are available at work-in-africa.com.

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