A Reader in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching – Students' Theoretical Overview of Selected Aspects
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The book *A Reader in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching – Students’ Theoretical Overview of Selected Aspects* is a collection of articles written by students of English in B.A. and M.A. seminar courses conducted by Dr Marek Krawiec at the Philological School of Higher Education (WSF) in Wrocław, Poland.

The book provides an insight into selected aspects of foreign language education and discusses important concepts in this area from the perspective of future EFL teachers. The collection emphasizes the notions of learners’ motivation, autonomy and creativity as well as teaching materials such as textbooks and audio-visuals. It also highlights the role of music and songs in language lessons and articulates different views on cultural elements, Information and Communication Technology, Content and Language Integrated Learning and the Project Work Method in language teaching.

The first chapter of the collection (Krzysztof Siemasz, Artur Piżyński, Martyna Perużyńska) addresses the question of motivation in a foreign language classroom. The authors in this part emphasize the beneficial influence of motivation on students’ learning performance and provide readers with background knowledge on motivational theories presented in psychology and pedagogy. The chapter also explains the complex character of motivation and gives an overview of how motivation may differ between students, depending on their personality and situational context. Finally, the authors propose a set of practical solutions on how to develop and sustain students’ motivation.

The next chapter (Natalia Steinhäußer, Alicja Mokrzycka-Kubiacyk) concentrates on the aspect of learner autonomy. In this part, the authors explain that the development of students’ autonomous language
learning behaviour should be perceived as one of the ultimate goals of modern-day foreign language methodology. In this chapter, the readers are presented with definitions, types and levels of learner autonomy. Next, the notion of learner autonomy is presented in correlation with motivation and socio-cultural context, proving that students’ language learning behaviour is contingent upon various interrelated psychological mechanisms.

The third chapter (Weronika Fura, Ewelina Kusiak) highlights the notion of students’ and teachers’ creativity and its role in the development of linguistic skills. Initially, the readers are invited to familiarize themselves with the definitions of creativity and the characteristics of creative students and teachers. Subsequently, the authors enumerate activities and techniques which are conducive to the development of learners’ creativity and emphasize the beneficial role of creative thinking in a foreign language classroom, encouraging teachers to stimulate their own creativity as well as their students’.

Chapter number four (Magdalena Kudlak, Sławomir Malak) characterizes textbooks and other instructional materials which are at teachers’ disposal and which support teachers’ efforts in their classrooms. In this chapter, the authors present definitions of instructional materials as well as enumerate their different forms and functions in foreign language learning and teaching. They also provide information on how coursebooks are structured and how to best adjust and select the best coursebook materials from the abundance of available publications. Finally, the authors emphasize the importance of printed materials in foreign language education.

The fifth chapter (Martyna Perużyńska, Artur Piżyński) focuses on audio-visual materials in language teaching. In this chapter, the authors provide a general overview of audio-visual aids, including such aspects as definitions, typologies and functions. They also show how different audio-visual materials are best used by language teachers and propose how a class with the use of audio-visual materials should be organized and structured. The readers are also offered here a list of advantages and disadvantages of audio-visual aids.

The following chapter (Ewelina Sejnowska, Marlena Zamroziewicz) concentrates on the issue of music and songs in foreign language instruction. This chapter discusses benefits that come from the use of songs
in language lessons. The authors suggest here that music has a beneficial influence not only on students’ linguistic skills but also on their emotional and social development and language learning motivation. In the field of language education, they recommend the use of certain selection criteria which help to choose the most appropriate songs for teaching.

Chapter number seven (Natalia Steinhäußer, Barbara Droń) introduces the notions of culture and intercultural language teaching. In this chapter, the readers find definitions and models of cultures as well as a set of practical ideas on how to develop students’ intercultural awareness and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). The authors suggest here that language and culture are inseparably linked, and thus teachers should be aware of the importance of culture teaching and should introduce intercultural elements into their daily work with students.

Chapter number eight (Jeremy Carrette, Dorota Furs) deals with Information and Communication Technology and online learning in a foreign language classroom. Having explained the term ICT, the authors enumerate in their accounts certain functions, benefits and limitations of using ICT in language education. They maintain that the systematic use of ICT in foreign language instruction is, nowadays, strongly limited due to limited school resources and teachers’ lack of IT knowledge. Thus, they call for further research on the benefits of ICT and further development of the field.

The next chapter (Maria Lota-Malak, Aleksandra Pałys) provides readers with theoretical and practical knowledge on Content and Language Integrated Learning. The chapter portrays a general picture of the approach, offering an insight into the definitions and principles of CLIL and holistic education. It also draws one’s attention to the advantages and disadvantages of integrated learning and presents examples on how history can be taught through the medium of a foreign language.

The last chapter (Martyna Zwolińska, Danuta Tomczyńska, Maria Lota-Malak) reviews the most important aspects related to the use of the project method in a foreign language classroom. In this chapter, the readers can find information on the historical background of ‘project work’, can compare definitions of this term and can identify features of a good project. Furthermore, they can learn about teachers’ and students’ roles in project-based learning and they can become aware of the set of steps that teachers take when they organise project work for their
students. Last but not least, the chapter describes how project work is conducted in a number of Polish schools.

This collection of articles, in fact, combines theoretical knowledge with practical guidelines on foreign language learning and teaching. Therefore, it can serve as a source of inspiration for philology students who have just begun their adventure with teaching, experienced teachers and researchers as well as everybody else who is interested in foreign language education and wants to gain a better understanding of the processes which stand behind students’ behaviour in foreign language learning. Furthermore, what should be accentuated is the editors’ wish to see this book as a source of reflection and a stimulus to further research.

Editors
CHAPTER 1:
MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING
AND TEACHING
Introduction

Motivation is one of the most important factors which determine human activity. It also applies to foreign language learning. Due to its presence in many spheres of human life, it seems necessary to describe what it means that someone is motivated and how this phenomenon affects people’s behaviour. As Jerzy Zybert (2006: 194) states, “… motivation is probably the most important variable that decides about the efficiency of human activity”. There are many approaches describing motivation, which differ widely. Three approaches are presented in this paper. These are the conditioning theory related to behaviourist psychology, the self-actualising tendency, called also the constructivist theory, and finally the cognitive approach which stresses a significant role of mental processes involved in motivation.

There are also different types of motivation. They differ in terms of the source of reward which is attained by the learner. One person is motivated to learn because of inner motives (intrinsic motivation), another one wants to learn in order to get a reward from external stimuli (extrinsic motivation). The second perspective which is featured by Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert (1997, in Dörnyei 2008: 16) recognizes the importance of the purpose of foreign language learning. Students who learn for social purposes possess integrative motivation. Those who learn to achieve some instrumental objectives have an instrumental type of motivation. This paper also deals with motivation in a language class as well as the ways of eliciting and sustaining students’ motivation.

1. Motivation in general

In the beginning, it is worth emphasizing that motivation has an enormous impact on the teaching process and on students’ achievements. Motivation is a kind of internal aspiration which moves people to do
things so as to achieve something, as indicated by Jeremy Harmer (2001: 51). Most researchers agree that it is related to the basic aspects of the human mind and plays a crucial role in determining the success or failure in one’s particular activity. According to Yoshiyuki Nakata (2006: 23–24), the nature of motivation is complex, and thus it is very difficult both to define and to describe it. Nevertheless, the researchers try to explore it as much as possible. Nakata (2006: 24), for example, points out that the term motivation comes from the Latin verb move, which means to move. Therefore, motivation is considered as something that keeps people moving and helps to accomplish their aims. According to H. Douglas Brown (1994a: 152), it is an inner force, emotion, desire that pushes one to an action. Another explanation presented by Brown (1994b: 34) suggests that “motivation is the extent to which you make choices about (a) goals to pursue and (b) the effort you will devote to that pursuit”.

Of particular interest for the matter under discussion are considerations of Zoltán Dörnyei (2008: 6–7), who depicts motivation as a way of referring to the antecedents of activity as, for instance, causes and origins. In his estimation, antecedents come to be perceived as key factors that help to explain what motivation actually is. The crucial ones are the choice of an action, the effort devoted to it and persistence with the activity. Consequently, different theories about motivation try to explain why people act, how hard they keep the action and how long they are able to proceed with their effort. In other words, it seems to be easier to describe motivation in terms of its effects rather than to define it, states Martin Covington (in Dörnyei 2008: 7).

Although numerous motivation theories have already been forwarded, new ones continuously appear. Still, the physical needs of humans change as well as one’s beliefs and higher-level values. As a result, people behave in many different ways because they are under the influence of various factors. Their motivation alters too. In the same way, motivational theories evolve. Scholars try to establish a comprehensive theory explaining the influence of diverse motives on human motivation (Dörnyei 2008: 7). There have been many explanations of human behaviour over the course of decades of research. However, three main approaches have emerged (Brown 2000: 160–161).
Firstly, in the middle of the 20th century, *conditioning theories* were dominant. They were strictly connected with behaviourist psychology (Dörnyei 2008: 7–8). From this perspective, motivation is viewed as action driven by the anticipation of rewards. These are a kind of engine which motivates people to do tasks, jobs and to solve problems. Behaviourists like Burrhus Frederic Skinner or John B. Watson (in Brown 1994b: 35) define motivation as the expectation of reinforcement. Whatever a person does, he or she believes that there must be a reward at the end of the acting process. In fact, it is a very crucial concept also for the teaching process. Learners pursue the aims so as to receive some kind of reward. These can be grades, sweets, diplomas, scholarships, certificates or, in the broadest sense, financial independence and prestigious job (Brown 1994b: 35). An essential point to be made here is that in the above-mentioned theories human acting is determined mainly by external forces (Brown 2000: 160).

An important change in the description of motivation was observed in the 1960s. Humanistic psychologists such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow (in Dörnyei 2008: 8) claimed that the force of primary importance to people is the *self-actualising tendency*. This approach is also called a *constructivist view of motivation*. With regard to this notion, Brown (2000: 161) indicates that “each person is motivated differently, and will, therefore, act on his or her environment in ways that are unique. But these unique acts are always carried out within a culture and social milieu and cannot be completely separated from that context”. Maslow suggested that one can achieve his or her goals according to the hierarchy of needs. Three major needs are physical necessities (food, air, community and security), identity, and finally self-esteem. A strong drive to fulfill these needs makes people act while motivating them at the same time (Brown 2000: 161).

Recently, another theory has come into existence among scholars. Namely, the *cognitive approach*, which stresses the significant role of mental processes involved in motivation. It needs to be noted, however, that these processes are affected by personal and environmental factors (Nakata 2006: 25). As Dörnyei (2008: 8) emphasizes, motivation depends on how human thoughts, conscious attitudes and beliefs affect one’s behaviour. In his line of reasoning, an individual appears as an actor who first considers a range of personal desires and aims in the light of their
own competences and environmental factors. Next, he or she evaluates whether these goals are worth the action necessary to achieve them and whether the external support he or she is likely to get is adequate. Summarizing, the researcher acknowledges that such conduct is very rational.

The discussion must be supplemented here by the presentation of one more approach which is strictly connected with English Language Teaching (ELT), or more generally Foreign Language Teaching (FLT). According to Dörnyei (2008: 12), although all the theories mentioned above are reasonable, they ignore one another to a considerable extent. Dörnyei emphasizes that every particular motivation theory is built around a few selected factors and it describes how people behave and how strongly they are motivated when they are under the influence of these factors. Classroom environment represents, however, an intricate field of human activity. Numerous elements interpenetrate here and significantly affect learners' behaviour and their motivation. Therefore, there is a need to construct a more complex framework in order to analyse the notion of motivation in FLT and to “close the gap between motivational theories in educational psychology and in the L2 field” (Dörnyei 2008: 17).

In Dörnyei’s (2008: 14) estimation, Robert Gardner comes to be seen as the most influential language motivation researcher. Gardner and Lambert (in Dörnyei 2008: 14) carried out the best-known research on motivation in language learning in 1972. Over a period of twelve years, they analysed how attitude and motivation influenced language learning success among learners in Canada. As a result of the research, the Canadian social psychological approach emerged. In summary of the research, Gardner and Lambert suggested that motivation for learning the language of another society is a crucial force in developing integration and communication between various communities. The core of Gardner’s theory is the integrative aspect or, to be more precise, the integrative motive (Dörnyei 2008: 16). Brown (1994a: 154) explains that such a motive is employed in the case when people want to integrate into the foreign culture and finally want to be a part of the particular society.

To sum up, there are many theories describing motivation. They differ and change continuously. That is because motivation is perceived as a crucial feature of man, which has a significant influence on the success or failure of any activity and as an essential force that is also dependent on the surrounding milieu.
2. Types of motivation

This part endeavors to describe types of motivation. According to the first division, two types of motivation can be distinguished, namely: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is aimed at obtaining an inner reward, for instance, feeling of competence, whereas extrinsic motivation means that a reward from outside stimuli is expected, for example, grades or sweets (Brown 1994a: 156). The second division was established by Gardner and Lambert. On the basis of a twelve-year-long research effort, they distinguished integrative and instrumental types of motivation. The former type refers to people who want to integrate with another culture and identify with the native language society. On the contrary, instrumental motivation is defined as tending to learn the second language in order to achieve other benefits, for instance, to become a translator.

The division into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is perceived as one of the most powerful divisions of the motivation construct. Edward L. Deci (1975, in Brown 1994a: 155) defines intrinsic motivation as follows:

Intrinsically motivated activities are ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward… Intrinsically motivated behaviours are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of competence and self-determination.

Accordingly, intrinsic motivation concerns the motivation that comes from inside rather than outside. An intrinsically motivated learner takes pleasure from completing or working on a task. On the contrary, extrinsic motivation signifies activities completed “in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self”, states Brown (1994a: 155). Common extrinsic rewards may be grades, sweets, prizes or some specific types of positive feedback. The avoidance of punishment is also a kind of motivation described (Brown 1994a: 153).

Scholars suggest that intrinsic motivation is more beneficial than extrinsic one, especially in accomplishing long-term goals. Intrinsic motivation is also more significant for Abraham Maslow (in Brown 1994a: 156), who claims that people are motivated to accomplish ‘self-actualization’ when their basic physical, safety and community needs are
satisfied. Even if there is no extrinsic reinforcement, people still try to attain fulfillment and self-esteem. Jerome Bruner (in Brown 1994a: 157) notes that the elementary weakness of the behaviour driven by extrinsic motives is that they are addictive by nature. People become dependent on extrinsic rewards they are provided with. If there is no reward, they may have no interest in the challenge, dislike it or even refrain from striving to attain it. The concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is observable in foreign language classrooms all over the world. Teachers identify intrinsic and extrinsic factors to stimulate the process of learning. They are more universal than integrative and instrumental factors of motivation that rely solely on a social-psychological approach.

Gardner and Lambert (in Brown 1994a: 153) carried out a famous and crucial research concerning motivation and its influence on the process of L2 learning. The study lasted twelve years and the participants were learners from different parts of Canada, the Philippines and the United States. The aim of the study was to identify the impact of motivation on language learning success. Scholars divide motivation into two basic types: integrative and instrumental. The first one applies to the learners who want to identify and integrate with the foreign society’s culture, which is greatly affected by language skills (Brown 1994a: 154). On the other hand, instrumental motivation is defined as a motivation to learn a language in order to attain other instrumental objectives, for example, a professional career, translation skills, or the ability to cope with technical texts. Researchers such as Lambert and Spolsky (in Brown 1994a: 154) established that students who possess the integrative type of motivation achieve higher scores in foreign language proficiency tests. Consequently, they stated that employing integrative motivation may be viewed as a significant element of successful foreign language learning.

A contradictory point of view was given by Yasmeen Lukmani (in Brown 1994a: 154). She indicated that Marathi-speaking learners of English in India with stronger instrumental motivation scored higher in language proficiency tests. With regard to this notion, William T. Littlewood (1998: 57) explained the differences obtained in Lambert’s and Lukmani’s research. The point here is that Lambert studied English-speaking learners of French in Canada, where there is a community of French native speakers close at hand (in Montreal). As it would be expected these students with integrative motivation would wish for more
social contact and be happier in adopting new speech patterns from
the other group. Lukmani obtained different results because she studied
learners of English in India. In light of the previous discussion, it does
not seem to be surprising that learners with *instrumental* motivation
achieved higher scores in tests. Such results occurred due to the fact that
there is no significant community of English native speakers in India.
Learners’ instrumental reasons for wanting to learn the language are
more powerful in this case.

Such disparate results of research reveal that there is no single way to
learn a foreign language. Depending on the context, both *integrative*
and *instrumental* types of motivation may accompany success in learning
a language. The research proves that foreign language learning often en-
tails a mixture of both kinds of motivation. Brown (1994a: 154) depicts
an example of Chinese students learning English for academic purposes
in the United States. Their *integrative* and *instrumental* motivation at-
titudes were balanced since they wanted to be integrated into American
society. As a result, they scored high on academic tests. On the basis of
what has been discussed so far, one may state that *integrative* motivation
is not more powerful than *instrumental* motivation.

### 3. Motivation in a language class

At this point, it is necessary to discuss the most important components
of the language class environment which are essential in creating basic
motivational conditions. Motivation is a very crucial factor which de-
termines whether individual’s goals are achieved or not. It seems to be
a complex issue to motivate people properly because their behaviours,
needs and attitudes are different. Motivation in a language class may
be evoked by a group of basic conditions, i.e. *appropriate behaviour by
the teacher, a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom* and
*a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms.*

The notion of motivational components in the teaching practice was
thoroughly analysed by Harmer (2001) and Dörnyei (2008). The former
scholar notes that a teacher can do a lot about the class environment
in terms of both its physical appearance and emotional atmosphere dur-
ing lessons (Harmer 2001: 53). According to the latter researcher, it is
precisely the teacher’s responsibility to motivate students using adequate
strategies and techniques. First of all, the teacher should create basic motivational conditions in a language class (Dörnyei 2008: 29). The conditions are the ones mentioned above.

The first condition, *appropriate teacher behaviour* is, as the survey conducted by Dörnyei and Kata Csizer in 1998 (Dörnyei 2008: 31) showed, the most important factor which increases pupils’ positive attitude towards language learning. In other words, everything the teacher does during a lesson influences students’ motivation. Thus, the teacher should show and project his or her enthusiasm towards the subjects he/she discusses with students during a lesson. Of particular interest for the matter under discussion are considerations of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (in Dörnyei 2008: 33) who points out that:

> young people are more intelligent than adults generally give them credit for. They can usually discern, for instance, whether an adult they know likes or dislikes what he or she is doing. If a teacher does not believe in his job, does not enjoy the learning he is trying to transmit, the student will sense this and derive the entirely rational conclusion that the particular subject matter is not worth mastering for its own sake.

The educator should also show commitment towards pupils’ learning and their achievements. It is important for students to know that the teacher wants to work as hard as learners in order to make progress. The teacher’s responsibility is to offer tangible assistance while performing a task. It is very helpful for pupils if the educator responds immediately when an individual asks for help. When possible, the teacher can send copies of materials to learners. A committed educator meets students individually to explain certain issues. Another aspect mentioned by Dörnyei (2008: 36) applies to the teacher’s good relationships with learners. The mutual trust and respect for students give them an inspiration for classroom activities. However, the process of developing personal relationships proceeds gradually and the ability to listen and pay attention to learners may significantly expedite it. It seems to be a vital merit, especially from students’ point of view, but it is often underestimated. This feature is inseparably connected, for instance, with remembering students’ names, smiling at them, noticing some interesting details of their appearance, showing interest in their hobbies, accentuating their birthdays or sending notes to absent learners. It is worth highlighting here that
appropriate teacher behaviour discussed above also applies to his or her good relationships with parents.

According to Dörnyei (2008: 40), the second motivational condition in a language class is a pleasant and supportive atmosphere. Dörnyei states that this factor is the second most important in terms of its impact on students' motivation. It is so because of language anxiety which occurs as a typical phenomenon within FLT. In a lesson, students tend to make mistakes or errors which hinder the language learning process and can also damage students' self-esteem. Therefore, it seems to be crucial to create a supportive atmosphere in class in order to enhance both pupils' positive attitudes and their motivation. In Dörnyei's (2008: 41) estimation, a pleasant and supportive atmosphere involves psychological and physical aspects. The key psychological component is referred to as the norm of tolerance. Students should learn that making mistakes is a common phenomenon and a natural part of learning. The norm of tolerance means that they do not feel embarrassed by their mistakes. It is the teacher's role to protect learners' self-confidence and keep them eager and motivated throughout the lesson.

Another tool mentioned by Dörnyei is the use of humour. The point is not to abuse jokes during classes, but to use them when necessary in order to make students feel relaxed. The positive classroom atmosphere also concerns some physical elements such as posters, flowers, board displays and funny objects. All of them can help the teacher to involve pupils in class and to make them feel like the owners of the classroom (Dörnyei 2008: 42). The discussion needs to be supplemented here by the presentation of the ideal classroom atmosphere given by David Scheidecker and William Freeman (in Dörnyei 2008: 41):

> It is easy to tell when the 'pleasant-and-supportive-classroom-atmosphere' is there – you can sense it after only a few minutes' stay in the particular class. There is no tension in the air; students are in ease; there are no sharp – let alone hostile – comments made to ridicule each other. There are no put-downs or sarcasm. Instead, there is mutual trust and respect. No need for anyone to feel anxious or insecure.

The third condition in a language class which constitutes Dörnyei's model is a cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms. It is commonly known that the group as a whole exerts a strong influence on the individuals within the respective group (Dörnyei 2008: 42). If
the group is not cohesive, it means that some pupils’ influence is damaging to the rest of the class. In this case, eagerness for learning and students’ motivation can collapse. On the other hand, in the cohesive group, learners’ motivation tends to increase. Members of such a group feel responsible for achieving the class goals. They provide mutual support and make each other feel welcome in the group. With regard to this notion, Dörnyei suggests teachers supply some activities in order to unite the group. Students, for instance, should be familiar with the others’ names. They should be allowed to share some personal information. The educator may ask learners for cooperation to achieve common goals. He or she may also promote the so-called group legends (Dörnyei 2008: 44) as, for instance, the name of the group, preparation of symbolic objects like flags, logos and the establishment of class rituals. Appropriate group norms are an important component of the model of motivational conditions. The point here is that such “norms are most efficient if they are explicitly discussed and willingly adopted by members” (Dörnyei 2008: 46). One more factor which is worth noting here is that the teacher must pay enough attention to the enforcement of these rules.

To sum up, the creation of the basic motivational conditions in a language class is the first step the teacher should take in order to build a proper atmosphere and positive students’ attitudes during a lesson. These conditions constitute the first element of the strategy which stimulates students’ motivation in ELT. Having recognized the basic conditions, it is necessary now to describe the ways of eliciting and sustaining motivation of young people.

4. Ways of eliciting and sustaining students’ motivation

Hanna Komorowska (2007: 12–13) states that motivation is a key factor in promoting language learning in Europe. The European educational policy asserts that two foreign languages should be learnt from the early education period, and then such a form of education ought to be promoted. The general aim is to develop international communication as well as cooperation which can guarantee economic growth.

As regards educators, they should be aware that there is a need to elicit positive learners’ attitudes towards language learning because a student, especially a young one, is frequently not motivated intrinsically. Annamaria Pinter (in Komorowska 2007: 12–13) notes:
In the education of young learners intrinsic motives are the only ones at play as learners of this age group are not yet aware of all the benefits of language learning. Young learners – unlike learners of other age groups – can get motivated by the person of the teacher and the pleasure of learning such as friendly atmosphere, attractiveness of classroom activities and learning materials.

It needs to be taken into consideration that the classroom reality is rather unpleasant for adolescents. Students are obliged to spend a good deal of time in a small space, constituting a classroom. Moreover, they are continuously monitored and evaluated. That is why, as Dörnyei (2008: 51–52) suggests, their natural curiosity about things and the desire to learn need to be stimulated and sustained.

According to Dörnyei (2008: 53), in order to elicit and sustain motivation among young people, the educator needs to do some enjoyable tasks and connect them with a variety of activities that language learning involves. A way to activate students’ curiosity about language learning is showing them some instrumental values of the foreign language. They are, for instance, getting a promotion, improving one’s social position, pursuing hobbies and leisure activities which require the language. Learners should also be encouraged to apply their foreign language skills in real-life situations. Researchers agree that a very strong motivational factor is the expectancy of success. It increases students’ motivation significantly. The teacher’s role here is to give the students appropriate tasks and to organize proper conditions. They include the teacher’s assistance if necessary. Additionally, during performing the task, pupils should be allowed to help each other.

Dörnyei (2008: 63–65) maintains that one of the most demotivating factors is when students have to learn something they are not interested in or when they lack knowledge of the topic. Unfortunately, a majority of learning activities are in accordance with the needs of a general public rather than of students. The solution for educators seems to be the idea of incorporating into their curriculum as many youths matters as possible. If the topic discussed and elaborated on in a lesson is fascinating for the learner, he or she is eager to listen, speak and write about it. To investigate what issues students are curious about, the educator may use some research techniques, for example, an interview, one-to-one chat, group discussion, brainstorming and questionnaires with open-ended questions.
With regard to this matter, Gary Chambers (in Dörnyei 2008: 63) puts forward the opinion that “[if: KS] the teacher is to motivate pupils to learn, then relevance has to be the red thread permeating activities. If pupils fail to see the relationship between the activity and the world in which they live, then the point of the activity is likely to be lost on them”.

Unless motivation is sustained and protected during the class activities, learners tend to lose their interest in performing tasks and achieving their goals. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to point to some strategies which help teachers to sustain pupils’ motivation.

According to Dörnyei (2008: 72), the first way is to make learning stimulating and enjoyable. The scholar suggests educators should break the monotony of the lesson. For instance, writing tasks can be followed by speaking activities. They can also shift from the whole-class organization format of the activity to group activity or pair work. Furthermore, if a particular material is presented through the auditory channel, the next task can be presented differently. Also, visual aids appear to be helpful here. Other aspects of breaking the monotony concern the style of presentation, which needs to be varied, and learning materials which the educator uses during the lesson. It is more interesting for learners if, apart from focusing on the coursebook content, they are allowed to work with magazines, pictures, films, maps, ICT tools, real objects, etc. Moreover, changing the classroom’s spatial organization should be taken into consideration. Another aspect mentioned by Dörnyei (2008: 75) applies to all sorts of crosswords, puzzles and computer games which are always welcome in a class. They naturally increase pupils’ involvement in the lesson. A powerful way to raise students’ curiosity is to link the topic of the lesson with objects or people children are interested in. Learning about daily routines becomes more attractive if a very famous singer’s or sportsman’s daily routine is discussed in a lesson.

Another important way of sustaining students’ motivation is setting specific learner goals. This aspect, as Dörnyei (2008: 82) states, “dramatically increases productivity”. The issue was studied by many researchers and psychologists. One of the most influential was carried out by Albert Bandura and Dale Schunk (1981, in Dörnyei 2008: 83). Three groups of students were given by them a series of tasks in Math. Each group received a different goal, either a vague and general or specific one. After
performing the tasks, the results showed that the group which was given
the most specific, short-term goal obtained the highest score. Dörnyei
(2008: 83) maintains that setting a goal is nothing else than planning
a process. The teacher should first show how to divide the given task into
smaller pieces. Next, the time for fulfilling every single piece needs to
be determined. Finally, students ought to be able to monitor their own
progress.

In this context, emphasis should be placed on the steps which both
the educator and learners need to take in order to prepare the course
goals appropriately. A straightforward template is given by Barbara L.
McCombs and James E. Pope (in Dörnyei 2008: 83). Its most important
constituents are as follows:

- clear specification of the goal;
- a list of steps to be taken to reach this goal;
- awareness of problems that may occur;
- consideration of possible solutions;
- specification of a deadline for achieving the goal;
- evaluation of progress.

According to Dörnyei (2008), the third way of sustaining students’
motivation is enhancing learners’ self-esteem and self-confidence. Dörnyei
(2008: 86–87) clearly states that:

… in order for students to be able to focus on learning with vigour
and determination, they need to have a healthy self-respect and need
to believe in themselves as learners. Self-esteem and self-confidence are
like the foundations of a building: if they are not secure enough, even
the best technology will be insufficient to built solid walls over them. You
can employ your most creative motivational ideas, but if students have
basic doubts about themselves, they will be unable to ‘bloom’ as learners.

As it is natural for learners to gradually lose interest in learning,
the teacher’s task is to find ways that will help to sustain their motivation.
Some of the ways have been presented in this paper, which in the final
part should provide conclusions and implications regarding the main
subject matter.
Concluding remarks

In the common opinion of scholars, motivation is a kind of engine which pushes people to perform tasks and to solve different problems. It, in fact, governs one’s success or failure in many areas of life. Irrespective of the type of motivation an individual possesses (intrinsic or extrinsic, integrative or instrumental), it is perceived as a crucial human feature which has a serious influence on achieving particular goals. The comments and observations of scholars presented here point to the importance of motivation also in the educational context. According to Dörnyei (2008: 12), the classroom environment is a very complex field of human (learner) activity. Numerous factors affect students’ motivation, among which one can emphasize such conditions as the physical appearance of a classroom and emotional atmosphere during lessons. Nevertheless, a crucial role in language classes is played by the teacher whose task is both to create basic motivational conditions and to use various strategies, methods and forms which can help to sustain motivation in the group of learners.

References

Artur Piżyński

Introduction

The paper presented here focuses on the term ‘motivation’ and relates to adult foreign language students. As motivation, in general, is a very complex and hard to define concept, the issue becomes even more complicated when it pertains to language learning. Nevertheless, the paper depicts selected definitions of motivation which seem to best embrace the nature of motivation in the field of foreign language learning and teaching. It briefly portrays fundamental motivational orientations which find application in foreign language education. The account here also describes the nature of motivation and presents useful methods of motivating EFL learners. The effort is put to comprehend why motivation is considered one of the major components of the learning process. Scholars (e.g. Dörnyei 1998: 117) point to motivation as the factor that allows an individual to commence and sustain an objective-directed action. Such an attitude may result in a successful life of a person. Perhaps because of the above, many researchers (e.g. Sogunro 2015: 22–23; Anjomsheoa & Sadighi 2015: 130) maintain that without a proper amount of motivation, effective learning cannot appear. Generally, the material here emphasizes the great importance and unquestionable role of motivation in FL learning and suggests that motivation may positively affect one’s attitude towards language learning.

1. Selected definitions of motivation

As Susana Fernández-Orío (2013: 11) points out, motivation is a very broad term which cannot be easily defined. She cites Robert C. Gardner (2010), who states that a straight definition of the concept cannot be provided. Zoltán Dörnyei (1998: 117) seems to agree with Gardner’s opinion. He notes that researchers provide various explanations of the process of becoming motivated. Nevertheless, they “seem to agree
that motivation is responsible for determining human behaviour by energising it and giving it direction” (Dörnyei 1998: 117). It means that although it is relatively clear how motivation works, it is not clear how and why it occurs.

Despite the lack of one ultimate definition of motivation, it is possible to gather a couple of presumably accurate views, which together may try to produce a comparatively insightful image of the concept of motivation. It is important to emphasize that the definitions presented below are selected only for the purposes (covering EFL learning characteristics) of this paper; otherwise, an attempt to explain motivation would demand more elaborate research.

The first group of definitions indicates that motivation is an abstract and highly complex term: “[m]otivation is complex” (Hardré 2003: 62), “[m]otivation is a multi-dimensional concept” (Moynihan & Pandey 2007: 2), “[m]otivation is at once simple and intensely complicated” (Winne & Hadwin 2008: 297), “[m]otivation is an abstract concept” (Sass 1989: 87), “[m]otivation can be defined as everything that drives and sustains human behaviour” (Gard 2001: 85).

The next definition denotes that motivation may commence as an internal or external urge of a person: “Motivation is generally more internally or more extrinsically oriented” (Mata et al. 2009: 709).

It is also possible to distinguish the definitions that highlight the notion of goals such as: “[m]otivation is generally understood to denote the strength of a person’s desire to attain a goal” (Schmidt et al. 2010: 977). Schunk, Pintrich and Meece (2008: 4) maintain that motivation is “… the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained”.

Some definitions suggest that motivation is a kind of motor force which helps a student to start a learning process: “[m]otivation is what causes behavior” (Ahl 2008: 152), “[m]otivation is what moves us to act” (McDonough 2007: 369).

Following scholars’ emphasis that motivation allows for preserving consistency, “[m]otivation may be defined as the degree to which individuals commit effort to achieve goals that they perceive as being meaningful and worthwhile” (Johnson & Johnson 2003: 137). Some researchers also point to the continuous nature of motivation by suggesting that “[m]otivation is an ongoing process” (Goudas, Biddle & Fox 1994: 462).
Certain researchers refer specifically to the importance of motivation in the learning process. They hold that “[m]otivation is a necessary ingredient for learning” (Biehler & Snowman 1986, in Tella 2007: 150) and that “[s]tudent motivation is an essential element that is necessary for quality education” (Williams & Williams 2011: 2).

The definitions introduced here vary, which proves that motivation is not easy to describe because of its great complexity. However, Mayer’s attempt seems to get close to what could be considered as a good insertion of the term motivation in language learning: “Motivation is an internal state that initiates and maintains goal-directed behavior” (Mayer 2008, 2011, in Mayer 2014: 69).

Summing up, motivation is interpreted in many ways by researchers. As Dörnyei (1998: 117–118) remarks, it should not surprise anyone because motivation is connected to human behavior and this factor makes space for so many interpretations of the term: “every different psychological perspective on human behaviour is associated with a different theory of motivation and, thus, in general psychology it is not the lack but rather the abundance of motivation theories which confuses the scene”. Despite many definitions, it is possible to conclude that motivation can be driven by intrinsic or extrinsic factors, that it is powered by unsatisfied objectives and needs, and that it enables an action to commence and to help to maintain consistency of a learning process.

2. Fundamental motivational orientations

To better understand the nature of motivation, it is necessary to depict basic orientations of motivation. Scholars provide numerous explanations on how and why motivation inspires someone to act. Still, it is possible to point to the concepts which seem to be fundamental in the field of foreign language learning.

2.1. Instrumental and integrative orientations

As Simon James Nicholson (2013: 277) points out, integrative and instrumental orientations of motivation are the earliest ones. They were proposed by Gardner and Lambert in 1959 and they became an essential component of current SLA. Tim Knight (1998: 56) briefly elucidates how integrative and instrumental motives supposedly work. He notes
that an integrative factor is based on a wish to integrate with the target language society, and it is possibly stimulated by interest in the culture and people of the target language community, whereas an instrumentally motivated person finds the target language advantageous, perhaps for career purposes. To better explain the nature of both types of motivation, it is worth quoting Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015: 127):

… instrumental motivation refers to the motivation to acquire a language as means of achieving goals such as promoting a career or job or reading technical texts while integrative motivation has to do with wanting to be accepted by another community. Integrative motivation means integrating oneself within a culture to become a part of that society.

Gardner and Lambert published research in 1972 which states that success of a learner is mostly depended upon his or her attitude towards the target language, which makes an integrative factor superior to instrumental motives (Kahng 1991: 161). However, such an opinion was met with some criticism: “Gardner and his group were criticized for ‘creating a false split’ between integrative and instrumental motivation …, as well as for emphasis on integrative motivation as the most important primary type of motivation in the second language learning” (Yashima 2000: 121).

Dörneyi, Clemént and Noels (1994: 420), for example, note that both orientations (integrative and instrumental) may exist together and dually cause goal-directed demeanor. Brown (2000) also maintains that both types of motivation do not have to always occur separately:

[l]earners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country. (Ahmadi 2011: 9)

Even though the circumstances presented by Gardner and Lambert (1972) do not apply to monolingual countries, there might be a way to attach their viewpoint to lands where natives learn a foreign language. According to some scholars, it is possible to distinguish specific, similar to integrative, reasons to get familiar with or even master a foreign language in nations with only one official language. As Leila Anjomshoa and Firooz Sadighi (2015: 127–128) indicate, echoing Chalak and Kassain’s (2010) work, in Iran, where English is commonly taught as a foreign language, people are encouraged to study it:
... due to economic, educational or political reasons, people – in their search for better work and better educational opportunities – have become increasingly mobile and have started to migrate to different English speaking countries. These reasons alongside with the other reasons such as ever-growing interest in learning English as a prestigious language encourage the people to learn it. It means that people and particularly young generations usually have some kind of positive feelings towards English.

Also Littlewood (1984) observes that in the case of international languages (like English), the purpose of getting familiar with them is not always only connected with integrating with native speakers. Sometimes a learner wants to communicate with other people who know English as a foreign language; e.g with people at the academic level or simply to communicate with international tourists (Kahng 1991: 166).

Dörnyei (1990: 45) conducted a research study among Hungarian English students (FLL environment) who learn the language in institutional/academic settings. The aim of the survey was to test how instrumental and integrative motivational systems apply to the FLL context. Results of his study prove that instrumental factors notably trigger motivation in the FLL setting. Speaking of integrative factors, Dörnyei (1990: 68–69) lists some: the desire to integrate into a new community, the interest in foreign languages, cultures and people, and the desire to broaden one’s views. Dörnyei’s research shows that it is possible to distinguish integrative-alike motives to study English as a foreign language. It indicates that Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) concepts of instrumental and integrative motivations may be applicable in environments where English is taught without direct contact with English native speakers and outside the native soils.

Summarizing, the instrumental orientation of motivation occurs when the process of learning a language is driven by the desire to be more competent, perhaps for occupation or academic purposes, whereas the integrative orientation refers to the desire to become a part of a target language society. In the case of foreign language learning, one may also be motivated by a willingness to get familiar with a target language culture or its people and not necessarily by a wish to become indistinguishable from them. It is important to emphasize that both orientations may overlap as one person does not have to be limited to one orientation.
2.2. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

These two types of motivation determine whether a person finds motivation to a greater extent inside or outside oneself. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015: 126) note that extrinsic motivation comes from outside and is based on a reward, which supposedly is provided to a person for fulfilling an activity. When it comes to intrinsic factors, motivation begins within a person and an activity itself becomes a reward; which means that no external factors affect motivation.

As Nicholson (2013: 278) points out, intrinsic motivation has its roots in the hypothesis that people are active because they endeavour autonomy and possess inborn curiosity. Jaclyn Bernard (2010: 5) seems to agree with Nicholson's point of view. She describes someone who is internally motivated as “a person who enjoys learning a language because of the satisfaction felt when new concepts are mastered (competence) or because of the inherent interest and joy associated with learning the language” (Bernard 2010: 5).

Dörnyei (1994: 275) notes that an extrinsically motivated person simply looks forward to a reward, for example, good grades, but it is not necessarily the only motor; extrinsic motivation may also grow from the fear of punishment. Bernard (2010: 5) adds that an individual may trigger extrinsic motivation for more ambitious reasons, for instance, by believing that bilingualism will be helpful in the job market or by a desire to make traveling more convenient and pleasing. She explains that such reasons are considered as external factors because they are separated from the activity of learning a foreign language itself (Bernard 2010: 5).

Clearly, both types of motivation differ as one is set inside a person and the other is established from the outside of a person and the activity itself. But which kind of motivation is considered to be a superior one? Scholars attempted to answer this question. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015: 126–127) imply that intrinsic motivation is the one which gives a learner better results. Deci and Ryan (1985: 245) affirm that intrinsic motivation, under proper circumstances, may be a great educational tool. They note that

[i]ntrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever students’ natural curiosity and interest energize their learning. When the educational environment provides optimal challenges, rich sources of stimulation, and a context of autonomy, this motivational wellspring of learning is likely to flourish. (Deci & Ryan 1985: 245)
Nicholson (2013: 278) points to characteristics of an intrinsically motivated student. He maintains that a student motivated in this way stores knowledge longer and does not need additional revision. Such a student also has higher chances of becoming a constant (lifelong) learner who seeks for education outside a school environment. Finally, an intrinsically motivated student makes an effort to fulfill a task even when a reward is not a part of it.

When discussing extrinsic motivation, Dörnyei (1994: 276) notes that extrinsic motives can weaken internal interest in learning. He states that “several studies have confirmed that students will lose their natural intrinsic interest in an activity if they have to do it to meet some extrinsic requirement (as is often the case with compulsory readings at school)” (Dörnyei 1994: 276).

Whether both motivations blend and overlap with each other is another issue raised by scholars. Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015: 127) point out that it is possible to be concurrently motivated internally and externally: “[i]n some cases, the two kinds of motivation may overlap to some degree because one may be motivated from both an inside source and an outside one at the same time”. Bernard (2010: 5) puts this thought further and maintains that one extrinsically motivated may become motivated intrinsically and vice versa: “[a]ctivities can be initiated extrinsically and later be internalized to become intrinsically motivated, or they can begin out of intrinsic interest and be perpetuated in order to obtain other (extrinsic) outcomes”.

To conclude, both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations have an impact on the process of successful learning (Anjomshoa & Sadighi 2015: 127). Nevertheless, scholars point to the intrinsic motivation as the more desirable one when it comes to the learning process; this type of motivation seems to make a learner truly interested in the action for an extended (presumably lifetime) time. However, both kinds of motivation may help a person to achieve goals at the same time. It means a person does not have to extract motivation from only one source. Moreover, one kind of motivation may entail another to appear. Thus, someone who started learning to get a better job (extrinsic purposes), may find learning so absorbing and enjoyable that his or her initial motives transform into intrinsic ones.
3. **Motivation of adult learners and its importance in FL learning**

To embrace motivation of an adult learner, it is advisable to collate not only motivational aspects but also essential features of adult learners. Only such an approach (insight into motivation and nature of adult learners) ensures a relatively comprehensive understanding of the roots of motivation among mature learners.

Scholars, when defining adult students’ motivation, focus on different aspects. Mancuso (2001, in Green & Kelso 2006: 65) indicates that an adult learner is the one who lives an independent life, faces life responsibilities (like work and family) and functions in society as an independent figure. Dorothy MacKeracher (2004: 32) claims that individuals can be considered adult learners when they are “multitasking their way through life”. According to Green and Kelso (2006: 65), an adult learner, when compared to a child learner, has a greater ability for critical reflection, is more involved and active in the learning process, as well as has his/her learning experience influenced by past knowledge and experiences, which can be considered an asset in various cases.

Lee Bash (2003: 28) holds the opinion that adult learners usually “have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge that may include work-related activities, interest-based experiences, family responsibilities, and previous education”. On the basis of this explanation, it is possible to state that previous life experience of an individual basically shapes his/her future life. Such a statement seems to be appropriate in the context of Gail Sheehy’s theory (1976, in Green & Kelso 2006: 66). She points to the so-called “marker experiences” that may encourage an adult learner to study and gain some additional knowledge or proficiency. Green and Kelso (2006: 66) enumerate some examples of “marker experiences” such as getting a job, changing careers, marriage or divorce. This means that crucial experiences may cause or influence the learning process (perhaps self-directed learning).

Of essential contribution to this discussion are also considerations of Marcia Kronholm (2009: 1). She maintains that adults are keen on learning and that their learning goals are connected to their occupations; they seek knowledge or skills that allow them to develop their careers or are relevant to their current position. Larysa Lukianova (2016: 223) broadens Kronholm’s view by considering the globalized economy and
technological developments as factors which cause lifelong education. She (Lukianova 2016: 223) notes that

> the current level of social-economic development, technological achievements, and information and communication technologies encourage lifelong learning. Under the conditions of the globalized economy, education as a production factor is gaining particular importance. It is becoming the person's need as knowledge and intelligence allow him/her to be competitive in the labour market.

Irena Sorokosz (in Lukianova 2016: 227) even suggests that motivation of a learner may change with the changes in the labour market.

Kronholm (2009: 1–2) holds that an adult learner is not necessarily only focused on gaining knowledge, but also on a chance for personal development, which may be provided by a learning experience. Moreover, she mentions that an adult learner participates in classes to share and exchange points of view with other participants (Kronholm 2009: 1).

Discussing internal factors of motivation among adult learners, Lukianova (2016: 227) relates to Bryn and Mann, who maintain that motivation of regular adult learners may result from the inner desire to learn. It is crucial here to consider their attitude to learning; they do it because they truly want to and not because they have to. External motivators, on the other hand, like appraisals or penalties, do not greatly influence adult learners or even not at all (Kulyutkin 1972, in Lukianova 2016: 227). It means that in the case of adult learning, internal motivators are viewed as those which play a more important role than external ones. That is why it seems necessary to broaden the information of internal factors of motivation (in the context of adults). Kulyutkin and Sukhobska (1972, in Lukianova 2016: 227) state that internal motivations of adults vary, and they divide it into three categories, i.e. utilitarian motivation, motivation of prestige and motivation of knowledge itself. The first type refers to personal needs of a person. The second type refers to personal needs of a person regarding social needs (enhancing social status by acquiring knowledge and skills unknown to the majority). The last type (the least common one) occurs when a person learns just for the sake of knowledge; here gaining new knowledge is the goal (Lukianova 2016: 227). Additionally, Lukianova (2016: 227–228), focusing on the mentioned division, proposes three types of adult learners: “adults oriented to purpose (they use education to achieve clear objectives); activities
(they participate in training programs for acquiring knowledge, expansion of social contacts); and training (they seek to acquire knowledge for knowledge's sake).

When considering motivation of adult learners, it would be a notable omission not to mention Stephen Lieb's (1991: 2) insight into the topic. He enumerates several sources of motivation for adult learners:

- social relationships: to make new friends, to strike up new friendships;
- external expectations: to comply with instructions from someone else; to fulfil the expectations or recommendations of someone with formal authority;
- social welfare: to improve the ability to serve mankind, prepare for the service to the community, and to improve the ability to participate in community work;
- personal advancement: to achieve a higher status at work, to guarantee professional advancement, and to stay abreast of competitors;
- escape/stimulation: to eliminate boredom, to escape from the routine of home or work, and to provide contrasts in different spheres of life (Lieb 1991: 2).

With reference to the above, it is essential to distinguish major characteristics of regular adult learners. Lieb (1991: 1) lists such characteristics. According to him, adult learners are autonomous, self-directed and goal-oriented individuals who see practical relevancy of their learning process as it is connected to their life experiences, interests or jobs.

One more aspect of motivation has to be raised here - it is the importance of motivation in foreign language learning. Dörnyei (1998: 117) notes that motivation is often considered by teachers and scholars as one of the essential elements of successful foreign language learning. Motivation is the factor which helps a learner to go through a usually demanding process of developing language skills. It needs to be noted here that even a very gifted student could not reach his/her full linguistic potential without the right amount of motivation. Also, a relatively weak, but strongly motivated learner can achieve more than his/her innate abilities might imply. To confirm this, Dörnyei (1998: 117) quotes the research of Gardner and Lambert (1972) which states that although language aptitude has its reflection in actual language proficiency of
an individual, motivational aspects may even surpass natural talents in some conditions. “In certain language environments, as Gardner and Lambert point out, where the social setting demands it (e.g. when the L1 is a local vernacular and the L2 is the national language), many people seem to master an L2, regardless of their aptitude differences” (Dörnyei 1998: 117).

Also, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015: 130) state that motivation is crucial when it comes to studying a foreign/second language. They maintain that motivation is one of the most important factors which not only allows a student to commence learning, but also to sustain it for an extended time. Moreover, even when a good teacher provides an adequate program, it might not be enough to achieve long-term goals of a learner when she or he lacks motivation.

Alexeeva is another scholar who underlines the importance of motivation in the teaching process. She notes that “[n]o one, even a highly qualified teacher, will achieve the desired result if their efforts are not coordinated with the motivational basis of the learning process” (Alexeeva 1974, in Lukianova 2016: 224).

Numerous researchers declare that the stronger motivation of a learner, the better learning outcome (Sogunro 2015: 22–23). It means that motivation undoubtedly highly contributes to successful FL learning. When summing up motivators of adult learners, several aspects have to be identified. Mature learners may be motivated by global, economic and knowledge changes to which they have to adjust (McDonough 2013: 345). They may feel a need to socialize and share opinions with people. They may commence studying for career reasons and they need to keep up with the demanding job market. They may desire personal growth or an improvement of social position; the more educated the person is, the more prestigious he/she is. A person may be willing to study new things just for the sake of knowledge or to break everyday routine. When it comes to external motivators, an individual obviously may be motivated by factors such as job promotion. Nevertheless, internal motivators are agreeably considered by scholars as fundamental. It is important to add that an adult may be demotivated because of numerous life responsibilities; the same ones that may appear as motivators (McDonough 2013: 347).
4. Ways of motivating EFL learners in a language class

As Dörnyei (1994: 280) emphasizes, motivation strategies cannot be provided as solid rules that can be applied to all learning groups and scenarios; they are more like suggestions which can be tried out by a teacher, but which may not be applicable in all sets of circumstances in a classroom. Dörnyei (1994: 280–283) himself makes an effort to describe the ways of motivating learners. He bases his scheme on his own teaching experience and on the research into educational psychology. Since Dörnyei with his many well-known and respected publications has contributed enormously to the area of motivation in language learning, this section will relate to the findings presented by him. It is valid to state here that Dörnyei’s recommendations were made for the purposes of L2 acquisition. Nevertheless, it is possible to select some of them and correlate with adult foreign language learners’ characteristics. It is also important to add that there are scholars (e.g. Lieb 1991: 3–4; Nicholson 2013: 281–282) whose opinions on this issue are similar to the ones presented by Dörnyei.

Dörnyei (1994: 280–283) advises teachers what to do to increase their learners’ level of motivation. He recommends to divide his suggestions into two major groups. Each group seems to focus on different aspects. The first one concentrates on making the learner as familiar with the target language and culture as possible. The effort is made to direct the positive attitude of a learner to the studied language. Dörnyei (1994: 281) suggests showing learners different materials (films, recordings, music) which could create favorable thoughts about the target language culture. He also proposes “inviting interesting native speaking guests ... focusing on cross-cultural similarities and not just differences, using analogies to make the strange familiar, and using ‘culture teaching’ ideas and activities” (Dörnyei 1994: 281).

The next group proposed by Dörnyei (1994: 281) deals with the ways of enhancing the student’s self-confidence in the area of achieving goals. To develop this ability, Dörnyei (1994: 281) gives clear guidelines:

- regularly providing praise, encouragement, and reinforcement; making sure that students regularly experience success and a sense of achievement;
- helping remove uncertainties about their competence and self-efficacy by giving relevant positive examples and analogies of accomplishment;
counter-balancing experiences of frustration by involving students in more favourable, “easier” activities; and using confidence-building tasks.

Dörnyei (1994: 281) also claims that learners should be taught what they can do instead of what they cannot do. He also mentions that a class environment should be open to mistakes; a teacher can even openly discuss with students his own language difficulties. Additionally, a student should be provided with information about how to confidently solve problems that occur in the learning process. It is crucial to emphasize that learning goals cannot be above the student’s current capability. Otherwise, the set purpose (advancing self-confidence) will not be achieved.

Dörnyei (1994: 281), apart from providing information about motivating students at the language level, suggests how to motivate at the learning situation level (“Course-specific motivational components”). Dörnyei (1994: 281) states that a syllabus should be based on learners’ needs and that learners should participate in the creation of the course syllabus and in the choice of materials. Additionally, a course should be attractive by “using authentic materials that are within students’ grasp; and unusual and exotic supplementary materials, recordings, and visual aids” (Dörnyei 1994: 281). Such a way of planning and conducting a course should, perhaps, help learners to sustain curiosity and attention and to increase involvement. For achieving the above, Dörnyei (1994: 281–282) points to the need of making classes unexpected, unfamiliar and varied. However, he still underlines the fact that students should be familiar with task types. In general, a learner has to clearly know what is expected from him when it comes to fulfilling exercises given by the teacher.

The last discussed division suggested by Dörnyei (1994: 282) concerns specifically teacher motivational components; it means what a teacher as a person can do to achieve better student motivation. Dörnyei (1994: 282) takes notice of empathy, congruence and acceptance as desired features of the teacher. It means that a good teacher should try to be authentic, non-judgmental and sensitive to students’ requirements.

Another characteristic of a teacher which Dörnyei (1994: 282) concentrates on is promoting learner autonomy. To achieve this, the scholar (Dörnyei 1994: 282) suggests
sharing responsibility with the students for organising their time, effort and the learning process; inviting them to design and prepare activities themselves and promoting peer-teaching; including project work where students are in charge; and giving students positions of genuine authority.

This list denotes that learner autonomy is an important part of a class. Dörnyei (1994: 282) also stresses the crucial role of feedback received from the teacher. Proper feedback should be carried out wisely; it cannot focus too intensely on errors. Appropriate feedback should be rather informative. The teacher can point to the accomplished aspects of the task. Only such an informative approach may strengthen learners’ motivation.

Although Dörnyei provides a very comprehensive insight into the issue of motivating a learner, it seems appropriate to supplement his studies and observations. Lieb (1991: 3–4), for instance, is another scholar who elaborates on the subject of motivating adult learners. He points to some interesting findings in this field. Lieb (1991: 3) underlines the importance of the level of concern adjusted to materials which are taught. According to him, the level of concern should be directly proportional to the importance of conceived objectives. It means that a learner has to know when he/she learns something less significant and vice versa. This allows him/her to put an appropriate level of tension to a given task. Interestingly, Lieb (1991: 3) also notes that people learn better under a low or moderate level of tension. That is why the level of difficulty of a task should be set with appropriateness to a student’s capability in order not to make him/her frustrated.

**Concluding remarks**

Motivation, which is strongly connected with human behavior, is a very complex term. That is why scholars constantly formulate new definitions of motivation that focus on different aspects of its nature. Some point to matters which have to do with triggering motivation, whereas others point to possible characteristics of an already motivated individual. Despite numerous definitions of the term, scholars seem to agree on two basic divisions of motivation in the context of language learning. The first division (instrumental and integrative orientations) proposes that one studies a language because of interest in a target language society or because of some advantages like new career opportunities. The second
division (extrinsic and intrinsic factors) simply specifies if one’s motivators come from his/her surroundings or from his/her inner self only. It means that a person may be motivated to learn because he/she enjoys learning or because he/she wants to obtain something by studying. It is crucial to stress that an individual can be motivated by more than one orientation. When it comes to evaluating the importance of motivation in foreign language learning, researchers clearly agree upon its great influence. They state that the stronger motivation, the more effective learning takes place.

Some scholars relate to motivators of adult learners. An adult learner may be motivated in various ways, from some trivial reasons like boredom, through job connected issues, to ambition ventures directed at mastery of new knowledge. Concerning ways of motivating learners, there are many options for a teacher who wants to enhance the level of motivation in a language class. To do so, he/she should organize classes and a curriculum in a way which promotes the target language society, and the learner’s self-confidence and autonomy. It may also be beneficial for the learner to maintain a carefully adjusted level of difficulty and reasonable feedback.

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Introduction

Motivation is viewed as one of the most important factors affecting the language learning/teaching process. A high level of motivation in a student can lead to very positive learning results, whereas lack of motivation in a student, which is connected with his or her unwillingness to learn can lead to rather negative results. When students are unmotivated and not willing to learn, it is a primary task for the teacher not only to transfer knowledge to them but also to make them interested and involved in the lesson. When dealing with unmotivated students, it becomes impossible to achieve set goals as well as good educational results. This is why one of the teacher’s most important tasks is to maintain and enhance motivation in students. The teacher should know what motivation is, what its types are, which type of motivation characterizes young children, and finally what the techniques of raising students’ motivation are. The process of teaching a motivated young learner is much more productive than the one when learners represent a low level of motivation. When students are motivated to learn, the subject seems more interesting to them, they know what goals they want to achieve, lessons are more enjoyable and the whole learning process becomes easier. This is why motivation is such an important aspect of language learning/teaching, which is discussed in detail in this paper.

1. Definition of motivation

Motivation is the primary impetus for beginning the language learning process and the driving force for maintaining it. Eventually, even the most gifted learners cannot accomplish long-term goals without sufficient motivation. The term ‘motivation’ can be used for “explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task” (Brown 2007: 168) and is said to be “a key to learning” (Brown 2007: 168).
Motivation basically can be defined as “some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something” (Harmer 2000: 51). Jack C. Richards and Richard Schmidt (2010: 377) suggest that motivation is a driving force that leads to some action. In the context of language learning, they distinguish orientation which is “a class of reasoning for learning a language” and “motivation itself, which refers to a combination of the learner’s attitudes, desires, and willingness to expend effort in order to learn the second language” (Richards & Schmidt 2010: 377).

According to Vivian Cook (2008: 137), motivation refers to students’ long-term attitudes. Patsy M. Lightbown and Nina Spada (1993: 40) define motivation in language learning in terms of two factors: learners’ communicative needs, and their attitudes towards the second language community. If learners need to speak the second language in a wide range of social situations or to fulfil professional ambitions, they will perceive the communicative value of the second language and will therefore be motivated to acquire proficiency in it. Likewise, if learners have favourable attitudes towards the speakers of the language, they will desire more contact with them.

Hanna Komorowska (2005: 128–129) describes motivation in terms of motives. She distinguishes the motif of safety, achievement, as well as the cognitive, instrumental and integrative motives. In order to succeed, the learner has to feel safe and has to be self-confident. It is important for learners to be acclaimed and to be able to show their knowledge and skills. The cognitive motif appears when learning is pleasant for the student due to the knowledge he/she gains. Learners driven by the integrative motif usually want to learn because of their fascination with a given language. The instrumental motif, on the other hand, appears when the student learns in order to get a good job and be well-paid.

As one universal definition of motivation does not exist, it is useful to discuss the subject in terms of the motivated learner. The motivated learner is willing and eager to make an effort in order to learn. He or she can be described by the following qualities (Ur 1991: 274–275):

- Positive task orientation – the learner tackles challenges and tasks with pleasure and believes in his or her success.
- Ego-involvement – it is important for the learner to succeed in learning a language to promote his or her positive image.
• Need for achievement – the learner feels the need to succeed and to overcome all difficulties which he or she encounters.
• High aspirations – the learner wants to get good grades, is ambitious and is not afraid of accepting demanding challenges.
• Goal orientation – the learner has specific goals of learning and makes his or her effort in order to achieve them.
• Perseverance – the learner devotes his or her effort to language learning and is not discouraged by small difficulties or temporary lack of progress.
• Tolerance of ambiguity – the learner does not get disturbed or frustrated by, for example, temporary lack of understanding. He or she is patient and knows that understanding sometimes comes later.

While defining motivation, it is also worth pointing to three theories of motivation (Brown 2007: 168–169). These are behavioristic, cognitive and constructivist theories. From the behavioristic point of view, getting a reward is the most motivating factor that makes the student learn. Driven by previous experience of reward, students act appropriately “to achieve further reinforcement” (Brown 2007: 168–169). Additionally, “performance in tasks – and motivation to do so – is likely to be at the mercy of external forces: parents, teachers, peers, educational requirements, job specifications, and so forth” (Brown 2007: 168–169).

From the cognitive perspective, motivation lays emphasis on the learner’s decisions and choices. Thus, students choose what goals they will approach, and how much of an effort they will put into the learning process. It is connected with learners’ needs, and they may be the cause of learners’ decisions. In the cognitive view of motivation, personal choices are very important. However, considerable emphasis is put on the social context. Learners are motivated differently and their actions depend on the-surrounding-them environment. From the constructivist perspective, motivation is derived from interactions with others and from learners’ self-determination (Brown 2007: 168–169).

For a better understanding of all three theories it is useful to show the schematic presentation of them (see Table 1):
Table 1. Three theories of motivation (Brown 2007: 170)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioristic</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Constructivist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anticipation of reward</td>
<td>Driven by basic human needs (exploration, manipulation, etc.)</td>
<td>Social context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to receive positive reinforcement</td>
<td>Degree of effort expanded</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External, individual forces in control</td>
<td>Internal, individual forces</td>
<td>Social status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in control</td>
<td>Security of group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Three theories of motivation (Brown 2007: 170)

To sum up, motivation is some internal drive which leads to an action. It is a very important factor that enables learners to maintain the language learning process. As motivation is a complex notion, it is useful to present it in terms of a motivated learner. There are also three views of motivation: behavioristic (connected with a reward), cognitive (connected with human needs) and constructivist (connected with a social context). As motivation is not a homogenous notion, it seems to have divergent backgrounds, which is why its types and sources need to be presented in the next section.

2. Types and sources of motivation

Taking into account different sources, one can distinguish different types of motivation. The criteria can be as follows:

- the source from outside or inside the learner (extrinsic or intrinsic motivation);
- learner’s reasons for learning (integrative or instrumental motivation);
- the learner’s attitude (task, situational and global motivation).

Extrinsic motivation is derived from an external spur (Ur 1991: 276). It can be caused by outside factors such as the hope of a financial reward, the need to pass an exam or the hope of a future travel (Harmer 2000: 51). Jack C. Richards and Richard Schmidt (2010: 378) add that extrinsic motivation can be driven by parental pressure, academic requirements and societal expectations.

The source of extrinsic motivation can be authoritative demands because learners are often motivated by the teacher’s pressure. Another source of extrinsic motivation is competition. Learners are more willing
to learn if they have a chance to beat their opponent at the same time. Similarly, tests can be a powerful source of extrinsic motivation. Students learn more if they know that they are tested and graded. Finally, probably the most powerful sources of extrinsic motivation are success and failure. Students who have succeeded in some learning tasks are more willing to engage in future tasks. They believe in themselves and they are more self-confident that they have a chance to succeed. As failure should be avoided, students are motivated to learn because they do not want to fail (Ur 1991: 278–279).

On the other hand, intrinsic motivation comes from within the learner. Hence, the learner may be motivated by a desire to make oneself feel better or by the enjoyment of language learning itself (Harmer 2000: 51). Intrinsic motivation is connected with a “cognitive drive” – “the urge to learn for its own sake” (Ur 1991: 276). It is typical of young children, but, unfortunately, it deteriorates with age. For intrinsically motivating activities there is no reward except the activity itself. Learners do the activity not to get any extrinsic reward but for their own sake. However, they intend to achieve internally rewarding consequences such as a feeling of competence and self-determination (Brown 2007: 172). According to Rod Ellis (1997: 76), “motivation involves the arousal and maintenance of curiosity and can ebb and flow as a result of such factors as learners’ particular interests and the extent to which they feel personally involved in learning activities”.

Integrative motivation can be defined as “the desire to identify with and integrate into the target-language culture” (Ur 1991: 274). According to Rod Ellis (1997: 75), integrative motivated individuals learn a foreign language because they are interested in the culture and the people who represent it. “The integrative motivation reflects whether the student identifies with the target culture and people in some sense, or rejects them” (Cook 2008: 137). It means that if the student admires the target culture (he or she reads its literature, looks for opportunities to practice the language and visits the country), he or she will be more successful in the language learning process.

Instrumental motivation can be described as “the wish to learn the language for purposes of study or career promotion” (Ur 1991: 276). Vivian Cook (2008: 138) maintains that instrumental motivation is connected with learning the language for some ulterior motive, which
is unrelated to its use by native speakers. It can be related to passing an exam or getting a certain kind of job. To sum up, instrumentally motivated individuals learn a foreign language for some functional reasons (Ellis 1997: 75).

Instrumental motivation can resemble extrinsic motivation as they both are stimulated by some external factors such as a reward or promotion. This is why it is sometimes hard to distinguish them in a student. However, instrumental motivation can be stimulated also by internal factors, and thus it differs from extrinsic motivation, which is stimulated only by external factors. To better illustrate these four types of motivation it is useful to present the following dichotomies (see Table 2):

**Table 2. Motivational dichotomies (Brown 2007: 175)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intrinsic</th>
<th>Extrinsic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrative</strong></td>
<td>L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g. for immigration or marriage)</td>
<td>Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g. Japanese parents send kids to Japanese language school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrumental</strong></td>
<td>L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g. for a career)</td>
<td>External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g. corporation sends Japanese businessman to U.S. for language training)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another distinction of motivation types has been proposed by H. Douglas Brown (1987, in Ur 1991: 276), who on the basis of the criterion of the learner’s attitude divides motivation into:

- task motivation – how the learner approaches specific tasks;
- situational motivation which is connected with the context of learning (classroom, total environment);
- global motivation – the general orientation of the learner towards the learning of the foreign language.

The divisions presented above suggest that there are different types of motivation which come from different sources. However, although the enumerated types of motivation are contrastive, the individual can be motivated by more than one type. Therefore, it is very important to motivate students in various ways.
3. Factors affecting motivation

The level of desire to achieve the set goal can vary with time. It can decrease or increase depending on the influences. The learner’s motivation is usually affected by many factors. People surrounding the student and their attitudes can have a strong influence on his or her motivation. This is why it is crucial to have a closer look at what affects the student’s motivation.

According to Jeremy Harmer (2000: 51–52), the first factor is “the society we live in.” In society, there are different attitudes towards language learning and towards the given language itself. Students’ motivation can be affected by the view whether learning of the language is important and whether it is a part of a school curriculum. Another crucial aspect is the cultural image associated with the language, whether it is positive or negative. According to Robert C. Gardner and Wallace E. Lambert (1972: 3), the student’s attitude to the target language community also affects the learning process and the level of motivation. The scholars note that “student’s motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his/her attitude toward the other group in particular and toward foreign people in general and by his/her orientation toward the learning task itself” (Gardner & Lambert 1972: 3).

Learners’ attitudes can also be affected by the influence of close-to-them people. The attitude of siblings and parents is crucial. It is important whether they approve of the language learning or whether they consider foreign language lessons as less important than other subjects. Another important factor is the attitude of peers. The learner’s motivation may suffer if his or her peers are critical of some activity or of the subject in general. However, there can also be advantages of the peers’ influence. If the student’s peers are enthusiastic about the subject or activity, they may take the learner along with them. Thus, he or she may be more motivated to learn (Harmer 2000: 52).

The learner’s motivation is also greatly affected by the teacher, whose attitudes to the target language and culture are essential. The atmosphere in the classroom is much better when the teacher is enthusiastic about the language and about teaching the language (Harmer 2000: 52). According to Hanna Komorowska (2005: 129), the teacher by his or her behavior and attitude can encourage students to learn. It is especially
visible in a group of younger children, who like lessons and are eager to learn if they like the teacher. The teacher and students have to be certain about the efficiency of learning methods. If students have no confidence in the method, their motivation can decrease. They are more likely to succeed if they believe in the efficiency of the used method.

Furthermore, Jeremy Harmer (2000: 53) distinguishes three fields in which the teacher can enhance learners’ motivation. The first one is goal setting, as “motivation is closely bound up with a person’s desire to achieve a goal” (Harmer 2000: 53). There is a need to make a distinction between short-term goals and long-term goals. A short-term goal is, for example, writing an essay, taking part in a discussion or learning a small amount of the target language. On the other hand, a long-term goal is, for example, the mastery of English or getting a better job in the future.

Long-term goals are very important. However, they may seem too distant for the learner. When some difficulties connected with language learning appear, the long-term goal may become even more far-away or disappear for some time. On the other hand, short-term goals are closer to the student’s daily reality. It is much easier to focus on short-term goals than on far-away goals. Succeeding strongly influences motivation, thus enhancing it. It needs to be noted here that achieving short-term goals is very important for the learner’s motivation. This is why the teacher should focus not only on long-term goals but also on short-term goals that encourage and motivate the student to learn and make him or her more confident (Harmer 2000: 53).

The student’s motivation is also influenced by the surrounding environment (the classroom) and by the atmosphere in the classroom (Harmer 2000: 53). An attractive classroom may better motivate students to learn than an unattractive one. However, the teacher can decorate the unattractive classroom in order to make the lessons and the learning process more enjoyable. If this is impossible, he or she can make the atmosphere in the classroom more friendly, for example, by the use of music. However, the most important aspect of the atmosphere in the classroom is creating a friendly emotional atmosphere. The teacher should be very careful when it comes to giving feedback or corrections. Learners have a need for a supportive and cooperative atmosphere in order to feel safe and confident. Eventually, “the teacher’s rapport with the students is critical to creating the right conditions for motivated learning” (Harmer 2000: 53).
One can thus state that motivation can be affected by many factors such as society, the surrounding environment, the learner’s family, peers, and finally the teacher. However, learners at a different age are motivated in a different way. Thus, it is very important for the teacher to know how his or her students are best motivated, which is a subject to be described in more detail in the next section.

4. Motivation in schoolchildren

School-age children have usually no specific contact with the foreign culture and no specific interest in it. They also do not have any job perspectives related to the knowledge of the foreign language. Their attitudes to foreign language speakers usually depend on the stereotypes from their culture (Cook 2008: 138–139). According to Penny Ur (1991: 287–288), children usually tend to be less motivated than adults as they have actually no choice in how, where or whether they are taught.

Young children are not entirely self-reliant and they get to know the subject with the great help of the teacher. This is why their motivation usually results from a liking for the teacher, and which is strongly connected with an interest in the subject. When students like the teacher and the subject, positive attitudes and motivation toward the foreign language are shaped in them. Thus, the best way to enhance motivation in children is to create a positive and friendly atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher has to grade students fairly and he or she should also take into account and reflect on his or her own mistakes. However, a friendly atmosphere in the classroom does not have to be connected with little demands. On the contrary, students are often willing to do some tasks even when they are hard, as long as the tasks are given by the teacher they like (Komorowska 2005: 129).

Older children are motivated similarly. However, they start to think about the teacher and the subject individually. Still, it is hard for them to like the subject if they do not like the teacher. Older children like the teacher mostly for his or her competence and honesty. Another aspect about motivation in older children is that they usually lose interest in language learning after some time. The teacher’s task is to prepare interesting activities and to choose interesting subjects due to the fact that students’ motivation results from being interested in the lesson (Komorowska 2005: 129).
Unfortunately, schools are filled with extrinsically motivated behavior (Brown 2001: 77–78). Very often politically influenced institutions create the school curriculum and even the teacher cannot change it. According to H. Douglas Brown (2001: 77–78):

Parents’ and society’s values and wishes are virtually forced onto pupils, whether they like it or not. Tests and exams, many of which are standardized and given high credence in the world ‘out there’, are imposed on students with no consultation with the students themselves. The glorification of content, product, correctness and competiveness has failed to bring the learner into a collaborative process of competence-building. The consequence of such extrinsic motivators is that schools all too often teach students to play the ‘game’ of pleasing teachers and authorities rather than developing an internalized thirst for knowledge and experience. The administration of grades and praises for being a ‘good child’ builds a dependency on immediate M&M gratification. Competition against classmates (who might otherwise be allies or partners in learning) ensues. If a communal bound is created, it ruins the risk of being motivated by the need to band together against teachers and authorities.

This dependency makes students focus mostly on the material or monetary rewards of education and not on creativity and satisfying basic drives for exploration and knowledge. Consequently, the student educated in this way is taught to fear failure and to refrain from potentially rewarding innovation or risk-taking behavior (Brown 2001: 77–78).

This is why the teachers’ task is to modify the school curriculum to some extent in order to include student-centered learning and teaching (Brown 2001: 78). Teachers should also pay attention to students’ learning goals and if it is possible to individualize lessons and activities. As a result, students may become more motivated and self-confident.

Since motivation is said to be a very important factor in the language learning process, it is very useful to maintain it in students. However, it is not an easy task. This is why in the next section techniques of raising students’ motivation are presented.

5. Techniques for enhancing motivation

Given the importance of the level of motivation in learners, the teacher should take it into account while preparing activities and planning
the lesson. He or she should also remember that the learner’s motivation lowers with time. This is why not only initiation of motivation is important but also sustaining it. According to Hanna Komorowska (2005: 105), the teacher’s main role is to involve and activate the student.

H. Douglas Brown (2001: 81) maintains that the teacher should not only deliver information to students but also be a “facilitator of learning”. The teacher’s task is to set the stages for learning, to turn students on to their abilities and to help channel the abilities in “fruitful directions”. Brown (2001: 81) provides ten guidelines on stimulation of students’ intrinsic motivation:

1. Set a personal example with your own behavior.
2. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.
3. Present the tasks properly.
4. Develop a good relationship with the learners.
5. Increase the learners’ linguistic self-confidence.
6. Make language classes interesting.
7. Promote learner autonomy.
8. Personalize the learning process.
9. Increase the learners’ goal-orientedness.
10. Familiarize learners with the target language culture.

A very important part of motivating students to learn is making lessons interesting and creating a positive atmosphere in the classroom. In reference to these demands, Penny Ur (1991: 281) suggests ways of arousing interest in tasks. The first one is establishing clear goals. The teacher should make students aware of the objectives of the task (language learning and content). Chosen tasks should be varied and interesting. As it is usually impossible to catch everyone’s interest, there should be a wide range of different tasks over time. Visuals are very useful when it comes to motivating students. Learners like to have something to look at, which means that the teacher should remember to prepare some eye-catching pictures or illustrations that are relevant to the topic. The classroom atmosphere is also important; students should feel challenged. This atmosphere can be created by some game-like activities. These activities are particularly liked by students because they simply are fun for them. Another idea to make the learning process more enjoyable is the use of entertainment. Enjoyment generated by entertainment adds motivation in its turn. The teacher can use some recorded materials
(e.g. songs, movies, clips) or produce them himself or herself by telling jokes, stories or preparing presentations. Play-acting is another idea of making students use their own imagination. Although some students are inhibited and these activities may be for them intimidating at first, role play and simulations are excellent since they take students out of themselves and stimulate their imagination. Tasks based on the need to transform or understand information are also very attractive as students have to communicate with each other and gain information. Learners like personalized exercises, especially the ones which refer to their interests, tastes, opinions, and experiences. Open-ended cues are very stimulating. Learners can use their own imagination and create some original and interesting answers.

Besides, learners should be aware of the reasons why they are learning the language. This is why the teacher should often discuss it with students and explain how a given task helps them in achieving their goals. They should also be involved in making decisions about their learning process (for example they can choose the activity). Students should also be involved in setting language learning goals. Helping individuals to “develop internal feelings of control and to move towards autonomy” seems to be a vital element of motivation (Williams & Burden 1997: 141–142). Learners should be recognized as individuals and should be allowed to learn in their own ways. Enhancing students’ beliefs in their effectiveness as well as their self-image as learners is another significant element of motivation. Students should be taught to develop their internal beliefs. It is useful if they are mastery oriented as it is easier for them to control their actions and to succeed in activities. The teacher should focus on enhancing students’ intrinsic motivation as they should “see value in carrying out activities for their own sake rather than only doing things for external reasons” (Williams & Burden 1997: 141–142). Learners are believed to be more motivated when they are in a supportive learning environment. This is why it is important to support them and to encourage them to express themselves. Another important aspect is giving informational feedback. Thanks to it, students know what they do improperly and what they should do to improve (Williams & Burden 1997: 141–142).

Taking the above considerations into account, one can state that there are different elements that contribute to the enhancement of students’
motivation. All of them seem to make the learning process interesting and challenging for students. The environment where the learning takes place is an important aspect. The role of the teacher is crucial as well. The educator’s job is to build up students’ belief in themselves, enhance their internal motivation and help them achieve their goals. As has been indicated, there are different ways in which the teacher can motivate students. One of them is by using audio-visual materials which encourage students to learn and which make the whole learning process more attractive for young people.

**Concluding remarks**

Summing up, motivation is a driving force which leads to action. From the above discussion, it turns out that motivation is one of the most important factors affecting the language learning/teaching process. Because it cannot be treated as a homogenous concept, it is necessary to remember its different types and sources. There is thus intrinsic motivation whose source comes from inside of the learner and extrinsic motivation whose source comes from outside. There is also integrative and instrumental motivation, its criterion being the reason for learning. Another criterion is the student’s attitude to learning which results from the influence of parents, peers and their surrounding environment. The educator’s role in the learning process is very crucial too as students’ learning depends to a great extent on his/her undertakings. If the teacher makes the lesson interesting and keeps learners motivated, they are more willing to learn. There are different aspects that the teacher should bear in mind. One of them is the learning environment. Considering this notion, it is necessary to remember that the classroom should be decorated with some visual aids which would make learners more attracted to the subject and more motivated to learn. The teacher should also try different techniques of motivating learners and should use the most effective ones in his/her daily educational practices.

**References**


CHAPTER 2:
AUTONOMY OF LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Introduction

Due to a paradigm shift from teacher-oriented to student-centred approach in foreign language teaching, in the last thirty years learner autonomy has gradually become one of the key terms in foreign language teaching. As it has been acknowledged that success in language learning does not lie only in formal instruction but also in students’ autonomous learning, many questions concerning the nature, limitations and practical applications of learner autonomy have been raised and called for answers. Thanks to the work of such researchers as Benson (2006, 2007, 2011), Littlewood (1996, 1999) and Little (1991, 1997, 1999, 2007), foreign language teachers and researchers have gained better insights into the concept of autonomous learning. This understanding, consequently, allowed both for the establishment of self-access centres and more effective language learning inside and outside of the classroom. However, as it has been emphasised by researchers, it has to be taken into account that learner autonomy is a multidimensional concept which exists in correlation with, for example, metacognition, language awareness and learner beliefs; and thus is not easily defined and measured (Benson 2011: 66).

1. Definitions of learner autonomy

The definition of learner autonomy was first proposed in 1979 in Henri Holec’s Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning, where learner autonomy was defined as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Benson 2006: 22). According to this definition, autonomy entails having control of such aspects of learning as determining objectives, defining content, selecting methods and techniques, and monitoring and evaluating learning (Little 1991: 7). However, as pointed out by Little (1999: 11, 2007: 14), the notion of autonomy postulated by Holec at first concerned only adult learners and only later, due to the proliferation of learner-centred
theories of education, entered national curricula and became applied in a formal classroom setting. Growing popularity of learner autonomy led to further conceptualisation and elaboration on the original definition, where the term *ability* was often replaced with *capacity*, and *taking charge* was substituted with *taking responsibility* or *taking control* (Benson 2006: 22).

According to Benson (2011: 60), Holec’s definition is problematic because it explains learner autonomy only in technical terms. The definition reveals a picture of behaviours characteristic of autonomous learning, for example, planning, monitoring and evaluating. However, it places little importance on cognitive processes facilitating these behaviours. Therefore, in answer to Holec, Little (1991: 4) proposed his own definition of autonomy, arguing that:

autonomy is a *capacity* – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning. The capacity for autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts.

These two definitions, very often combined, gave a picture of autonomy as a construct involving abilities and capacities that are both psychological and behavioural (Benson 2011: 60).

Additionally, in 1990, Little made another significant contribution to learner autonomy research, as admitted by Benson (2007: 737), providing readers not with a definition of what autonomy is but of what it is not. According to this definition, autonomy is:

a. not synonymous with self-instruction;
b. not a matter of allowing learners to cope with learning as best as they can;
c. not a teaching method;
d. not a unidimensional and easily explicable behaviour;
e. not a steady state.

In Benson’s opinion (2007: 737), this definition is of particular importance because, instead of emphasising the learning situation itself, it stresses the attributive character and multidimensional nature of autonomy. Thus, from this perspective, autonomy is seen as a construct which might differ from individual to individual and from context to context.
Sinclair, in 2000, as can be found in Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012: 5), proposed yet another definition of autonomy composed of numerous aspects. According to Sinclair, autonomy:

a. is a capacity which requires willingness to take responsibility;
b. is not always an innate ability;
c. differs in levels and degrees;
d. requires learners’ willingness to participate;
e. entails conscious awareness of the learning process;
f. implies more than just strategy training;
g. is exhibited inside and outside the classroom;
h. has social, individual, political and psychological dimensions;
i. is open to different interpretations by different cultures.

The psychological approach to learner autonomy led to a dispute about such essential components of autonomy as degrees, forms, and variables affecting autonomous behaviour. Therefore, it can be seen that attention shifted from trying to describe autonomy to trying to examine how autonomy can be represented in various contexts (Benson 2006: 23). Hence, as postulated by Benson (2011: 58), “it is neither necessary nor desirable to define autonomy more precisely than this, because control over learning may take a variety of forms”.

2. Levels of learner autonomy

As quoted by Benson (2011: 58), Little, in 1990, claimed that autonomy is not “a single, easily describable behaviour”, for which reason a significant number of researchers have tried to investigate the complex character of learner autonomy. As a result of numerous empirical and theoretical studies, researchers, for example, Nunan in 1997 (in Benson 2006: 23), Littlewood (1996) and Macaro (1997), came to the conclusion that autonomy is a multilevel construct.

In the discussion on the multidimensional nature of autonomy, in 1997, Nunan, as quoted in Benson (2006: 23), proposed an autonomy model composed of five levels of learner action, i.e. awareness, involvement, intervention, creation, and transcendence. In this model, at the awareness level, learners become mindful of the content of materials and pedagogical objectives, they recognise connections between learning strategies and educational tasks and choose their own preferred
learning style and strategies. At the transcendence level, students form connections between the content of classroom instruction and the outside world, becoming ‘teachers’ and ‘researchers’ themselves.

A similar approach was taken by Littlewood in 1997, as quoted by Benson (2006: 23), who proposed a three-stage model of autonomy. Littlewood’s model includes the dimensions of language acquisition, classroom organisation, and personal development. In the context of language acquisition, the researcher linked autonomy to communication and described it as an ability to use language autonomously to express personal meanings in real-life situations (autonomy as a communicator). In the context of classroom organisation, autonomy involves students’ control over their learning, for example, application of language learning strategies (autonomy as a learner), whereas, in the context of personal development, autonomy is related to the aim of achieving greater autonomy at a personal level (autonomy as a person).

Another three-dimensional model of learner autonomy is proposed by Macaro (1997: 170–172), who subdivided autonomy into: (a) autonomy for language competence, (b) autonomy for language learning competence, and (c) autonomy for choice of action. In this model, autonomy for language competence refers to the ability to communicate with the use of the acquired rule system of the target language and without substantial help of a more competent language speaker. Autonomy for language learning competence places emphasis on the use of metacognitive strategies and entails the reproduction and transfer of acquired learning skills to other situations, for example, L3 learning. Autonomy of choice of action involves such behaviours as: (a) forming short-term and long-term language learning objectives, (b) addressing the question of an individual’s motivation to learn a target language; and (c) discovering and gaining access to target language materials that may be useful for reaching students’ personal language learning objectives.

Benson (2011: 61) developed yet another multilevel model of autonomy, postulating that there are three fundamental aspects of autonomy that can be controlled by learners, i.e. learning management, cognitive processes, and learning content. In this model, these three dimensions are interconnected, whereby learning management and control of cognitive processes affect one another and, in consequence, influence decisions about the content of learning.
According to Benson (2006: 24), all the hierarchical models of autonomy presented above imply that learners can move from lower to higher levels of autonomy. However, it should not be assumed that levels of autonomy are directly correlated with language proficiency. For example, according to Kumaravadielu (2003: 114), such an assumption would be a mistake since stages of autonomy are determined more by the communicative and linguistics demands rather than language proficiency.

3. Versions of learner autonomy

Benson (2011: 62) stated that as the discussion on autonomy expanded, various efforts aimed at identifying different approaches to the practical application of autonomy had been made. In 1997, initiating the discussion on types of autonomy, Benson (2011: 62) proposed a distinction between technical, psychological and political versions of the term. As can be read in Schmenk (2005: 109–110), the concept of technical versions of autonomy is defined as an act of learning outside of the classroom and without the supervision of the teacher. Psychological versions of autonomy illustrate autonomy as a capacity which facilitates autonomous learning, whereas political versions represent the concept of exerting control over the content and process of learning.

In line with Benson’s theory, Oxford (2003: 76–89) proposed a four-dimensional model of autonomy, investigating autonomy from technical, psychological, sociocultural, and political-critical perspectives. Autonomy from a technical perspective is seen here as influenced by situational conditions under which learner autonomy develops, including self-access centres, a classroom and a home setting. The psychological perspective is primarily interested in students’ mental and emotional characteristics, examining them as either individuals or as members of a social or cultural group. The sociocultural perspective emphasises the role of social groups and social interaction as a major part of cognitive and language development, and the political-critical perspective refers to such issues as attributes and ideologies specific to given locations, groups, and institutions.

Kumaravadielu (2003: 132–145) distinguished a narrow and a broad view of autonomy. The narrow view of autonomy emphasises teaching
learners the ability to learn by providing them with requisite tools and training them in the application of learning strategies that correspond to their learning objectives. Conversely, in the broad view of autonomy, learning to learn is seen only as a step towards liberation which aims to improve students’ critical thinking skills and release their human potential. Furthermore, Kumararavadielu relates his theory to Benson’s political version of autonomy (2011), proposing that, in the broad view of autonomy, a successful training strategy is possible only after due consideration of socio-political factors influencing formal instruction.

Littlewood (1999: 75) proposed two levels of self-regulation, i.e. proactive and reactive autonomy. According to this distinction, proactive autonomy corresponds to the concept of autonomy suggested by Holec in 1979, where learners are capable of exerting control over their learning process, specifying their objectives, selecting methods and evaluating progress. In this point of view of autonomy, learners remain autonomous throughout the whole learning process and regulate not only the activity but also its directions. In the second approach, students are capable of monitoring the activity once the direction has been initiated for them. In other words, learners work autonomously towards achieving a particular goal that has been set by the teacher.

Emphasising the influence of social interactions on language learning behaviour, Yeh and Yang (2006) postulated the distinction between individuating and relating autonomy. According to the researchers, individuating autonomy develops in answer to adolescents’ need for individuality which rises with age and the development of cognitive processes. This aspect of autonomy entails the creation of self-identity which promotes distinctiveness from other people. Relating autonomy, on the other hand, involves achieving a psychologically interdependent self-identity. In this approach, individuals perceive themselves as part of a social group; hence, their behaviour is strongly influenced by other people, for example, parents, family members or teachers.

Similarly, Rudy et al. (2007: 985), relating to their earlier work on motivation, distinguished between individual and inclusive autonomy. While individual autonomy is related to an individual alone, inclusive autonomy is focused on group identity composed of an individual and their family members. In the educational context, a student who is characterised by individual autonomy has high intrinsic and identified
motivation, whereas a student who has inclusive autonomy is primarily extrinsically driven. Therefore, an individual’s reason for accomplishing a goal may result from one’s personal or collective objectives defined by them and their family. According to the researchers, this distinction is crucial in understanding motivational patterns and autonomous behaviours of students from different cultural contexts.

4. Learner autonomy and motivation

In the examination of the relationship between autonomy and motivation, two major assumptions have been taken into account by researchers, i.e. that motivation stems from autonomy, and that motivation leads to greater autonomous behaviour. According to Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002), autonomous learning behaviour is strongly influenced by motivation, which strengthens students’ readiness for autonomy. Similarly, Dickinson (1995: 156) echoed Knowles’s claim from 1975 and stated that there is irrefutable proof that proactive learners initiate learning with much greater motivation, and thus their learning results are much better than those of passive students, who depend on teachers’ directions.

As stated by Benson (2006: 29), the introduction of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Ryan and Deci (2000), introduced autonomy into L2 motivation studies. According to SDT, all individuals possess “inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs that are the basis for their self-motivation and personality integration” (Ryan & Deci 2000: 68). Ryan and Deci identified those needs as the needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Regarding autonomy, SDT argues that choices and opportunities for self-direction have a beneficial influence on people’s intrinsic motivation as they allow individuals for a greater autonomy.

Within the framework of SDT, Ryan and Deci (2000) formulated Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), which identifies factors that are beneficial or detrimental to the development of intrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci emphasise that intrinsic motivation is an inherent property of all human beings, which, nevertheless, is susceptible to change by various social events. As the theory states, there are two fundamental conditions which allow for the development of intrinsic motivation,
Autonomy of language learners

i.e. an informative rather than controlling learning environment, and an autonomy-supporting learning context (Dickinson 1995: 166). Furthermore, CET specifies that the need for competence will only facilitate intrinsic motivation when combined with a perceived sense of autonomy. Thus, for intrinsic motivation to be manifested, people must experience competition and recognise their behaviour as self-regulated.

Ushioda (2008: 27) claims that it is impossible to investigate pedagogical approaches to enhancing learner autonomy without taking into account theories of self-determination. Seeing that learner-regulated motivation is promoted when students are driven by their own needs, goals and interests, it is imperative that they are allowed to set those goals and have an influence on the learning process as only then they can develop a feeling of personal responsibility. This claim is supported by Lamb (2009: 80), who states that the perception of personal control over a situation and, in consequence, a sense of personal responsibility, is a crucial factor in initial and continuing motivation.

Attribution theory is another theory of motivation strongly connected with learner autonomy (Dickinson 1995: 171). According to the theory, people make internal and external attributions about their past success or failure which, consequently, determines their future behaviour in similar situations. In the educational context, internal attributions are made when a student believes that success or failure in performing a learning task comes from their internal characteristics, for instance, a lack of abilities, whereas external attributions are made when a learner attributes an outcome of a situation to external factors, such as task difficulty. Furthermore, researchers distinguish stable and unstable attributions, where stable attributions are made when a person believes that the outcome of a situation results from stable and unchanging factors which will recur in the future despite one’s efforts, for example, ability, whereas unstable attributes are made when a person infers that success or failure results from unstable temporary factors, for instance, effort or luck. There is substantial evidence to suggest that those people who attribute their failure or success to their own effort are more likely to take control over their own learning and overcome obstacles. In consequence, those learners tend to be more competent and confident than those who assume that success depends on fixed abilities (Dickinson 1995: 172).
Oxford and Shearin (1994: 21) hold that “L2 learners must believe that they have some control over the outcomes (failure or success) … they must feel a sense of effectiveness within themselves so that they will want to continue learning the target language”. Similarly, Dickinson (1995: 166) and Ames (1986: 248), echoing the deCharms’s work from 1984, support the assumption that motivation can be enhanced through autonomy. According to deCharms, teachers can raise students’ motivation by giving students more responsibility for their learning and creating learning experiences that are beneficial to students’ personal causation, which is a person’s belief in their determining role in creating desired outcomes. One of the more significant findings to emerge from deCharms’s work is that students’ greater belief about their personal control over learning can be fostered by placing them in a supportive learning environment, where they take an active part in decision-making about the learning process and its objectives (Ames 1986: 248).

All the above-mentioned theories and researchers imply that motivation is fostered by learning autonomy. However, according to some researchers, autonomy is not so much a facilitator of motivation but its direct outcome. Littlewood (1996) argues that the capacity to act autonomously depends on ability and willingness, where ability stands in correlation with knowledge and skills, and willingness is determined by motivation and confidence. Thus, in order to initiate autonomous behaviour a person must have the knowledge about all the alternatives he or she can choose from, must have the requisite skills needed to execute those choices, must have the motivation to act autonomously, and must have confidence in one’s own actions. According to the researcher, a person will only be able to successfully manifest autonomous behaviour when all of these components are present.

Cotterall (1999), in her article on the key variables in language learning, stresses the influence of self-efficacy on the process of foreign language learning. In Cotterall’s point of view (1999: 52), self-efficacy is “the learners’ confidence in their overall ability to learn the language, as well as their ability to achieve more specific learning goals”. The influence of self-efficacy on learner autonomy was emphasised by Mojoudi and Tabatabaei (2014: 26), who in their studies of Iranian English language students, discovered that students’ high level of self-efficacy leads to higher motivation and self-esteem, which, in consequence, results in
greater learner autonomy. Comparably, Oxford (2003: 83) postulates that autonomous learners possess such characteristics as high motivation, a high degree of self-efficacy, positive attitudes towards learning, need for achievement as well as a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

As concluded by Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002: 262), it can be stated that motivation may be a prerequisite to autonomous behaviour as well as it may be a product of autonomy. According to the researchers, there is a likelihood that the relationship between autonomy and motivation is bidirectional, changing its course with different stages of learners’ progress. The correlation between autonomy and motivation may be in fact dynamic, in the same way as motivation is, where different types and orientations are predominant in different contexts.

5. Learner and sociocultural variability in autonomy

According to Benson (2006: 29), there is a clear link between autonomy and individual variables since individual learners differ from one another and might want to use different learning processes as means of developing their individuality. Numerous researchers have investigated the topic of individual differences in foreign language learning with respect to learner autonomy. The opinion which can be highlighted is that individual learner differences have an influence on students’ language learning behaviour, and consequently on autonomy. For example, Little (1991: 4) maintains that “it is true, of course, that we recognize autonomous learners by their behaviour, but that can take numerous different forms, depending on their age, how far they have progressed with their learning, what they perceive their immediate learning needs to be, and so on”. Guo (2007), in her paper on autonomous language learning in China, gives a review of the literature on individual learner differences in autonomy, enlisting such factors as beliefs and attitudes, motivation, learning environment, teachers’ influence and culture as the most prominent variables.

Oxford (2003: 84) makes an attempt to link motivation and learner autonomy to learners’ learning styles. The researcher claims that concrete-sequential learners, who prefer their learning process to be directed by an authority figure, are less likely to be motivated to develop learner
autonomy than those students who possess intuitive-random learning style and value independent learning. Furthermore, Oxford, on the basis of Yang’s research from 1992, maintains that certain learning styles are culturally-embedded and result from beliefs held by learners.

Cotterall (1995: 195) notes that beliefs and attitudes held by learners have an impact on language behaviour. According to the researcher, it is crucial to measure learners’ readiness to change their learning habits as well as beliefs about autonomy before learning training can take place. Thus, Cotterall (1995: 196) categorised autonomy related beliefs into six groups, i.e. beliefs about (a) role of the teacher, (b) role of feedback, (c) learner independence, (d) learner confidence in study ability, (e) experience of language learning and (f) approach to studying. In the course of her research, Cotterall detected that, for example, those students who believe in a teachers’ authoritative role do not respond well to the shift of responsibility from teacher to learner. On the other hand, autonomous learners are capable of assessing their language progress and believe in their learning abilities, which stands in a positive correlation with the outcome of learning.

However, while Cotterall advocates the influence of beliefs on autonomy, Benson and Lor (1998: 11–12) adopt a much more critical approach. According to these two researchers, instead of concentrating on establishing methodologies for investigating and classifying beliefs, the focus in individual difference research should rather be placed on examining why and to what extent certain beliefs influence learning. Furthermore, the researchers maintain that learner beliefs are susceptible to change in different learning contexts and from one learner to another. In one of his articles, Benson (2006: 29) points to his work from 2005 and states that while research on individual learner differences gives insight into psychological and social factors influencing learning, it fails to answer the question as to how learners create individual identities through the language learning process.

According to Little (1999: 13), attitudes are seen as psychological characteristics that predispose learners to take responsibility for their learning, since those students who have a positive orientation towards autonomy may be more likely to accept a shift of control from teacher to student. This assumption was supported by the study of Chinese postgraduate learners carried out by Guo (2007: 59), who stated that
a positive attitude towards autonomous language learning was reflected in students’ desire to work independently in the classroom and to employ autonomous learning strategies in a naturalistic setting.

Lee (1998: 283) enumerated a number of factors that were found vital to the development of learner autonomy, i.e. voluntariness, learner choice, flexibility, teacher support and peer support. Quoting Esch’s work from 1996, Lee (1998: 274) notes that students’ flexibility, which can be achieved by allowing and encouraging students to change their learning objectives according to their personal needs and interests, is crucial in promoting an autonomous learning environment. Furthermore, seeing that autonomous learning does not take place in isolation, but is located in a social context, peer support, which means interaction, collaboration and support, as well as teacher support, i.e. providing feedback, encouragement and reinforcement, should be seen as factors which play a major role in self-directed learning programmes.

The role of the teacher was also discussed by Reinders and Blacikanli (2011, cited in Phan 2012: 469), who identified two major factors relevant to the development of learner autonomy, i.e. teacher autonomy and teachers’ collection of teaching skills which can be used to facilitate students’ autonomous learning. The researchers base their premise on the fact that, in the classroom context, it is the teacher who is likely to have the greatest influence on students’ autonomy training. However, Guo (2007: 50), quoting Benson’s premise from 2005, suggests that only by taking into account the social context of learning, learner training in the classroom environment can be effective. Furthermore, Cotterall (1995: 198) points out that learners’ beliefs about the role of the teacher might be an insurmountable obstacle to incorporating learner training in the classroom. Hence, those learners who perceive their teachers as authority figures express little readiness for autonomy, as opposed to those students who view their teachers as counsellors and facilitators of learning.

The role of situational context of learning has been emphasised by Oxford (2003: 86), who maintains that “learning is situated in a particular context – that is, a social and cultural setting populated by specific individuals at a given historical time”. Oxford, supporting her claim on the work of Vygotsky, states that a sociocultural context is connected with mediation, which is defined as a dynamic interaction between
the learner and *significant others*. Little (1997: 19) also based his theories on autonomy from the Vygotskyian point of view, claiming that despite the fact that all human beings are predisposed to exhibit autonomous behaviour, this what they perceive as autonomous will vary depending on the sociocultural environment. Little (1997: 19) notes that “… [autonomy] development is susceptible to infinite variations. One significant variable will always be the extent to which the individual is explicitly aware of his or her capacity for self-regulation and the constraints within which it must operate”.

As stated in Benson (2011: 69), seeing that autonomy takes different shapes for different people or in different learning contexts, it is also possible that autonomy varies across cultures. In the discussion on cultural variables in learner autonomy, the major question investigated by researchers is whether autonomy, as a concept primarily rooted in Western civilisation, can be applied in non-Western cultures.

The question about the appropriateness of autonomy in non-Western cultures was first addressed by Riley (1988), who expressed concerns about the effectiveness of learning of non-European students studying in Europe. Later, the same question was raised by Pennycook (1997), who, having ascribed the origins of human autonomy to European Enlightenment, stated that the notion of autonomy is structured and has different values in different cultural contexts. Comparably, Schmenk (2005: 107–108) suggests that “learner autonomy can become an important notion in many cultural contexts only if its cultural backdrop in Western traditions is not neglected but given more serious consideration”. Furthermore, Ho and Crookall (1995) brought to attention the fact that it is imperative to take into account the culturally embedded nature of the classroom in the process of planning learner and strategy training.

This point of view contrasts with the one of Little (1999: 11), who argues that autonomy is “more than a Western cultural construct”. To support this claim, Little (1999: 13–14) states that all successful scholars and researchers conform to the definition of an autonomous learner, even though a vast majority of them did not develop their autonomy thanks to pedagogical traditions in which they were educated. Therefore, according to the researcher, it might be assumed that autonomy is not a new invention but has always been an integral part of successful learners’ cognition, which may be developed independently of teachers.
Additionally, learner autonomy may be a general human capacity available to everyone, and not only to those with an intellectual or academic facility. Moreover, Holliday (2003: 118), presented an opinion that despite the fact that learners from different cultural backgrounds are autonomous in their own ways, autonomy is a psychological phenomenon that goes beyond cultures.

The ongoing debate on the application of autonomy in a non-Western context led to a substantial number of publications and empirical research, especially in the Asian context, that aims to investigate the differences in learning behaviours across cultures. While some researchers indicate that there are visible differences in Asian students’ learning behaviour in respect to autonomy (Aoki & Smith 1999; Nguyen 2011; Li 2005; Smith 2001), there is also substantial empirical evidence that Asian learners exhibit positive attitudes towards autonomy as well as autonomy itself (Ho & Crookall 1995; Littlewood 1999).

Ho and Crookall (1995: 240), in their study on the use of simulations in autonomy training, reported that their students exhibited a high degree of autonomy, in spite of the assumption that Chinese students have “a cultural background that is almost diametrically opposed to autonomy”. Therefore, as stated by the researchers, learner autonomy can be facilitated and enhanced by a learning environment that takes into account cultural norms and expectations. A similar point of view was expressed by Nguyen (2011: 7), who notes that Vietnamese students, although different from Western students in their learning styles and approaches to learning, are not entirely passive and can develop autonomy in the course of learning. Gieve and Clark (2005: 261), in a comparative study of Chinese and Western students studying in the UK, concluded that both groups expressed the same level of appreciation for autonomous learning. Therefore, culturally embedded dispositions towards autonomy may lessen when students are provided learning conditions that foster autonomy.

As claimed by Aoki and Smith (1999: 22), an individual’s desire to express autonomy may have its source in political rather than cultural or psychological factors. Comparably, Benson, in 1997, as mentioned in Miller (2009: 10), expressed a belief that autonomy should be seen as a political construct because roles in the classroom are divided between those who hold power (teachers) and those who obey (students).
Therefore, to facilitate the development of autonomy, a shift of power structure is inevitable since only then learners will be able to hold a critical view of the learning process. Thus, it may be assumed that autonomy will have different dimensions in various political contexts (Aoki & Smith 1999: 22).

Concluding remarks

As can be seen, autonomy is not an easily definable concept, and its manifestation may vary depending on the context and one’s individual characteristics (Benson 2007: 737). According to Little (1997: 20), human behaviour is controlled partially by our cognition and partially by our outside environment and, for this reason, to gain a better understanding of learners’ autonomous learning behaviour, such factors as social, cultural, political and educational contexts of learning need to be taken into consideration. What should be emphasised, however, is the fact that learner autonomy may be exhibited in various different forms and can prove to be highly beneficial to students’ development of linguistic competence and motivation. Seeing the significant influence of learner autonomy, it becomes imperative that teachers implement learner autonomy into their daily teaching practice and encourage students to take greater responsibility for their learning, which will not only help to develop learners’ higher linguistic competence but also life-long learning skills and independence as human beings.

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Introduction

Nowadays, it is hard to imagine the process of learning or teaching without connecting it somehow to the concept of autonomy. Many scholars (e.g. Benson 2012; Little 1991; Reinders 2017) agree that personal autonomy is crucial for lifelong learning, which has been an aim of education for decades. It is argued that autonomy should be fostered in the classroom setting and interrelated with important notions from the field of foreign language learning and teaching. In order to guarantee enhancement of autonomy in language education, it is essential to consider and introduce changes to the relation between a learner and a teacher, and to encourage students and educators to develop their independent actions in a class.

This paper thus focuses on the concept of autonomy in language learning and teaching and discusses the role of teachers and students in this process. It also describes methods and techniques that can be helpful in fostering autonomy in a language classroom.

1. Contexts, definitions and classifications of learner autonomy

Autonomy may be discussed in various contexts of life. Hayo Reinders (2017: 37–49) points to political, social and psychological contexts of autonomy. A political context of autonomy is related to minority rights movements, and the main idea about autonomy is that everybody should be free to make their own choices. This statement had a huge impact on education. An adult learner, as Henri Holec (in Reinders 2017: 38) states, has to be seen as “a producer of society” and not “its product”.

Transformations in Western societies included, apart from minority rights and personal freedom, respecting society members as individuals with different needs. Therefore, in 1971 the Council of Europe started the Modern Languages Project. Its initial goal was to create a proper environment for adult learners to enable their lifelong learning. Leadership
in this project was given to Holec, who in 1981 formulated the most influential definition of learner autonomy (Benson 2001: 7–8).

A social context of autonomy refers to globalization and the changes it brought to English language learning and teaching. English became a language of international communication. Therefore, scholars’ perspective on what is important in language learning and teaching had to change. Cultural differences had to be considered. Learners needed English not only to communicate with the members of the community they belonged to, but also for effective international communication. The learning experience had to involve social reality. Learners by affecting this reality, influenced the language itself (Reinders 2017: 37–49).

The last context is psychological and it involves creating the learner’s own target language through individual experiences (Reinders 2017: 38–40). This context was explored further by Fener and Newby (in Çakıcı 2015: 32) who state that:

... each individual has a unique way of constructing his or her own world. Each generates rules and mental models so that they make sense of experiences. Learning is a search for meaning. Therefore, learning must start with issues around which students actively try to construct meaning. The key to succeed in learning depends on allowing each individual to construct his or her meaning, not make them memorize and repeat another person's meaning. In formal learning environments, learners can be enabled to construct their own personal learning spaces in accordance with their personal and educational needs.

Defining learner autonomy has proved to be a difficult task. After decades of researching this notion, there is no definition which captures all the complexity of autonomy. There are, however, some popular definitions, which all together might give some idea of what learner autonomy is.

Benson (1996: 27, 2001: 13) points to three ways of defining learner autonomy. According to him, autonomy can be seen as:

a. an idealistic concept in which the learner is fully responsible for all the decisions he makes concerning his language learning process;

b. a set of skills that can be learnt;

c. “... an inborn capacity, suppressed by formal education”.

As for definitions, the most often cited definition was introduced by Henry Holec in Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning (1980). Henri
Holec (in Little 2017b: 2) defines learner autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning”. This definition was later changed by other scholars but without a significant change in meaning.

In *Self-instruction in Language Learning*, Leslie Dickinson (1987: 11) presents learner autonomy as “the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions”.

It is also worth alluding to David Little (1991: 4), who views learner autonomy as “a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action”.

Alastair Pennycook (1997: 39) defines learner autonomy as “the struggle to become the author of one’s own world, to be able to create one’s own meaning, to pursue cultural alternatives amid the cultural politics of everyday life”.

The last explanation to be quoted here is the one given by Anita Wenden (in Benson 1996: 30), who puts forward the opinion that:

… ‘successful’ or ‘expert’ or ‘intelligent’ learners have learned how to learn. They have acquired the learning strategies, the knowledge about learning, and the attitudes that enable them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Therefore, they are autonomous.

As it was stated before, scholars cannot agree on one definition of learner autonomy. The problem seems to be in “the lack of definition by professional authorities and the subsequent tendency for different terms to mean different things to different practitioners” (Finch 2017: 7).

It seems that it may be easier to explain what autonomy is not than what it is. Edith Esch in *Promoting Learner Autonomy: Criteria for the Selection of Appropriate Methods* (1996: 37) lists concepts that might seem to be learner autonomy but are only some aspects of it. Esch states that learner autonomy is not:

- self-instruction or learning without a teacher;
- banned intervention or initiative on the part of a teacher;
- something teachers do to learners;
- a single behaviour;
- a steady state achieved by learners once and for all.

Phil Benson (in Finch 2017: 5) presents three major classifications of learner autonomy for language learning. He points to technical,
psychological and political autonomy. Benson (in Finch 2017: 5) main-
tains that technical autonomy is about learning a language informally
and without the intervention of the teacher. Biljana Ivanovska (2014)
argues that it should be done mostly after finishing learner training. Bar-
bara McDevitt (in Deimante-Hartmane 2017) holds that learners should
understand basic concepts of learning and how to learn to be able to take
responsibility for their learning process.

According to Phil Benson (in Finch 2017: 5), psychological autonomy
is a capacity to take more responsibility for learning. It is possible only
through developing confidence and maintaining motivation. Political
autonomy is a control over the processes and content of learning. It
means giving learners freedom to make decisions about their own learn-
ing (Borg & Al-Busaidi 2012: 14).

Many researchers point to the importance of learner autonomy
in effective second language learning. Autonomy is too complex to be
expressed in a simple way. However, there have been attempts to do so.
To simplify the phenomenon of autonomy, many scholars have decided
to describe it using metaphors. A good example of it may be the stage
theory, autonomy as a part of a spiralling process, and degrees of au-
autonomy is not an absolute concept. There are degrees of autonomy
which depend on a range of factors such as:

- the personality of the learner;
- goals of the learner;
- the philosophy of the institution providing the instructions;
- cultural context within which the learning takes place.

There is an ongoing discussion about individual autonomy in contrast to
social autonomy. Individual autonomy has been prioritised in Western-
style of learning for many years. In this view, an autonomous learner
is more likely to attribute his learning success to internal factors and
control. In other words, he believes that he will succeed thanks to his
abilities, effort and hard work. Social autonomy, on the other hand,
emphasizes that learners may be autonomous in different ways accord-
ing to their sociocultural background. There are numerous autonomies,
also within Western culture. It is suggested that researchers should focus
on kinds of decisions and types of responsibility learners take in their
cultures (Oxford 2008: 49–51).
According to social autonomy, autonomous learning should be promoted in classrooms by encouraging learners to develop and express their own identities using the target language (Ushioda 2011). It means that learners should speak as themselves and “what they learn becomes a part of what they are” (Little 2004: 106).

The idea of social autonomy was described by Adrian Holliday (in Oxford 2008: 49), who states that:

- different kinds of autonomy can be found in different sociocultural contexts;
- autonomy is present in learners’ social environments;
- teachers should allow learners to use their own learning strategies and at the same time share other strategies that might be useful to them.

2. The role of the teacher, and the concepts of teacher and learner autonomy

In times of globalization, the role of the teacher is changing. English, mostly from Britain or America, which has been taught in European countries for so many years, is being replaced by international English. The new role of English as a lingua franca forced teachers to set different teaching goals and to change methods of teaching. Learners aim for communication skills that can be used within and beyond Europe (Berns et al. 2007: 16–25).

As it was stated before, learner autonomy does not necessarily mean learning without the assistance and support of a teacher. Learners also might or might not be independent of institutions. However, the role of the teacher is different now (Benson 2008: 20–24).

Learner and teacher autonomy are interdependent. It is emphasized that only autonomous teachers can help learners to become autonomous. The person of a teacher is thus a crucial factor in the development of learner autonomy (Little 1995: 179).

With technology, which brought new possibilities to language learning (especially self-studying), teachers have changed into advisors or helpers. Learners started to use “learning technology” and collaborative learning (Esch 1996: 35).
There are, however, two problematic areas related to autonomy in language education that are often highlighted by scholars. They are closely connected with definitions of autonomy, namely: responsibility for learning and freedom to make choices concerning this process (Finch 2017; Little 2017a).

It is often stressed that some amount of responsibility has to be taken by the learner in his or her language learning process. However, there is no consensus on the degree of this responsibility. It is connected to the concept of self-directed learning. Some researchers point out that even a little degree of autonomy ought to be praised. For instance, in some communities taking partial responsibility only for learning outside the classroom is a great effort for learners (Smith 2001: 80). What is more, even a small degree of responsibility is considered a step towards becoming a lifelong learner, which nowadays seems to be one of the main priorities of education (Borg & Al-Busaidi 2012: 42).

Many researchers maintain that autonomy is all about freedom. It is stated that freedom is not the same as autonomy. However, most scholars agree that autonomy requires at least some degree of freedom (Benson 2008: 17–18). Nevertheless, it is not absolute. Rebecca L. Oxford (2008: 48–51) indicates that learners are capable of making some decisions concerning their learning but never all of them. She also notes that not every learner will decide to set being autonomous as a goal. Additionally, taking responsibility for learning may differ for every learner.

What is more, it is the teacher’s role to encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning and in doing so to move towards autonomy (Benson 2008: 20–24).

According to Phil Benson (1996: 31–33), responsibility for managing the learning process and freedom is connected to the concept of power. Benson points to three main areas of control in the language classroom:

a. control over the learning process;
b. control over resources;
c. control over language.

Considering responsibility for the learning process, Benson (1996: 31–33) emphasizes that a teacher’s role is to encourage learners’ critical thinking about “social constraints under which language learning takes place” such as functions of the language in the educational system and society and learners’ attitudes towards these functions. He maintains
that critical thinking is crucial when it comes to making decisions about the content and ways of learning that should be relevant to learners’ personal goals.

It is stated that teachers should raise learners’ critical awareness of resource limitations in areas such as native and non-native educators, textbooks and self-access (Benson 1996: 31–33). David Little (1995: 179) notes that even textbooks, used in a proper way, can become a tool for developing autonomy among learners.

Phil Benson (1996: 31–33) suggests that teachers should use subjective needs assessment instruments and take into account learning style preferences.

Control of language is also related to the subject of autonomy. According to Philip Candy (in Benson 1996: 31–33), it is crucial to point to a creative element in learning the language, encouraging learners to question the judgments of experts:

> In the language-learning context, native speakers might be considered as the experts ... and subject matter autonomy as the learner’s right to question native-speaker judgement of normative appropriateness. ... It can be said to define the goal of autonomous language learning as the negation of the teaching-learning distinction, or the transformation of the learner into a user or producer of language. (Benson 1996: 33)

The teacher’s role in enhancing learner autonomy is to choose areas where autonomy in the classroom can be promoted. It can be done by the process of negotiation. It is possible even in formal education with all its limitations. Formally-imposed goals of learning can be fulfilled through negotiation between teachers and learners regarding learners’ personal aims (Little 1995: 179).

The main reason why it is very difficult for both learners and teachers to develop autonomy, according to Mirosław Pawlak (2004: 174), is learners’ reluctance to take more control over the process of learning a language, both in and outside the classroom. Hanna Komorowska (in Pawlak 2004: 174) states that it may be a result of:

- the fear of making decisions and dealing with their consequences;
- doubts about the competence of the teacher who transfers responsibility for the learning process to learners;
- learners’ expectations towards the teacher and his teaching strategies and behaviour;
• learners’ and parents’ beliefs about teachers and their responsibility for both the process of learning and its outcomes;
• expectations of formal educational system – goals, framework, exam preparation;
• teachers’ own experiences with the learning process;
• insufficient teacher training – without the development of autonomy.

The problem may also be in learners’ and teachers’ attitudes towards authority. In Polish schools, according to Magdalena Szczepanik-Ninin (2004: 231), learners and teachers are used to subordination, and questioning authority may result in sanctions. Learners and teachers should thus develop autonomy in order to involve in critical thinking in the language classroom. Such a practice can lead to independent thinking without negation of authority or uncritical acceptance of everything.

It needs to be noted here that autonomous teachers feel responsible for their teaching. They continue to develop their own autonomy and skills by continuous reflection and analysis (Little 1995: 179). Richard C. Smith (in Phan 2012: 468) presents six characteristics of teacher autonomy:

a. self-directed professional action;
b. capacity for self-directed professional action;
c. freedom from control over professional action;
d. self-directed professional development;
e. capacity for self-directed professional development;
f. freedom from control over professional development.

It needs to be noted here that autonomous learners, on the other hand, have to understand the purpose of their learning. They have to accept responsibility for their process of learning, take part in setting goals and planning activities. They have to be able to review and evaluate how effective their learning is. It means that an autonomous learner is someone who understands the process of learning, has a positive attitude towards learning, takes initiative and is capable of reflection (Little 2017a).

It is stressed that learners and teachers should be aware of the fact that learning and teaching is not entirely about knowledge, but also about certain skills that should be developed. Thus, it needs to be remembered that every person in a school community is able to become autonomous (Riihimäki 2013: 22).
3. Ways of fostering learner and teacher autonomy

Education policy should support the development of learner autonomy by creating an appropriate environment. This development can be facilitated by the introduction of new technologies at schools, flexible curricula and proper teacher training (Trad 2004: 69–70).

Phil Benson (2001: 112) points to six “areas of practice” related to autonomy in language education. These areas relate to teachers, learners, curricula, classrooms, resources and technology.

At this point it is necessary to emphasize that successful promotion of learner autonomy, in fact, strongly depends on teacher autonomy (Little 1995: 180). However, in Polish schools, it is a very difficult task to develop teacher autonomy. Anna Michońska-Stadnik (in Marciniak 2014: 337) enumerates the main obstacles in this area such as:

- lack of fostering autonomy in teachers’ education;
- learners’ attitudes towards teachers and specific expectations concerning the choice of a textbook and other materials as well as the assessment system;
- parents’ attitudes towards teachers: learning should be serious, teachers should not teach in a fun way.

In the context of language education in Poland, there are several possible ways of fostering autonomy among language teachers. Apart from reflection on and analysis of the teaching and learning process, there are a few more ways of developing teacher autonomy that are worth mentioning (Marciniak 2014: 338–339):

- promoting creativity among teachers;
- teacher development;
- giving new roles to teachers such as the role of an expert, advisor or researcher;
- using new technologies in the area of resources;
- strategy training.

David Little (1995: 179–180) highlights the importance of the process of negotiation and pedagogical dialogue in fostering not only learner but also teacher autonomy. He states that teacher education should be based on negotiation in the areas of goals, course content, learning tasks and assessment.
Richard C. Smith (2000: 90) maintains that working on learner autonomy is only possible when teachers themselves are autonomous learners. In his opinion it is very important during teacher training to focus not only on pedagogical skills but also on teacher-learner autonomy. One way to achieve it is through encouraging teachers to learn a foreign language.

Development of autonomous learning skills is shown in learner-based approaches. As Phil Benson (2001: 142–145) states, they concentrate on changes in behaviour and attitudes of the learner so that they are able to develop autonomy as individuals. These changes can be initiated by Learner Training, which focuses on introducing strategies of language learning to learners. It is stated that such an approach results in improving the effectiveness of the whole learning process (McCarthy 1998).

As highlighted above, learner autonomy depends to a great extent on teacher autonomy. However, according to Alina Gmur (2004: 236–241), it is not the only factor. She points to other elements which contribute to the development of autonomy among students, such as:

- a contract, which is an effective tool in fostering learner autonomy; it is written as a result of teacher-learner cooperation, and it is an outcome of the negotiation process;
- learner training, during which students learn strategies for learning a language;
- group work, which allows for more interaction between learners;
- self-evaluation, which is the assessment of oneself.

Autonomy can also be evident in the decisions made about classroom activities. Phil Benson (2001: 151–155) maintains that students should be encouraged to participate in the activities planning phase and the evaluation phase. Studies show that a classroom without a teacher, or with a teacher in the role of a consultant, encourages peer-teaching, learning from mistakes, self-monitoring and self-assessment.

Besides, students are recommended to use different resources independently. They should be given an opportunity to take control over learning by selecting and evaluating a variety of materials (Benson 2001: 113–135). An independent use of resources by them might be a complementary activity to the traditional classroom course or a way to self-study. Learners should practise choosing appropriate learning materials and tasks for themselves on the basis of their individual learning experiences.
and needs (McMurry, Tanner & Anderson 2010). William Littlewood (in Benson 2001: 124) points to shortcomings of self-access centers. He argues that they allow learners to practise only receptive skills, however, they lack authentic communication. That is why it is stressed that self-access is not enough and it is better to incorporate it into regular lessons. In literature, it is often stressed that self-instruction and distant learning are other ways of practising independent use of materials. However, these practices are criticised by many scholars who emphasize that learning “in isolation is a poor way of learning a language” (Roswell & Libben, in Benson 2001: 131).

One should also point here to an independent use of technology in language learning, especially in accessing materials. It is associated with computer software and the internet, both of which help students in their educational undertakings. When it comes to autonomy and the internet, learners should be encouraged to do activities such as e-mailing and online discussions, as they create opportunities for various interactions (Benson 2001: 136–139). The notion of interaction is emphasized, for instance, by David Little (1991: 5–7) who states that education as a social process has a lot to do with relationships between learners. Therefore, autonomy can only be achieved by interacting with other people.

Little (in Riihimäki 2013: 27) notes that in an autonomous language classroom there should be enough space for learner involvement, learner reflection and target language use. He indicates that learners should not be left alone with their learning. They need help in analyzing and estimating everything which is presented to them.

**Concluding remarks**

Bearing all these considerations in mind, one can state that autonomy is a broad and complex concept which applies to different spheres of life. Scholars, in fact, discuss this notion from different perspectives and in different fields of studies, including of course foreign language learning and teaching. Researching every kind of autonomy requires, in fact, thorough investigations and analyses of the elements contributing to the development of autonomy in a particular field. Such is also the case with autonomy in language education which, as has been emphasized in this account, plays an important role and which results from a series of
factors, among which is the significant impact of a teacher. The teacher, however, is also a person subjected to autonomy. One can thus state that language education has to be aimed at fostering autonomy of both learners and teachers and not only focused on encouraging autonomous learning. Autonomy in the educational context needs to be promoted not only for more effective and natural foreign language learning and teaching but also for learners and teachers to become more responsible and autonomous in their actions.

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Autonomy of language learners


CHAPTER 3:
CREATIVITY OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS
AND STUDENTS
Introduction

‘Creativity’ is perceived today as a serious aspect in education, and creative ways of conducting classes are highlighted in contemporary scholarly literature because they are regarded as effective. In scholars’ opinion (e.g. Krawiec 2012; Skoczylas-Krotla 2005) it is necessary to implement ‘creativity’ into the field of language learning and teaching. As they claim, an effective process of acquiring language knowledge cannot be performed without creative thinking. Both students and teachers are responsible for the work during language classes and that is why both sides need to demonstrate their creativity.

According to researchers, creativity is evident in a number of areas. Michael Thanhoffer, Rene Reichel and Reinhold Rabenstein (1996), for example, contend that creativity manifests itself in students’ and teachers’ ideas. These ideas help to transfer and acquire a certain amount of knowledge. Another scholar, Lee Watanabe Crockett (2016) regards creative teaching and learning as inseparable. Thanks to creative teaching, students learn in a more effective way and learn how to be creative themselves. Creative skills are highly important as they help to solve many language problems. According to Marek Krawiec (2012), creative undertakings of students and teachers motivate, inspire and make participants of classes more engaged. That is why it is crucial for teachers to conduct their lessons in a creative way.

1. The notion of creativity

The word ‘creativity’ comes from the Latin word ‘creare’ and means “to produce” or “to cause” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2017). According to Daniela Braun (2009: 28), creativity has always been present in human life. It is manifested in paintings inside caves, jewellery, which was made even in ancient times, and different items of art and culture that people
Creativity of language teachers and students

have created over centuries. She maintains that creativity is an innate ability of people which helps them to create better living conditions and to adapt to specific conditions that they live in.

Braun (2009: 29) divides creativity into individual, social and societal. Individual creativity applies to the creation of something new by an individual. Social creativity has an impact on people and attracts attention because of its newness. Societal creativity is related to things often seen and experienced in the environment and among people. Braun indicates that not only remarkable achievements, for example, writings, formulated theories or discoveries, are taken into account as creative undertakings, but also actions that are important for individuals. In fact, one does not have to be creative on a large scale in order to be considered creative.

Braun (2009: 33) notes that creativity is a key to solving problems. She maintains that one has to be creative to find a solution to some specific problem. This ability is seen as competence which helps people to manage in the world full of challenges. Managing numerous tasks in some new way is impossible without being creative. One has to imagine this kind of solution which will be possible to execute in reality and at the same time helpful in dealing with a particular situation. Even the execution of it can be creative if executioners suggest new ideas and add some new elements to it or simply change it.

It is highlighted that even if a person creates something that is new only to him/her, it can be called creative. Braun (2009: 34) points to the necessity of making a very important distinction between creativity and fantasy. She sees creation as a result of fantasy. Fantasy has an impact on being creative but, as she notes, it is obvious that one has to see the difference between these notions. Only realization of fantasies in real life can be called creativity. Usually, fantasies motivate people in creation, but if they are not expressed in some way, they still remain fantasies. New creations are born thanks to a thin line between the outside world and the inside of a creator. If the creator is able to find the connection between them, he can consider himself a creative person.

According to Michael Thanhoffer, Rene Reichel and Reinhold Rabenstein (1996: 13), one should see the connection between the expression of creativity and being active and imaginative. To be creative, one must express things, have a vision of something and experiment.
The visions, feelings and ideas that he/she has can be expressed either verbally or nonverbally, for example, by gestures, dance or art. All these means of expression play a significant role in society and enable one to influence his or her surroundings. Maciej Karwowski and Aleksandra Gajda (2010: 13) state that everything depends on the individual and what kind of creation he considers as creative.

The notion of creativity is also discussed by Irena Adamek and Józefa Bałachowicz (2013: 16), who view creativity as an inseparable feature of modern and future human life. They note that thanks to creativity which is present at school during classes, teachers and students have a chance to develop their own creativity.

2. Creative undertakings of teachers and students

Edyta Skoczylas-Krotla (2005: 97) emphasizes that ‘creativity’ in classrooms is manifested in the behaviour of both students and teachers. As she points out, experimentation, being brave and inspiring are features of the creative teacher and as well creative students. She maintains that making learners look for and find information by themselves is an essential step in the development of creative behaviours in a class. Encouraging learners to behave spontaneously is also urged by the scholar. It is advised by her to place emphasis on the overall development of students and for this purpose she recommends the use of rhymes, poems, dialogues, tales and songs devised and made by learners themselves.

Marek Krawiec (2012: 145–146) states that it is crucial to change traditional ways of teaching at schools in order to develop creativity of students and teachers. On the basis of the material coming from the work called ‘Agent’, he emphasizes the role of project method in creative EFL teaching and learning at the secondary level. He maintains that project work in out-of-school conditions reinforces creativity and activates the whole school community to a great extent. According to Krawiec (2012: 146–147), organization of classes in this form requires, of course, inventiveness from the teacher who needs to plan and devise challenging and stimulating tasks for his students. He emphasizes, however, that not only teachers are creative in this work but also students who must find their own ways of solving problems that are devised by educators.
As Daniela Braun (2009: 41) notes, products like homework, written tasks or paintings made by students can also be treated as forms of creations, by means of which young people have a chance to simply express themselves. When the task is needed to be done on one’s own, it requires to be thought over and it helps students to develop creativity and deepen their visions and new ways of producing. Moreover, Braun claims that a form created by a learner reveals individual processes ongoing in his/her mind. It means that everyday situations and his/her experiences have an influence on forming the final product that he/she presents in a class.

According to Lee Watanabe Crockett (2016: 1), it is acceptable to view creativity as teachable and learnable. He believes that creative learning is possible thanks to creative teaching. The scholar maintains that creative formations should be adequate to the level of the group’s age and knowledge. The teacher is supposed to take these factors into account when specifying expectations towards learners. At first, he needs to show that he is a creative person. His creativity can be evident in planning the lessons and in assessment activities. Teachers should also make students aware of what they are capable of instead of constantly reminding them of their limits. Young people simply cannot be too restricted. They need to be shown that obstacles are not difficult to overcome and if they think them over and define them, they will be able to find solutions. This type of approach will make students look at the problem from different points of view, let them see the origin of it and discover aspects that are not visible. Learners will be able to consider ideas of their classmates. Crockett (2016) also highlights that students need to be supported and that the whole process takes time. Critical and analytical thinking play a crucial role in solving problems and that is why young people should be aware of the necessity of using them during classes. The teacher is not only one person in school who teaches, he has colleagues who may have many creative ideas to share. The Internet is also a source of interesting materials which may inspire students. Young people must be perceived as individuals who are responsible for their education and that highs and lows sometimes can occur. They for sure need to be taught to make choices on their own. Crockett proposes to make use of technology to become creative. Using technology for creative work causes a feeling of responsibility among students. A chance to create own pictures, animations or stories merits the process of teaching/learning. It is observed
that this is the time for teachers to become more flexible and to be aware that sometimes the change of old habits is beneficial.

Małgorzata Zalewska-Bujak (2005: 67–68) maintains that the teacher is supposed to be flexible and he is to accept many changes connected with education. According to her, realization of the curriculum must be done in a ‘creative and innovative way’ and it is the teachers who have to find the ways that meet this requirement.

Anna Sajdak (2008: 196) points to some of the ways which help to develop creativity of students and to realize the curriculum in an effective and interesting way. At first, the teacher needs to recognize the phase of acquiring knowledge in which students are. Thanks to this information, the teacher will be able to establish adequate ways of teaching. Secondly, he should verbally and non-verbally ‘inspire’ and ‘motivate’ learners. Thirdly, he must allow them to be physically active as every sense is needed for the stimulation of creativity. Time for group- and individual work must be taken into account by him as well. The teaching material which he uses in class should be not only well organized but also revised and repeated with students several times. Only through such initiatives of a teacher can learners become more interested and more creative in the lesson.

Ewa Zwolińska (2005: 57) in her account points to many creative undertakings of students. Firstly, she distinguishes ‘ideas’ as, for example, expressing one’s ‘points of view’, making plans for the lesson, and ways of acting while role-playing. Next she stresses the use of vocabulary to ‘reconstruct thoughts’ and the ability to imagine. She also mentions ‘intentions’ which are related to the ambition of putting students’ creations in motion. Students’ situational estimation and ‘perceptions’ about specific topics are viewed by her as creative undertakings as well.

Marek Krawiec (2012: 147–150) indicates that it is important for a teacher to devise or choose sets of activities which help learners to form answers creatively and to solve tasks in an imaginative way. As he notes, a chance of becoming acquainted with specific information in an original form is possible on their side thanks to a considerable number of tasks conceptualized and prepared by educators. He maintains that thanks to such tasks, students are able to develop different skills (including language skills) and to use their layers of creative potential.
3. Development of creativity in a language class

Joanna Sobańska-Jędrych (2013) shows a connection between creativity and acquisition of language knowledge. She claims that oral ‘products’ in a foreign language are creative formations, and activities during language classes help to trigger students’ imagination. Simply, to do the activities in a language lesson, learners have to formulate answers to specific questions. Creative tasks suggested by Sobańska-Jędrych involve, for example, role playing, communicative simulations and oral presentations which allow for original solutions and imaginative thinking.

The teacher performs the main function in the development of creativity in a language classroom, as Sobańska-Jędrych (2013: 56–57) notes. The teacher as a person teaches how to be creative and makes conditions for his students to be so. It is important for him to know how to organize or reorganize lessons in different kinds of situations. Educational methods should be well planned and chosen and adjusted to each learner in the group. Similarly as Krawiec (2012), Sobańska-Jędrych maintains that young people can develop their creativity through projects that are not regulated by any principles. This kind of a research task allows learners to face and solve problems in a creative way. The scholar maintains that the process is not as easy as it seems to be because there are some issues that may restrict it. The financial state of the school, exhaustion, lack of motivation, mental state of the teacher or his relations with his co-workers have a huge impact on the development of the whole project.

Sobańska-Jędrych (2013: 57) states that exercises which are not in the form of tests have a positive influence on the development of creativity among students. Game-type tasks are included in this group because they lead among others to the development of learners’ imagination. Independence of young people in such activities is also noticeable. Sobańska-Jędrych (2013: 58) distinguishes techniques that allow students to remember certain material much better. The first one is called associative which leads to finding many ideas by brainstorming or mind mapping. The second one involves making analogies that are based on comparisons. The last one relates to looking at the problem from different perspectives, which should make students find possible solutions. Presented methods often lead to many questions asked by the group that can be sometimes problematic. These behaviours should
not be inhibited, and every creative teacher is supposed to be prepared to answer and solve such problems.

**Concluding remarks**

The paper presented here shows that creativity plays an important role in the process of language learning and teaching. It suggests that there are numerous methods and techniques which lead to creativity of educators and learners. Scholars’ proposals of specific tasks which require creativity and which have been discussed here, in fact, help students to express their ideas, to use their imagination, and as a result, to learn in an effective way. Tasks such as role-playing, writing poems and doing projects activate students and encourage them to work and produce something useful. In the opinion of the author of this paper, the application of scholars’ guidelines with regard to creative formations can bring a lot of benefits in the area of language teaching and learning. We can thus conclude that creativity should be evident in language education and that creative ways of teaching are a practical and reasonable choice of every modern language teacher.

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Introduction

Today’s scholars and teachers, in their accounts, focus on the notion of creativity and emphasize its role in the educational process. Their main assumption is that everything which is done by teachers at school should be creative, innovative and interesting for students. The development of creativity by learners is essential for their future life as creative citizens and for solving problems which await them on an everyday basis.

The main aim of this paper is to discuss important aspects connected with the concept of creativity such as the definition of the term, the process of creative teaching at school and the development of creativity by students as well as the notions of creative learners and teachers, and activities outside the classroom.

1. Definition of creativity and characteristic features of a creative person

Concentrating on the definition of creativity, it is necessary to relate to John F. Feldhusen (1999: 623), who points out that “[c]reativity is the ability to produce new ideas”. In Oxford English Dictionary (2015) one can read that creativity is “the ability to use skill and imagination to produce something new or to produce art; the act of doing something”. In the Encyclopedia of Children’s Health (2015) creativity is defined as:

- the ability to think up and design new inventions, produce works of art, solve problems in new ways, or develop an idea based on an original, novel, or unconventional approach. Creativity is the ability to see something in a new way, to see and solve problems no one else may know exists, and to engage in mental and physical experiences that are new, unique, or different. Creativity is a critical aspect of a person’s life, starting from inside the womb onward through adulthood.
Scholars indicate that creative people tend to be more impulsive, free and extemporaneous. People with these characteristics are less susceptible to pressure because they are self-sufficient and self-supporting. Creativity in childhood is measured by the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking. These tests assess fluency, originality and flexibility. However, a lot of scholars criticize these tests because of a problem with the definition of creativity (Encyclopedia of Children’s Health 2015).

Creativity has also been compared to a voyage of discovery (Craft 2008: 1). According to Alexander Graham Bell (in Craft 2008: 1), creativity is like diving into an unknown place. It is recognized by Jung (in Craft 2008: 1) as “water representing the depths of the unconscious which provide a stimulus to creative impulse”. Fryer and Collings (in Isenberg & Jalongo 2014) maintain that creative thinking is thinking “outside the box” and connect this concept with fluency and flexibility. Joan Isenberg and Mary Jalongo (2014) view creativity as a form of intelligence which is usually not recognised by tests and grades.

Creative thinking involves three skills (Sternberg & Williams 1996: 3):

1. **Synthetic skill** – it means that a creative person thinks spontaneously and makes connections between things. It is a competence which allows for producing new ideas. Students, for example, are able to connect knowledge from different subjects, for example, history and maths. They can count reigning kings, e.g. Bolesław I The Vailant (992–1025), Władysław I Herman (1044–1102).

2. **Practical skill** – is a skill to turn theory into practice. The innovative person uses this competence to show other people that an idea is worthy. In English, for example, students learn the principles of Present Simple Tense and then they can build sentences.

3. **Analytical skill** – is connected with critical thinking. People with this competence analyze and test ideas. In maths, students know the Pythagorean trigonometric identity and count the legs a, b and the hypotenuse c.

A creative person should show these three skills because only a balance among them can guarantee success and can generate original and innovative concepts.

According to Robert Franken (in Isenberg & Jalongo 2014), there are three reasons why people want to be innovative and original, namely:

a. solving problems;
b. communicating concepts and ideas;
c. complex stimulation.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1997) enumerates characteristics of a creative person. He identifies the following features of creative individuals:

- a great deal of energy;
- a connection between discipline and playfulness;
- imagination;
- a combination of extroversion and introversion;
- independence;
- interest and passion to their work;
- openness;
- inspiration;
- perspicacity.

Bearing all these in mind, it is necessary to allude to Robert Sternberg and Todd Lubart (1995, in Sternberg & Williams 1996: 1), who compare creative people to “good investors” who can sell high and buy low.

2. Creativity of teachers

Today’s test-taking and data-driven schools dominate in the educational system and creativity is often forgotten. Many teachers concentrate on tests and students’ results and they forget about critical thinking and creative undertakings. The reason why teachers do not teach creative thinking and focus on test scores is that they are the subject of evaluation of headmasters and school institutions, for whom test results of students play a more important role than other aspects. Therefore, teachers rather concentrate on good preparation of their students for tests than on the development of numerous skills of young people (Sternberg & Williams 1996).

Teachers, learners, parents and school authorities should, however, take into account the notion of creative thinking (Craft 2008). According to Alice Sterling Honig (1990: 52), the teacher should be creative as much as possible and should inspire his/her students. He/she should be curious, interested in the world and engaged. If students see these features in their educator, they will also become committed and investigative. As Honig (in Preble 2015) indicates, “[t]he great engine that drives innovation and invention in society comes from people whose
flame of creativity was kept alive in childhood”. Thus, teachers’ task is to develop creative and critical thinking among students. There are, of course, certain ways of developing such thinking in the classroom, such as:

- presentation of visuals – e.g. students look at pictures or photos and create a story;
- introduction of music – e.g. students listen to different types of music and imagine scenes when music is being played, in this form students can show their emotions by, for example, writing a poem or a short story;
- historical reference – e.g. students can write a letter pretending to be a historical person, or write and act out a dialogue between a historical person and a present-day politician or themselves;
- incorporation of math and science – e.g. a learner can create geometric buildings or become “an architect” and design a housing estate (Preble 2015).

An important factor which influences creative thinking is the atmosphere in the classroom, which relates to verbal and physical responses (movements) of the teacher. By using them the educator can provide learners with proper feedback. The teacher should also offer activities outside the school. Another important aspect is the notion of lesson planning. In this area, the teacher should be creative too and should design and organize tasks that are challenging, but which do not overwhelm his students (Preble 2015).

Researchers identify a creative skill as a “mental activity performed in situations where there is no prior correct solution or answer” (Ripple 1999: 631). Those who measure creativity clearly point to such features as (Preble 2015): originality, fluency, curiosity, flexibility, complexity, risk-taking, elaboration and imagination. Obstacles to creativity can sometimes occur, such as:

- cultural barriers;
- emotional barriers;
- language barriers (Preble 2015).

To overcome these barriers, it is necessary to use creative teaching techniques. The educator may decide which techniques are suitable for his/her lesson and students. Here are suggested techniques for creative teaching in the classroom:
• **Brainstorming** – students are divided into groups, they develop ideas which may be shocking and fantastic. Learners can convert ideas into original concepts. Brainstorming is useful for diagnosing problems as well as establishing and suggesting solutions. When students work together and exchange their opinions, they are critical (Mind Tools 2015a). In English lessons, students can work in groups and discuss, for example, the problem of “Living in a small town, a big city and in the country”. They can collect their ideas and present them to the class.

• **Brain-sketching** – students can make sketches when they want to solve a specific problem. Then, they can exchange their sketches with their colleagues and add some notes or drawings to the illustrations of their colleagues (Preble 2015). For instance, learners when discussing the problem of “planning a journey” can work together and make one poster with ideas that each of them has prepared on his/her chart.

• **Role-playing** – learners can take a role of a particular person and analyze the behaviour from the perspective of that person. Before this activity, learners should be prepared for difficult situations and conversations (Mind Tools 2015d). For example, students can act out Lady Macbeth, who conspires against Dunkan and encourages her husband to kill the king of Scotland. Participants of role-playing can discuss the conduct of Lady Macbeth.

• **Concept mapping** – students can mirror their knowledge in graphic form. They can make a network which consists of links that show relationships between certain ideas and nodes. A concept map includes a minimum of words which describe an idea (Canas & Novak 2009). For instance, learners can prepare a diagram about DNA: definition, biological functions, interaction with protein and usage in technology.

• **DO IT** – this technique allows students to define problems. Learners look for the best solution and then transform it into action. The technique supports the searching process (Mind Tools 2015c). An illustration of the use of this technique can be finding the best means of transport (car, plane or coach) for a trip from Warsaw to London.
• Questioning activity – in which students formulate 100 questions. Thanks to these questions, learners make certain discoveries (Preble 2015). For instance, they can formulate questions on the topic of mass media and they can consider the role, types and influence of mass media on people’s life.

• Slip-writing – students write their ideas on small slips of paper. Then the teacher collects ideas on one big card and students draw a conclusion and get feedback (Mind Tools 2015b). For example, students can write their ideas on how to learn English vocabulary effectively. After 10–15 minutes given to students to complete the task, the teacher sticks slips of paper onto a big poster.

• Exaggeration – which is a technique that helps to illustrate a problem (Preble 2015). For example, students can use hyperbole to make a boring story more interesting: I was in Africa and I saw giraffes wearing sunglasses and caps.

• Reversal – a problem can be solved in many ways: inside out, upside down or backwards (Preble 2015). For example, to the topic: How can computer games influence children? reversal questions can be asked: How can computer games influence children’s memory? How can computer games speed up children’s development?

Modern pedagogy offers a lot of techniques and forms of work which can be used in the classroom and which can help to develop creativity at school. The techniques presented above are only some examples of undertakings of educators that allow them to implement the ideas of creative thinking and innovative problem-solving in the educational context.

3. Creativity of learners

Bertie Kingore (2004), an international consultant and a teacher in preschool, compares a creative student to a high achiever and a gifted learner. Such a student, according to her, is curious, critical and interested in a variety of aspects. He/she generates ideas, carries out tasks in time and always wants to work out the meaning of the given assignments. A creative person asks himself/herself the question “What if…?” Kingore (2004) maintains that a creative thinker is independent, intuitive and original. She points out that for such a person, who is often
not understood by others, everything is possible and that numerous opportunities are awaiting him/her.

Dean Rieck (2009) enumerates several traits that students need to strive for if they wish to be creative:
   a. courage to do new things and make mistakes;
   b. relating to one’s own experience (the ability to make connections between old and new concepts);
   c. testing innovative ideas;
   d. feeling of enjoyment (related to a sense of humour);
   e. finding order and meaning (connected with critical thinking);
   f. determination (the ability to find solutions to difficult problems);
   g. high level of motivation (intrinsic motivation is more important than extrinsic one);
   h. the ability to overcome barriers;
   i. the use of intuition;
   j. willingness to perform different tasks.

All these features need to be developed in students by educators, who share the responsibility of preparing young people for a competitive world and who need to guarantee the formation of a generation of creative thinkers through the activities which they offer in their courses.

4. Creative activities in and outside the classroom

Activities which contribute to the development of students’ creativity can be performed in school and out-of-school conditions. Many researchers, however, believe that students learn better outside the classroom because they take the opportunity to learn in context through personal discovery and greater engagement (Department for Educations and Skills 2006: 3).

There are, in fact, a lot of places where young people can learn, discover and develop their creative skills, for example, museums, theatres, archives, libraries, art and community centers and farms. All these places provide an interesting offer of lessons for students. Physical contact and experience of real things are better than memorizing and learning from books. It is beyond doubt that learning through experience lasts longer and is more meaningful. A real context for learning makes young people aware of the usefulness of learning to their lives. Students also become aware of their self-responsibility for learning. What is more, such a form
of education broadens their horizons and teaches them to take risks. One should, however, remember that learning outside the classroom should involve original activities that meet the needs of young people (Department of Cultures, Communities and Rural Affairs 2009).

One can state that the activities suggested here encourage young people to creative thinking and acting. However, an important role in the organization of classes with these activities is assigned to the teacher who should always look for opportunities to convince his/her students of the role of creativity now and in their future life. If students see that their teacher is passionate and original, they will definitely want to follow their instructor to a great extent and to use their creative potential.

Concluding remarks

Opinions and comments of scholars presented in this paper highlight an important role of educators as well as numerous techniques and activities in the development of students’ creativity. They suggest that a teacher by incorporating the forms of work discussed here into his/her teaching practices can encourage young people to think creatively and make the best use of their creative skills. Thanks to the person of a teacher and his/her organisation of the lesson with these techniques and activities, students can have a chance to practice problem-solving and finding solutions, and they can develop original ideas, become more self-confident and use knowledge in real life situations. They, in fact, can become aware of the important role which creativity plays in human life.

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CHAPTER 4:
LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK / COURSEBOOK / INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
Magdalena Kudlak

Introduction

For many years, a traditional paper coursebook has played an essential role in the teaching and learning process. It has been the most popular didactic material used both during the lesson and at home. However, in recent years we have witnessed a lot of changes in foreign language teaching and learning, which have also been visible in the domain of materials used in class. The rapid development of modern technology, the CD-ROM industry, common digitization and innovations in methodology have led to attempts to replace, or at least support, a traditional paper coursebook with high technology tools. As a result, the content of coursebooks, as well as their visual presentation, have undergone alterations. It is worth highlighting that regardless of what a coursebook has looked like, it has always met three main requirements. Firstly, it is devoted to teaching a particular subject. Secondly, it is used by school learners. That is why it refers to a school curriculum. Thirdly, it is approved by the education ministry (Konieczka-Śliwińska 2012: 77). Despite all the changes and improvements which have been made in the educational field, the ‘classical’ coursebook has remained the basic foreign language teaching and learning material which is, of course, supported now by other tools, such as high technology tools.

Bearing this in mind, this paper will essentially focus on a coursebook and will present its definitions and highlight its use, importance and function in the foreign language teaching and learning process. It will also present the ways of assessing and evaluating coursebooks and describe the structure and different components of such materials. Finally, it will highlight the impact of a coursebook on the development of speaking skills.
1. Coursebook and its use in foreign language teaching and learning

In foreign language teaching and learning the term *coursebook* is commonly used to describe

a book (usually as part of a series of books) that contains all materials necessary for a particular type of language learner at a particular level. Such a book is typically based on an integrated or multi-skills syllabus i.e. one that contains sections on grammar functions, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing. (Richards & Schmidt 2002: 141)

For Ur (2004: 183) the term *coursebook* means “a textbook of which the teacher and, usually, each student has a copy, and which is in principle to be followed systematically as the basis for a language course”.

It is important to note that in Applied Linguistics the terms *coursebook* and *textbook* are often used interchangeably, although their definitions do not exactly refer to the same kind of book. Sheldon (1987: 1) defines a textbook as a “published book, most often produced for commercial gain, whose explicit aim is to assist foreign learners of English in improving their linguistic knowledge and/or communicative ability”. Brown (1994: 151) presents a textbook as “a book for use in an educational curriculum”. According to *Collins Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary* (2003: 322, 1497), a coursebook is “a textbook that students and teachers use as the basis of a course”, whereas a textbook is “a book containing facts about a particular subject that is used by people studying that subject”. Taking into consideration all the presented definitions of *a coursebook* and *a textbook* we can conclude that both terms refer to a book that students and teachers use while teaching and learning. For the purposes of this paper, the terms *coursebook* and *textbook* will be used synonymously.

In a language classroom, different teaching materials are used. The most often listed are: coursebooks, workbooks, teacher’s books, audio equipment, video equipment, interactive boards, overhead projectors, computers, posters, pictures, games, teacher-made worksheets and work cards (Ur 2004: 190–192). All of them play an important role in foreign language teaching and learning. Although teaching a foreign language does not always require using a coursebook, coursebooks seem to be the most common kind of teaching material adopted. Most educators
use textbooks in the teaching and learning process. In some places, they are taken for granted. In others, they are not used at all. It is interesting to note that there are teachers who cannot do without a coursebook, while others use such form of material only when the need arises. Some teachers use a coursebook selectively and supplement it with other materials (Ur 2004: 183).

Sheldon (1988: 237) points out that coursebooks “represent for both students and teachers the visible heart of any ELT programme”. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994: 315) suggest “[t]he textbook is an almost universal element of teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in countries… No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook”. According to Richards (1998: 131), for most teachers, the textbook represents the main source of ideas for teaching. Ur (2004: 193) has identified a coursebook as a necessary resource for teachers, stating that:

personally, I very much prefer to use a coursebook. I find that a set framework helps me to regulate any time my program; and, perhaps paradoxically, provides a firm jumping-off point for the creation of imaginative supplementary teaching ideas … It seems that the possession of a coursebook may carry a certain prestige.

Despite the belief that textbooks diminish initiative and creativity in the classroom and that they will gradually become redundant, “the textbook not only survives, it thrives” (Hutchinson & Torres 1994: 316). This is because, in times of continuous search for the better approach, and of an experimentation fever, textbooks bring a desired structure and organization into the lesson (Cunningworth 1995: 83).

O’Neill (1982: 105–107) presents four justifications for the use of textbooks. Firstly, a lot of textbook material is suitable for students’ needs, even if not specifically designed for them. Secondly, it is possible for students to look ahead or to look back if, for various reasons, e.g. they miss lessons. Thirdly, most textbooks provide material which is well-presented. Finally, well-designed textbooks allow for improvisation and adaptation by both the teacher and the student.

Textbooks have many advantages for both educators and learners. Teachers praise their consistent syllabus, vocabulary chosen with care, a wide range of reading and listening material and workbooks. And what
is most important, textbooks offer teachers ideas if they do not know what to do (Harmer 1998: 117). Elliott (2010: 12) states that in many situations, for both teachers and students, a textbook “offers security, clear goals and a framework for study”. It is important to indicate that students often feel more positive about textbooks than some teachers. For them, the textbook is reassuring … It allows them to look forward and back … Now that books tend to be much more colourful than in the old days, students enjoy looking at the visual material in front of them. (Harmer 1998: 117)

Arguments in favour of using a coursebook presented by Ur (2004: 184) are: framework, syllabus, ready-made texts and tasks, economy, convenience, guidance and autonomy.

A positive aspect of using coursebooks in language teaching and learning is undeniable. Nevertheless, there are some teachers who have a critical opinion of textbooks. For a large number of teachers, “textbooks are just collections of material” (Harmer 1998: 117). According to them, textbooks “are sometimes uninteresting and lacking in variety” (Harmer 1998: 117). They are also “boring and stifling (for both teacher and students) and … inappropriate for the class” (Harmer 1998: 116). To this list of disadvantages of using coursebooks, Cunningsworth (1995: 10) adds “a reduced range of response to individual student needs and problems; a possible lack of spontaneity; a sharply reduced level of creativity in teaching technique and language use”. Cunningsworth (1995: 10) criticizes heavy dependence on coursebooks as “it reduces the importance of the individual contributions … It can stifle innovation and it severely limits flexibility”. Ur (2004: 185) reproaches a coursebook inadequacy, irrelevance, lack of interest, limitation, homogeneity and over-easiness.

Whether we like it or not, coursebooks are seen as an indispensable vehicle for foreign language acquisition. What is more, they have multiple roles to play in language classes. Cunningsworth (1995: 7) lists seven main roles of a coursebook. According to him, it can serve as:

- a resource for presentation material (spoken and written);
- a source for activities for learner practice and communicative interaction;
- a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.;
d. a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom language activities;
e. a syllabus (where they reflect learning objectives which have already been determined);
f. a resource for self-directed learning or self-access work;
g. a support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

A number of books and articles on the subject provide examples of functions of coursebooks. For Komorowska (2002: 40) a crucial function of a coursebook is to enable students to master all language skills. Banach (2001: 16–17) and Styszyński (1993: 58) point to six most commonly listed functions. They emphasize that coursebooks provide information and facilitate transformation, research, self-learning, assessment and self-correction. Pfeiffer (2001: 167, 169) points also to a motivating function of such materials and to the importance of developing knowledge about the world by using them. The roles and functions presented above do not complete the list of all functions of coursebooks. For more information, it is advisable to study Banach (2001), Pfeiffer (2001) and Styszyński (1993) in more depth.

It is obvious that a coursebook is one of the most important teaching and learning materials. It is used by many teachers and students every day all over the world. For teachers, it is the basic source of knowledge that he or she has to convey to students. It serves as a didactic aid. For students, it is the fundamental book about a foreign language, containing vocabulary, grammar exercises and listening exercises. Thanks to a coursebook, students can practice four basic language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) (Krajka 2003: 62). That is why the choice of the best and the most suitable coursebook for a particular group of students is a real challenge for a teacher. As Cunningsworth (1995: 1) states, “[t]he wealth of published material for English language teaching (ELT) available on the market makes selecting the right coursebook a challenging task”. The number of questions that need to be asked about a coursebook can be overwhelming. Brown (1994: 149) gives an example of the longest evaluation checklist – over eight printed pages. Harmer (2007: 301) makes a distinction between the assessment of a coursebook and a coursebook evaluation. The first term is defined as “an out-of-class judgement as to how well a new book will perform in class”, while
the second, on the other hand, is “a judgement on how well a book has performed in fact”. As Krajka (2003: 66) notes, it is important to evaluate a coursebook not only at the beginning of the school year but also at the end after using it for a year, which could help make the decision whether to follow the next part of the coursebook or not. What is more, to have an in-depth view of the coursebook, both teachers and students should evaluate it.

Evaluation of coursebooks is not easy and a lot of aspects and criteria have to be considered. One of the most common approaches (Harmer 2007: 301–302) suggests the use of checklists. Such forms of evaluation can be very useful and many authors give examples of them (Brown 1994: 150; Cunningsworth 1995: 3–4; Harmer 1998: 119; Komorowska 2002: 42–43; Krajka 2003: 66; Sheldon 1988: 242–245; Ur 2004: 186). Most features presented in the checklists of the above scholars are the same. They list price, availability, layout and design, clear instructions, syllabus, practice of all language skills, topics, usability, sociolinguistic factors and many others. According to Sheldon (1988: 245), coursebook assessment is a very subjective activity and “no neat formula, grid, or system will ever provide a definitive yardstick”. He (Sheldon 1988: 245–246) also indicates that

[Textbook appraisal is not a once-only activity. When a coursebook is selected, its success or failure can only be meaningfully determined during and after its period of classroom use … The coursebook ultimately needs to be appraised in terms of its integration with, and contribution to, these longer-term goals.

2. Components and structure of a coursebook

A coursebook is mostly a part of a coursebook package and, as it was stated in the previous part, plays an important role in a class. In this account, we will have a closer look at what a coursebook contains and what a coursebook package is made up of, as coursebooks rarely stand alone. We will also consider how different parts of the coursebook package are related to one another and how the central coursebook is supported by other materials (Cunningsworth 1995: 25).

The central part of most coursebook packages consists of at least two books: a student’s book and a teacher’s book. A student’s book is said to
be “the main plank of a package” because it is the main point of contact with students. The role of a teacher’s book is also very important. It is a guide for teachers on how to make the best use of the whole course (Cunningsworth 1995: 25). The third significant element of a coursebook package is a workbook or an activity book. Its main function is to give students some extra practice of items that have already been studied in class. What is more, a student can find a lot of additional writing exercises there too. Workbooks are not very expensive so as students can write in them and throw them away if they are completed (Cunningsworth 1995: 25). The next component of a coursebook package is a CD used generally for listening and pronunciation practice. As the quality of the material recorded on them can vary a lot, it is vital to listen to them in order to evaluate this aspect of the package as well (Cunningsworth 1995: 25; Field 2008: 46–47).

Teaching materials are quite expensive and a budget for buying them is very often limited. That is why it is so important to distinguish essential and optional parts of the package. It would be difficult to teach and learn without students’ and teachers’ books. It would also be ineffective not to have the opportunity to listen to authentic-sounding CDs. These three elements of the coursebook package (students’ book, teacher’s book, CDs) are seen as essential. On the other hand, items like videos, are perceived as optional, as without them the course can still be conducted effectively. Video material is undoubtedly valuable but not indispensable. It arouses mainly learners’ interest and motivation. One can thus state that before purchasing teaching materials, it is necessary to decide about priorities (Cunningsworth 1995: 25–26; Field 2008: 46–47).

Cunningsworth (1995: 26–27) gives examples of the make-up of some typical courses. He also enumerates, in a form of a checklist, various components of a coursebook package and makes the reader decide which components are essential for the total course package and which are optional. The checklist exemplified by Cunningsworth (1995: 28) relates to a student’s book, a teacher’s book, a workbook or an activity book, tests, additional reading material, recordings for listening and for pronunciation, video, CALL materials and other components.

Krajka (2003: 65) provides a very similar model of a coursebook package. He lists a student’s book, a workbook (with or without key), a teacher’s book, recordings for classwork and recordings for homework.
He indicates that some teachers’ books contain extra exercises, tests and projects. He points to a separate book called a teacher resource book which is sometimes added to a coursebook package as a separate book. Krajka (2003: 65) draws our attention to the fact that there is a new tendency to add to the course separate books for practicing a particular skill, for example, pronunciation or listening comprehension. There are, for example, *New Headway Pronunciation Course* and *New Headway Intermediate Video Workbook* which are closely related to particular units of the student’s book. Krajka (2003: 65) does not forget about coursebooks aimed at students preparing themselves for a particular exam. Such books are often accompanied by example tests, CDs, and a teacher’s book with a key. It is of vital importance to add that some coursebooks are sold with computer software, for example, *Shine CD-ROM*, which are practically interactive workbooks containing games, films and recordings.

Due to the technological development and common digitalization, more and more interactive and digital materials are added to the coursebook package. Not to mention the attempts to replace printed books with computer software (Konieczka-Śliwińska 2012: 77).

It turns out that coursebooks are supplemented with more and more additional content. Such is the case with workbooks that have changed to such an extent that one can find in them, for example, mini-grammar sections (*Opportunities*) or new-technology-based materials (Krajka 2003: 65).

Another aspect that needs to be mentioned here is the extent to which different parts of the course package work together in order to form an integrated package. Cunningsworth (1995: 25) asserts that

> ideas on how to bring the different parts together and suggestions on how and when the various components are best used should appear in the teacher’s book. Ideally, we would look for a chart or other schematic representation showing the progression of each component in relation to the other components.

The next concern is with the structure of coursebooks. The term ‘coursebook’ refers here to the student’s book. Most coursebooks begin with a table of contents which is like a map for the whole course containing units, topics, grammar, vocabulary, texts and different tasks. Coursebooks that prepare students for particular exams usually contain at the beginning detailed information about the exam and at the end
example tests accompanied by authentic answer sheets. A coursebook is divided into units of different length. The end of each unit or of a few units often comprises revision sections (Krajka 2003: 64).

To make studying more enjoyable and varied, units are often interwoven with cartoon strips, culture information and various projects. At the end of the coursebook, learners can find additional materials such as transcripts, lists of irregular verbs, grammar explanations, bilingual dictionaries, grammar and vocabulary games and songs. In some coursebooks, at the end, there are also sections devoted to practicing and improving writing skills or additional communicative exercises. More and more often coursebooks and workbooks are linked together and form one book (workbook is always the second part of the book) (Krajka 2003: 64).

Thanks to the diversity of additional materials, working with a coursebook is less monotonous and the coursebook itself may replace other necessary books such as a grammar book, a dictionary or an activity book (Krajka 2003: 64–65).

Cunningsworth (1995: 28) puts emphasis on the importance of recycling the new items. According to him “[it] is rarely sufficient for students to meet new items only once”. It is particularly important when it comes to memorizing grammar and vocabulary. As Cunningsworth (1995: 28) highlights “… items not only need to be met in context and actively practised, they need to be recycled three, four or more times before they become stored in the long-term memory”. He adds that general coursebooks are expected to have “a clear policy on recycling, with progressive reinforcement of newly taught items” (Cunningsworth 1995: 28). He concludes that “[m]any teachers and students are happier when they have a straightforward route through a course, and they sometimes feel more secure when the conventional beginning-to-end direction is used” (Cunningsworth 1995: 28).

It is essential to point out that “[d]espite innovations in technology and methodology, the textbook still has life in it yet. Using a textbook needn’t be a safe or lazy option, but should be one of a number of tools which we use to help our learners learn” (Elliott 2010: 14).
3. **Coursebook and its impact on development of speaking skills**

The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many language learners who evaluate their success in language learning mostly on the basis of the effectiveness of their English course and improvements in their spoken language proficiency (Richards 2008: 19).

Penny Ur (2004: 120) indicates that … of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak.

Furthermore, speaking seems to be one of the most difficult skills students may possess since it requires a great deal of practice and exposure.

Considering the importance of developing speaking skills, it is necessary to have a look at how speaking skills are presented and taught in English coursebooks and what is the role of a coursebook in teaching speaking. Despite the fact that courses in speaking skills have a prominent place in language programs today (mostly thanks to growing needs for fluency in English), many scholars have a rather negative opinion on the impact of coursebooks on the development of speaking skills (Richards 2008: 1).

According to Grant (1987: 34), most of the speaking is done by teachers. Moreover, many textbooks do not contain enough activities for speaking, which might be a reason why a lot of students have trouble with speaking and are very poor in it. Grant (1987: 35–43) lists three kinds of speechwork used in textbooks: drills, communication activities and natural language use. When it comes to drills, learners practice grammar and sounds of the language (pronunciation). As for communicative activities, pupils use the language to practice and improve their fluency rather than accuracy. They have more freedom to communicate. The aim is not to concentrate on mistakes but to gain confidence in speaking. The third kind of speechwork, natural language, should be a part of the class and should be realized by the teacher too. What is more, before choosing a coursebook, it is essential to answer the question whether the book contains enough activities used for practicing the spoken language, what kind of material for speaking is included or what strategies for conversation are recommended (Cunningsworth 1995: 70).
Richards (2008: 19) claims that “oral skills have hardly been neglected in EFL courses (witness the huge number of conversation and other speaking course books in the market)”. At the same time, he (Richards 2008: 19) adds that teachers and textbooks make use of a variety of approaches, ranging from direct approaches focusing on specific features of oral interaction (e.g. turn-taking, topic management, and questioning strategies) to indirect approaches that create conditions for oral interaction through group work, task work, and other strategies.

Cunningsworth (1995: 70) complains that many EFL coursebooks lack activities that include an element of unpredictability and uncertainty, which are present in any genuine discussion or conversation. He adds that thanks to these activities, students gain confidence in participating in a conversation and develop strategies how to cope with unpredictability. Although these activities replicate real-life situations as they create an information gap, they do not actually teach how to speak.

A critical view is also presented by Thornbury (2005: iv), who indicates that speaking activities in many coursebooks are often simply exercises in vocalizing grammar and postulates that “… you learn the grammar and you learn some vocabulary and you make sentences which you pronounce properly, and hey presto, you can speak! This is reflected in generations of books on oral English, which are essentially just books on how to vocalize grammar”.

Cunningsworth (1995: 69) points to the fact that speaking is rarely taught as a separate skill. He states that “[f]ew courses treat speaking as a separate skill in the same way as listening, reading and writing”. He emphasizes that the integration of skills is a very important aspect of the overall ability. He even mentions the fifth skill which is “being able to integrate some or all of the other four skills in ways which are appropriate to the situation” (Cunningsworth 1995: 65), which has to do with the idea of communicative language teaching (CLT).

As speaking practice takes place through oral presentation and practice of new language items, dialogues and role plays are often used during the lesson as speaking activities. Thanks to pronunciation practice, which is also an aspect of speaking, students are provided with well-spoken models from their teachers and have the opportunity to practice on their own (Cunningsworth 1995: 69).
Coursebooks vary in the amount of speaking practice for more advanced students. Some provide topics for discussion, others offer more realistic interactions through the use of different communicative activities. Examples of such activities are presented by Cunningsworth (1995: 69–72).

It is worth highlighting the changes towards the methodology of teaching speaking skills since the emergence of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1980s. Grammar-based syllabuses were replaced by communicative ones. Fluency became a goal for speaking courses; the goal that can be achieved through the use of information-gap and other tasks attempting real communication regardless of students’ proficiency in English (Richards 2008: 2). Richards (2006: 4) draws our attention to the fact that thanks to CLT, traditional lesson formats with the focus on teaching different items of grammar through controlled activities such as memorizing dialogues and drills were replaced by pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work. A lot of the classroom speaking activities which are currently in use belong to the CLT. The most widely-used are: acting from a script, communicative games, discussions, prepared talks, questionnaires, simulations and role plays (Harmer 2007: 271–275). Unfortunately, many modern course books still do not contain much speechwork, which is not beneficial because speechwork is a vital language skill. In many cases, it is the teacher who does most of the talking. It is necessary to point out that speechwork means student-talk and not teacher-talk, which is often neglected in many classrooms. As many coursebooks lack speaking activities, it is the teacher’s role to prepare or to bring to the class his or her own additional materials that would help to develop students’ speaking skills. It is also the teacher’s role to provide students with the maximum number of possibilities to speak in the classroom, no matter if it is done via the coursebook or additional materials (Grant 1987: 34).

**Concluding remarks**

A coursebook has always been a basic didactic aid in foreign language teaching and learning. Despite a lot of changes it has experienced for years, especially as far as its design and methodology are concerned, it is
still used in many classrooms in the world and serves as an indispensable source of information for both teachers and students.

The usefulness of a coursebook has been argued for years. Some methodologists question its role (Allwright 1981). Others defend its use (O’Neill 1982). Tice (1991) treats it as a methodological straitjacket. Hutchinson and Torres (1994), on the other hand, praise its value as an agent of change (Harmer 2007: 304). Educators create ‘for’ and ‘against’ lists regarding the use of a coursebook, but there is no need to judge whether advantages outweigh disadvantages or vice versa. It is the teacher who decides to what extent he or she wants to use a coursebook, bearing in mind his/her students’ learning styles, needs and expectations. As Elliott (2010: 14) notes, “[u]sing a textbook needn’t be a safe or lazy option but should be one of a number of tools which we use to help our learners learn”, and develop language skills, including speaking skills.

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Introduction

For decades, instructional materials have been considered an irreplaceable component of foreign language teaching and learning. Nowadays, with the growing popularity of foreign language learning, one can easily observe a proliferation of different instructional materials and teaching aids being published year by year, making it even more difficult for educators to select the materials which would best correspond to their needs. Thus, the main aim of this article is to provide the readers with practical considerations and guidelines useful for the process of proper material selection. Additionally, the author will make an attempt to examine the general characteristics, as well as forms and functions of instructional materials, shedding light on both the practical and theoretical aspects of the subject in question.

1. General view on instructional materials

Textbooks that are used at school during classes are a part of instructional materials which can be defined as any support, which teachers and students use to help them in the effective process of teaching and learning of the target language (Çakır 2015: 69–70). These materials are used to increase students’ access to a language and to improve four language skills (Çakır 2015; Kusiak-Pisowacka 2015; Neuner, Krüger & Grewer 2005; Solmecke 1997).

Instructional materials undergo two types of evaluation. The first evaluation is made by independent experts from the list of the Ministry of Education and applies to the textbook with all its components (Kusiak-Pisowacka 2015: 65–75). The second type of evaluation is performed by teachers, who want to check if the given materials are adequate to the capabilities and expectations of their students. It is important that particular needs of learners are taken into account in the selection of
instructional materials. In this case, teachers carry out a preliminary evaluation of textbooks on the basis of relevant objectives and transparent criteria, also bearing in mind the core curriculum of pre-school education and general education in individual types of schools (cf. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 August 2012, Journal of Laws of 2012, item 977 and Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 February 2017, Journal of Laws of 2017, item 356). They finally make a decision about which of the materials should be selected for their students (Kast & Neuner 1999: 43–55). The second situation refers to the case when teachers want to replace the textbook because they are dissatisfied with their students’ achievements. They, for example, turn to new materials due to the poor results at the final examination organized by the Central Examination Committee (CKE).

To guarantee achievement of objectives in the EFL class, instructional materials have to comply with certain conditions. According to scholars, instructional materials should contain, not only unusual topics and activities but also numerous suggestive instructions in order to meet the criterion of original materials. A textbook as a central element of these materials should also include a variety of activities which break the routine of a lesson. They should also contain a variety of texts, for instance, interviews, descriptive texts, personal reports, tales etc. (Çakır 2015: 71–72; Tomlinson 2006: 7–8). A textbook must be characterised by very attractive content and graphic layout which would not only draw learners’ attention but also create new opportunities for the development of four language skills – listening, reading, speaking and writing (Krüger 2001: 18; Solmecke 1997: 30). An important task of the authors of instructional materials is to present appealing content, introduce engaging stories, focus on universal problems and discuss traditional customs typical of the target language community. Their task is also to design exercises which challenge students and which encourage them to solve, for example, lexical or grammar problems (Çakır 2015: 70).

2. Forms of instructional materials

Instructional materials can take various forms which are presented in the table below.
Table 1. Main forms of instructional materials (Tok 2010: 508; the table is supplemented and modified by the author of this article: SM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Materials addressed to teachers</th>
<th>Materials addressed to students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>printed ones</td>
<td>teacher books</td>
<td>textbooks – divided into: student books, workbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non printed ones</td>
<td>special IT tools which can be used in the process of measuring and comparing learning achievements</td>
<td>recordings on CDs or in MP3 format or both, computer games, educational and edutainment programs, podcasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digital materials ready to print out</td>
<td>syllabi, lesson plans performance plans, assessment criteria, tests or internal mock examinations</td>
<td>e-textbook, e-workbook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above table, printed materials include the teacher book. This book is sometimes called the teacher guide and is the norm in all publishing houses. Such a book plays especially an important role in the teaching process because it includes a lot of necessary information for teachers, such as on the core curriculum of general education. The teacher book gives tips on how to adapt syllabi to the conditions of the particular type of school. In other words, these guides provide support for the planning process because they identify characteristics of all materials which are released by the publisher (Tok 2010: 508–509; Tomlinson 2011: 11).

The teacher book contains the student book pages with characteristics of tasks and guidance on solving more sophisticated exercises. There are tips on how to solve common didactic and educational problems. This material also includes answer keys to the exercises in the student’s book and workbook (Littlejohn & Hicks 2003: 7–9; Tomlinson 2012: 156–157).

Teacher books also contain worksheets which refer to each individual lesson or to the particular unit in the student book or workbook. Additionally, in many teacher books, one can find round-up summarising worksheets and tests. They are the main form of revising after each unit and they prepare learners for their final tests and final examinations at the end of the didactic process. The worksheets stimulate language activities because they include many exercises (Littlejohn & Hicks 2003: 6).
Teacher books are also useful for management staff: headmasters, supervisory staff and school superintendents, who use this material in different verification and supervising procedures, especially when teachers apply for their next professional advancement degree (Journal of Laws of 22 June 2017, item 1189, chapter 3a).

Another important material is a textbook, which is usually subdivided into a student book and a workbook. The textbook is considered a key component in each foreign language course or class and is seen as the basis of the teaching and learning process. Scholars emphasize that textbooks do not only represent a key component of a syllabus but also provide valuable guidance for both foreign language learners and teachers (Sheldon 1988: 237; Tok 2010: 508). They are the most common glottodidactic material which allows for the development of four language skills and cultural knowledge (Demir & Ertas 2014: 243). According to Rudby (2003: 39), this material “helps provide a route map for both teachers and learners, making it possible for them to look ahead to what will be done in a lesson as well as to look back on what has been done”.

Textbooks are not only a basis for the teacher in achieving goals but also a source of texts, exercises, grammar instructions, etc. They are also an irreplaceable source of input for learners (Tok 2010: 508–509). A textbook with additional materials such as CDs, MP3 recordings, worksheets, etc., allows students to listen to (especially hear, cf. Rost 2002: 1–2), read, speak and write in a foreign language, which is done not only during classes but also in students’ private contacts with representatives of other countries.

Another significant component of instructional materials is a workbook. This book is viewed as a supplementing material and it is typically divided into units and lessons which correspond to those in the course book. A workbook is a form of material which contains extra practice activities for students to complete in their free time. In other words, this material is designed for learners for their independent use. The book often contains an answer key at the end of the book to give necessary feedback to learners so that they can use this material without a teacher. Well written workbooks contain exercises at two levels of difficulty, which helps to cater for all needs and skills of students (Tomlinson 2011: 15–17).
Apart from the above-mentioned instructional materials, which seem to be well established, new forms of instructional materials can be distinguished nowadays too. These materials involve modern IC technology, which significantly modifies the glottodidactic process. It is impossible to mention all of them; however, the most interesting ones should be listed here. According to Chris Pim (2013: 24–33), it is necessary to point to, for instance, digital texts, e-books, audio-books, educational computer games, iChats, and different communicators.

3. Functions of instructional materials

Numerous scholars (e.g. Kupisiewicz 2005; Okoń 1998; Styszyński 1993; Tomlinson 2011, 2012) have studied functions of instructional materials, especially of textbooks (Andrychowicz-Trojanowska 2015: 3). Although Brian Tomlinson (2012) is the author of one of the most well-known lists of functions, the list forwarded by Jan Cyprian Styszyński (1993) seems to be more complete and therefore will be discussed in this account. The list by Styszyński (1993) highlights the following functions of such materials:

- **informative function** – instructional materials provide students and the teacher with valuable information on the target language and culture;
- **transformation function** – materials constitute a starting point for defining relevant lesson objectives in the context of the practical application of theoretical knowledge;
- **instructional function** – educational materials guide both teachers in their work and learners in practising the language;
- **control function** – instructional materials help to supervise learners, to point to their possible mistakes and to show certain ways of eliminating these mistakes; it is done among others through revision exercises;
- **motivating function** – materials through their content and form motivate students to learn and achieve certain goals;
- **systematising function** – materials, including ICT tools, allow for ordering and systematizing information and knowledge of students;
• *rationalisation function* – instructional materials, especially new technology tools, give students the opportunity to learn in their own individual way at any time; they allow for the reception of the target language and for the use of all perception channels;

• *organisational function* – instructional materials organize the learning process by dividing the content into chapters and by sequencing grammar and lexical aspects;

• *integrating function* – which comes down to the integration of instructional materials and students’ activities in the educational process;

• *social function* – instructional materials provide students with certain models of behaviour, verbal and non-verbal, in different life and communication situations and they teach tolerance and respect to people coming from other cultures.

4. **Selection of instructional materials**

The procedure of selecting new instructional materials should be coherent and as simple, efficient and transparent as possible. This procedure should involve pre-selection of items from the current Ministry list of textbooks. Foreign language teachers must gather information about the textbook and supplementary materials by answering basic questions given below [the list of questions developed by the author of the article on the basis of Kast and Neuner’s (1999) work]. If there is one negative answer, the materials should not be taken into account.

1. Is the textbook subsidized?
2. Was it made from high-quality paper?
3. Does the textbook contain comprehensive and detailed information on the culture(s) of the country(ies) where the given language is spoken?
4. Do these materials include tasks or instructions both in the foreign language and in the mother tongue? If so, is the mother tongue version without any errors and stylistic shortcomings?
5. Is the electronic version of the textbook made readily available?
6. Is the Internet platform linked to the textbook prepared in a very simple way?
7. Is there a variety of engaging exercises?
8. Does the textbook with all instructional materials include authentic photos from the target language countries and cultures?
9. Has the textbook got a coherent and clear layout?
10. Are the materials positively evaluated on the Internet as far as the quality of customer support provided by the publishing house is concerned?

If language teachers have pre-selected several textbooks which seem to be the most suitable for their purposes, they can begin the second step. To do this, they must draw up the second checklist. The checklist below was developed on the basis of the studies carried out by Breen and Candlin (1987: 13–29), Dougill (1987: 29–37), Ellis (1997: 36–42) and Garinger (2002: 2–10) and it was adapted to the needs of Polish students. This checklist is more complex than the first one. Teachers must evaluate each textbook on a scale from one (very dissatisfied) to five (very satisfied) by taking into account more specific evaluation criteria. After summarizing all scores, the best textbook is selected (cf. Yaghoobi Nezhad, Atarodi & Khalili 2013: 56–57). This procedure should be as follows:

1. The target age group

The first step of an evaluator is to establish the target group – it means that the teacher should be aware of students’ expectations and positive or negative reactions to selected instructional materials. To receive information from students, teachers should conduct trial classes with new materials, after which each student from the target group should answer the question:

- How do you like this textbook?

The textbook is evaluated by learners on the same scale as other questions in the questionnaire. The score should be an average mean. Apart from that, also at this point, teachers should answer the question based on their observations:

- Does the textbook reflect students’ preferences in terms of graphic design and material organization?

2. The syllabus

The questions to be addressed with regard to this area can include:

- How much effort does it take to adapt the textbook both to
requirements of the core curriculum and to the timetable proposed by the headmaster?
• How deep or narrow is it if you compare the textbook with other existing ones on the Ministry list?
• Is the textbook a part of a series? If so, do all parts have a coherent form?
• Is there an integrated skills approach in the textbook?

3. Skills
• Are listening, reading, speaking, and writing exercises organized in a proper ratio? It means in 8:7:4:2 (Neuner, Krüger & Grewer 2005: 18)?
• Do these materials provide pupils with adequate guidance on the development of these skills?
• Do these materials include a wide range of language and cognitive concepts that are challenging for students?

4. Units’ organization
• Is the amount of learning material proportionate to the amount of time given to students?
• Are the units coherent?
• Is the material presented both in a clear and interesting way?
• How motivating and inspiring is the material?
• Does the material guarantee that students will be able to communicate in a foreign language on their own outside the classroom?
• Is there sufficient variety to maintain students’ interests?
• How clear is it what learners are expected to do?

5. Subject-matters
• Is the textbook intrinsically motivating?
• Is the textbook culture specific?
• Is it too easy or too complex for the target group?
6. Form
   • Do the pages have a significant amount of information?
   • Does the layout have a motivating or demotivating effect?
   • Do illustrations serve a function or are they only an element of decoration?
   • Is the graphic design clear enough?
   • Are there enough drawings, tables and lists of explanations for students?
   • How effective are they?
   • How useful is the textbook for outside-the-classroom use? Are there any answer keys?

7. Other components
   • Is it easy to use audio materials?
   • Are they achievable by the use of standard and available equipment in the classroom?
   • How natural are the readers in the recordings?
   • Does the textbook include a transcription of records? If so, are they easily available?
   • Are all the recordings sufficiently demanding?
   • Are the passages of recordings too long to hold the pupils’ attention?
   • Is the teacher’s book addressed to both experienced and inexperienced teachers?
   • Can the material guide the inexperienced teacher through the lesson?
   • Does the teacher’s book provide alternatives?

In the conclusion to this section, we can state that the decision related to textbook selection is probably the most important decision facing foreign language teachers. The use of the above-mentioned evaluation procedure and of the two checklists may lead to more systematic and detailed evaluation of potential textbooks. It is worth emphasizing that such a procedure is an excellent opportunity to get to know strengths
and weaknesses of examined materials, and consequently to enhance the quality of the school’s work. For these reasons, the same or similar procedure should be adopted whenever the textbook is changed.

**Concluding remarks**

The information and opinions presented above suggest that instructional materials are an important part of the teacher’s toolset. It is thus the educator’s task to identify essential features of instructional materials in order to adapt them to current school circumstances and to the real needs of students. It is important for him/her to take a closer look at different criteria which are used in the process of material selection. It is particularly significant to apply the procedures described above because they enhance awareness of educators with regard to the role of each type of material. This awareness, in fact, leads to more effective utilization of available materials and to better achievements of learners.

**References**


CHAPTER 5:
AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS
IN LANGUAGE TEACHING
Introduction

The teacher’s task is not only to teach but also to motivate students as well as to encourage and engage them in the learning process. A form of material which seems to be helpful for the educator and which, in the opinion of scholars, facilitates teaching and learning processes is audio-visual material. It is necessary to note here that many teachers are not aware of the potential of audio-visual aids in a class. Therefore, it seems to be a good idea to discuss this subject in detail and provide essential information on several aspects connected with the application of different audio-visual materials in a foreign language class. Thus, the account here, by relating to scholarly literature, will define, classify and evaluate audio-visual aids in the context of language learning and teaching. It will also point to the organization of classes with the use of such materials as well as highlight students’ and teachers’ tasks in this area.

In the discussion on audio-visual materials in a language class, one should bear in mind the fact that they can be used in many ways and how a lesson with audio-visuals is organized depends mostly on the teacher’s creativity and willingness. As long as audio-visual aids are used properly, they surely help students in the language learning process.

1. Definition, classification and evaluation of audio-visuals

Audio-visual aids can be defined as audio or visual devices “used by a teacher to help learning” such as pictures, flashcards, records, videos and films (Richards & Schmidt 2010: 40). According to Edgar Dale (1946: 4), audio-visual aids are “multi-sensory materials” that contribute to “communication of ideas between persons and groups in various teaching and training situations”. They can be also described as “supplementary devices by which the teacher, through the utilization of more than
one sensory channel is able to clarify, establish and correlate concepts, interpretations and appreciations” (McKown & Roberts 1949: 12).

There are different types of audio-visual aids that can be used in the foreign language learning/teaching process. Hanna Komorowska (2005: 59–60) divides audio-visual materials into three groups: visual materials (pictures, illustrations, maps, posters), sound materials (songs and cassettes) and video materials. Similarly, Sarah Phillips (1993), distinguishes three types of audio-visual aids. These are sound and picture (video), picture (posters, flashcards) and audio materials (music and recordings).

Probably the most popular type of audio-visuals is a picture. Pictures and illustrations are especially suitable for visual learners, who tend to prefer studying charts, drawings and graphical information (Brown 2007: 129). According to Penny Ur (1991: 289), a visual stimulus is “a very dominant channel of input” and, therefore, it is a good idea to apply pictures in the language learning/teaching process. Additionally, children tend to be easily distracted if they do not have anything to look at. Hence providing visual aids can help in keeping the learners interested and focused on the lesson. Teachers can use pictures in the form of flashcards (small cards held up for students to see), big wall pictures (they are so big that everyone can see details), cue cards (small cards used in pair or group work), and finally illustrations (from magazines or those in the course books) (Harmer 2001: 134). Pictures can also be drawn by students or by the teacher. Pictures in different forms can be used for presenting and practicing new vocabulary and structures as well as for revision of previously learnt material (Doff 1999: 82–87). However, in order to be linguistically useful and interesting for students, pictures need to meet some requirements. Regardless of their form and size, they need to be visible and legible for all students. The learners should be able to notice necessary details regardless of their place in the classroom. The next aspect is that they should not only be appropriate for the purpose in hand, but also for the age group they are being used for. It means that there is a risk that if they are too childish, older learners may not like them. Similarly, if pictures used in the class of young children are too serious, the children not only may not like them, but they also may not understand them. Pictures used in a lesson should also be culturally and politically appropriate so that they do not offend the students (Harmer 2001: 136).
Another type of audio-visual materials applies to recordings and songs. Listening is a very important part of language learning as it provides a valuable language input. One can distinguish extensive listening, which takes place outside the classroom, for example at home. In this type, the learner can choose the listening material himself/herself and, therefore, the activity is highly motivating. Another type of listening is intensive listening, which takes place in the classroom and is usually provided by the teacher. Listening materials can be used for practicing a variety of skills. They can also be used as a base for other activities. Recordings allow learners to identify a variety of voices, ‘meet’ different characters and hear the language in use in different situations (Harmer 2001: 228–232). Listening to recordings is a great pronunciation practice. By listening, students learn how to properly pronounce words and they improve their speaking skills. This gives them opportunities to hear different speakers and different accents. In this way, they better understand the spoken language (Harmer 2001: 242). One of the main advantages of using recordings is that it is very simple and relatively inexpensive. This is why coursebooks usually include tapes or CDs with recordings for the student to complete activities or to listen at home (Harmer 2001: 228–232). Among audio materials, it is possible to distinguish songs and music in general. According to Sarah Phillips (1993: 100):

> music and rhythm are an essential part of language learning for young learners. Children really enjoy learning and singing songs, and older learners find working with current or well-known pop songs highly motivating. … Music and rhythm make it much easier to imitate and remember language than words which are ‘just spoken’.

Music is viewed as a very powerful stimulus that can influence students’ engagement because it speaks to their emotions. A song can also change the atmosphere in the classroom as well as introduce a new activity. One of its tasks is to entertain, but it can also combine leisure and the student’s life outside the classroom with learning (Harmer 2001: 242). Using audio materials is very effective for teaching auditory learners who get most information from listening (Brown 2007: 129).

Video and television, which are a significant part of students’ lives, can also be an effective tool in language learning. However, watching television at home differs considerably from watching a video in a classroom followed by activities and tasks. Videos are very useful for
presentation of new vocabulary, structures and functions as they provide a ready-made context. They also provide a stimulus for speaking as well as constitute a rich source of input for topic-based activities. Through combining images with spoken language, videos parallel real life. Visuals are helpful in understanding the situation and the language. Sometimes learners do not understand a command only by hearing it, but when they hear it and at the same time see a gesture, the meaning becomes obvious for them (Phillips 1993: 133). Using a video in the language learning/teaching process can help to motivate students. Young people are simply more interested and involved in learning when the language is experienced in a lively way by means of video and television. Presentation of the language through a combination of sounds and moving pictures is much more comprehensible and realistic than through any other teaching medium. The video can also take students into the experiences and lives of other people. What is more, it can encourage students to communicate in the target language by voicing their opinions or by performing activities and tasks connected with the video. Another positive aspect of using a video is that it enables students to see the gestures, postures and expressions of the speaker. Finally, students can also see cultural differences, which are a rich source for communication (Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 3–4).

There are many advantages of using audio-visual aids. They are real and tangible, they can arrest as well as hold attention. They also stimulate creativity. “Good teaching involves using all audio and visual experiencing smoothly and with purpose – with the attention of the learners on the lesson, rather than on the methods or media” (Rachford 1954: 163).

However, there are also some disadvantages of using audio-visual materials. The first aspect is that audio-visual aids are very helpful in the learning/teaching process only when they are properly used. If they are overused, they can have opposite results to the ones intended – instead of diversifying a lesson, they can make the lesson boring. There also may occur some problems while using audio-visual aids. For example, the pictures can be too small or too blurred, and thus illegible for students. In this case, learners can feel frustrated and discouraged to pay attention to the lesson. Some pictures can also offend students or their parents if they are improper in religious, cultural or political aspects. Finally, students may find the picture too childish and dislike it; therefore, they might not
participate in the lesson. It is a hard task to find a proper picture when taking into consideration students’ likings, inclination towards religion, politics and culture as well as the quality of the picture (Harmer 2001: 136).

Different problems may occur while using audio materials. It is very difficult to ensure that all students in a classroom can hear equally well. Usually, big classrooms with poor acoustic conditions are a problem when it comes to listening to some recordings and, for example, students in the back might not hear equally well as those in the front. Another problem is that all students have to listen to the recording at the same speed, which is dictated by the tape or CD and not by the teacher or listeners. This may be a problem for weaker students who need a slower speed while better students may find the recording too slow. Another disadvantage of taped materials is that learners cannot see the speaker, his/her gestures, facial expressions or surrounding where the speaking takes place. Furthermore, they cannot interact with the speaker; therefore, there are no means of asking for clarification if they do not understand something (Doff 1999: 198–206; Harmer 2001: 229).

Similarly, the use of video in the classroom, in spite of its many advantages, can cause some problems. The first one is called “the nothing new syndrome”. Nowadays, people are surrounded by television and the Internet and they have access to all kinds of video materials. Thus, the video activity used in a classroom has to be a unique learning experience and not just simply television viewing. Another aspect is that since learners are used to good quality films, woodenly acted or poorly filmed materials might not grab students’ attention. Another disadvantage of videos is related to viewing conditions. Not every school has got a spacious cinema room and good viewing conditions. When students cannot hear or see the video well because of inappropriate equipment, they may be discouraged and not interested in the video and the lesson. The detail that needs to be remembered about is also proper light, which should not be too bright for students to see the screen. Learners may also dislike constant stopping and starting a video by the teacher. They may lose interest if the video they find attractive is constantly being paused and they can see only bits of the story. Similarly, not showing the end of the story may be especially irritating for students. The video can be found by learners boring and uninteresting if it is too long. Thus, using shorter, about five minutes videos, seems to be a better idea. Finally, students, as
well as teachers, may get frustrated and irritated when the equipment they are using does not work the way they want it to (Harmer 2001: 283).

Summing up, audio-visual aids are very powerful materials in the language learning/teaching process. They can be used for many purposes: to teach different skills and aspects of language as well as to present and discuss various elements of culture. However, they can also cause some problems and difficulties which may discourage students to learn and make the lesson boring and uninteresting. The conclusion is simple: audio-visual aids can motivate students and help in the language learning/teaching process only if they are properly used.

2. Ways of using audio-visual aids

Audio-visual materials can be used for many purposes and in many different ways. Pictures, whether in the form of flashcards, cue cards, posters or illustrations can be used in numerous engaging activities. One of them is a drill-activity which can use different kinds of pictures. The teacher shows the picture to the students and nominates one of them to give the answer. The teacher can also point to some details at a poster and ask for a response or give students cue cards and ask them to do the task in groups. This activity is useful for practicing vocabulary, revising grammar items or creating various sentences (Harmer 2001: 134–136).

Another activity based on pictures can be a communication game. Students can be put in pairs, but only one of them sees the picture and tries to describe it, while the second person draws it without looking at the original. Such an activity is very engaging for students because of its game-like nature. Students can also be divided into four groups. Each group is given a picture which shows a different part of the story. After studying the pictures, students give them back to the teacher and form four new groups in such a way that every person is from another ‘old’ group (every person in the new group has seen a different picture). After sharing what they have seen, they have to put together all pieces of the story and guess what it is saying. Pictures can also be used for creative writing, students can be asked to create some story or to make up the end of the story shown in the pictures. Apart from this, pictures can be used for presenting and checking the meaning. Instead of giving
the translation of some word, the teacher can show a picture of the given thing. In the same way, the teacher can check if students know the word. He or she can show the picture and ask a student to name it, or the teacher can give the name of something and ask a student to choose from a few pictures (Harmer 2001: 134–136).

Pictures can be used for predictions. Students can be shown a picture and asked to guess what is happening in the picture. Then, they can listen to the recording and check if they are right. Besides, pictures can be used for different kinds of discussions. Students can be asked to describe a picture or to create a dialogue based on the picture. Finally, pictures can be used to make the work more appealing. There are many pictures in coursebooks and sometimes they are not adequate for the activity, but its purpose is to attract students’ attention and to diversify the content (Doff 1999: 81–91; Harmer 2001: 134–136).

Listening can be used at different stages of a lesson. It can be the “jumping-off point” for the following activities: it can be an introduction to some role-playing acted by students or an introduction to a writing task. Usually, listening activities involve a mixture of language skills. For example, first students listen only for gist and then do tasks concerning different skills. They can listen for some specific information right away. There are many listening activities developing a variety of skills and structures. Students can listen to dialogues, radio broadcasts, interviews, stories and others. After listening, they can be asked to answer specific questions, put some items in the correct order or tell a story based on the recording. Another interesting idea for a listening activity is inviting a guest to the classroom and asking him/her to tell a story or asking him/her some questions and interviewing him/her. This is especially enjoyable for students as they can meet a person who speaks the target language and can listen to this person as he or she speaks live. Live listening is very advantageous as students can ask for clarification if they do not understand something or ask for some specific details if they are interested in them. This is why the teacher should speak in the target language as often as possible. An enjoyable activity can be reading some story by the teacher, especially if the teacher is prepared to make a big thing out of it and not just simply, unemotionally read the text. Besides, one can use story-telling, which is an excellent listening material for students. Learners also like listening to interviews, especially when
the interviewed person is famous or liked by the students. They listen not only because they have to complete the task, but they are really interested in what the person is saying (Doff 1999: 198–206; Harmer 2001: 228–242).

Similarly, listening to music can be a source of many interesting and engaging activities. There are many different songs and chants, traditional or written especially for learners. Songs in the classroom can be used in different ways. Some of them can be used for singing, others for doing some actions. Songs can be used at any stage of the lesson: at the beginning, “to mark the change from the previous subject to English”, in the middle of the lesson “as a break from another, more concentrated activity”, and finally at the end of the lesson “to round a lesson off” (Phillips 1993: 100).

In the class, one can use film music. The teacher plays a piece of film music and asks students to indicate what type of film it comes from in their opinion. They can also describe emotions and mood expressed by the music. They can listen to music describing people and try to guess what their features are. Another way of using music in the classroom is focusing on the lyrics. The teacher can ask students to choose their favourite song and prepare some activities connected with it. The teacher can play the song, explain new phrases and vocabulary and ask questions to check students’ comprehension. Students can also be given the lyrics with various words blanked out and asked to complete the text. They can be given mixed lines of the song and be asked to put them in the right order. The task can also involve listening to the song, reading the lyrics and trying to guess the title. There are many ways of using recordings and music in the classroom and how they are used depends mostly on the teacher’s creativity (Harmer 2001: 242–244).

A video can be useful in the language learning/teaching process at every level as well as in every age group. It can be used for a variety of purposes, such as vocabulary development or review and grammar presentation as well as for its review. A video can be used for teaching pronunciation, listening and speaking skills and even for teaching reading and writing skills (Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 4–6). There are different types of video materials that can be used in the classroom. One of them is an off-air program – a program recorded from television channels. This type of video material is very engaging, interesting and
motivating for students. However, it should meet some requirements. The video should be of an appropriate length and it should not be too long. A very important aspect is the language used in the video. It should be comprehensible and should not be too difficult. The video should enable completion of various activities and should spur students’ creativity (Harmer 2001: 284–291; Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 4–6).

Another type of video materials is a real-world video. When choosing the video, the teacher should consider the same aspects as the ones mentioned above, such as length, comprehensibility and its multi-use potential (Harmer 2001: 284–291).

The third type of video material is a language learning video. Many publishers attach videos to their coursebooks for the purpose of using them in the classroom. Such materials are designed for students at a particular level and of a particular age; thus, they should be comprehensible, interesting and engaging. The teacher can also base the whole lesson on the video. The video can be divided then into a few sequences, each being followed by some activity. Besides, the video can be only a part of the lesson. It can, for example, introduce a topic. Students can watch a video which introduces a particular problem before reading a text about it. This can help them understand and interpret the text. Furthermore, a video can be used to show particular phrases, structures and grammar forms in use. The video can present new items, practice already known items as well as encourage students to analyse the used language. Sometimes a video can be used for relaxation. Showing a short clip after a noisy activity seems to be a good idea as it helps to calm down the students. There are many types of activities with the use of a video. Students can watch a video and answer questions about some details. The teacher can also use a foreign language film with subtitles in the students’ native language in order to discuss the translation of subtitles and different aspects of the language. A video can also be used to make students think about further events and to interpret the video. There are a few viewing techniques, such as “fast forward”. The teacher shows the sequence shoots at high speed without sound. Then, he/she asks students what in their opinion the film was about and what the characters were saying. Another technique is “freeze frame” which is simply stopping the video at a particular moment and asking students about next events or asking them to comment on previous ones. The last technique is “partial viewing”,...
which is showing only a part of the video and arousing students’ curiosity (Harmer 2001: 284–291; Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 4–12).

From what has been suggested here, it can be concluded that there are many ways of using audio-visual materials in a classroom. One can use different activities depending on what skill he/she wants to develop in students. It is necessary to remember, however, that the use of audio-visual materials depends on both teachers and students. This is why in the next part teachers’ and students’ tasks in the use of audio-visual materials are presented and described.

3. Teachers’ and students’ tasks

The teacher is usually responsible for providing teaching materials for students. In some cases, students may be asked to prepare or to find some materials by themselves, but yet it is the teacher’s role to accept them. Thus, the role of the teacher in the use of audio-visual aids in the language learning/teaching process is of great importance. While selecting pictures for the use in the class, the teacher should remember that the picture needs to possess particular qualities. It should be visible for all students and should be appropriate in cultural, political and religious aspects. It should also be adequate to the age group to which it is addressed. The teacher should not only select the picture but also take care of the way it is shown. This is why the teacher should provide pictures in proper size and quality. However, the process of selecting pictures can be very time-consuming, and thus it is a good idea to make them durable so they could be used more than once (Harmer 2001: 136).

As far as the use of recordings in the classroom is concerned, the teacher should take into account several roles he/she needs to perform. The first of them is the role of an organiser. It is of importance to explain to students what the purpose of the listening task is and to give them instructions on how to achieve it. By preparing achievable tasks and comprehensible texts, the teacher can build up students’ confidence (Harmer 2001: 231–232).

While using recordings in the classroom, the teacher becomes also a machine operator. It means that he or she should be efficient in the use of CD and tape players and be prepared to stop the recording at the right moment (Harmer 2001: 231–232).
It is crucial for the teacher to be a feedback organizer as well. After completing a listening task, students may check their answers in pairs and then share them with the rest of the group. In this way, they can share their knowledge as well as they can share responsibility, which makes them feel safer. Most importantly, the teacher has to be supportive in providing feedback in order to counter students’ negative expectations and to sustain their motivation (Harmer 2001: 231–232).

Sometimes the teacher needs to be a prompter. For example, he or she can ask students to listen to the tape or the CD once again so that they can identify particular spoken features and varieties of language. Students can also be given a script with blanked out words or phrases to complete. This task can make them aware of the use of some phrases (Harmer 2001: 231–232).

Finally, the teacher should remember that he or she is an important source of listening material. Thus, it is a good idea to use the target language in the class as often as possible. It can be done by giving instructions in the target language, by telling stories and by interacting with students. The teacher as a source of listening material is very useful since students can see his/her gestures, facial expressions and body language (Phillips 1993: 17).

The teacher has a great responsibility while choosing a video for use in the classroom. Students’ interests play an important role here since they do not consider a video as teaching material but as television. Thus, if they consider the video boring, they may not want to watch it. This is why it is important that the chosen video is interesting and attractive for students. The length is important as well. It is better to use shorter videos so that they are suitable for a one-hour class. Too lengthy videos may be considered boring by students (Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 9–10).

A video should be suitable for different types of activities and should have language that students can understand. It is more important, however, that the task connected with the video is of a particular language level than the video itself. The language level of the video material can be slightly higher than the students’ level, as through seeing the story, learners can easily catch the meaning. The video sequence used in the classroom has to match particular purposes. Thus, if the teacher wants to teach vocabulary or some phrases, he or she should apply the video with a considerable number of lexical items from the particular field (Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 9–10).
The teacher’s task is to prepare appropriate worksheets, tasks and activities which follow watching the video. Sometimes it is necessary to prepare transcripts of dialogues and commentaries so that students can see the text if it is too difficult for them (Stempleski & Tomalin 1990: 9–10). The teacher should take into account the quality of the video as videos of poor quality can discourage students (Phillips 1993: 133). The teacher needs to be aware of the main educational purposes of using video materials in the classroom. The purposes are:

1. To introduce and stimulate interest in the presentation of a new unit of work.
2. To give concrete information on a subject.
3. To develop comprehension, to enrich and enlarge the child’s experience, provide a basis for the expression of ideas and thoughts.
4. To review a unit of work.

The teacher should properly prepare before using a video in a lesson. He or she should preview the video earlier and organize materials for the lesson. It is important to motivate students to watch the video. Thus, it is a good idea to give them a reason for watching it and to provide adequate information on what they are going to see. The last stage is preparing tasks and activities connected with the video. They should be engaging and interesting for students (Bloss & Roberts 1954: 198).

The use of audio-visual materials in the classroom is a great opportunity for enhancing students’ creativity. Learners, for example, can be asked to use their own pictures or pictures found and chosen by them. They can also choose songs that they would like to work with. A great activity, especially for younger children, seems to be singing songs. In this way, they can easily learn new vocabulary and phrases and remember them without any effort. Similarly, as in the case of the video, students can choose what they would like to watch. They can be asked then to give their feedback and express their thoughts about what they have seen. Children and teenagers are very creative, and thus it is a good idea to ask them for their ideas of working with given materials. In this way, one can create very interesting activities, and students can be motivated and feel appreciated (Harmer 2001: 231–232, 286–293).
Concluding remarks

Summing up, the use of audio-visual materials such as pictures, recordings and videos can help educators to encourage students to learn and to make them more motivated. Audio-visual aids can be used at any stage of the lesson and in any age and language group. One aspect the teacher has to remember is the choice of proper materials which need to be adjusted to students’ level of knowledge, needs, interests and age. The teacher is also responsible for preparing proper activities that will correspond to the presented material and which will engage all students in the lesson. Another important aspect which the teacher should take into account is the quality of such materials.

There are many ways of using audio-visual aids in the lesson. Such materials can be used for presentation, practice, as well as revision. It depends on the teacher and his/her creativity how these materials are applied in a class. Audio-visual materials in a lesson can definitely make students’ learning more interesting and attractive. As such aids are the same tools that young people use for entertainment, they can easily engage students in the learning process and make them more focused on the content presented by the teacher. Thanks to these aids, students have a chance to identify characteristic features of the given language and practice and learn it in a multimodal way. Because students simply enjoy watching videos, listening to music and seeing pictures, audio-visual materials in the classroom must be seen as a useful tool in the learning/teaching process of the 21st century.

References


Introduction

Nowadays, due to the development of modern technology audio-visual materials are commonly used and accessible for everyone. People benefit from watching television, listening to radio podcasts or surfing the Internet. In other words, audio-visuals constitute a significant part of people’s lives. It means that no progressive teacher can omit using audio-visual materials which modern technology provides him with. There are many ways of incorporating audio-visual materials into a language class; from simple audio recordings through rich multimedia presentations to computer programmes whose role is to support the teacher. They all can be used in the teaching process.

The main aim of this chapter is to shed light on these materials and to present them as interesting and productive educational tools. One, however, has to remember that ‘audio-visual (AV) materials’ is a broad term which refers to numerous teaching aids. This paper clarifies what the term really means and features the division of such aids into certain categories. It also presents advantages and disadvantages of audio-visual materials and discusses the organization of language classes with the use of such tools.

1. Audio-visual materials in general

Someone unfamiliar with teaching methodology could assume that audio-visual materials simply denote helping devices which affect visual and aural senses of a student. Such a statement would not be false but it would not be perfectly correct and precise enough either. The nature of these aids is more complicated and that is why it needs a closer look. To present a more detailed picture of the notion, it seems appropriate to first put together selected definitions of audio-visual materials. Only such an approach may well embrace the essence of these aids in language
teaching. It should also raise other issues concerning audio-visual materials which the author of this account attempts to clarify in the subsequent sections.

Since there are numerous interpretations and statements about audio-visual materials, often focusing on different aspects, it is therefore reasonable to arrange them within certain groups. The first one refers to these statements which take into account terminology of audio-visual materials: “[i]n educational literature more than a few terms can be used, alternatively, for audio-visual aids i.e. educational technology, audio-video media, and instructional technology, learning resources, audio-video equipment, communication technology and educational media” (Selvi 2007, in Akram & Malik 2012: 10597), “synonymous words with audio-visuals are: educational instructional media, visual aids, and learning resources” (Ossai-Ugbah, Ogunrombi & Ameh 2012: 217). This clearly shows that audio-visual materials can be labelled in various ways. It is not a surprise as they richly support the teaching process and they offer various forms of presentation (both will be discussed later). To put it another way, the term ‘audio-visual materials’ involves a range of teaching aids and naturally, in accompaniment with it, different nomenclature is used for the term.

The next group of statements highlights senses which are triggered as a consequence of introducing audio-visual aids, such as: “[a]ny recorded sound and/or moving and/or still image items” (Royan & Cremer 2004: 7), “any device by means of which the learning process may be encouraged or carried on through the sense of hearing and/or the sense of sight” (Rudramamba 2004: 66), “[m]aterials that use sound or vision to present information” (Seel 2011: 384), “[any] instructional media consisting of hearing and seeing activities” (Kholis 2016: 2), as well as “devices and related supplies that are designed to enhance learning through the combined sense of hearing and sight” (Ahmad 2008: 43). The above implications suggest that audio-visual materials have a lot to do with the use of visual and aural senses. The difference which can be identified is that some statements mention the occurrence of sound or vision independently, whereas others omit this possibility and point to the necessity of using both visual and auditory senses. For the purposes of this discussion, it seems proper to treat audio-visual materials
as the ones which involve simultaneous usage of sound and vision as the majority of modern teaching aids focus on both senses.

The last group of statements highlights the very purpose of audio-visual materials, which is to facilitate the learning process: audio-visual aids “are those instructional aids which are used in the classroom to encourage students learning process” (Shabiralyani et al. 2015: 226), “aids, which help in completing the triangular process of learning, i.e. [m]otivation, classification and stimulation” (Mossaab 2013: 8), “[a]udio-visual (AV) aids have different levels of complexity and are commonly used to enhance learning and instruction by improving comprehension, retention, and transfer” (Seel 2011: 384), “[a]udio-visual resources … do not only increase the motivation of the teachers and learners; they add clarity to the topic taught and make learning more interesting” (Dike 1989, in Ode 2014: 195). In other words, audio-visual aids are used to support a teacher and/or to facilitate the learning process of a student. They enhance motivation of learners and help the teacher become a better, more efficient and effective educator. In scholarly literature, the emphasis is put on the role of such materials for teachers because there are still numerous educators who are afraid of using modern resources and who believe that such materials can replace them in their work. Nevertheless, as Ranasinghe and Lisher (2009, in Mathew & Alidmat 2013: 87) note, teachers should not be worried at all, as educational aids of this sort can expand the human mind but they cannot replace it.

Summing up, the term ‘audio-visuals’ is very broad when considering how many various materials can be included in this category and how vast the range of their effectiveness is. It is possible to look at them as those materials which enhance the teaching and/or learning process through sight and/or hearing, and which are beneficial for both students and teachers. Such materials encourage a learner in a classroom and lead to the learner’s improved comprehension of information. One must also remember that they also assist teachers in their educational efforts on an everyday basis.

2. Typology and features of audio-visual materials

A fundamental categorization of audio-visual materials is proposed by Pfeiffer (2001: 163) who divides audio-visual materials into three groups:
a. audial (hearing) materials;
b. visual materials;
c. audio-visual materials.

Pfeiffer’s categorization reflects ideas presented in some of the previously mentioned definitions of audio-visual materials, namely those which distinguish between senses that AV aids activate.

The first group in Pfeiffer’s division identifies audial materials which, as Macwan (2015: 91) notes, occur when the text can be heard and when it is recorded on some source (e.g. CD, DVD, tape). In his work, Macwan mentions music, songs or any recorded dialogues/speeches and states that the amount of audial material is only limited by the teacher’s creativity. Sadly, scholarly literature does not say much about characteristics of audial materials. Researchers who study AV aids distinguish audial resources and advise how to use them effectively, yet very little is mentioned about characteristics of them. They put more emphasis on audio-visual materials; probably because audial aids are rather self-explanatory. Additionally, audio-visual materials are simply better to use in a classroom as they trigger more senses of students and they simultaneously attach to learning preferences of more students. Still, no one should think that audial materials are somehow unworthy to use. It is not a coincidence that e.g. songs are broadly used by teachers. It is this way because, as Mamun (2014: 12) indicates, music lowers the level of anxiety among students by creating a relaxing environment.

The second group in Pfeiffer’s categorization involves visual materials. Macwan (2015: 91) defines them as items which can be seen. To exemplify visual materials, one should point to models, objects, charts, pictures, maps, flannel boards, flash cards, bulletin boards, chalkboards, and slides (Shabiralyani et al. 2015: 226). The main goal of using such materials is “to clarify, establish, and correlate and co-ordinate precise conceptions, understandings and appreciations” and “to make learning more actual, active, motivating, encouraging, significant and glowing” (Shabiralyani et al. 2015: 226). The mentioned goal is achieved by presenting information by means of vision. According to researchers, visual materials make the teacher more professional and consistent as they strengthen his control over students and encourage body movements (Shabiralyani et al. 2015: 226). Mossaab (2013: 10) explains the reason for the effectiveness of visual aids: “Visual aids create influence and
excitement to a presentation. They help targeting more than one sense simultaneously, therefore increasing the audience’s comprehension. With pictures, the concepts or ideas presented are no longer simply words – but words plus images”. This passage clearly emphasizes the role of visual stimuli in teachers’ work.

It should be obvious now that audial and visual experiences, even when introduced independently, support the teacher to a great extent. That is why, no one should be surprised that audio-visual aids, which involve senses of both hearing and seeing, draw special attention of educators and researchers. For this reason, considerations on this type of materials need to be presented here as well.

When discussing audio-visual materials, it is essential to point to some examples of such aids: television, chat shows, movies, documentaries, and YouTube (Akram & Malik 2012: 6; Kholis 2016: 4; Sowntharya, Gomathi & Muhuntarajan 2014: 385). The question which needs to be answered with regard to audio-visuals, commonly identified as ‘videos’, is why so many teachers use them in their classes. The answer will be simple and clear after examination of the main effects of introducing videos in a language class (Daniel 2013: 1):

1. They help to avoid excessive, empty and meaningless verbalization in teaching English.
2. They provide direct sense of experience to students.
3. They help students to form clear and accurate concepts in English.
4. They make teaching and learning effective.
5. They provide variety to teaching.
6. They arouse interest.
7. They create language atmosphere.
8. They reduce teachers’ talking.
9. They clarify the subject-matter.
10. They save time and energy.

This list clearly suggests that using videos in a lesson brings a lot of benefits. Apart from the above-mentioned effects, it is essential to point, for example, to the excitement and stimulation of a learner, to the collection of ideas for discussion, to the improvement of interactiveness of the group, to better understanding of a topic and to the development of language competences of students (Mamun 2014: 10–11).
When considering the above statements, it is hard to believe that a simple resource such as a video material has the power to do so much good. Additionally, videos are now more available than ever before: teachers can download from the Internet different videos which can be appropriately used with their learners (Mamun 2014: 10). It all means that audio-visuals are accessible for every teacher who is keen on applying them in a class.

To sum up, one can state that each type of material distinguished in Pfeiffer’s categorization frame can be effectively used in a class and can bring a lot of benefits to teachers and students.

3. Advantages and disadvantages of audio-visual materials

The previous section ended with the statement suggesting that AV aids are beneficial in a language class and this is undoubtedly true (at least to some extent). Researchers in their reports enumerate many advantages of audio-visual aids and they often view them as supreme resources. Still, moderate opinions or even doubtful ones about the level of contribution of AV aids in the classroom can be found. That is why the issue needs to be examined deeper. This part will answer the question whether AV materials are truly as beneficial as is commonly stated, as well as juxtapose advantages and disadvantages of such educational aids.

The list of advantages of audio-visual aids is extensive. There are many researchers who promote the use of AV aids, and compiling all of them would take many pages. Nevertheless, it is possible to pick those which seem to be the most relevant. It seems appropriate to begin with Daniel’s (2013: 3–4) list of advantages; her list is succinct, so it can be used as a sort of introduction for further research. She emphasizes the following positive effects of AV aids: they draw students’ attention and make them interested in the lesson, save teachers’ time and effort, present ideas in an easy way, make language learning simple, provide students with diverse experiences, and allow educators to create a natural language environment. According to Daniel (2013: 3–4), AV aids are greatly beneficial for both learners and teachers as they make the learning and teaching processes easier, quicker and more productive at the same time.

Ashaver and Igyuve (2013: 45) imply that audio-visuals extend one’s experiences. According to them, when something is not only verbally
explained but also supported by audio-visual materials, it is better communicated. Moreover, AV aids bring foreign culture to a class and give learners a chance to analyse, interpret and learn on their own. Additionally, they state that audio-visual materials make learning permanent as people are more likely to remember what they see, as audio-visuals “seem to evoke the maximum response of the whole organism to the situations in which learning is done” (Ashaver & Igyuve 2013: 46).

Kholis (2016: 2) maintains that audio-visual aids allow teachers to respond to modern education requirements. He claims that education nowadays “is different from the past, because now in learning, students must study actively, creatively, independently” (Kholis 2016: 2). According to him (2016: 2), AVs enhance creativity and build independence in students, and as a result, they create a modern learning environment (which is desired nowadays). Kholis (2016: 3) also emphasizes that AV aids help teachers to eliminate the boredom of students. When students only listen to a teacher and imitate him/her, they quickly become disinterested. Therefore, implementation of AV aids breaks the passivity of students, thus rendering classes more interesting and effective.

Another advantage of AV aids mentioned by Kholis (2016: 5) refers to English language students and their problems with communication. Speaking in a second/foreign language, naturally, can be demanding – probably because of lack of authentic language models. And teachers, in order to facilitate such models, may use audio-visual materials as they can provide access to “real communication”. Students then are not only influenced by native speakers but they also feel that classes are more interesting and enjoyable. Macwan (2015) adds that listening to audio clips shows students that there are more ways to speak English as they listen to different English accents. Also, Adela (2017: 52) indicates that AV aids can help learners to achieve language habits reminiscent of native-speakers: “[t]he sound which is produced by a model of the native speaker can help the students to learn and improve their pronunciation by imitating the speaker”. One more point made by Adela (2017: 58) is worth mentioning. It is cross-cultural awareness that is expanded in learners by watching videos; they can observe foreign customs.

Hiral (2015: 92, in Kholis 2016: 5), on the other hand, throws light on the matter of versatility of AV aids in his study concerning audio-visual aids in English classrooms. He stresses upon the fact that AV resources
can be used to teach all four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Still one might doubt whether watching videos develops writing. The explanation comes with instructional media which show the language in its original state. In addition, they help students use appropriate words in writing, to build sentences which sound natural and to be creative (Kholis 2016: 6).

Some of the previously made points indicate that videos increase the interest in students towards learning languages. To go even further: “learners prefer action/entertainment films to language films or documentaries in the classroom” (Canning-Wilson 2000). It raises the question whether or not static AV aids, which are not packed with action, can preserve students’ interest and benefit the teaching/learning process. Canning-Wilson (2000) conducted research concerning this issue. She accounts that not only do images contained in videos positively increase learning productivity but also the occurrence of images directly benefits students’ demeanour:

the use of illustrations, visuals, pictures, perceptions, mental images, figures, impressions, likenesses, cartoons, charts, graphs, colors, replicas, reproductions, or anything else used to help one see an immediate meaning in the language may benefit the learner by helping to clarify the message, provided the visual works in a positive way to enhance or supplement the language point. (Canning-Wilson 2000)

It means that teachers do not have to depend only on videos to improve their classes. They can also use less modern resources and achieve positive effects. And songs cannot be omitted here as they also bring benefits. They provide a relaxing environment which is essential when a teacher’s goal is to reduce tension level in a class (Mamun 2014: 12).

Macwan (2015: 93) puts an emphasis on the rather obvious but very valuable advantage of videos, which is its ability to be viewed multiple times. This function facilitates students’ self-esteem and self-confidence: “[w]ith the rehearsal and memory of sequenced activities, learning and understanding become easier” (Macwan 2015: 93). In other words, the repeatability of videos allows a learner to master difficult material and simultaneously to improve his/her language-confidence. Mamun (2014: 10) points to another technical advantage of videos, which is their wide accessibility. With the rise in instructional videos, a teacher can conveniently select a video for his/her specific purposes (Mamun 2014: 10).
One could not omit PowerPoint presentations as teachers often incorporate presentations prepared both by them and by their students. As Mamun (2014: 9) maintains, PowerPoint slides are a tool which makes the whole presentation more appealing. Listeners simply pay attention to the given material more easily. Therefore, we can consider such an aid as not only an independent part of a class but also as a tool which enhances the speaker.

Mishra and Yadav (2014: 3–4) argue that the biggest advantage of AV materials is placed in their universality: they can be used with equal efficiency and utility right from the beginning stages of education up to university level with only slight changes. They claim that especially at kindergartens and primary schools, AV aids primarily interest learners, while at the advanced level they provide authentic language input.

To sum up, AV aids, which are often considered as very motivating for learners, are beneficial in numerous ways. They help explain ideas better, enhance teachers’ role in the classroom, as well as help make classes more interesting, thus preventing boredom. And most importantly, they bring real language situations to class.

One should, however, bear in mind that there are also disadvantages of audio-visual aids. Pfeiffer (2001: 66), for instance, presents some common doubts concerning the employment of AV resources in language classes. First of all, he points to the fact that there is insufficient evidence proving that teaching achieves better results with the use of modern media. He also notes that such aids have not changed teaching/learning processes to the extent that educational goals are obtained more quickly. He maintains that the expectations which were placed in modern media were too great to be achieved and states that the employment of new technology demands significant financial investment, training, and the necessity to incorporate it with other teaching resources, although it is known that these requirements can be challenging to meet. Pfeiffer concludes that audio-visual media are only a teaching resource, and they cannot be seen as some kind of exceptional teaching method.

Pfeiffer’s opinion about AV materials is very balanced when comparing it to some of the views depicting benefits of AV aids. However, there are more researchers who present similar reasoning. Wolak (2013: 300), for example, stresses that authentic audio-visual texts can be demanding for a teacher, as employing them requires serious consideration. Materials
have to suit students’ language level, and they have to be used at the right moment. Moreover, failure to do this may result in considerable frustration in learners. Wolak additionally reminds that audio-visual materials ought to match with teaching goals and that the topic should correspond with the subject-matter.

Various advantages of incorporating authentic video materials in a class have been discussed. First and foremost, how it gives students a chance to get familiar with native speaking. Nevertheless, voices of doubt continue to arise when it comes to the use of linguistically demanding materials. In simple words, learners may take watching videos as pure entertainment and as a kind of break, rather than learning time (Tezi 2013: 33). It proves once more that the selection of proper materials is extremely important.

Furthermore, if one searches for drawbacks of AV resources, he/she may find that some of the information contradicts previously stated advantages of AV materials. One of the strong benefits of AV materials lies in its dual-sense capacity. Even though this capacity to trigger both aural and visual senses of a learner is considered advantageous, it can be at some point considered negatively: “[t]he auditory/verbal channel can become overloaded when a lot of spoken words, sounds, etc. are presented at the same time” (Seel 2011: 385). Another example of an advantage which can be also regarded as a drawback is the authenticity of videos. Students at the beginning may find native accents and their way of speaking difficult to understand, which may lead to confusion and silence (Adela 2017: 63). Yet there are more conflicting points. Earlier the benefits of using PowerPoint slides for presentations were identified, especially how it develops a speaker’s demonstration. Nevertheless, the reasoning can be reversed: “some people think that PowerPoint slides are not always helpful for teaching. It may draw a border between the presenter and the audience as the presenter concentrates more on the slides than the audiences” (Mamun 2014: 9). This means that the tool may create an invisible line between the speaker and listeners which would not be appreciated by the audience (Mamun 2014: 9).

As the main disadvantages of audio-visual aids, Çakir lists: “cost, inconvenience, maintenance and in some cases the fear of technology” (Çakir 2006, in Mamun 2014: 19). In other words, the major disadvantages of AV aids do not refer to the aids themselves, but rather to the teaching environment which may lack funding or sufficient training.
Mossaab (2013: 21–22) points to more obstacles which may accompany AV resources. He maintains that students can get distracted if the video is used to make the whole lesson instead of aiding it in key moments. He also notes that preparation of audio-visual classes may take time, and the organization of the classroom must be appropriate as all students should be able to hear and see the prepared materials.

To sum up, some researchers point to not only the pros but also cons of AV aids. Still, there are no arguments which suggest that AV resources fail in their function as teaching resources. Numerous doubts seem to be based on the fact that employing relatively new methods of teaching demands additional effort and resources. Furthermore, AV materials should not be treated as some sort of superior tools which can replace traditional teaching. In other words, if AV aids are used properly, and with enough amount of practice, they aid classes. But, if someone wanted to use them in order to substitute a teacher, it would not succeed as a good teacher cannot be replaced by technology.

4. Organization of classes with audio-visual materials

Some general suggestions about the employment of AV aids have already been made. Nevertheless, the issue needs to be elaborated on further. Fortunately, there are researchers who provide their “field” experience of using modern materials in a classroom setting. As a result, this section attempts to bring their experiences together and to present recommendations and views which seem to be helpful for any teacher who thinks about using AV resources in a language class.

As briefly stated before, a teacher has to address audio-visual aids in accordance with educational goals and themes of the lessons. It means that AV resources used in a class cannot be chosen at random. Mossaab (2013: 16) even specifies questions which a teacher can answer in order to decide on a good AV aid: “What are you actually trying to convey? Which aid will best serve your purpose? Which aid is easily available? Can it be used in the classroom situation? Can it be used in other situations like outside the classroom etc.? Can you use the same aid again?” One then could say that a good teacher must choose his materials smartly. Only well picked AV aids serve as facilitators of learning and can be used conveniently. Besides being concerned with the content and ease
of use of AV aid, a teacher cannot forget about technical quality: “[m]ake
sure that the student will be able to see and hear clearly. Audio cassettes
that cannot be heard or lettering that is too small to be seen can make
the audience restless and inattentive” (Madhuri 2013: 119).

In order to supplement the above suggestions and to clarify the whole
message, Bozimo’s (2002, in Iwu et al. 2011: 64) points have to be taken
into account. He proposes six points which seem more than enough to
follow if one wanted to make sure that an AV aid is worthwhile:

a. appropriateness of the materials to instructional objectives;

b. freedom of the content from bias;

c. quality of the format, print, sound or photography;

d. degree of the quality and variety of the materials;

e. availability of the materials and how to operate the materials;

f. how reasonable the time and effort are for both the students and
the teachers.

Now it is reasonable to point to teaching methods in which a teacher can
use particular AV aids. Researchers propose many exercises which can
be employed in a class. As expected, the majority of them are related to
videos, yet there are also some which apply to songs and pictures.

Sowntharya, Gomathi & Muhuntarajan (2014: 2–3) discuss activities
that can be completed after watching English movies/documentaries:
“[w]riting reviews of the movies … [d]iscussion about the theme, plot
and characters … interview writing … [r]ole plays … [g]iving oral com-
mentaries … [w]riting Scripts for narration”. Thus, it can be clearly seen
that movies can be used to trigger some post activities which improve
students’ oral and/or writing skills.

There are also suggestions how to creatively play a video. Tezi (2013:
23–26) proposes a few methods that are worth noting. Active viewing is
a technique in which learners have to be constantly focused as something
put in a video might demand their reaction. Another method is called
Silent Viewing. It has two approaches. Students can be prompted to find
out what was said in a video, whereas the other way focuses on vision –
what students can see. This method can be successfully reversed and
then learners would be provided only with a soundtrack. There are also
other, rather well-known techniques, like Freeze Framing or Repetition
(the teacher pauses a recording and students have to repeat what has
just been said) (Tezi 2013: 23–26). Obviously, more techniques could be
quoted, but as the majority of them are rather similar, further inquiry is omitted.

Nonetheless, potential songs to be played in class need careful examination. They also can be used to teach in a creative way. Tomczuk (2012) presents some ways to do so. She commences with a validation of songs: “the work with songs creates a lot of didactic possibilities, and they depend on a teacher’s creativity and student’s commitment” (Tomczuk 2012: 35, self-translated). Furthermore, she enumerates manners in which a teacher can use songs, for example: attaching music to a picture or to a discussed situation, analyzing elements of a song, building dialogues based on songs’ plot. So once again, AV aids may be used in a creative way which is only defined by teachers’ and students’ willingness.

Pictures can also be successfully implemented in a language class, which should not be a surprise for any experienced teacher. As in the case with videos and songs, the employment of pictures: “[d]epends a lot on the teachers (their ability, their flexibility and their purposes as well” (Trang 2015: 4). It means that pictures can be used in numerous ways in a class. For instance, a teacher can ask students to repeat a word when pointing at a picture; a picture used to illustrate words. One could go a bit further and ask a student to describe what he or she can see in a given material. Another activity can be based on hiding a picture or its elements to train students’ memory; students are to ask questions about the covered picture, eventually essentially ‘repainting it with their descriptions’. What is more, learners can be requested to order pictures accordingly to given instructions (Trang 2015: 4–6). These are only a few examples. Collecting all techniques of applying pictures in a language class would take many pages, yet as the majority of methods are based on very similar concepts, there is no reason to quote them all.

To sum up, AV aids can be implemented in many ways in a language class. And most importantly, the way they are used does not have to be boring for students. In fact, the majority of techniques encourage students to become a part of the class, causing them to be more involved in the learning process. Additionally, teachers do not have to stick to given methods, being able to rearrange them or create individual ones.
Concluding remarks

Audio-visual materials have been termed in diverse ways but the most established name is *AV aids*. This term refers to various teaching aids which trigger, collectively or separately, the two major human senses: vision and audition. Based on this assumption, Pfeiffer’s (2001: 163) classifies AV materials into three groups: *Audial (hearing) materials*, *Visual materials*, *Audio-visual materials*. Naturally, the flagship examples of AV aids are: pictures, songs and videos. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the mentioned division includes many subtypes of AV resources, like recorded speeches, paintings or YouTube videos. One also should keep in mind that AV aids may be classified based on different factors, e.g. non-technical media and technical media (Brinton 2001, in Bergeron 2015: 20), or informational and didactical functions (Wolak 2013: 294–295).

The usefulness of AV materials has great potential. Researchers (e.g. Daniel 2013: 1; Kholis 2016: 5; Macwan 2015: 93) enumerate many advantages which AV resources add to language classes. Describing only a few of the benefits builds an impressive portrayal of AV aids: they are considered very motivational for learners at every stage, they help with decreasing the level of dullness among students by enriching teaching methodology, they clarify concepts, they allow students to get used to native pronunciation, and they reduce a teacher’s burden.

Still there occur moderate opinions (e.g. Pfeiffer 2001: 66; Tezi 2013: 33; Wolak 2013: 300) regarding AV materials. The major objections against AV aids are based on the belief that it is rather challenging and expensive to incorporate them into classes. Some teachers are still not convinced that the employment of AV materials is worth the time and money. Unfortunately, there are also teachers who use AV resources in order to fulfil whole classes, although they should use them only to aid their lessons in appropriate moments. Some also set too high expectations concerning AV resources, as if they were able to educate without a teacher’s supervision and with little effort put into their arrangement. It all means that disadvantages of AV materials occur rather only when one does not put enough effort to preparation (failing to choose aids in accordance with goals and learners’ language level) which leads to poor quality of a class and its dubious effectiveness. In other words, AV
materials are not a problem themselves but rather their wrong employment and usage spoil them.

With regard to methods in which a teacher can integrate AV aids, it is important to bear in mind that whether one achieves success is dependent on his/her creativity and willingness. A teacher has to pick materials considering their effect on current goals. Clearly, they cannot be chosen at random because it might lead to ineffectiveness and lack of interest in learners. Additionally, the quality of materials matters, as well as their variety. Only a proper approach to these resources provides positive teaching results. It is also necessary to point here to the teacher’s creativity which plays its role when an educator chooses the way to use a particular aid. For example, a song can be simply listened to or can be used in order to open a discussion, videos can be watched to benefit listening skills or in order to familiarize students with a foreign culture, pictures can stand for particular words or they can be dispersed to make students draw connections to them. Specialized sources evoke many more methods AV resources can be used in. Moreover, a creative teacher can successfully create their own strategies which is undoubtedly another advantage of AV aids.

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CHAPTER 6:
MUSIC AND SONGS IN LANGUAGE LESSONS
Ewelina Sejnowska

Introduction

Music has a far-reaching influence on human potential and people’s way of living. Every man recognizes how strongly music affects human behavior, thinking and learning abilities. One may state that music is everything that people hear and everything that they say. Since music and language have a lot in common, language education can offer excellent opportunities for integration of music with language skills development. Bearing this in mind, the author of this paper emphasizes an indisputable role of music in human life and in foreign language learning and teaching.

1. The role of music in human life

No society exists without music. People throughout the world use their ingenuity, time and effort to create some melodies because music is often a form of communication for them. Music stimulates emotions and elicits various responses as it is often inextricably connected with movement and dance. It is important here to answer the question of what exactly music is and why it is an essential part of human life.

The origins of music date back to the beginnings of mankind. Quoting Brown (2000), Siek-Piskozub (2002: 29) explains that music (or rather musilanguage as an early form of singing) was the first way of communication. She points out that our ancestors communicated with each other using combinations of sounds resembling melody. People transformed melodies into the spoken language in which each sound or set of sounds meant something different. Bearing this in mind, one may state that language developed from songs (Siek-Piskozub 2002: 30).

Apart from tones and deliberate variations of intonation, our ancestors diversified their announcements on account of rhythm. Richard Wallaschek (2009: 230) states that an essential feature of primitive music
was rhythm. He indicates that “rhythm, taken in a general sense to include ‘keeping in time’, is the essence in music, in its simplest form as well as in the most skillfully elaborated fugues of modern composers” (Wallaschek 2009: 230). His point of view is based on the assumption that if one wants to recall a tune, first he/she must revive the rhythm which will then aid the recollection of melody. It is impossible to do it the other way around and this suggests that the origin of music should be sought in a rhythmical impulse of man.

Richard Wallaschek (2009: 231) also underlines that the musicality of our ancestors developed so rapidly because they created very original and rich in meaning melodies, using different sounds from their surroundings. Music has always been associated with some human experience, ideas and feelings, and this process can be observed today as well.

Elaborating on the subject in question, Ian Cross (1999) recognizes music as a universal and powerful tool which can significantly affect people. Nowadays, the influence of music is as distinctly noticeable as among people from the past. Cross (1999) highlights that “music may have an adaptive value for the group through reinforcing group identity and promoting group morale and by virtue of its capacity to release individual tensions while not destroying group morale”.

Cross (1999) underlines that music also integrates information from different domains. This integrative function of music fits well with Mickey Hart’s explanation quoted by Martin Fautley and Jonathan Savage (2011: 102), which states that “music is a reflection of our dreams, our lives, and it represents every fibre of our being. It’s an aural landscape, a language of our deepest emotions; it’s what we sound like as ‘people’”. Music collaborates with other arts, but no artistic field, apart from music, gets out such a great number of human feelings like music. Since melody is built on emotions, music is also able to respond and express human behavior by conveying a variety of messages and meanings.

It needs to be highlighted here that music stimulates people’s emotions by introducing a relaxing atmosphere and harmony. Claudia Smith Salcedo (2002) holds an opinion that music is an effective tool in reducing human anxiety and boredom associated with routine tasks. She points out that music is a positive force in mental health stimulation of every human being, regardless of one’s age. Moreover, a variety of music styles allows every man to choose the kind of music according to his/
her preferences and mood. The choice of music style and the frequency and intensity of listening to songs or melodies depend, of course, on individuals themselves.

Carmen Fonseca-Mora (2012) pays attention to another feature of music which may have an impact on one’s ability to remember certain situations and emotions. She maintains that music leaves a deep trace in human memories. This statement is based on some unconscious factors of inborn musical perception that every man possesses. That is an explanation why singing is an easy way of memorizing everything that is new. “Melody seems to act as a path or a cue to evoke the precise information we are trying to retrieve” (Fonseca-Mora 2012).

It is also necessary to emphasize that music may be produced and consumed. For artists, music can be an outlet for feelings, ideas and energy. For listeners, music is a source of entertainment which perfectly relieves stress and gives opportunities to identify with emotions of other people. According to this line of reasoning, every human being has a chance to choose a piece of music to simply enjoy it or to take part in music creation. Both areas ensure development and both guarantee people a certain level of advancement as human beings. In relation to this implication is the view of Ian Cross (1999), who describes the role of music in the following passage:

Music propels the development, and propelled the evolution, of mind by enabling consequence-free representational redescription across domains; music also facilitates the development and facilitated the evolution, of social behaviours by enabling risk-free action and risky interaction. At the very least it may have contributed to the emergence of one of our most distinguishing features, our cognitive flexibility; at most, it may have been the single most important factor enabling the capacities of representational redescription to evolve.

Ian Cross (1999) also notes that music is the most important invention that man has ever created.

In the concluding part, one may state that music and society have always been intimately related. Since music reflects ideas of individuals and societies, it may be described as a very powerful medium of representation. It may hold this label because melodies reflect communication which goes beyond words, facilitate transmission of many meaningful messages and promote the development of individual, cultural and national identities.
Music and foreign language learning

Music and languages have had a remarkable significance for people for ages. Both are understood as some form of communication that conveys messages, expresses emotions and transfers ideas and concepts. Each of them has its own characteristics, structure and role to play. However, when treated together they can influence human behavior even more significantly. Nowadays, the correlation between music and language is indisputable and, on this basis, integration of them in the learning process seems to be essential.

Stansell (2005) highlights the fact that music and language are “complimentary systems of structured communication” in which language is responsible for content, whereas music for emotions. These ways of communication are based on a sound or rather sets of sounds. However, they have many more common features that are universally associated mainly with music, like melodic recognition, timbre, tempo, stress, pause, tonality and rhythm. As forms of communication, they also contribute to the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver, and to the triggering of a suitable reaction.

Although every man recognizes differences between a spoken language and music, all the above common features may suggest that language and music have the same origins and aims. The deep relationship between music and language, especially in the process of learning, is called by John Weatherford Stansell (2005) a correlation of ‘supportive sisters’. He emphasizes the role of music and its correlation with language, also in the educational context, in the following passage:

Music's success is due, in part, to primal human abilities. Music codes words with heavy emotional and contextual flags, evoking a realistic, meaningful, and cogent environment, and enabling students to have positive attitudes, self-perceptions, and cultural appreciation so they can actively process new stimuli and infer the rules of language. The universal element of music can make the artificial classroom environment into a “real” experience and make new information meaningful, bringing interest and order to a classroom.

This correlation of music and language is visible in the foreign language learning process as music helps students to get familiar with some unknown aspects of a language. Such a view is held, for instance, by
Carmen Fonseca-Mora (2012), who presents melody and rhythm as useful tools influencing foreign language learning. She emphasizes that both music and language are representatives of melody with specific rhythm. This last one may be very effective in foreign language speaking because the more rhythmic and intonated the utterance in a language is, the easier it assimilates. In addition to that, if an utterance reflects a chant or song, it becomes very memorable. All the implications here are connected with a melodic approach to language teaching which stresses the power of sound in the process of language learning. According to this approach, a sound stimulates learners’ attention and helps to familiarize one with some linguistic features like accent and intonation. Carmen Fonseca-Mora (2012) indicates that “the musicality of speech has an effect not only on the pronunciation skills of EFL students but also on their entire language acquisition process”. It simply develops learners’ long-term memory and shapes their ways of producing foreign words in natural contexts.

It is also worth emphasizing that the majority of people concentrate better thanks to some musical stimulus and that music helps one to relax and unify with others. John Weatherford Stansell (2005) notes that when teachers add some musical background to language input, they can expect higher motivation, enjoyment and comprehension from learners. He maintains that music positively affects learners’ interest in other cultures. By being exposed to a wide variety of music, a learner may get a better insight into a particular culture and its history. The integration of foreign language and original melodies give an extra opportunity for presentation of and familiarization of students with another tradition.

It is also necessary to indicate that melodies can be an excellent and relaxing background for language learning. Such is, for instance, the case with Suggestopedia, which involves usually baroque or meditative music that helps to enhance the language acquisition. The regular use of background music as a language stimulus increases learners’ linguistic performance and their general learning skills (Strokes 2007).

According to Teresa Siek-Piskozub and Aleksandra Wach (2008: 57), music, especially a song, has an enormous influence on the learning process. The two scholars clearly point out that regular song exercises improve students’ foreign language skills. As they note, even weaker students can achieve a high level in language acquisition thanks to the use
of songs. Well chosen music may help students with some learning disabili-
yes to become much more confident and to be successful in improving their skills. Music and songs make the learning process much easier because music relieves stress that accompanies students when they try to comprehend information about the language and its various elements (Fonseca-Mora, Toscano-Fuentes & Wermke 2011).

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, the melodic approach which was discussed in this paper, and observations and findings of scholars on the use of music in a language class point to numerous positive effects of music in the classroom. On the basis of the information presented above, one may state that music and songs play a crucial role in language learning. The introduction of music in a lesson guarantees the development of different skills, including linguistic ones, increases learners’ motivation, stimulates emotions, elicits various responses, and helps one to interact with another culture. Thus, a creative and an effective language teacher should be aware of how useful the tool of music can be in the process of foreign language learning.

Bearing this in mind, it is impossible to deny the positive influence of music on language education. The correlation between music and language is indisputable and, on this basis, integration of them in the learning process should be seen as totally beneficial for students.

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Introduction

This paper is devoted to the use of music and songs in the foreign language teaching process. Due to their numerous benefits, music and songs play, in fact, a crucial role in language education. It is highlighted by researchers (e.g. Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006) that music reflects a target culture and enhances students’ language awareness. Listening to songs creates a student-friendly classroom atmosphere that contributes to lowering learners’ anxiety and raising their self-esteem and motivation. It is believed that music and songs can lead to the development of all language skills. They have a positive influence on students’ pronunciation as well as memorization of vocabulary and grammar structures. In this account, the author will discuss the role of music and songs in the educational process and will point to the reasons for using them in foreign language teaching. Furthermore, the author will enumerate song selection criteria and will describe how the teacher can use music and songs to develop language skills of his/her students.

1. The role of music and songs in the educational process

Music and sounds are an integral part of human life. Every culture, nationality or group of people create their own music. Carlton (1987: 16) maintains that music plays an important role in human life because it is “a non-verbal language, a way of communicating ideas and feelings through the medium of sound”. Before small children start to use words, they communicate with others using simple sounds. Music and songs seem to have a positive influence on the educational process. It is claimed that music fosters the social, emotional and mental development of human beings (Gage 1999; Pradela 2003; Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006).

Scholars claim that singing songs fosters the process of socialization. As Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 32) note, group singing not only
provides a great pleasure but also gives the group members a sense of belonging and a sense of security. The same point of view is presented by Pradela (2003: 35), who states that group singing brings students together and helps to eliminate borders between the teacher and learners, creating a sort of bond between them.

Grygalewicz (2005: 130) asserts that the use of music and songs in the educational process develops emotional intelligence, namely sensitivity to the beauty of sound, imagination, inner concentration and musical memory. Pradela (2003: 36) adds that music and songs raise students’ cultural awareness, develop their artistic sensibility and encourage them to creative work. Shen (2009: 88) enumerates positive effects of using music in education. As he points out, music “has the power to soothe people’s emotions, refresh their minds and to unlock their creativity”. He notes that musical activities stimulate abstract thinking and help to extend the child’s attention span.

Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 76) emphasize that the use of music and songs in early childhood education positively influences the development of both the native and the foreign language, accelerates the willingness for reading, fosters the social development and general achievements of students. Additionally, it generates a positive attitude towards learning.

Noteworthy is also the fact that music plays a therapeutic role in the educational process. As Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 76) indicate, songs have a deep impact on students’ emotions because, on the one hand, they can amuse them and, on the other hand, they can evoke feelings of sadness; nonetheless, they never cause fear which is primarily responsible for students’ inhibition in the learning process (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 113). Shen (2009: 94) maintains that “listening to songs can knock down the learner’s psychological barriers, such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence and apprehension”. It means that music enables the teacher to create a friendly and stress-free learning environment.

What is more, music supports the mental performance of students (Gage 1999). Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 76) emphasize that listening to music increases the effectiveness of students’ work in mathematical and logical exercises. Besides, reiteration of songs helps children to memorize words and language structures. It is also observed that listening to music, singing and playing instruments stimulate both the right
and the left hemispheres, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of learning (Shen 2009: 92).

Gage (1999) claims that the use of music can have a positive impact on learning of other school subjects, such as Math or Science. To support this argument, the scholar suggests that in such countries as, for example, Japan, Hungary and the Netherlands, where art training plays an important role in elementary curricula, students achieve one of the highest math and science scores in comparison to other countries. Additionally, songs may be applied in teaching history because they often stress important facts from the particular region or country. They sometimes are reminiscences of historical events, for example, the old English song “Sing a song sixpence” or the Polish national anthem “Mazurek Dąbrowskiego” (Pradela 2003: 35; Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 31).

Since the Middle Ages, music and songs have been used in the foreign language teaching process. For the first time, they were applied in teaching Latin. As Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 12–13) state, singing songs was considered a good exercise for practicing pronunciation and intonation. It also gave students a sense of proper rhythm of a spoken language. In fact, throughout the centuries numerous reasons for using music and songs in education have been forwarded. In the next part of the paper, the author will enumerate some of them, drawing particular attention to the area of foreign language teaching and learning.

2. Reasons for using music and songs in foreign language teaching

Music and songs may be essential components of foreign language teaching. Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 78) maintain that the use of music and songs can activate the inborn mechanism of language acquisition and contribute to the development of language competence, which is the main objective of foreign language teaching.

According to Shen (2009: 88), songs which are “a combination of music and language, … have innumerable virtues that deserve our attention. Their richness in culture and themes, their idiomatic and poetic expressions, their therapeutic functions and so on make them an impeccable tool for language teaching”.
Undoubtedly, one of the most significant advantages of songs is their authenticity. The use of popular songs provides students with a colloquial and informal language and makes them prepare for informal conversations in real life. Shen (2009: 91) notes that the use of realistic material during a foreign language lesson contributes to the development of students’ language awareness. It means that students who listen to authentic recordings are given an opportunity to observe how the language is used and how the language structures are joined together. Thanks to the application of songs, the foreign language is presented holistically and in natural chunks.

Jolly (1975: 14) maintains that songs are a good tool for teaching a foreign language because they give students a chance of “acquiring a greater understanding of the cultural heritage which underlies the target language”. He suggests that songs are a welcome help in foreign language teaching because thanks to them students may have contact with the foreign language culture. As Shen (2009: 88) underlines, “language and music are interwoven in songs to communicate cultural reality in a very unique way”.

Jolly (1975: 14) notes that “songs are often written to express the deeper feelings of the people. The subjects of songs tend to be those things or ideas to which the stronger emotions are tied”. Thus, lyrics often refer to values and issues important to a certain group of people, for instance, Black Americans singing about equality and respect (Shen 2009: 88; Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 115). Thus, it can be stated that songs promote tolerance and teach thoughtfulness towards others (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 115). Songs make learners aware that despite ethnic differences, people may share the same feelings and opinions. Jolly (1975: 14) emphasizes that songs “become then a direct avenue to the basic values of the culture”.

Another reason for using songs and music in the educational field is their therapeutic function. The Affective Filter Hypothesis formulated by Stephen Krashen suggests that a high level of motivation and self-esteem and a low level of anxiety improve the foreign language learning process. Thus, it seems to be important to eliminate stress and anxiety and raise students’ self-esteem and motivation during a lesson. Thanks to the use of songs and music, the teacher may create a friendly and stress-free classroom environment, and thus contribute to the enhancement of
motivation and to the decrease of anxiety. Engh (2013: 117) maintains that “music lowers affective barriers and assists in making students more relaxed, thereby more receptive to language learning”. The same opinion is shared by Keskin (2011: 378), who notes that

the amusing and relaxing mood brought by songs to the class eases the effects of certain emotional cases such as excitement, anxiety, lack of self-confidence and the feeling of being threatened, in addition to influencing learning process positively or facilitating it by stimulating the student emotionally.

Well-prepared lessons with the use of music and songs, in fact, enhance students’ engagement and encourage them to actively participate (Shen 2009: 90; Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 112–113). As Millington (2011: 136) asserts, songs “can bring variety to the everyday classroom routine. This variety stimulates interest and attention, which can help maintain classroom motivation, thereby helping learners to reach higher levels of achievement”. This view corresponds to the one by Shen (2009: 88), who believes that “using English songs in EFL classrooms can successfully bring about affective learning through providing a harmonious classroom atmosphere, reducing students’ anxiety, fostering their interests and motivating them to learn the target language”. It is also worth relating here to Ludke (2009: 10), who maintains that music and songs “can quickly set a positive classroom tone, improve foreign or second language (L2) intake in the learning process, and attract learners’ attention to the linguistic material contained in the song”.

According to Piotrowska (2001: 74) and Millington (2011: 136), songs bring a lot of fun, joy and elicit smiles on students’ faces, which contributes to the elimination of stress associated with foreign language learning. The application of songs and music during a foreign language lesson gives students an opportunity to learn through play and, as Davanellos (1999: 13) indicates, “the most successful lessons are the ones where we all feel we’ve had a good time. Enjoyable learning has to be more effective than teacher-centred procedures”. It is also emphasized that songs help the teacher to make the lesson more attractive. Davanellos (1999: 13) notes that using songs “is one way of ‘escaping’ from the coursebook and adding new learning experiences”.

Keskin (2011: 379) indicates that songs “offer many codes that strengthen student memory such as choruses, rhymes and melodies …
Therefore, these codes in songs increase the functionality of songs in language teaching”. She adds that “when a student listens to and memorizes a song involved in the class, the lyrics are embedded in his/her long-term memory” (Keskin 2011: 379).

It can be concluded that there are many reasons which speak in favor of using music and songs in foreign language teaching. First of all, songs and their lyrics provide students with an authentic material and transmit cultural knowledge about the foreign language environment. They also foster co-operation between students and develop a sense of belonging to the classroom community. Thanks to the use of music and songs, the teacher can create a student-friendly classroom atmosphere and eliminate stress and fear connected with foreign language learning. Additionally, music and songs contribute to the attractiveness of lessons and they raise students’ motivation to a great extent.

3. Criteria for selecting songs and music

The proper choice of a song has a significant impact on the success of a lesson (Kociola 2005: 90). According to Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 92), some songs may not encourage learners to study a foreign language because of their lyrics’ level of difficulty, uninteresting content or inappropriate language. For this reason, songs and their lyrics need to be selected carefully. In order to choose an appropriate song for students, the teacher has to take into account several aspects.

First of all, the teacher should check if the song is of good quality. In order to enable learners to work with lyrics, the words of a song should be clearly audible (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 105). Keskin (2011: 380) states that “the song to be chosen should have a clear sound and it should be comprehensible”. Too loud music and an excessive use of instruments may distract students’ attention from the lyrics.

Another important aspect is the tempo of a song. If the tempo is too fast, there is a chance that students may have problems with the understanding of lyrics. On the other hand, if it is too slow, students may quickly get bored and lose their interest in the lesson (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 105). Keskin (2011: 379) maintains that “the lack of the ability to slow down the tempo of the song when a grammatically difficult
part is playing, or to fasten it when there is the repetition of certain parts” is one of the disadvantages of using songs in language teaching.

Another aspect that should be taken into consideration while choosing a song is the quality of language. Many pop songs which are popular among teenagers include “slang, bad grammar, and unnatural word stress” (Davanellos 1999: 14). Keskin (2011: 379) notes that “songs which are not grammatical or those involving complicated sentence structures may confuse students”. Thus, learners who fail to work with a song or its lyrics may lose their interest in the lesson easily. The poor quality language that is presented in songs may have a negative impact on foreign language learning. For example, students may perceive incorrect grammar structures as appropriate and use them in further communication.

In the selection of songs, the teacher should also pay attention to their level of language. It is suggested that songs ought to be adjusted to the students’ language level. According to Keskin (2011: 380), “meaningful and popular songs which also harbor cultural elements, as well as grammatical patterns, should be chosen for adult students on intermediate or advanced level whereas more familiar or internationally-known songs should be selected for children”. Moreover, “long and fast songs which tell a story” should be applied in teaching learners who represent a higher language level, whereas short and slow songs are recommended for teaching beginners (Keskin 2011: 380).

Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 106) state that the content of a song is also very crucial. Some lyrics seem to be inappropriate for teaching a foreign language because of their content which deals with violence or sex (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 95). Keskin (2011: 379) also points to this notion by indicating that in some songs “there may be embarrassing parts which cannot be explained to students”. It means that the teacher should choose songs which are devoid of vulgar and insulting words.

Furthermore, the teacher is advised to choose songs that are popular among students and respond to their musical tastes. In order to get to know what type of music is preferred by the majority of students, Kociola (2005: 90) suggests conducting a lesson concerning the types of music and favorite singers. During this lesson, learners may be asked to take part in a survey whose results may provide the teacher with information about students’ favourite types of music. According to Sevik (2011: 1029), “to enhance learner commitment, it is also beneficial to allow learners to take part in the selection of the songs”. To motivate students
to participate in the lesson, the teacher may consult with them the choice of songs.

The chosen song should obviously correspond to the aim of the lesson. It means that the teacher ought to make sure that the themes of the song “fit in with the curriculum or language point to be taught” (Millington 2011: 139). The teacher should check if given songs are appropriate for introducing new vocabulary or grammar structures.

According to Pradela (2003: 37), music seems to be another important factor which should be considered in the selection of songs. Music ought to speak to students and be easy to remember. One is advised to choose songs which have a simple and catchy melody that can be reproduced without the least difficulty. Also, the rhythm of the song ought to be repetitive and straightforward.

In summary, there are many aspects that should be taken into account in the selection of songs. A chosen song has to be adjusted to the students’ age and level of proficiency. Such a material should also correspond to the goals of the lesson. In the selection of pieces of music, the teacher should pay attention to the quality of language and transmitted content. Additionally, the teacher should use songs which are favored by the majority of learners, as well as catchy and easy to understand.

4. Music and songs in the development of language skills

Due to their glottodidactic value, songs are applied in teaching various aspects of language. According to Keskin (2011: 378), “in foreign language teaching, activities which are created by using songs contribute to the development of a lot of language skills from grammar to pronunciation. Therefore, these activities can be carried out in all classes ranging from very basic levels to advanced ones”. The same opinion is presented by Sevik (2011: 1029), who confirms that songs are precious resources which “develop students’ abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Songs can also be used to teach a variety of language items such as sentence patterns, vocabulary, pronunciation, rhythm, adjectives, and adverbs”.

It is necessary to note here that songs are primarily used in developing listening comprehension skills. As Shen (2009: 91) indicates, “good listening comprehension lays the corner-stone for developing other
skills in the foreign learning”. Listening to songs in the target language, in fact, prepares learners for “the genuine English language they are to be faced with” (Shen 2009: 91). What is more, listening to songs gives students an opportunity to become familiar with the rhythm, intonation and accent of the foreign language.

There are many activities involving the use of songs that may be adopted to improve listening comprehension skills. The most widely used exercise for practicing listening is gap-filling (Shen 2009: 91). In gap-filling exercises, students are provided with the text of a song where some words are removed. Learners’ task is to listen to the piece of music carefully and to write the missing words. In this task, the teacher may remove some words or a group of words, for instance, nouns or verbs. As Ludke (2009: 22) notes, for students at an intermediate level, the teacher may remove every seventh or eighth word. It is however suggested that the more blanks there are, the more challenging a listening exercise can be.

In order to develop listening comprehension skills, students can also be given fragments of lyrics and be asked to put them in the correct order while listening to a song (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 201). Ludke (2009: 22) also suggests a dictation exercise, during which students are supposed to write out the lyrics of songs while listening to them. It should be noted that a dictation activity is appropriate for learners at an advanced level and the entire song should be played at least three times.

Songs are also viewed as a good tool for fostering reading comprehension. According to Ludke (2009: 26), songs “can provide a good opportunity for learners to approach reading strategies for authentic foreign language material”. Thus, Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 181) maintain that the teacher should use the lyrics of a song for practicing reading, and the lyrics ought to have a clear structure and should be understandable. The two scholars claim that the most appropriate are the texts which tell a certain story. To practice understanding of the text, the teacher may provide students with multiple choice questions, open-ended questions or true/false statements about the lyrics. After reading the lyrics, learners may also try to formulate the title for each verse, or the entire song. Furthermore, the teacher may divide the text into parts and ask students to read its fragments in turns. Additionally, quiet music may be used as the background for reading exercises.
As Millington (2011) indicates, songs can be used for developing writing skills as well. Listening to songs can stimulate learners’ creativity that may be expressed in the form of writing (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 181). One can distinguish a number of writing exercises which can be based on songs. Students, for example, can summarize the lyrics of a song, write a short story connected with the lyrics, or write a letter to the main character of a given piece of music. Learners may also create their own verses. Additionally, students may feel inspired to describe their deep feelings and opinions (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 181). Shen (2009: 91) states that students may also be encouraged to create their own songs. In this type of activity, learners are supposed to “create their own lyrics by following the same tune and imitating the format of the lyrical lines of the original song” (Shen 2009: 91).

Besides, a song is a good tool for practicing speaking skills and pronunciation. According to Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006: 180), a song is a stimulus for uninhibited and spontaneous oral production. Some lyrics are very provocative and controversial, and therefore they encourage students to express their emotions and opinions. The content of a song may also lead to a class discussion. What is more, students can practice communication in the target language by roleplaying the situation as described in the text. They can be asked to prepare an interview for one of the characters as well as to interpret and analyze the situation presented in the lyrics (Davanellos 1999: 15). Ludke (2009: 24) notes that “for the purposes of pronunciation practice, it is important to choose songs which are not too fast and which do not have a very difficult melody or rhythm”. In order to practice pronunciation, learners can be asked to “listen to the text and identify stress, rhythm and intonation patterns” (Davanellos 1999: 15). The teacher may also encourage students to sing the song and to record it. Then, the whole class can try to analyze their pronunciation and, if necessary, improve it.

It is necessary to emphasize here that songs can be used for introducing and practicing grammatical structures. Songs, in fact, enable the teacher to present a new grammatical structure in a meaningful context that helps students to understand the correlations between the structure and its meaning (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 125). There are many songs which can help to introduce and practice grammar, especially tenses. For example, the songs such as Yellow submarine
(The Beatles) or Wonderful tonight (Eric Clapton) may be used for teaching Present Simple Tense (Pradela 2003: 38). To practice grammatical structures, students can be given a text of the song with gaps and asked to put the correct verb forms into them. Learners may also try to re-write the lyrics from Present Simple to Past Simple or from the active to the passive voice. The teacher may encourage learners to identify all tenses used in the text of the song. Students can try to find irregular verb forms as well.

Finally, songs may contribute to the development of students’ vocabulary knowledge. According to Millington (2011: 135), songs are “usually based around a theme or topic that can provide the context for vocabulary learning.” Songs expose students to new vocabulary items that are presented in some meaningful contexts. Researchers believe that thanks to their repetitive nature songs accelerate memorization of vocabulary and repetitions of a song enable students to store new words in their long-term memory. As mentioned in a previous part, the lyrics of songs may evoke strong emotions among students, and such deep feelings can, in fact, facilitate vocabulary learning. Thanks to listening to songs, students not only develop their listening comprehension skills but also acquire some words automatically (Sevik 2011: 1032).

Foreign language words in the text of a song may be practiced in many ways. At the beginning of the lesson, with the use of a song, the teacher may write its title on the blackboard and ask students to find as many words as possible connected with the title. The teacher may also write out all new words which occur in the lyrics and invite pupils to guess their meanings (Ludke 2009: 17). Students may get lyrics with blanks and try to predict the missing words. The teacher can also give students a list of words and challenge them to find their synonyms or antonyms in the text of a song (Siek-Piskozub & Wach 2006: 128). Additionally, learners can also be asked to find and underline all verbs, nouns or adjectives in the text of a song. The teacher can “play the song and encourage learners to try to guess, from the context, what the new vocabulary words mean” (Ludke 2009: 17). What is more, among young learners, the teacher may use songs to give an opportunity to children to connect singing a song with acting; in this way, the body parts or basic verbs can be introduced and practiced.
Concluding remarks

In the concluding part, we must emphasize that music and songs introduced and practiced in a lesson in different ways and forms have a very positive influence on students’ linguistic, emotional and social development. They, in fact, play a crucial role in foreign language learning and teaching because they develop all language skills, enhance students’ language awareness and familiarize them with cultural elements of a foreign environment. Listening to songs creates a nice atmosphere that contributes to lowering learners’ anxiety and raising their self-esteem and motivation. Songs also prepare students for real interactions with other people and they bring a lot of fun and joy to the class, which results in the elimination of stress associated with the learning process. They also foster co-operation between students and develop a sense of belonging. The above-mentioned effects suggest that music and songs should be seen as indispensable elements of the process of educating young people and developing their different skills, including, of course, the linguistic ones.

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CHAPTER 7:
CULTURE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING
AND TEACHING
Introduction

Due to increasing globalisation and migration, the importance of building students’ intercultural competence alongside the development of linguistic skills, which until not long ago had been seen as a cornerstone of language teaching, has started to be acknowledged by researchers and teacher educators (Moeller & Nugent 2014: 1). Byram and Morgan (1994: 39) provide a thorough critique of the approach to foreign language teaching that prioritises the encoding of messages instead of communication and interaction. According to the researchers, this approach has proved to be highly ineffective, for it does not promote understanding of the world and negotiation of shared meanings. Kramsch (2001: 4), echoing Widdowson, points to the unique character of language and postulates that a foreign language cannot be used appropriately and correctly without the knowledge of the rules and conventions of the target language community. Brown (2007: 194) draws attention to the process of acculturation, stating that teachers should help their students to overcome difficulties related to the acquisition of a new language ego. Moreover, in order to help students to preserve their own identity and make a foreign language their own voice (Kramsch 2001: 4), Brown (2007: 194), calls for the incorporation of cultural awareness into a foreign language classroom. Therefore, taking into account the fact that successful language learning is contingent upon the knowledge of the home and target language cultures, negotiation of shared meanings, and the ability to cope with contrasting ideas, it becomes relevant that foreign language teachers become aware of the benefits of and guidelines for the implementation of intercultural teaching.

1. Definitions of culture

The abstract and complex character of culture accounts for several definitions that reflect different theoretical perspectives of what culture is and
how it can be investigated (Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1995: 135). According to McCarthy and Carter (1994: 150), in general terms, culture can be defined as the set of beliefs and values which commonly exist within a social group or society. However, once an attempt is made to define culture from the perspective of behaviourism, functionalism, cognitivism or symbolism, it becomes apparent that there is no one universal definition of the term (Byram 1989: 43).

Behaviourist and functionalist perspectives on culture assume that all aspects of culture are directly observable or possible to detect from observation (Robinson 1985: 10). Behaviourists perceive culture as consisting of discrete behaviours or sets of behaviours, e.g. traditions, habits or customs. In foreign language teaching, the behaviourist definition of culture is manifested in the teaching of practices, e.g. leisure time or institutions of the target language community (Robinson 1985: 8–10). The functionalist approach to culture tries to investigate reasons behind and rules for social behaviours; thus, similarly as in the behaviourist approach, culture is viewed here as a social phenomenon (Robinson 1985: 8–9). Functionalists believe that if students understand reasons behind certain-novel-to-them behaviours, they will become more tolerant of people who exhibit them in real-time interactions. According to Robinson (1985: 10), in language teaching, the behaviourist and functionalist approaches to culture can be both beneficial and detrimental. On the one hand, they can foster cultural description and recognition of cultural behaviours and, on the other hand, they can reinforce cultural stereotypes.

In the cognitive approach, culture is not perceived as an observable phenomenon, but as a process through which input is mapped out, categorised and interpreted. Therefore, the cognitive theory primarily aims at investigating the way people process and structure information (Robinson 1985: 10). What is implied with regard to the educational setting is that students’ own internal cognitive system must be taken into account in processing new cultural information (Robinson 1985: 11). The symbolic definition of culture focuses on the product of cognitive processing where culture is an end product of facts, historical experience, attitudes and processes which have shaped groups over the years (Papaefthymiou-Lytra 1995: 135). In the teaching context, this theory implies that cultural understanding is a constant process during which new cultural input is synthesised into students’ past and present experience.
Moreover, the definition of culture as patterns of meanings which are represented by symbols supports the premise that language, which is a principal carrier of meaning, constitutes an integral part of culture (Byram 1989: 43).

The iceberg conception of culture (Martinelli & Taylor 2007: 21–20) reflects both the behaviourist-functionalist and cognitive-symbolic traditions, defining culture as an observable and not observable phenomenon. As can be seen in Figure 1, culture is an iceberg of which only a small portion is visible above the waterline, and a much greater and more important foundation is hidden underneath. The visible part of the iceberg constitutes artefacts, rituals and behaviours which are explicit in their nature, e.g. architecture, customs or language, but which are only an expression of the hidden aspects, e.g. values, beliefs, assumptions, norms or history.

![Figure 1. The iceberg model (Source: Jordan, Carlile & Stack 2008: 83)](image)

The model directs attention to and explains why the process of understanding and relating to members of different cultural groups can be problematic. According to Martinelli and Taylor (2007: 20), people tend to create assumptions and comparisons between cultures based on what is observable, but they quite often remain unaware of the implicit elements. For intercultural teaching, as indicated by the researchers, it means that the recognition of and ability to talk about one’s culture is
a necessary condition for finding common ground between members of different cultural groups. Moreover, building students’ awareness of the target language culture cannot be successful when students at first do not become aware of their own iceberg.

Martinelli and Taylor (2007: 20) admit that the iceberg model is often used as a starting point for a more in-depth discussion on culture, and thus two additional models of culture, i.e. the pyramid and the onion model (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010), should be discussed. In Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov’s point of view (2010: 6) culture is “a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others”. The pyramid model presents the construct of this collective programming as composed of three levels, i.e. human nature, culture and personality (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2. The pyramid model (Source: Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010: 6)](image)

In the pyramid model, culture is largely collective and specific to a group of people phenomenon, which results from the social environment rather than genes. Human nature, as opposed to culture, represents the universal level of mental programming that is shared by all human beings. All people, irrespective of their cultural background, share certain universal abilities, needs or faculties, which are, however, manifested differently by members of different cultures. At the top layer
of the pyramid, the researchers place personality, which is defined as a unique set of mental programmes that result from culture, personal experience and genes (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010: 6–7). What is, nevertheless, worth remembering is that the boundaries between the three levels of human mental processing are never clear-cut and any attempt to establish their exact position is challenging (Lázár 2007: 7).

The next cultural model presented by Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 7–8) is the onion model, in which the scholars make an attempt to categorise different manifestations of culture. For this reason, they propose four categories, i.e. symbols, heroes, rituals and values, depicted as the skins of an onion (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3. The onion model (Source: Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010: 8)](image)

Symbols represent the outermost manifestation of culture, e.g. words, gestures or objects which were created to convey meanings understood only by the members of a given culture. Symbols by their nature are dynamic and can as quickly disappear as be replaced by new ones. The next level of depth includes cultural heroes who represent characteristics and virtues which are highly valued by members of a culture. Heroes can be both imaginary or real and dead or alive. Rituals amount to socially essential activities, e.g. social and religious ceremonies, and written and spoken discourse used in daily interaction and to communicate beliefs.
The deepest manifestations of culture are represented by values which are acquired during early years of child development. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 9) subsume the three other layers of cultural manifestations under the term practices, suggesting that, although they can be observed by a non-member of a culture, their implicit cultural meaning remains unnoticed.

Different approaches focus on different elements of culture. Behaviourists and functionalists identify culture as an observable phenomenon which can be explicitly taught during foreign language instruction. Symbolists and cognitivists accentuate those elements of culture which cannot be seen with the naked eye. The iceberg conception of culture supports the premise that culture is built of implicit and explicit elements; therefore, as postulated by Lázár (2007: 8), it is imperative that teaching culture should not be limited to the traditional list of compulsory facts about the history and literature of the target language community. Understanding of behaviour patterns and cultural meanings should be treated as equally important. Nussbaum (1997: 82) advocates that foreign language teaching should employ a more intercultural approach to culture which will include the recognition of universal human needs as well as dissonance within one and between different cultures.

2. Intercultural elements in language education

The connection between language and culture has been the focus of attention of anthropologists and second language acquisition researchers. Taking into account the fact that language is “a useful means of reflecting one’s thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes towards fragments of the surrounding cultural reality” (Krawiec 2012b: 47), it becomes apparent that any attempt to isolate culture from language would result in the loss of significance of either language or culture (Brown 2007: 189). Byram (1989: 22) argues that perceiving a language independently of culture would mean ignoring its very nature. The theory of linguistic relativity, proposed by Whorf and Sapir, states that language shapes cultural ideas, and thus cannot be perceived merely as a means of expression (Brown 2007: 211). Similarly, Kramsch (2001: 4) advocates the union of language as both voice and culture, but she also admits that, while in the first language the difference between the two cannot be easily spotted, learning
a foreign language makes the gap between culture and language more apparent.

In Vygotsky’s view, as highlighted by Byram and Morgan (1994: 22), children possess culture-specific representations which are acquired through their first language and are further modified by experiences brought by language learning. Therefore, language acquisition also means the acquisition of a new culture, and consequently a new cultural identity (Brown 2007: 194). Byram and Morgan (1994: 43) believe that no foreign language learner can simply abandon their own culture for the one of the target language community, and thus will make an attempt to anchor it within their existing categories.

Acculturation – the process of adjusting to a new culture – can, on the one hand, be liberating and beneficial (Littlewood 1981, cited in Byram & Morgan 1994: 6) and, on the other hand, it can trigger cultural shock and alienation (Brown 2007: 194). Brown (2007: 195) enumerates four stages of acculturation, i.e. euphoria, insecurity, recovery and acceptance. It is during the second period that culture shock starts to manifest itself as foreign language speakers are inundated with more and more cultural differences that need to be processed and internalised. The importance of overcoming cultural shock is emphasised by Byram and Morgan (1994: 9), who postulate that for the linguistic progress to happen, learners at first have to process through the stages of euphoria and insecurity. Thus, it is essential that the adverse outcomes of acculturation be mitigated in the process of culture learning and promotion of cultural awareness.

Brown (2007: 194) defines culture learning as an experiential and long-lasting process of establishing shared meaning between cultural representatives. He maintains that it is a process that continues over years of language education and deeply affects person’s cognitive processes. Lázár (2007: 8) echoes Damen’s definition of cultural awareness and characterises it as an ability to discover and understand one’s own and someone else’s culturally-driven behaviours and modes of thinking. Therefore, a culturally aware or educated person will not only have the ability to perceive the similarities and differences in different cultures but will also be able to understand how their own culture shapes his or her identity and patterns of behaviour.
Robinson (1985: 7), having examined teachers’ responses to the question about the meaning of culture, reported that most frequently teachers understand culture as ideas, behaviours and products and less frequently as a worldview or a way of life. Correspondingly, Lázár (2007: 7) accentuates that, in teachers’ understanding, culture typically means literature, geography or arts, and although these subjects are undoubtedly vital ingredients of culture learning, there also are different, equally crucial, components that should be integrated into the foreign language classroom. McCarthy and Carter (1994: 151) classified these components under the terms culture with a capital C, culture with a small c, and culture as social discourse.

Culture with a capital C applies to artistic achievements of society, i.e. arts, literature, music or theatre. McCarthy and Carter (1994: 151) give an example of how elements of culture with capital C are taught in the grammar-translation method, which aims at building students’ linguistic competence so that they can read and translate great works of literature. The use of literature as one of the tools for building students’ cultural knowledge is postulated by Valdes (1986b: 137), who admits, however, that teaching culture through literature is possible only at upper-intermediate to a highly advanced level. In accordance with Valdes, as mentioned by Krawiec (2012a: 111), van Dijk accentuates the importance of public discourse, in both written and spoken form, in the transmission of cultural beliefs, values and meanings. Moreover, Kramsch (2001: 5) encourages teachers to use authentic documents, together with a text-oriented discourse analysis system.

Culture with a small c refers to the customs, habits, social behaviour and worldview of a cultural group. Textbook designers frequently make an attempt to at least partly cover this broad range of concepts. Such domains as, e.g. family, eating habits or public institutions are often portrayed in the main course material or a supplement. McCarthy and Carter (1994: 151) suggest that not only textbooks but also literary texts, magazines, TV series, newspaper articles or even jokes can provide information about customs and practices of the foreign language culture.

Social knowledge and interactive skills which, together with the knowledge of the language system, enable successful communication are classified under the term culture as social discourse. McCarthy and Carter (1994: 151) point to the fact that cultural norms of written and spoken discourse, e.g. rhetorical conventions in writing, conventions of
politeness, discourse markers or paralinguistic codes, may differ significantly between different cultures, and thus should not be excluded from foreign language instruction.

Byram and Morgan (1994: 48) distinguish two types of knowledge required from foreign language learners. The first one is the recipe knowledge of social transactions, silent language, turn-taking or rules of politeness. In the case of a native speaker, this type of knowledge is internalised and subconscious. However, unlike native speakers, language learners have to know it consciously and, on some occasions, substitute for their own subconscious knowledge. The second type of knowledge has geographical, historical and sociological dimensions. It is the knowledge that has to be learnt consciously by both native speakers and foreign language learners. For native speakers, the process of learning starts already during childhood and takes the form of formal education and social interaction. It is the shared understanding of symbols, historical and contemporary figures or geographical features to which people of the same cultural background refer in conversation or text. According to the researchers, it is this type of knowledge that can be most frequently found in textbooks and language curricula. However, the researchers strongly recommend that within the time constraints and available resources, the two types of knowledge be made available to the learners.

3. ICC approach

Lussier et al. (2007: 25) claim that the key to successful cross-cultural interaction lies in certain attitudes, knowledge and skills which can evolve from both linguistic and communicative competence. Communicative competence refers to these aspects of our competence which enable negotiation of meaning, and transmission and interpretation of messages within a specific context. This type of competence is less concerned with the knowledge of the language code than with the knowledge of how to use a language functionally, interactively and appropriately to a given situation (Brown 2007: 219). Nevertheless, in a situation when people of different cultural background choose to engage in communication, communicative competence has to be sustained by intercultural awareness and intercultural competence.
Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), even though often perceived as an extension of communicative competence (Lázár 2007: 9), does not focus only on exchanges, but on relationships and interaction of people who have a different perception of the surrounding reality (Moeller & Nugent 2014: 7). Lázár (2007: 9), echoes Beneke’s definition of intercultural communication and states that to communicate interculturally means to establish a dialogue with an interlocutor who possesses a different set of values, models of the world and linguistic codes.

Byram (1997: 34) proposes a model of intercultural communicative competence in which the construct of ICC results from four facilitating factors, i.e. knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and attitudes. According to Byram (1997: 31–32), a foreign language speaker’s knowledge refers to both the home and foreign culture and can be conscious or subconscious in nature. Byram states that this knowledge, irrespective of a speaker’s linguistic competence in a foreign language, will always influence social interaction with an interlocutor from a different country because a person’s knowledge of their culture is an ingrained part of their identity. Moreover, as emphasised by Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001: 5), the knowledge of specific facts, e.g. geography or history, is not the most important component of ICC knowledge. For the researchers, this lies in the understanding of the functioning of social groups, and the practices and principles of social interaction present in both cultures.

Skills are the next requisite component of successful intercultural communication. Byram (1997: 37) states that when a foreigner encounters a new piece of culturally-specific information, he or she uses skills of interpreting and relating in order to make it accessible. For this purpose, an individual can ‘translate’ or interpret the input using already established knowledge as a point of reference. When establishing relationships, the individual will discover similarities, easily translatable concepts and connotations or mutually contradictory meanings which need to be processed and resolved whenever possible. Skills of interpreting and relating need to be distinguished from skills of discovery and interaction. Skills of interpretation are used during analysis of input which was delivered in written form; therefore, without any time constraints or interaction demands. Skills of discovery can also relate to a person’s individual work, but may as well be used during social interaction.
They are activated when a person lacks or has only partial knowledge of a culture and cultural practices of the interlocutor. Taking into account the character of real-time communication, this lack of knowledge has to be recompensated for at the moment of speaking and with consideration of social demands (Byram 1997: 37–38; Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001: 5).

The fourth factor in Byram’s model (1997: 34) concerns attitudes towards individuals who have unfamiliar cultural meanings, beliefs and patterns of behaviour. When these attitudes are negative, they can be characterised as stereotypes and prejudices and can hinder mutual understanding. Nevertheless, positive attitudes, although helpful, do not obligatorily result in successful communication. For cross-cultural communication to succeed, interlocutors need to be curious, open, un judgemental, respectful, and ready to suspend disbelief. These characteristics, however, need to be further supported by interlocutors’ willingness to reconsider their own values, beliefs and behaviours. Furthermore, as emphasised by Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001: 5), intercultural communication requires speaker’s ability to imagine how their own sets of values and patterns of behaviour may be understood and perceived by their interlocutor.

Byram (1997: 33) emphasises that fundamentally the four dimensions of successful intercultural communication can be learnt through experience and reflection without the intervention of any educational institutions. However, when acquired with a teacher’s help, they should be a part of a much broader teaching context, e.g. learner autonomy instruction or the development of critical cultural awareness. Moreover, the researcher postulates that ICC can be taught not only in a foreign language classroom. Such school subjects as geography, history or literature can broaden learners’ horizons and sensitise to otherness. However, the researcher states that foreign language teaching has this unique quality of having the notion of otherness at its very centre of concern, for it entails dealing with familiar and unfamiliar input through the medium of another language.

Moeller and Nugent (2014: 7–8) comment on Byram’s ICC model (1997) and present a pattern of how ICC is best acquired in the classroom setting. The researchers postulate that before students enter the process of discovery, they need to undergo transformation and start to question their preconceived ideas. For this purpose, the researchers suggest
the use of activities which introduce the topic of otherness. The process of discovery entails an exploration of various aspects of culture and leads to building hypotheses about similarities and differences between cultures. Once these hypotheses have been created, teachers should design activities which will help learners to build relationships with members of different cultures. Subsequently, teachers must allow learners enough time to develop skills of interpreting and relating so that students can start to identify, mediate and avoid cultural misunderstandings. Finally, learners develop skills of discovery and interaction in spoken discourse, becoming fully competent in intercultural communication.

As stated by Lázár (2007: 9–10), communication courses which aim at developing ICC will primarily focus on teaching culture through the foreign language or will alternate between teaching culture and teaching language. These courses will consciously and systematically include in their curricula elements of culture with capital C and elements of culture with small c, using culture-specific examples from various cultures, and not only the target one. This cultural knowledge, together with positive attitudes and skills of, e.g. observation, relation and mediation, will result in students’ greater curiosity and higher tolerance of ambiguity.

Foreign language learning is primarily concerned with communication. However, according to Byram (1997: 3), our understanding of what FLT entails should go far beyond communicative language teaching, which judges communication only in terms of effective information exchange. Similarly to Byram, Moeller and Nugent (2014: 8) advocate the need for reconsideration of the traditional teaching methods which prioritise vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar teaching. According to the scholars, foreign language teaching should not aim at modelling students on native speakers, but at building relationships and allowing students to thrive in the target language culture.

4. Ways of shaping intercultural awareness

Valdes (1986a: 121) postulates that in a foreign language classroom, the practice of language skills, e.g. writing, speaking or reading comprehension, should be based on cultural elements. For this reason, the researcher advocates the incorporation of cultural content into the topics of activities which are used to teach linguistic competence.
The researcher maintains that because of time constraints, it is often impossible to devote enough time, let alone a whole class, to teaching culture. Therefore, for most teachers, the incorporation of cultural elements into their daily language teaching is the only chance to help their students develop cultural awareness and intercultural understanding.

Visual and textual materials included in foreign language textbooks are undoubtedly a useful tool for developing intercultural competence. The stimulating role of visual materials in the development of intercultural competence is acknowledged by Krawiec (2012a: 112), for whom pictorial elements presented in textbooks are a colourful source of knowledge about the socio-cultural world of the target language culture. According to the researcher, visual materials can either function as a supplement to the information available in the text form or as a stimulus for classroom discussion.

The use of authentic documents and literature is strongly recommended by Byram (1989: 98), Valdes (1986b: 137) and Kramsch (2001: 5). Byram claims that the introduction of authentic teaching materials provides students with a series of insights into the system of cultural meanings and values of the target language culture. Valdes believes that cultural values of a group of people are transmitted through written-by-them literature, and thus literature should be recognised as a viable component of second language instruction. The researcher admits that even though both literature and its simplified versions can be used to teach culture, readings have a much different function and will never convey the same amount of cultural-specific content as the originals. Kramsch (2001: 5) advocates the use of authentic texts as a tool for constructing cultural knowledge. As stated by this scholar, students can experience cultural diversity through exercises with the use of authentic texts. Kramsch gives an example of an activity during which students are asked to rewrite a story using a different genre, e.g. transforming a story into a diary entry, so that they can discover particular features of a text and its cultural characteristics.

Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 153) distinguish between one- and two-dimensional teaching materials. One-dimensional materials present foreign language learners with only one point of view, whereas two-dimensional materials display culture-related topics from at least two contrasting perspectives. According to the researchers, the former
ones are far more popular than the latter, even though they encourage the development of intercultural understanding to a much greater extent than one-dimensional materials. The researchers believe, however, that a sensitive-to-an-intercultural-approach teacher will be able to use both types of materials successfully. The key, however, lies in teachers’ ability to adapt available materials so that they are free of cultural biases.

Byram and Morgan (1994: 42) believe that intercultural awareness can be developed most effectively with the use of comparative methods. According to these researchers, even though mostly incidental and implicit, comparison and contrasting are a part of students’ strategies of accommodation and assimilation and are widely employed in a foreign language classroom. Byram and Morgan give an example of the keyword technique thanks to which students can contrast L2 words with their L1 equivalents to discover that they do not always denote the same meaning or are not translatable into the first language.

The premise that intercultural teaching should be based on comparing and contrasting is also supported by Brooks (1986: 123) and Robinson (1985: 70). While Brooks proposes the use of presentation of culture-related topics as a means to expose similarities and differences between cultures, Robinson establishes a pattern of practical activities which can help learners to better relate with members of different cultures. According to Robinson, when a new cultural topic is being presented to students, after a period of exposure to the written or spoken material, students should be given a set of comparing exercises. For example, at first, students are presented with a story in which fictitious characters are faced with a problem or a dilemma. Next, students are asked to think about an analogous situation in their home culture and describe how they would act in that situation. The exercise can be followed by a class discussion during which students can be asked to explain their reasoning.

Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 148) state that communication activities are the most explicit form of introducing intercultural elements. These researchers propose that intercultural topics can be the basis for conversation classes which primarily aim at fostering free communication. During such classes, students can be asked to discuss the topic of stereotypes or find a solution to a problem. It is held by the scholars that such activities can become an effective technique for promoting discussion about cultural differences. Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986:
149–150) and Bateman (2002: 326) emphasise the role of interaction with native speakers of the target language in building students’ intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg give an example of conversation classes during which certain topics, e.g. parents and children, divorce or society, are being discussed with native speakers. Bateman accentuates the role of interviews with native speakers, stating that they strengthen students’ positive attitude towards the target language culture.

Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 51) propose the implementation of role play as an introductory activity which can be followed by a full and open discussion. During role play, students may be asked to take the roles of typical members of the native and foreign cultures, which, according to Donahue and Parsons (1982, cited in Brown 2007: 200), can facilitate cultural dialogue while still providing opportunities for oral practice. Brown (2007: 200) proposes the use of simulations and cultural games, and Choi (2003, cited in Brown 2007: 200) emphasises a significant role of drama in the development of intercultural awareness. Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 51) suggest the introduction of lecture-discussion format, which, according to the researchers, does not only provide learners with cross-cultural themes but also strengthens students’ listening, note-taking and examination skills.

Byram and Morgan (1994: 56) emphasise that classroom instruction cannot recompensate actual contact with the target language culture, and thus they propose fieldwork as a supplement to classroom teaching. While classroom teaching can prepare for and reflect upon the experience of fieldwork and experiential learning, it should not be seen as the only tool used for building students’ intercultural competence. Byram and Morgan quote the work of Clifford, who enumerates a number of disadvantages and advantages of fieldwork. Clifford maintains that while classroom learning cannot replace experience, experience does not result purely from immersion into the target language culture. Seeing that students are not equipped with all the requisite skills needed to observe and experience culture, teachers’ support and directions during the discovery process are necessary.

Taking into account the fact that acculturation can result in culture shock and fragility of students, Brown (2007: 200) postulates that teachers should be sensitive to students’ fragile condition and take the role of
a therapist who will help them to get through the stages of acculturation. Moreover, as noted by Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 157), teachers are responsible for encouraging students to maintain their own cultural identity. One can thus state that teachers are intercultural instructors, who should not only focus on teaching language, but also on drawing comparisons and eliminating stereotypes (Krawiec 2010: 17). Standards for Foreign Language Learning (2006: 48) strongly suggests that teachers implement activities which aim at exploring the process of stereotyping and the role they play in forming prejudices. Moreover, Byram and Morgan (1994: 10) quoting Seelyer, put emphasis on teachers’ role as builders of bridges between two cognitive systems.

Teaching intercultural competence is undoubtedly important but not easy. Valdes (1986a: 121) admits that well-working techniques for teaching culture are hard to find, and Byram and Morgan (1994: 41) call for the development of a more comprehensive learning theory than the one that is currently available. Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 157) ask the question about the degree to which culture learning can be effective and about the amount of cultural content that should be incorporated into the curriculum. Corresponding to Byram and Morgan, the researchers postulate that the implementation of a cultural approach to teaching requires reconsideration of most EFL programmes.

Moreover, the researchers suggest that changes in language learning curricula should be accompanied by a revision of the content of teaching training programmes. As observed by Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 157), foreign language teachers often perceive culture only as a secondary goal of their teaching practice, which, however, might result from time constraints rather than a negative attitude towards intercultural teaching. Furthermore, teachers’ cultural awareness and understanding of the concept of culture is seen by Dunnett, Dubin and Lezberg (1986: 148) as one of the necessary conditions for the development of adequate programmes, syllabi and materials. Therefore, it is imperative to implement changes in all areas of foreign language education.

**Concluding remarks**

As has been indicated, language and culture are inseparably linked, and it is impossible to teach the former without considering the latter (Byram
Language learners, to be able to communicate with members of English-speaking cultures, need to be culturally aware, free of cultural stereotypes, and able to distinguish differences and similarities between their home and foreign cultures (Byram 1997). Researchers (e.g. Brown 2007) acknowledge the difficulties that students need to face when learning a foreign language. When learning the system of a foreign language, students acquire a new language identity, which often causes alienation from both the members of the home and target language culture. Thus, teachers’ help is recognised as indispensable. Taking into account the fact that techniques and methods should always be tailored to available time and resources as well as students’ age and proficiency level, there is no single formula for intercultural teaching. Nevertheless, what should be emphasised is its unquestionable importance and the call for further research and development of the approach.

References


Introduction

Mastering a foreign language involves not only the knowledge of grammatical or lexical elements of the language. The recently developed methodology of language learning and teaching highlights the importance of understanding the relationship between language and culture.

Taking this relationship into account, this paper first defines the term culture, which is crucial for the overall discussion of the issue in question and then links it with the process of foreign language learning and teaching. It essentially stresses the role of cultural elements in a language class and points to the effects of presenting them to students. Moreover, the role of the teacher in developing cultural awareness among young people is highlighted here. The concepts of acculturation and culture shock are also explained and several important issues connected with teaching culture are discussed.

1. Definition of culture

It has been suggested by scholars (e.g. Byram 1994, 1997; Byram & Grundy 2003) that language and culture are strongly connected with each other. It is thus impossible to view these two terms separately and to teach and learn the language out of the cultural context. In order to provide a deep insight into language and culture learning and teaching, it is necessary to become familiarized with available definitions of culture. As the nature of culture seems to be rather complex, the term has been defined in many ways.

One of the scholars interested in the issue in question is Patrick Moran (2001: 24), who defines culture as “the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices, associated with a shared set of products, based on a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts”.
H. Douglas Brown (2000: 178) defines culture as “… a way of life. It is the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others. It is the ‘glue’ that binds a group of people together”. He maintains that culture reflects ideas, beliefs and values of its society. According to Brown (2000: 177), culture can also be seen as “arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time”. Primarily, it is all that humankind can create. Patrick Moran (2001: 25) refers to this aspect of culture as ‘products’. By ‘products’ he understands “all artifacts produced or adopted by the members of the culture, including those in the environment, such as plants and animals” (Moran 2001: 25).

Undoubtedly, culture can be defined in many ways and from different perspectives. As Rebecca Valette (1986: 179) points out, the concept of culture is very broad, but there are two major components of culture in a foreign language teaching classroom, i.e. anthropological/sociological (attitudes, customs, daily activities, ways of thinking) and history of civilization (geography, history, science, art). Acquiring cultural information is the foundation of culture and language learning, which means that it is necessary to devote enough time and to use appropriate methods that do not give only passive attention to these components, but also integrate culture with other language skills.

2. The notion of culture teaching

According to Claire Kramsch (1993: 205), throughout the years, culture teaching was undervalued and very often limited to providing some information about the target country and its people. Nowadays, it is understood more as studying the foreign culture with a comparison to one’s own. The question frequently asked by teachers is no longer the matter whether to teach culture or not but what methods and materials to use and to what extent it ought to be taught. Kramsch (1993: 205) enumerates three main lines of thought according to which culture should be taught (establishing a ‘sphere of interculturality’, teaching culture as difference and crossing disciplinary boundaries) and Patrick Moran (2001: 137–138) proposes certain guidelines for teaching culture.

By establishing a ‘sphere of interculturality’, Kramsch (1993: 205) understands creating a link between the target culture and one’s own. She maintains that teaching culture involves not only transmission of
information about the foreign society and its milieu but also includes a reflection on both the foreign and on the native cultures. This kind of comparison enables learners to discover similarities as well as differences and possible problems the latter might cause.

Teaching ‘culture as difference’ means that teachers should make an effort to compare foreign cultural elements with the ones from other cultures. Culture thus should not be presented in terms of national traits only (Kramsch 1993: 206).

Kramsch (1993: 206) also points to ‘crossing disciplinary boundaries’ and identifies it as the element that is worth taking into consideration while teaching culture. It means that teachers should not limit themselves to the materials that are easily accessible and well-known, but they ought to “broaden their readings to include, besides literature, studies by social scientists, ethnographers, and sociolinguists” (Kramsch 1993: 206).

Moran (2001: 137−138) emphasizes that teaching culture means basically guiding the learners. The teacher is supposed to play different roles, he/she ought to “present, elicit cultural information, coach and model cultural behaviour, guide and conduct cultural research and analysis” (Moran 2001: 138).

While teaching culture, it is important to get learners acquainted with various components. Moran (2001: 137−138) divides them into four main ‘cultural knowings’: knowing how (development of cultural behaviours), knowing about (acquisition of cultural information), knowing why (discovery of cultural explanations), knowing oneself (articulation of personal responses). At every point of culture teaching, the teacher is supposed to play different roles as well as to interact differently with students while teaching the four ‘cultural knowings’ (Moran 2001: 138). What is more, it needs to be remembered that “every learner goes through the culture learning process in a unique way” (Moran 2001: 137). Due to this fact, the teacher’s main role is to help learners express and respond to their cultural learning experience. The teacher-learner relationship at this point is crucial as it influences the learners’ future attitudes towards language and culture learning (Moran 2001: 138).

It seems that there are several approaches and strategies to teach culture. The main principle of culture teaching is to compare the target culture with the native one. It is also necessary to teach culture from different perspectives, taking into consideration learners’ needs and points of interests.
3. Language and culture in foreign language classes

As it has already been suggested, language learning is strongly connected with culture. In order to understand the language properly, it is necessary to understand the culture that has produced it. Kramsch (1993: 1) notes that “[c]ulture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing”. Culture is always in the background of foreign language learning and teaching. Regardless of difficulties that teaching culture may cause, it is the teachers’ role to integrate language learning with culture learning and to develop cultural awareness of students.

3.1. Developing cultural awareness of students

In order to enable students to understand, interpret and function in the target culture, it is necessary to provide some suggestions that would help them deal with the new environment and behave appropriately. In the globalized world, students ought to be aware of the cultural diversity as well as possess the knowledge of how to interact in a multicultural environment. George Hughes (1986: 167−168) enumerates several techniques for shaping cultural awareness of students in the classroom:

Cultural awareness can be developed by a ‘comparison method’. It means that the teacher begins a lesson with a short presentation of an element from the foreign culture and then leads a discussion that encourages learners to identify similarities and differences between the foreign and native cultures.

Another technique is a ‘culture assimilator’, which involves a short description of an incident that causes misunderstanding during a cross-cultural interaction. Four possible solutions are presented and students are asked to make a choice. If they do not provide the correct answer, they are supposed to search for more information that would lead them to the correct conclusion.

‘Drama’ is also useful for the process of shaping cultural awareness of learners. It encourages students to act out scenes that probably would cause some problems or misunderstandings in real-life situations.

By creating ‘the culture island’, it is possible to contribute to the culture learning process too. Through the use of posters, pictures or other
Barbara Droń

materials, the teacher draws the attention of students who ask questions and make comments on the presented cultural content.

3.2. **Acculturation of students and the phenomenon of culture shock**

On the basis of what has been presented so far, one may conclude that foreign language learning can be successful only when it is combined with cultural content. It means that teaching and learning a foreign language and culture should always be an interconnected and inseparable process. Closely related to this point are the considerations of John Schumann (1986: 11), who indicates that “a thorough understanding of the language can only be gained by understanding the cultural context which has produced it”. This point is also signalled by H. Douglas Brown (1987: 123), who states that “[m]isunderstandings are likely to occur between members of different cultures; differences are real and we must learn to deal with them in any situation in which two cultures come into contact”.

The above quotations provide the ground for the consideration of the term *acculturation*, which relates to learning how to function in a new cultural environment. Michael Byram (1994: 7) defines *acculturation* as the way of “learning to function within a new culture, while maintaining your own identity”. According to the definition, *acculturation* is “the gradual adaptation to the target culture without necessarily forsaking one's native language identity” (Acton & Walker de Felix 1986: 20). The concept of *acculturation* is, in fact, an area of interest for different scholars among whom of essential recognition are John Schumann and H. Douglas Brown, whose models and assumptions are to be discussed in the following passages.

The *Acculturation Model* proposed by Schumann (1986) is mainly based on social and psychological factors. “Acculturation depends on positive factors in terms of social distance and psychological distance” (Byram 1994: 7). By social distance, Schumann (1986) understands the relationship between the foreign language learner and the members of the target language culture. In connection to the above assumptions, it ought to be clearly pointed out that “[t]he learner will acquire the … language only to the degree that he acculturates” (Schumann 1986: 384). Schumann’s *Acculturation Model* includes eight variables which influence the relationship between foreign language learners and the target
culture community. In the group of factors affecting contact of two social
groups Schumann (1986) distinguishes:

a. social dominance;
b. assimilation, preservation and adaptation;
c. enclosure;
d. cohesiveness;
e. size;
f. congruence;
g. attitude;
h. intended length of residence.

As far as social dominance is concerned, Schumann (1986: 381) explains
that “if one group is politically, culturally, technically or economically
superior (dominant) to the other (the language learning group) then it
will tend not to learn the target language”. The scholar gives an example
of American Indians who, being inferior to the dominant Anglo group,
strongly resisted learning the language and acculturation. The point here
is that if the two social groups are politically, culturally, technically or
economically equal, language learning will be enhanced.

By assimilation, preservation and adaptation Schumann means some
slightly different concepts. The scholar emphasizes that if a member
of a language learning group “assimilates then he/she gives up his/her
own lifestyle and values and adopts those of the target language group”
(Schumann 1986: 381). In this way, language learners maximize contact
with the target language culture community. However, if a learner chooses
to integrate by means of preservation strategy it means that he/she does
not give up his/her own lifestyle in exchange for the target culture values.
In this situation, social distance is created, and as a consequence, language
acquisition will not take place because the language learner will become
linguistically and culturally separated. Finally, adaptation is understood
as choosing the strategy which simply allows one to adapt to the lifestyle
and values of the target culture. With regard to the above explanations,
it is necessary to mention that the best condition to learn a language is
when the assimilation strategy is chosen (Schumann 1986: 381).

The next social factor that influences the language learning process
is enclosure. According to Schumann (1986: 381), enclosure concerns
the degree to which the members of a language learning group and
the members of a target culture group “share the same churches, schools,
clubs, recreational facilities, crafts, professions and trades”. What has to
be emphasized at this point is the fact that the lower the enclosure is, the more facilitated language learning becomes.

The terms *cohesiveness* and *size* relate to the degree to which a given group is integrated and its number of members. If a learner belongs to a group that is very cohesive and integrated, it will separate him/her from the target language community. Additionally, if the language learning group is large, it will definitely favour intragroup rather than intergroup contacts. The best condition for language acquisition is obtained when a language learning group is neither large nor cohesive (Schumann 1986: 381–382).

The next factor considered by Schumann is the concept of *congruence*. Schumann (1986: 382) points out that “[i]f the two cultures are similar then social contact is potentially more likely and … language learning may be facilitated”. The more similar the cultures of the two groups are, the more likely the language acquisition is.

The scholar mentions also *attitude* as a factor influencing language acquisition. If the two groups have positive views and attitudes towards each other, the conditions for language learning are more favorable, thus they promote the process (Schumann 1986: 382).

The last factor to be considered is called *intended length of residence* and it relates to the time a language learner wishes to stay in the given community. Of course, the longer the learner intends to stay, the greater chance that he/she will feel the necessity to learn the target language. What is more, the time spent among the members of the target culture will contribute to creating stronger links and contacts between the members of those two groups (Schumann 1986: 382).

The social factors discussed above mostly apply to language learning in groups. Schumann distinguishes some more factors, called psychological, which relate to language learning by an individual. By psychological factors affecting language acquisition Schumann (1986) understands *language shock* and *culture shock*. Overcoming these two will help to achieve success in language learning.

Overcoming *language shock* seems to be an important element when taking language acquisition into account. Considering the term *language shock*, Schumann (1986: 382) emphasizes that “when learners attempt to speak a second language they often fear that they will appear comic”. Adult learners, in his opinion, always bother themselves whether they
sound ridiculous in a target language and if the words they use reflect their real ideas. If language shock is not overcome, the learner will be separated from the target culture, and at the same time, it will prevent language acquisition (Schumann 1986: 382).

*Culture shock* can be defined as “anxiety resulting from the disorientation encountered upon entering a new culture” (Schumann 1986: 383). It applies to the situation when the learner finds it difficult to cope with the new environment because all his/her problem-solving mechanisms do not work in the foreign surrounding. As a consequence, the learner has a feeling of disorientation, fear and anxiety. Because of cultural differences, the learner’s attention will be drawn from language learning to finding causes of his/her confusion and to problem-solving. In this situation, the learner “may reject himself, his own culture, the organization for which he is working and the people of the host country” (Schumann 1986: 383). At the same time, he/she will separate himself/herself from the target culture and language acquisition will not be possible.

All the above terms relate to Schumann’s Acculturation Model in which he stresses the importance of social distance. Taking the enumerated aspects into consideration, it is worth emphasizing that “[t]he concept of social distance emerged as an affective construct to give explanatory power to the place of culture learning in second language learning” (Brown 1987: 145). The shorter the distance between two cultures, the greater possibility that acculturation and language learning will take place (Schumann 1986: 384).

In close connection to this point are the considerations of H. Douglas Brown (1987), who also presents an insightful explanation of acculturation with particular regard to *culture shock*. In his estimation, the concept of *culture shock* comes to be seen as one of the four stages of culture acquisition.

Brown (1987: 144), first of all, mentions the *honeymoon* or *tourist stage* in which learners have a great feeling of excitement and fascination about the target culture. However, at this point, the target culture is almost inaccessible. As Brown (1987: 144) suggests, “[e]uphoria over the newness of surrounding” stimulates the learner to associate with foreigners, to love their way of life, habits and language. However, this phase lasts only up to several weeks.
Culture shock or survivor is the second stage of acculturation, which refers to “phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis” (Brown 1987: 143). This stage occurs when the learner starts to notice more and more cultural differences. The differences become a nuisance and the learner’s excitement about the new culture gives way to the feeling of anxiety, insecurity and frustration. At this point of acculturation, the learner very often feels alienated, lonely and homesick; thus, he/she looks for support of his/her countrymen. Quoting Edward Hall, Brown (1987: 143) presents an example of undergoing from the first phase to the second one:

At first, things in the cities look pretty much alike. There are taxis, hotels with hot and cold running water, theaters, neon lights, even tall buildings with elevators and a few people who can speak English. But pretty soon the American discovers that underneath the familiar exterior there are vast differences. When someone says “yes” it often doesn’t mean yes at all, and when people smile it doesn’t always mean they are pleased. When the American visitor makes a helpful gesture he may be rebuffed; when he tries to be friendly nothing happens. People tell him that they will do things and don’t. The longer he stays, the more enigmatic the new country looks.

Culture shock is one of the stages that leads to an adjustment to the new cultural environment because it clearly entails modification of one’s behaviours and it is part of the cultural learning process. What needs to be emphasized at this point is the fact that culture shock is an intrapersonal phenomenon. The shock cannot be avoided. However, it is possible to prepare learners for that uncomfortable phase of acculturation. Paul Pedersen (1994: 10) proposes several undertakings that may function as culture shock preparation elements: language study, learning about the target culture and spending time with the members of the target culture community.

Apart from negative effects of culture shock, there are several elements that are considered positive. Pedersen (1994: 7) maintains that “[a]cculturative stress may be a positive and creative force with an educational impact to stimulate, motivate and enhance the individual’s long-term acculturation” because it always results in learning and it helps to achieve a better understanding of oneself and of the target culture. What
is more, learners become aware of their values and the degree to which they are influenced by their own culture.

The third stage of the acculturation process described by Brown (1987) is called recovery or immigrant. At this point, the learner adjusts to the target culture in a way that he/she knows what is expected from him/her in a given situation, what to expect from the members of the new culture, and can predict some behaviours and start to develop problem-solving skills. As Brown (1987: 144) explains, “individuals begin to accept the differences in thinking and feeling that surround them, slowly becoming more empathic”. However, most of the people who spend a given period of time in the target culture environment do not go beyond this stage.

The last phase, called full recovery or citizen is the moment in which individuals finally feel comfortable in the target culture environment. Their pronunciation and gestures are native-like (Brown 1987).

Summing up all the above considerations, it ought to be clearly stated that acculturation is a rather dynamic process, which at the same time requires some time to be completed. According to Brown (1987: 34), “[e]ach type of second language situation involves different degrees of acculturation”. Of great significance in the process of acculturation is, mentioned by Schumann (1986), the concept of social distance. The greater the social distance, the more problems with acquiring the target language and its culture. As far as language and culture learning are concerned, the most convenient conditions to learn both is to learn them in a country where the target language is spoken. However, there is a variety of helpful techniques and methods that can be used by teachers while teaching culture in the classroom environment.

3.3. The role of the teacher

The teacher’s role in the classroom basically comes down to creating a positive atmosphere and positive attitudes towards language learning. Frequently, the teacher serves as the only language model and he/she is the only source of knowledge about the foreign language and the country where it is spoken. In order to understand the role of the teacher in learning and teaching culture, it would be helpful to study the table proposed by Patrick Moran (2001: 139). The table specifies the content, activities and outcomes as well as teacher’s roles and responsibilities in the process of culture teaching.
By ‘knowing how’ Moran understands all the cultural (verbal and non-verbal) behaviours that learners need to develop in order to act properly in a new cultural environment. ‘Knowing how’ relates to the understanding of what is appropriate, what to say and what to do in new situations: “… it is all about action: talking, doing, moving (even dancing, singing, playing music, eating, or otherwise expressing oneself in the manner of the people of the culture)” (Moran 2001: 143). At this stage, the teacher is a model and a coach. The teacher’s responsibility is to show how to act in a proper way. The teacher as a ‘model’ demonstrates the behaviour himself/herself (gestures, pronunciation) or provides a model by making use of videos or the Internet. The teacher as a ‘coach’ gives advice, encourages, supports and guides the learners.

‘Knowing about’ is getting information about the target culture, which, in fact, is the foundation of culture learning. The elements of cultural content that need to be gathered involve some information about the foreign as well as the learner’s own culture (products, practices, perspectives, communities etc.). Looking from this perspective, the teacher plays four key roles helping learners acquire the information. The teacher as a ‘source’ primarily provides, organizes and presents the cultural information. Being a ‘resource’ means showing students where to find the information needed. As an ‘elicitor’ the teacher asks students to express what they know and what they have learnt. Finally,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowing how</th>
<th>Knowing about</th>
<th>Knowing why</th>
<th>Knowing oneself</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>cultural practices</td>
<td>cultural information</td>
<td>self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language function</strong></td>
<td>participating</td>
<td>describing</td>
<td>responding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td>developing skills</td>
<td>gathering information</td>
<td>reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>cultural behaviors</td>
<td>cultural knowledge</td>
<td>self-awareness personal competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher’s role</strong></td>
<td>model</td>
<td>source</td>
<td>guide co-researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coach</td>
<td>resource arbiter elicitor</td>
<td>witness co-learner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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as an ‘arbiter’ the teacher evaluates the students’ knowledge and comprehension (Moran 2001: 145–146).

In the ‘knowing why’ role the teacher functions also as a guide and a co-researcher. Being a ‘guide’, the teacher asks questions but does not give answers. The students are supposed to ask questions and hypothesize. There might not be one satisfactory answer. Thus, learners need to look at the problem from different perspectives by comparing and contrasting a foreign milieu with their own culture (Moran 2001: 149). As a ‘co-researcher’, after listening to the students’ explanations, the teacher makes his/her own comments and takes part in the discussion (Moran 2001: 150).

‘Knowing oneself’ is “the most critical stage in culture learning” (Moran 2001: 151). It involves decisions on how to respond to the culture. At this point, the teacher can be a listener, a witness and a co-learner. In the role of ‘listener’, the teacher focuses on what the learners say and attempts to understand their point of view and way of thinking. As a way to encourage learners to express their feelings and ideas, the teacher ought to create a positive atmosphere in order to make students feel secure (Moran 2001: 151). Being a ‘witness’ means paraphrasing and interpreting what the learner is expressing. As a ‘co-learner’, the teacher shares his/her own ideas and expresses his/her own way of thinking, provides some tips and pieces of advice that could help in the process of culture learning as well as presents some examples and stories from his/her own culture learning (Moran 2001: 152).

By examining the nature of culture learning (content, activities, outcomes and language functions), Moran establishes several key roles of the teacher in the process of culture learning and teaching. The roles vary depending on what part of the cultural content (knowings) is being taught and learnt.

3.4. Important issues connected with teaching culture

The importance of teaching culture has been clearly explained by Robert Politzer (in Brooks 1986: 123), who states that “[i]f we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning”. However, implementation of culture into the language classes raises several important issues.
As Joyce Merrill Valdes (1986: 121) notes, “not all programs are able to devote enough time or specialized instruction to the subject of culture”. Language curricula seem to be overloaded and there is a feeling of doubt whether to devote some time to culture or not. However, there needs to be a combination of culture with other language aspects. Teaching language skills (reading, speaking, listening or writing) may, in fact, be based on materials which include cultural content. Therefore, culture does not necessarily have to be taught in separate classes devoted only to this subject.

“Good techniques to teach culture are not easy to find” (Valdes 1986: 121). Even knowing which aspects of culture are the most important and should be discussed and taught in the classroom, does not provide an insight into the teaching methods and techniques.

There is also a problem connected with evaluation of cultural knowledge. The majority of teachers do not deny the importance of cultural content in the language teaching process. However, there is an uncertainty about what to test and how to do it. Rebecca Valette (1986: 181) enumerates four categories into which cultural goals might be divided: developing a greater awareness, acquiring a command of the etiquette, understanding differences, understanding the values of the target culture. Testing cultural awareness is mostly done by means of pretests and posttest. The tests reflect the students’ knowledge before and after the course. The command of etiquette – it is all that the learners must know about the polite and expected behaviour of the people from the target culture. It can be tested by role-play activities. Understanding of cultural differences such as dates and times, hours of meals, road signs etc. can be tested by interpreting the timetable or reading and formulating newspaper announcements. Teaching cultural values helps the students to realize that the values of the foreign culture differ from their own, but still they must be respected. They can be examined by interpreting behaviour of members of the target culture.

As teaching culture has become an accepted and desired part of foreign language teaching and learning, teachers should bear in mind how complex and sometimes challenging this subject can be. However, it does not mean that teaching of culture should be avoided.
3.5. The role of authentic materials in teaching culture

The Communicative Approach to language teaching promotes exposing learners as much as possible to spoken or written texts that have not been produced for pedagogic purposes (Kramsch 1993: 185). Authentic materials brought into the classroom are a highly valuable source of knowledge that helps learners to understand the customs and ways of life of people in the target culture. The main argument in favour of the use of authentic materials in the classroom is that they represent the culture from which they come. As Mishan (2005: 45) asserts, “even the humblest material artefact which is the product and the symbol of a particular civilization, is an emissary of the culture out of which it comes”.

First of all, authentic materials are seen as a helpful tool that enhances students’ motivation. These kinds of materials are perceived as challenging and very attractive. The challenge they provide the students with is in fact seen as an advantage. The materials can be used for all levels of language proficiency as the ‘difficulty’ is not the element that characterizes the materials but the task set (Mishan 2005: 45).

Furthermore, authentic materials expose learners to the living language that coursebooks lack. The cultural content is not just a set of facts and figures that need to be learnt, but it is a useful tool that helps learners to understand the people of the target language. Furthermore, authentic materials help students to build a ‘cultural framework’ for the language (Mishan 2005: 47).

Authentic materials enable the learners to interact with the real language and content rather than with the form. The learners feel that they are learning a real language that exists outside the classroom and that comprehension of the target culture can help them with travelling and understanding foreign films, magazines and certain ways of life.

There is a number of reasons why authentic materials should be used while teaching culture. It is necessary to highlight here that they are the product of the target culture and they reflect the way of life, beliefs, values, and points of interest, etc. of the foreign culture people. Besides, such materials have a positive impact on learners’ motivation and they contribute to the development of creative forms of teaching.
Concluding remarks

Throughout centuries, teaching culture has been seen as an unnecessary element in the foreign language teaching classroom. In contemporary methodology, culture is perceived as an inseparable aspect of language learning and teaching. Defined in many ways by a number of scholars, culture is mainly understood as a way of life (Brown 2000: 178), all that a given society creates (Moran 2001: 25), as well as being described as “... the ‘glue’ that binds a group of people together” (Brown 2000: 178). With this in mind, it is necessary to state that in order to learn a language properly, it is vital to study cultural aspects of a given society, for learning a foreign language means achieving both linguistic and cultural competence. As emphasized by scholars, culture ought to be taught mainly by using comparisons. The role of the teacher in this process is crucial as he/she is the one who should develop cultural awareness of students, guide them, and create positive attitudes towards the target language and culture. However, culture teaching is sometimes perceived as a complex and problematic process, mainly because of doubts concerning methods and techniques, evaluation and amount of time that should be devoted to present it. With reference to this dilemma, the role and use of authentic materials need to be highlighted as they reflect the target culture and help to motivate students and develop their cultural knowledge.

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CHAPTER 8:
ICT IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION
Introduction

Technology has been striving to be ubiquitous within every field of life in the past decade and education is no exception. It is widely believed that technology is the future of education; thus, one must take a deeper look into the potential of technology and related aspects. A cursory glance at technology would bring about few, if any, concerns regarding its usefulness, yet there are unsettling obstacles that must be looked into and overcome to ensure the proper assessment of technology in education.

In this article, the author delves into a variety of aspects concerning the use of technology in a language class. Initially, a review of the current literature on the subject of technology in education is conducted. Following this, an evaluation of the numerous obstacles that may hinder the integration process is carried out, including acceptance of technology in learning, in company with preparation that may have to take place prior to application. Subsequently, the author enquires into the utilization of technology as a means to assess language and its effect on the learning process. Finally, technology’s employment in the field of projects and online learning is explored, which may be the most instrumental uses of technology going into the future.

1. Technology’s function in language learning

According to Prensky (2008: 1), technology’s role in language learning is intensifying. Currently, there is a trend towards learner autonomy and the increasing triviality of teacher-centered approaches in classrooms. Consequently, teachers and linguists are constantly exploring new techniques that can facilitate this shift. Technology is one of those findings. Previously, the availability of language applications and programs was negligible. However, throughout the latter part of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, we can observe widespread
technological advancements in the realm of ESL. Schmenk (2005: 107) states that “[t]he popularity of learner autonomy may be at least partially related to the rise of computer technology and the growing importance of computers in language learning environments worldwide”. This expansion was in large part due to Burns’ (1979) dissertation written on the effects of computer-assisted instruction.

Klopfer et al. (2009: 3–4) ensure the ESL community that technology is not only an easier way to teach, but it can be far more effective and can enable teachers to expand into other areas of English that were not accessible beforehand. They emphasize that teachers had been, and still are, detached from the real world in their approach to teaching. The rise of technology’s role in society has not been fully adopted by the teaching society, although it seems to be that it is accepting its role increasingly. Once this is done, they stress that teachers will be much more appreciated than they once were.

2. Obstacles of technology’s use in ESL

The difficulties of adopting technology for ESL use are extensive. Many researchers, including Prensky (2008: 2), have looked into the causes of not employing technology to assist teaching and learning. One of his findings was that teachers frequently refuse to accept training to equip them with the skills needed to use technology. In addition, according to Bielefeldt (2002: 126), even if teachers have some knowledge of technology, they lack the confidence to implement technology in the classroom. Not only does this insecurity affect certain classrooms, but it also results in authorities getting involved. As a result of the doubtful teacher, authorities must inspect the effectiveness of teachers’ use of technology, thus adding to the costs of education.

On the other hand, Prensky (2008: 2–3) unexpectedly denounces this as an obstacle due to the fact that students should be the users and they themselves technologically adept; the teacher’s role is to just pass on knowledge to the pupils. Nonetheless, he informs that students habitually take advantage of technology for their own purposes. This can be readily seen in almost any school that uses technology, even if they put up some barrier to deter students. He views these reasons as obstructions to the realization of classroom technology.
Various reasons as to why some teachers, especially low-tech teachers, avoid using technology are laid out by Honey and Moeller (1990: 3). First of all, fear regarding their role in the classroom impedes their utilization of technology. As many low-tech teachers have traditional approaches to teaching, their position in the classroom is superior to that of the students. However, if technology is integrated, that role may be undermined by the autonomous effects of technology. In addition, the ones that are not teacher-centered instructors may have had difficulties finding appropriate software to assist themselves. Then again, Honey and Moeller (1990: 3–4) have found that high-tech teachers are greatly influenced by students. They tend to be self-driven and willing to take the time to learn about new approaches. On account of students’ interest in technology, they take advantage of it and integrate technology to improve the connection between the teacher and the learner, thus strengthening the bond between students and learning.

Another aspect to the lack of technology use by teachers is the perception of its potential. As Romano (2003: 89) states, teachers are not presented the benefits of technology in a convincing way. In spite of the fact that the positive effects of technology can be readily seen in numerous other fields, this has not been sufficiently explored by educators. What is more, Sheingold and Hadley (1990) discovered that the pressure of implementing technology is overwhelming. This pressure leads educators to shy away from it as technology is an extremely engulping subject and incessantly revolutionizing, thus extremely time-consuming and arduous. One argument that Slaouti, Onat-Stelma and Motteram (2013: 77) make is that teachers see technology as just a means to supplement the teacher. Nevertheless, they believe that the fundamental use of technology should not be to aid teachers but to open doors that teachers will be able to use to pass on knowledge in a way never done before.

Gremmo and Riley (1995: 151–164) also purport some of the challenges of integrating technology into teaching. They suggest that finding applications/programs that are not only effective but also compatible with the goals of the teacher are hard to come by. The teacher must do extensive research to locate programs or websites that are consistent with his/her aims and techniques. In addition, technological equipment is frequently absent or lacking in some schools. This statement, though, is contradicted by Pegrum (2009: 4). He believes that teachers do not need
an abundant supply of technological equipment to incorporate technology but only their personal computer. This may not be full-integration, but it is a step forward.

3. **Acceptance of technology to enhance learning**

The recognition of technology as an aid to encourage learning has been disputed ever since its rise. Hayta and Yaprak (2013: 61) found through their research that a majority of students were keen on using technology to advance their English. Moreover, they discovered that although it is true that students time and again use technology for purposes outside of learning, many of these deviations are indirectly improving their English, especially in the case of watching films, videos, etc. This is also stated by Laakkonen (2011: 10), who ascribes this phenomenon as being the result of English as the internet lingua franca. There are many instances in which the most popular movies, videos, or information can only be attained, or are preferred, in English.

An adversary of technology’s role in the classroom is Larry Cuban (2001: 71–72). He may not be in opposition to using technology to advance education, but he believes that nowadays the benefit we get from the money we spend is deep in the negative. Technology, according to Cuban, is continuously used intermittently and the money invested in it is wasted. Hodas (in Boulter 2007: 56) also claims that technology is seen as a disturbance in the classroom. He adds that the construction of the school system impedes the teacher’s ability to regulate it as they desire. There are too many rules as to how students and teachers can use it (Boulter 2007: 56).

The principal assertion that is made by Schedlinger (in Boulter 2007: 56) is the lack of progress that can be observed in educational facilities. He emphasizes the fact that schools have gone largely untouched by modern developments and innovation. In spite of the fact that some facets of technology have been designed to pull educational facilities out of this changeless system, Hodas (in Boulter 2007: 56) is dissatisfied with the shortage of implementation, which is for the reason that schools lack incentive in their own minds.

An additional reason as to why technology is not fully accepted is the responsibility that comes with technology. Karnovsky (in Cook 2006:
17) highlights one of the reasons that teachers are reluctant to integrate technology, and he states that it is the abrupt duties that come with it. Not only do they have to acquire the skills to use it properly, according to him, they also have to pass on that knowledge to students. In addition, teachers lack the confidence to incorporate technology into their curriculum. As far as Karnovsky asserts, teachers frequently lack sufficient training and they do not feel qualified enough to begin using it in their classroom.

4. Pre-requisites to technology implementation in the ESL classroom

Samuel and Zitun (2007: 10) hold the belief that first and foremost, experience and availability to technology are crucial elements to begin the integration of technology into ESL classrooms. Moreover, he suggests that not all teachers have the ability and/or willingness to gain technological knowledge to be used in their classroom, so currently the number of classrooms using technology will be limited by the number of teachers that desire to advance their teaching techniques. Samuel and Zitun (2007: 10) further the impediment by stating that not all teachers have technology available to them, thus restricting it even further. However, they believe that once teachers gain experience and insight with regard to technology, the school still has to confirm that the teacher is using it in their lessons. Prensky (2008: 1) writes that there have been schools in which teachers were well-trained on the use of technology in the classroom, yet it was found out that they had not been integrating it into their lessons. This hindrance may be challenging, as not only does it take a technologically-skilled teacher, but also one that can and is willing to devote a vast amount of time to integrate it into the curriculum. To add to this, Gruba (2009: 1) challenges the ESL community by saying that even if a teacher is willing, there is no obvious and straightforward way to do it.

Another factor which is essential to integrating technology is the design of the classroom, say Chambers and Bax (2006: 466). They warn teachers that the traditional classroom set-up may not be effective for many kinds of technologies, thus advising them to structure the classroom to increase the effectiveness of the technology they plan to use.
Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of the school’s full backing and the need for schools to reduce the number of teaching hours. As a result, the teachers would have more time to build up their stock of programs and lessons. Advances in these criteria have been noted by Dellicarpini (2012: 14), who affirms that there have been campaigns by the government to facilitate and promote the amalgamation of technology into learning.

It is underlined by Prensky (2008: 3) that the fundamentals of teaching must be altered to allow technology to be effectively used in the classroom. He advises teachers to stray away from the teacher-centered approaches and allow for learner autonomy. Only through learner autonomy can students truly take full advantage of the benefits of technology. Godwin-Jones (2011: 4–11) indicates that this trend has already begun to take place due to the progress of technology alone. They believe that with the immense quantity of programs and applications that have been developed, teachers’ employment of technology has risen.

5. Using technology to assess language

For most of the 21st century, technology has played a significant role in assessing students’ language. One of the prime examples is the introduction of Cambridge and other exams that are offered in computer version. These exams have taken the English community by storm, allowing individuals who had not had access to such exams to gain access to them. Therefore, English as a lingua franca has amplified. However, accessibility is not the only way in which tests that rely on technology are more valuable.

One way in which computer technology is superior to traditional testing approaches is the fact that computers can measure various aspects that may be challenging for humans to do. First of all, Alderson and Corbel (in Chapelle & Douglas 2006: 16) point to the timing of answers. Computers have the ability to measure the time between the proposal of the task and the answer. This allows the assessor or the student to precisely analyze the automaticity of the examinee’s language.

Some objections have been raised in regard to language assessment through technology. The most prominent concern is the adverse effects that computers have on test takers. Chapelle and Douglas (2006: 17) state
that this criticism has slowly faded away in recent years with the ubiquity of technology in the modern world. Currently, a large part of our society has access to technology, thus the fear and lack of awareness have a rather minuscule effect on test takers.

Common knowledge would suggest that teaching practices determine assessment techniques. Although this is true, assessment techniques also have an impact on teaching. Messick (1989) explains that due to the introduction of various tests and assessment techniques, teachers and students have adopted approaches to suit them. Messick does not voice his support or opposition to this phenomenon, but he does expound that it can facilitate and/or hinder language learning. He states that producers of these tests frequently create syllabi for teachers or course books that allow teachers who were off-track with their teaching techniques to come back on board and offer effective teaching practices to their students. On the other hand, there are some teachers that are extremely successful, but as a result of the introduction of these tests, they have to adjust their style to a more uniform and possibly less effective approach.

6. The effects of technology on learning

Although it is widely known that technology enables learners and teachers to access countless resources and ways to learn and teach, this must unquestionably coincide with better results as well. Therefore, to verify the positive impact that technology has on learning, we must explore the literature that proves it. In a survey carried out by Bhattacharyya (2009: 74–75), she found the following:

Use of technology in ELT is desirable for the following reasons:

**For students technology can:**
- be very motivational;
- be the source of a significant amount of reading material;
- be fun – and when it’s fun you learn!;
- help students to produce excellent published work.

**For teachers technology can:**
- allow for the easy production, storage and retrieval of prepared materials such as certificates and work required sheets;
- free up communication with other teachers;
- help teachers to find information easily;
- assist good teaching but not replace it!
The impact of technology was delved into by Allen and Seaman (2003). Their sample contained numerous academic officers at major universities in the U.S.A. and their intent was to find out how effective online learning is for students. From their research, they concluded that a majority of those surveyed officials felt as though online education was equal or more effective than traditional classroom settings.

In addition to the direct educational benefits, Dunkel (1990) has discovered increased motivation in students whose teachers regularly integrate technology into the classroom. This is in part due to the fact that there are many mediums to be found that not only teach but also entertain. Some of the examples that he gives are games that are now widely used in primary school classrooms.

Petrina (2007: 188) furthers the significance of technology in education. She purports the connection between education and almost every facet of life. While her statement suggests that it is not advantageous for our society to have developed into such a culture, she does conclude that it is one of the reasons technology is crucial in education.

7. The influence of ICT on projects

The progress of technology has dramatically facilitated project work. The fundamental benefit students have gained with regard to project work, as stated by Gillespie (in Riasati, Allahyar & Tan 2012: 26), is that they are able to access not only information but also communicate with individuals from innumerable societies. Furthermore, Murphy (in Riasati, Allahyar & Tan 2012: 26) informs us that students’ awareness of the vastness of the web recurrently improves their work. The reason for this is that students are conscious that if their work is published on the internet, that means their work could be read by voluminous numbers of people, and thus they should ensure high quality. This advantage is acknowledged by teachers as well. Debski (2003: 120) alleges that teachers are using this to the advantage of the student. Teachers are creating projects in which students have to communicate with foreign partners, thus exploring the web to acquire information and eventually publish their results. In conjunction with the learners’ strive to create a worthy project to publish, once it is published, there is also a benefit. Petrina (2007: 284) affirms that as soon as readers begin looking at projects,
criticism initiates. Consequently, the participants in the project become aware of the faults and weaknesses of the project, hence educating them in project work.

Debski (2003) emphasizes the significant impact technology has had on learning and teaching in this decade and the last. He explains that in current times projects are assigned as to encourage cooperation between not only classmates but also foreign students. Nonetheless, he does suggest that this kind of learning has not been fully researched and the full effects are not entirely evident. Various authorities have outlined that the positive result of such assignments hinges on the individual and teacher. On the other hand, as Searle (in Debski 2003: 121) claims, projects can bring significance to an assignment, along with the requirement to interact in a second language due to it being the sole way to communicate. This he believes is the key to projects’ effectiveness.

Thorne (in Bradley et al. 2011: 97) furthers the claims of Searle and Gillespie by stressing that not only are projects effective means to develop communication skills but more importantly to encourage intercultural communication. Despite the main task being aimed at language skills, participants in the projects also acquire knowledge they would not have gained within their environment. Kramsch and Whiteside (in Bradley et al. 2011: 97) accentuate an aspect of this cultural and language exchange that many have not considered, namely the spontaneity of the language used. They point out that while speaking to students with different cultural backgrounds, various surprises may rise up in how they talk and answer certain questions. This allows learners to become familiar with situations in which they are not prepared for to arise in the future.

Although projects have been largely accepted as an effective method of teaching, and as mentioned in the previous paragraph, becoming more prevalent, there are various obstructions to them. First of all, Denes (in Baraya 2002: 11) purports that time is not plentiful enough for technology-integrated projects. In addition to this, teachers and students rarely have enough backing when it comes to technology, thus restricting usage. A few guidelines for technology, which correspond to projects, are laid out by Tom Barker (in Baraya 2002: 14). He explains that the effectiveness of technology is heightened when students work together; hence, a group project. What is more, he suggests that the employment of technology in education should ensure that the teacher incorporates...
many aspects into the lesson to ensure that students’ various skills are improved. Therefore, projects ought to be assumed to be such an assignment that would fulfil the requirements laid out.

8. Online learning

One of the most rapidly developing fields of education is online learning. This has been confirmed by Kim and Bonk (2006: 2), who stated that in one year, over 2.35 million students had registered for an online course in the U.S.A. Moreover, they were informed by various universities that this is not a short-term inclusion into their curriculum. There are several reasons as to why it has been researched and experimented with so exhaustively over the last decade. First of all, online learning has multiple advantages over traditional face-to-face models. For instance, Burns (2011: 66) outlines the financial aspect of online learning. She purports that due to the often excessive prices of face to face classes, many students look for alternatives and online learning is one of those. In this way, if they can find a comparable course online to the one they are seeking, an online course can be an effective means of learning.

In addition, Burns (2011: 66) extends this by stating that learners are frequently looking for an all-around more effective course. There are many cases in which students are not able to get apt teachers or appropriate classes, thus they browse the web to hopefully land on one. As O’Donoghue, Singh and Green (2004: 64–65) explain, many onlookers tend to mistakenly see that it is only helpful for students who have no educational facilities around. However, they emphasize the fact that many students may have educational centers nearby, but they do not meet the expectations or the needs of the student. To extend the previous argument, many students are deprived of places to study near their home, or their amount of free time severely restricts the time they can devote to learning. The people he is referring to are ones with disabilities, rural community members, parents with obligations at home, etc.

Certain personality types can also take advantage of online learning. The case is presented for students with reserved personalities by O’Donoghue, Singh and Green (2004: 65). The researchers state that these students frequently fall behind as a result of their nature. They seldom participate in discussions and may not request help when needed.
Consequently, online learning might be ideal for them. Online tools would allow them to feel more self-assurance and perhaps communicate more effectively.

**Concluding remarks**

In recent years, technology has made its way to most educational facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, various uses of computers, smartboards, etc. However, as many students can contest, they are not utilized habitually, possibly due to lack of knowledge, funds, etc. Nonetheless, new research must be conducted to further verify the beneficial nature technology has in education. Most of the obstacles of technology stem from the lack of awareness of technology’s functionality in helping teachers pass on knowledge to their pupils, along with concerns of allowing pupils to govern their own learning process to a degree. Over time, if new data appears, there may be a momentous transformation in the field of education, which could significantly improve the learning experience of students, as well as the teaching processes undertaken by teachers. Therefore, researchers and students ought to begin assessing the application of technology in teaching and learning processes and implementing it individually, if found to be advantageous, to ameliorate students’ knowledge acquisition until a consensus is achieved.

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Introduction

Nowadays, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being used in almost all fields of life. In education, computer technology is really essential. It has become, within a very short period of time, a major tool in the educational world and has been used from preschool to university. What is more, each day there are new options, opportunities and challenges due to the rapid changes in this area. Understanding ICT and mastering the basic skills and concepts of ICT are regarded as part of the core of education, alongside reading, writing and numeracy.

It is held that ICT facilitates both teaching and learning processes and significantly assists educators and students. It seems to be of crucial value also for foreign language teachers and students, for whom ICT has become a necessary instrument for effective work in a language class. It is thus the notion of ICT which is going to be discussed in this paper and which is going to be connected with the field of foreign language learning and teaching.

1. ICT in general

It was in the early 1980s when the term Information Technology (IT) was used to indicate the convergence of computer technology and communication technology. In the 1990s, the term Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was introduced to replace IT. Thanks to it, a greater emphasis on communication aspects was given (Turban, Rainer & Potter 2005: 5).

There are numerous definitions of ICT. The most comprehensive one is presented by Toomey (2001), who claims that it:

... generally relates to those technologies that are used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information. The technologies could include hardware (e.g. computers and
other devices); software applications; and connectivity (e.g. access to the Internet, local networking infrastructure) … Increasing convergence of computer-based, multimedia and communications technologies and the rapid rate of change characterises both the technologies and their use.

The definition of ICT as presented above can be supported by the definition given by Turban, Rainer and Potter (2005: 5), who maintain that Information Technology “is an organisation's collection of information resources, their users, and the management that oversees them; includes the IT infrastructure and all other information systems in the organisation”.

Whatever the definition is, ICT has proven to be a valuable aid in accomplishing tasks and solving problems in business, industry, government, education, and many other areas. According to Moursund (2005: 4–13), there are six important, long-lasting, unifying ideas:

- Idea 1: Problem Solving Using Body and Mind Tools;
- Idea 2: ICT is a Change Agent;
- Idea 3: Some Basic, Enduring Goals of Education;
- Idea 4: Developing and Increasing Expertise as a Teacher;
- Idea 5: Craft and Science of Teaching and Learning;

The first idea states that a high number of challenging problems can be solved and a wide variety of difficult tasks can be accomplished by properly educated people who use tools that aid their physical bodies and their minds. In the second point, it is maintained that opportunities and challenges are created by the development of a new physical body or mental tool. “ICT is an example of a technology that is a powerful change agent” (Moursund 2005: 6). It is also a mind tool which facilitates automation of many mental activities. Three general goals are discussed in the third idea: acquisition and retention, understanding, and use of knowledge and skills. It is important for students to have a great deal of learning and actively use experience in each of these three goal areas, both in school and outside of school. Next, the fourth idea appears. Having some level of expertise and being an expert are not the same. A good teacher should have “an appropriate balance of expertise in the content of areas he or she teaches, and the pedagogy of teaching the content” (Moursund 2005: 9). The figure below illustrates this idea.
The fifth idea deals with the knowledge about teaching and learning in school environments that has been accumulated over the span of 5,000 years. Thanks to it, a huge amount of information has been collected, which, as a result, helps to design curriculum content and instructional processes. The sixth and last idea presents the importance of student’s own learning responsibility. With the help of the formal education system and ICT, a learner should be independent, self-responsible, self-sufficient and intrinsically motivated (Moursund 2005: 12).

To unify the ideas, the following figure can be suggested (see Figure 2). It shows that ICT systems can manage some problems and achieve some tasks much better than people. On the other hand, people may solve some problems and accomplish some tasks much better than ICT systems. Finally, working together, they can be head and shoulders above ICT systems or individuals.
The use of ICT in a language classroom

The next point to be discussed in this paper refers to the use of ICT in the education field. One needs to emphasize here that teaching and learning cannot be treated as independent and separate activities. Khvilon (2002: 16–17) links them to two sides of the same coin which are interconnected and interrelated. Four broad stages are identified in terms of how teachers and students learn about and gain confidence in the use of ICT:

- discovering ICT tools;
- learning how to use ICT tools;
- understanding how and when to use ICT;
- specializing in the use of ICT tools.

First of all, teachers and learners discover ICT tools and their general functions and uses. There is usually a great emphasis on basic skills in literacy. Then, the stage of learning regarding how to use ICT appears. It is the beginning of using interactive tools in foreign language learning. The stage that follows the learning stage is the one of understanding how and when to use ICT tools to achieve goals. This ability allows teachers and students to choose the most appropriate tools for a task and to use...
them in combination to solve authentic problems. The final stage “involves specializing in the use of ICT tools” and it “occurs when one enters more deeply into the science that creates and supports ICT” (Khvilion 2002: 17).

Consequently, contemporary settings are presently favouring curricula that promote competency and performance. The point is reflected, for instance, in the line of argumentation presented by Oliver (2000: 12), who notes that modern curricula draw more attention to the development of life and career and to how the gained information will be used in the future than to what the information itself is. The potential uses of knowledge that pupils are expected to master need to be reflected by learning environments. It is teachers’ obligation to engage students in active knowledge construction. Strong support for all these requirements is provided by contemporary ICT.

Scholarly literature (e.g. Adamczak-Krysztofowicz 2014; Dusza 2014; Grąż 2014; Olek-Taszarek 2012, 2014, 2017; Oliver 2000) enumerates the most common technologies that are currently in use in education. The most popular and most widely used are audio devices (e.g. CDs, Web and audio recorders). Relatively cheap, authentic and potentially culturally rich programmes for the language learner might be found on television, on both satellite and terrestrial TV. Moreover, improvement of digital quality and lower connection costs make telephones popular. When it comes to computers, the learner and the teacher have at their disposal a tool that combines all of the above instruments in one compact form. Because of the connection with the Internet and Interactive White Board (IWB) supported by unusual software, it is common place in many teaching/learning environments nowadays.

In fact, the above considerations provide the ground for defining ICT integration. One may state that it is “a range of learning environments from a stand-alone computer in a classroom to a situation where the teaching is done by the computer through pre-packed ‘teacher-proof-courseware’” (Laferriere 1999). Implementation of ICT has a significant impact not only on how learning is conducted but also on what is learnt. Lloyd (2005: 5), in her research, quotes the words of Roschelle, who notes that “not only can technology help children learn things better, it also can help learn better things”. Lloyd (2005: 5) also relates to Papert, who maintains that “better learning will not come from finding better ways
for teachers to instruct but from giving the learner better opportunities to construct”. In other words, to integrate is to combine elements, parts or components into a complex but harmonious whole. If technology is integrated into the classroom environment, technological fluency can be achieved. “At its extreme, there is more here than sublimation as what is created is a technological cocoon where the technology cannot be ignored because of our reliance or dependence on it” (Lloyd 2005: 5). To continue Lloyd’s idea, it is possible to achieve integration by positioning ICT at the centre of the lesson, making it an essential context for learning. However, it is an expensive and sometimes complex process. It demands all the necessary equipment, proper components to get it up and running, technical support, well-trained staff… the list is, in fact, long.

3. Problems connected with implementation of ICT in language teaching

ICT provides opportunities to support teaching and learning but it is not without some downsides. “The virtually limitless opportunities of access to information in an educational context can pose a real danger of information overload if the teachers do not have the skills in filtering information for relevance, or are unable to establish a coherent organizing principle” (Sundaravalli 2016: 309). Not only teachers but also students may lack the key skills to access, process and use information. There is a number of different barriers to overcome and different classifications in this respect are forwarded.

One classification of problems connected with the implementation of ICT is proposed by Pelgrum (2001). He divided problems into material and non-material. An insufficient number of computers or copies of software refer to the first group, insufficient ICT knowledge and skills, the difficulty of integrating ICT in instruction and insufficient teacher time relate to the second group.

Another group of problems is related to teacher-level barriers and school-level barriers. Lack of confidence, shortage of time and resistance to change refer to individual (teacher-level) barriers. On the other hand, lack of effective training in solving technical problems and lack of access to resources go to the institution (school-level barriers) (Bingimlas
To determine the present and the future barriers that face teachers, the following argumentation is given, which takes into account the teacher-level and school-level barriers.

3.1. Teacher-level barriers

The first problem in this group identified by Bingimlas (2009: 237–238) is related to lack of teacher confidence. Researchers agree that this is the major barrier to the uptake of ICT by teachers in the classroom. The reasons for teachers’ lack of confidence with the use of ICT has been investigated by various specialists. One reason is a fear of failure, the other one is limitations in teachers’ ICT knowledge. “Many teachers who do not consider themselves to be well skilled in using ICT feel anxious about using it in front of a class of children who perhaps know more than they do” (BECTA 2004). In other words, teachers’ motivation to use ICT in the classroom is highly related to their confidence and experience with technology. Those who believe in themselves understand the usefulness of ICT and they will extend its use further in the future.

Another problem is a lack of competence among teachers in integrating ICT into pedagogical practice. It is directly related to tutors’ confidence. Bingimlas (2009: 238) points to some results which suggest that lack of knowledge and skills to use computers causes that many teachers are not enthusiastic about the changes and integration of supplementary learning connected with bringing computers into their teaching process. Lack of skills is a constraining factor, a serious obstacle which is linked with resistance to change.

It is essential to discuss now the notions of resistance and negative attitudes. All teachers handle them differently and all their beliefs influence what they do in classrooms. It is necessary to take into account different teachers’ attitudes. One of the most important points is to understand what benefits ICT brings to their teaching and to their students’ learning. Those who do not believe in modern technology simply do not use it during the lessons. Resistance to technology cannot function as a barrier itself, instead, it is an indication that something is wrong.

The change from a present level to a desired level of performance is facilitated by driving (encouraging) forces such as the power of new developments, rapid availability, creativity, Internet access, or ease of communication, while it is delayed by resisting (discouraging) forces
such as lack of technical support, teacher expertise, or time for planning.
(Bingimlas 2009: 238–239)

If teachers do not see the point of changing their professional practice, they are unlikely to use new technologies in their teaching. “Teachers who resist change are not rejecting the need for change but lack the necessary education in accepting the changes and are given insufficient long-term opportunities to make sense of the new technologies for themselves” (Bingimlas 2009: 239).

3.2. School-level barriers

Having recognized the teacher-level barriers, it is necessary to proceed to the next subject which involves school-level barriers. An important factor affecting the application of ICT in education is a lack of time. Bingimlas (2009: 239) maintains that teachers do not use computers in the classroom, not because of lack of confidence and competence but because they do not have enough time. Many teachers complain that planning technology lessons, exploring different Internet sites and looking at various aspects of educational software is really time-consuming. What is more, some time has to be devoted to dealing with technical problems, exploring technology or receiving adequate training in this area. Both students and teachers have busy schedules and a limited number of hours during the day to work on the implementation of ICT in education.

Another point here is the lack of effective training. There are not enough training opportunities for teachers in the use of ICT in a classroom environment and an insufficient amount of in-service training programs. The issue is certainly complex and there is a need to consider several aspects: time for training, pedagogical training, skills for training and ICT use in initial teacher training. An important point is to provide training on the use of ICT tools in the pedagogical context as teachers’ awareness of the value of using technology is highly beneficial. The knowledge of how to run a computer, set up a printer or connect an interactive board is not enough. Very often training programs focus on the development of computer skills instead of developing teachers’ pedagogical practices in relation to ICT. Being computer literate is nothing without possessing pedagogical knowledge. However, it is still necessary to train teachers in specific skills especially when a new tool
is introduced. “Inadequate or inappropriate training leads to teachers being neither sufficiently prepared nor sufficiently confident to carry out a full integration of ICT in the classroom” (Bingimlas 2009: 240). In addition, it happens that training sessions are not regularly updated and are not differentiated to meet the particular learning needs.

Lack of accessibility is another complex barrier to be discussed. There are several reasons for the lack of access to technologies. First of all, there is an insufficient number of computers, interactive boards and adequate materials. Many schools do not even have broadband Internet access yet. Secondly, teachers have to share ICT equipment with others. It is necessary to book computers in advance. In the case of ICT project work, it is almost impossible to book a computer lab for several days. Another problem relates to the non-availability of the hardware and software or other ICT materials. It has to do with the poor organization of resources, poor quality hardware and not suitable software. The lack of consideration on what is appropriate for classroom teaching is a problem of the majority of teachers (Bingimlas 2009: 241).

With regard to the above aspect, it is necessary to point to the barrier connected with lack of technical support. Teachers cannot be expected to overcome their prevention of using ICT without good technical support in the classroom and whole-school resources. Technical issues include waiting for websites to open, failing to connect to the Internet, not working printers and malfunctioning computers. Thanks to maintenance contracts in schools, teachers use ICT in teaching without wasting time on fixing software and hardware problems. Bingimlas (2009: 241) quotes the findings of BECTA’s report (2004) which suggest that “if there is a lack of technical support available in a school, then it is likely that technical maintenance will not be carried out regularly, resulting in a higher risk of technical breakdowns”. The risk that equipment may break down during a lesson successfully discourages teachers from using ICT in their teaching.

3.3. Relationship between barriers

According to Bingimlas (2009: 242), all discussed barriers are related to one another and form complicated relationships. Especially lack of accessibility and lack of teacher competence seem to be closely connected. More significant than others is the relation between lack of teacher
confidence and resistance to change. Taking into account other factors, such as lack of time and technical support, poor training opportunities, scheduling difficulties and pessimistic attitudes towards ICT, it is easy to imagine a high number of limitations. For example, the lack of time, as well as a poor technical and pedagogical training, do not allow teachers to use ICT tools effectively in a class although they are available at school. Lack of proper coaching may be connected with the problem of accessibility that leads to a reduction in training possibilities. It is also related to time and technical support. “Teachers whose schools give them time to develop their skills can be more creative than teachers who do not have sufficient time. In order to achieve sufficient competence in using ICT effectively in education, a teacher also needs professional technical support” (Bingimlas 2009: 242). A dearth of such support influences teachers’ confidence and competence. Satisfaction with modern technologies can be achieved by having basic skills to operate them and by having easy access to them. In consequence, technical problems may appear more often and it may influence teachers’ motivation. The list is thus endless.

To overcome these barriers, it is necessary to follow certain recommendations. First of all, “[e]ducators, teachers, and school principals need to collaborate to overcome any of the obstacles and break down the above-mentioned barriers to the meaningful integration of ICT into teaching and learning” (Bingimlas 2009: 242). To deal with new tools, modern technologies and new pedagogical approaches, along with some training courses for teachers should be provided. It would be great if there was access to technical support. Necessary ICT materials such as hardware and updated software must be available any time. To arrange sufficient time to implement new technologies, the school should reduce the teacher’s number of lessons or increase the daily lesson length. Teachers’ engagement into this implementation is also obligatory as educators should appreciate ICT materials offered at schools. Before joining the teaching profession, they need to be well prepared and open-minded, acquire skills of self-organization and have the right attitude (Bingimlas 2009: 242). Table 1 illustrates all the implications presented here.
Table 1. Possible implications for schools and teachers for the integration of ICT into education (Bingimlas 2009: 243)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>For schools</th>
<th>For teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access</td>
<td>- Providing ICT resources including hardware and software</td>
<td>- Taking advantage of resources offered at schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Access to ICT resources at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>- Training in new pedagogical approaches</td>
<td>- Being open minded towards new ways of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>- Providing sufficient time: reducing the number of teacher lessons or increasing the daily lesson time</td>
<td>- Acquiring skills of self-organisation and time managements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training</td>
<td>- Providing training courses in dealing with the new devices, modern technologies, and new pedagogical approaches</td>
<td>- Preparing themselves (pre-service) by self-training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Taking up opportunities for training offered at schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Knowing how to access to resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of technical support</td>
<td>- Providing continued technical support</td>
<td>- Relying on themselves to be able to solve problems in their use of ICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Accessing available support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Advantages and disadvantages of using ICT

Using technology in a classroom is one of those issues that requires a closer look. Without any doubt, there is a massive number of arguments for using ICT in everyday teaching. However, there are so many convincing points against it. For many teachers, technology is useful but for the others, it is a kind of distraction. Technology gives children the ability to learn in ways their parents and grandparents never had. Immediate access to answers and research is nothing unusual in the present learning and teaching process. However, it changes the way students think about work and how they feel emotionally. The pros and cons of using technology in a language class are given below.

Advantages of using ICT can be presented in a certain division, namely advantages for teachers, for students and for parents (as suggested by Mohanty & Vohra 2006).

Benefits for teachers are as follows (Dusza 2014; Mohanty & Vohra 2006; Olek-Taszarek 2012, 2014, 2017):

- greater flexibility regarding when and where tasks are carried out;
- gains in ICT literacy skills, confidence and enthusiasm;
ICT in language education

- easier planning and preparation of lessons and designing materials;
- access to up-to-date pupil and school data;
- enhancement of professional image projected to colleagues;
- greater ‘on task’ concentration and expression of more positive feelings while using ICT tools;
- feeling of satisfaction: greater motivation of students for continuing learning outside school hours.

Among benefits for students one can distinguish such positive effects as (Adamczak-Krysztofowicz 2014; Dusza 2014; Mohanty & Vohra 2006; Olek-Taszarek 2012, 2014, 2017):

- higher quality of lessons;
- more focused teaching, tailored to students’ strengths and weaknesses, better analysis of attainment data;
- improved care and behavior management;
- gains in understanding and analytical skills, including improvements in reading;
- better comprehension;
- development of writing skills (including spelling, grammar, punctuation, editing and re-drafting), also fluency, originality and elaboration;
- encouragement of independent and active learning, and self-responsibility for learning;
- flexibility of ‘anytime, anywhere’;
- development of higher-level learning styles;
- higher possibility for students to increase self-confidence and self-esteem and to become more successful in school and more motivated to learn;
- stimulation;
- supporting reliable and uninterrupted downloading of web-hosted educational multimedia resources;
- opportunities to address one’s work to an external audience;
- opportunities to collaborate on assignments with people outside or inside school.

Benefits for parents can be reflected in the following points (Mohanty & Vohra 2006):

- easier communication with teachers;
higher quality student reports – more legible, more detailed, better presented;

greater access to more accurate attendance and attainment of information;

increased involvement in education for parents and, in some cases, improved self-esteem;

increased knowledge about children’s achievements and capabilities;

involvement in the school community.

Apart from benefits, there are, however, some negative effects of using ICT in teaching (edudemic.com 2017; Olek-Taszarek 2012: 110). For example, where devices are easily available, students instead of using them for educational purposes pay more attention to online socializing. Another problem is connected with plagiarism. Nowadays, students have means of entry to any websites providing or accumulating essays, reports, class notes and tests. It is difficult for the teacher to recognize whether the completed activity is original or not. The common issue is a disparity of access outside of class. As in school, everybody has the same access to ICT, the admission to technology tools outside the classroom is not the same for all students. “When edtech programs are considered for homework, at home intervention, or even flipped learning, student access to the Internet must be considered” (edudemic.com). Some people claim that ICT is a way to replace teachers in the future. It has already happened in the car industry, agriculture and manufacturing industries. The newest software is powerful enough to deliver content, to carry evaluations and to set students on a new course of learning, all without teacher intervention. Another drawback is a lack of interest in studying. As everything is accessible online or through data saved on a computer, students are likely to develop poor studying habits and a lazy attitude towards education. They skip lessons because the Internet provides them with all information needed. What is worse, they do not rely on themselves but on technological tools. Misspelling is a common problem that results from the use of spell checkers. On the other hand, those who do not use technology have technical problems, and computer malfunctions cause loss of assignments and other materials, resulting in a high level of stress.
Concluding remarks

It is evident that ICT plays an essential role in modern society and in a number of areas of human life, including education.

Today’s technology … offers students all kinds of new, highly effective tools they can use to learn on their own – from the Internet with almost all the information, to search and research tools to sort out what is true and relevant, to analysis tools to help make sense of it … [a]nd while the teacher can and should be a guide, most of these tools are best used by students. (Prensky 2008: 2)

Taking into account all the information above, one can come to the conclusion that ICT can be introduced successfully in a language classroom. However, it is not enough just to provide computers, software and Internet connection. The key to success is “an innovative teacher who knows how to effectively incorporate ICT tools” in the educational process and how to develop students’ language skills by using these tools (Olek-Taszarek 2017: 78).

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Introduction

On 1 September 2012, under the provision of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education, dated 27th August 2012 item 977, a new core curriculum came into force in Poland. This document is the fundamental legal instrument comprehensively governing the work of preschools and general education in particular types of schools.

At the very beginning of Annex IV, three key objectives of education in the area of education at levels 3 and 4 were formulated. According to the Ministry of Education, the main aim, besides the acquisition of new facts, principles, theories and practices related to specific fields, is to provide young people with the opportunity to practice using acquired knowledge through performing tasks and solving problems. In the course of study, a learner should also become more prepared for effective and responsible functioning in modern society. According to the above-mentioned provision of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education, school education should also aim to ensure the acquisition of the key competencies such as teamwork, personal development, scientific thinking, the ability to read, filtering and understanding information, and identification of educational needs and learning activities.

Another rule, item 1046, which is relevant to the discussion, and which is emphasized in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education dated 20th August 2010, concerns obligatory realization of an educational project in lower secondary school. An important effect of the regulation was the promotion of active teaching methods and cooperation with teachers working in many different subject areas. In addition, this document also allows for the execution of both outside and inside framework curriculum contents.

A response to these postulates is cross-curricular teaching and learning, which is solidly grounded in holistic education. Therefore, information which is presented in this paper provides an insight into
the holistic approach and cross-curricular teaching and learning. It stresses an important role which cross-curricular dimensions play in modern school, particularly during English lessons, and points to the consequences of dealing with them by teachers and learners. In language teaching, these dimensions are linked with the methodology called Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which in fact arouses mixed reactions in the educational environment. On the one hand, the importance of the CLIL model is emphasized by the government and the EU. On the other hand, criticism is raised by educators and methodologists (Cummins 1998; Hood 2006; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2009; Snow, Met & Genesee 1989; Swain & Lapkin 1995) with regard to this form of learning and teaching.

Before the cross-curricular implementation in school conditions and its consequences and limitations are discussed here, it is essential now to pay attention to the notion of holism and to relate it to cross-curricular education.

1. Holistic vision of education

Holistic education is a philosophy of education which is the result of the cultural and intellectual movement of the 1960s and 1970s in America. As Ganesh Saw (2013: 69–70) notes, a fundamental impact on the creation of the new approach was exerted by the civil rights movement, the women’s liberation movement, environmentalism and mainstream religious institutions. It was also influenced by educators’ dissatisfaction with the education system. All these factors led to the development of new theories, methods, techniques and practical solutions. However, according to some scholars, holistic education is partly based on theories arising over the last 200 years. For example, Jane Preston (2012: 253) notes that it was created in accordance with Maria Montessori pedagogical methods. A holistic approach to education fits also into the turn-of-the-century New Education movement represented by John Dewey, who created the theory of instrumentalism and was a proponent of an integrated approach to knowledge (Parr-Modrzejewska & Szubko-Sitarek 2016: 101; Miller 1997: 121–148). Furthermore, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Johann Pestalozzi, Francis Parker, John Caldwell, Carl Jung and Abraham Maslow are reported as the pioneers of this new trend in the literature (Saw 2013: 70; Miller 1997: 87–120).
In the book *What Are Schools For?*, Ron Miller (1997: 12) emphasizes that “holistic education is a countercultural movement seeking radical, far-reaching changes in American society”. Other scholars (e.g. Jacobs 1989; Martin 2014; Saw 2013) maintain that holistic education is rooted in many modern problems. Many changes in the surrounding world, dysfunctional communities, families, mainstream education based on academic subjects like mathematics, literature and history and, first of all, the fragmented curriculum frameworks caused that people did not know how to “live good and meaningful lives” (Saw 2013: 69). Thus, new didactic solutions have been created and one of them is holism.

Holism is a model that emerged across all disciplines in the 20th century. The impact of the new paradigm was visible in the evolution of Sciences and Humanities. The holism movement in psychology appeared in the 1970s and provided the theoretical base for the development of a holistic vision of education. According to Anastas Harris (1980, in Saw 2013: 70), the term *holistic* was first used at the first national holistic education conference in 1979 at the University of California. The book entitled *The Holistic Curriculum* (1988), written by a Canadian scholar John P. Miller was the next step. At the same time in the US, a new journal called *Holistic Education Review* was founded. Since that moment, a marginal movement started to attract large numbers of international followers.

A holistic concept is based on the universal attitude to the nature of knowledge. In line with this approach, different cognitive methods are integrated and used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of reality (Carr 2002: 126). According to the constructivist theory, learning activities lead to discovering and creating new thought patterns in multi-level interactive processes with the surrounding world (Parr-Modrzejewska & Szubko-Sitarek 2016: 101). In their considerations, George Taylor and Loretta MacKenney (2008: 144) emphasize that knowledge tends to form networks of smaller phenomena and that division of education into separate school subjects leads to the destruction of knowledge.

Holistic education focuses on humanistic and democratic sets of determinants (Miller 2002), because values, relationships and the nature of beauty constitute the most significant areas. Identity, meaning and the purpose of life are the direct objectives for which each student aims.
This alternative approach in education referred to intellectual, emotional, physical, social, artistic, creative, spiritual and primarily synergistic development (Saw 2013: 71). The same concept of holism was emphasized by Jiddu Krishnamurti (1953: 25), who maintained that “the highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole”.

The holistic approach is still present in the contemporary world, and what is more, it is a part of the general educational theory and practice. In his paper called *The Ethics and Politics of Holism*, a present-day scholar Glen Martin (2014: 4–5) exposes the essential role of holistic education:

> If education is an important key to creating a better future for humanity, then education must not only be for global citizenship but for global citizenship within the new set of assumptions about the world and human life that comprise the holistic paradigm. Education must be directed toward creating a shift in human consciousness, not just a shift in the intellectual assumptions behind our actions (an intellectualized paradigm shift) but rather to an existential understanding in which thinking and action arises from a new holistic wisdom and unity of consciousness.

2. **The concepts of cross-curricular teaching and learning and CLIL**

The holistic approach was a source of many studies, observations, implications, and conclusions. No wonder then that this approach to learning manifested itself in schools and translated itself into specific teaching methods, concepts and curriculum frameworks. Many schools which were solidly grounded in the concept of holistic education were created. A cross-curricular approach in education is one of the ways of teaching which fully realizes the main assumption of holistic education. Importantly, holism exerted a fundamental impact on the creation of new pedagogy. Therefore, many of the main guidelines of holistic education were adopted by supporters of interdisciplinary teaching. This new approach was based on integrating different school subjects while stimulating pupils’ progress (Parr-Modrzejewska & Szubko-Sitarek 2016: 102).

Interdisciplinary teaching is a phenomenon which began to spread in the second part of the 20th century. According to Heidi Jacobs (1989: 1), one of the main reasons for its emergence was a conviction that “school is irrelevant to the larger world”. A turning point in cross-curricular
teaching was the implementation of the first National Curriculum in England in 1992 which introduced cross-curricular elements within a wider curriculum framework. During extensive discussions, the benefits of a cross-curricular set of themes and skills were recognized (Savage 2011: 13–16).

The main assumptions of the cross-curricular approach to the teaching practice are presented in the book *Cross-Curricular Teaching and Learning in the Secondary School* (Savage 2011). As the source indicates, cross-curricular teaching and learning is intended to motivate and encourage pupils to synthesize knowledge, skills and understanding from different domains (Savage 2011: 15), because the main task is to create a bridge between different school subjects and to stimulate learners’ holistic development. This assumption is related to a further key objective of cross-curricular education, namely students’ cognitive, personal and social enrichment (Savage 2011: 42). Progress in these areas allows young people to understand the surrounding world (Fautley & Savage 2011: 8).

In the discussion on cross-curricular teaching and learning, it is essential to mention another opinion presented by Thomas Farell and George Jacobs (2010). According to them, *Integrated Curriculum* is one out of eight priorities necessary for effective learning in formal education. This approach presupposes that the contents from different domains should be combined in order to reinforce one another (Farell & Jacobs 2010: 126).

Realization of the postulates of cross-curricular education requires integration of school subjects to achieve assumed students’ development. The issue has been described in the last few years by a number of scholars and educators (e.g. Fautley & Savage 2011; Krawiec 2014; Savage 2011; Stevens 2011). A meaningful role in providing learners with a coherent framework is assigned to such school subjects as Language, Art, Culture Studies, History, Geography and Information Communication Technology. The information about the subjects, their properties and the application techniques are presented in the papers and books written, among others, by such researchers as Krawiec (2014), Savage (2011) and Stevens (2011).

Having discussed so far the main goals and rationales of interdisciplinary teaching and learning, it is necessary to turn our attention to the cross-curricular teaching practice in a foreign language lesson.
The current process of globalization is an incentive for an active pursuit of effective methods of foreign language acquisition and learning, and the CLIL educational model is perceived as a very promising solution. As Christiane Dalton-Puffer (2008: 1) notes, it has been a central issue in European education. In foreign language methodology, the approach based on integration is called CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). The acronym CLIL was coined in Europe in the early nineties of the 20th century (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols 2008: 9; Eurydice Report 2006: 7). CLIL has become increasingly popular in its cross-curricular form. In this model, a foreign language is used for teaching and learning of a non-language subject matter, which results simultaneously in the acquisition of knowledge and improvement of language competences (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols 2008: 11). The long-term objective is to enhance proficiency in both (Eurydice Report 2006: 7). The 4C model, which involves a holistic integration of content, communication, cognition and culture, provides the background to this form of teaching and learning (Harrop 2012: 58).

According to CLIL proponents, this model is also grounded in many second language acquisition theories and practices (Dalton-Puffer 2007: 2–5). The context of Content and Language Integrated Learning, in which pupils learn a subject through the medium of a foreign language and with focus on meaning, is similar to real communication. As Parr-Modrzejewska and Szubko-Sitarek (2016: 102) note, this form of teaching is intended to motivate students to learn language structures and terminology appropriate for the situation. As a result, the learner’s performance becomes less schematic. Besides, CLIL aims at making individual school subjects more explicit to students. From the very beginning, work with the use of interdisciplinary methods provides many possibilities for assimilation of knowledge about different realities. Finally, methods in this approach are adequate for learners with various abilities and skills (Harrop 2012: 57).

The example below shows the curricular model (Zydatiš in Dalton-Puffer 2008: 3) with its four equivalent areas: content, communication, culture, cognition.
The curricular model above shows that CLIL practice not only develops cognitive skills and proficiency in communication but also leads to progression in knowledge and improves cultural awareness. All the areas are non-hierarchically structured, but they are integrated. As Dalton-Puffer (2008: 3) rightly notes, communication plays a significant role and is a central part of this model.

3. Students’ and teachers’ tasks in CLIL

Considering the issue of CLIL practice, it is important to take into account the role of the teacher and the student. Extensive discussion amongst professionals about the cross-curricular framework has led to a review of the traditional approach to the educator and the learner. As a result, teachers, parents and students are faced with totally different tasks.

Because CLIL is an approach which is embedded into the framework of cross-curricular teaching and learning, teachers’ and students’ tasks will be described in this paper from a wider perspective of interdisciplinary teaching.

3.1. Teacher’s role

The teacher creates cross-curricular opportunities for young people and builds a necessary context for acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding from different school areas because the main aim of the cross-curricular approach to the teaching practice is motivating and encouraging students to learn through conjunction with real life,
providing active methods and experiential learning (Savage 2010a, 2010b, 2011). In addition to the main objective, the approach aims to evoke reflection and to replace passive memorization of facts. It is used to relate to students’ prior knowledge and experiences. The educator needs to know how to inspire and motivate students, due to the fact that inadequate application of CLIL can cause disorganization and confusion of the class (Savage 2011: 64–68). The appropriate adaptation of the cross-curricular approach to teaching should lead to greater effects than in the case of traditional teaching. Harris, Harrison and McFahn (2011: 56) stress that “the more we can connect to other subjects in our teaching, the more we can help children make links between subjects”.

Moreover, the teacher should be an imaginative and innovative manager who evaluates his teaching. He should strive for intellectual and emotional growth of every student because, in line with Aristotle’s view reiterated by holism proponents, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”. Based on evolving social advancement, the teacher should develop an atmosphere of collaboration and eliminate competition in the class. As the learner is at the centre of cross-curricular classes, the teacher acts as a guide, instructor, consultant or – as suggested by Martin Fautley and Jonathan Savage (2011: 52) – facilitator who supports students in their undertakings. Scholars (e.g. Harris, Harrison & McFahn 2011; Krawiec 2012, 2014) claim that the educator acts also as an effective organizer, because a lot of supplementary materials, in particular, multimedia, encourage students to participate in classes and to adopt active attitudes, which means the teacher is a co-creator of tools used in cross-subject work. Interdisciplinary activities familiarize students with the use of new technologies as learning tools and improve communication between teachers and students (Krawiec 2014: 245).

Attention must also be given to the individual development of teachers since it is one of the conditions for interdisciplinary education. It is worth emphasizing that this essential type of pedagogy aims at creating essential cooperation between teachers from different disciplines. Collaborative curriculum ventures should benefit imaginative and innovative curriculum planning, across subjects or from external curriculum themes or dimensions. As scholars (e.g. Savage 2011; Parr-Modrzejewska & Szubko-Sitarek 2016) emphasize, the teacher should create the conditions for active empirical exploration by students. He needs to know
both the discipline content and educational theory in order to make cross-curricular links more explicit to the learner (Fautley & Savage 2011: 71) and, in the end, provide students with a coherent educational framework. Another aspect relevant to the discussion is the effect of the educator’s actions on the student. The teacher’s task is thus to develop a love for learning and to develop positive attitudes towards learning.

3.2. Students’ role

The desired effect of cross-curricular education is the learner, who can work with cross-curricular themes and creatively deal with interdisciplinary materials, tools and activities. As Marek Krawiec (2014: 245) notes, examination and interpretation of a cross-curricular phenomenon should be based on students’ own innovative ideas, observations, experience, and imagination. By using all of them, students become more independent in their learning (Zajączkowska 2013: 138), can correctly identify and describe emotions and present own judgments about the surrounding reality (Fautley & Savage 2011: 34–35).

Being involved in this form of education, young people open up to new mindsets, link the content from different domains and use various modes of thinking. The need to build effective fundamentals to broaden their knowledge supports self-reflection and enhances students’ autonomy. Kazimiera Myczko (2008: 26) stresses that it is vital to stimulate and encourage the student to be self-aware of learning strategies and to be able to evaluate them.

Through cross-curricular education a learner shows an active approach to learning, develops creativity, autonomy, independence and critical thinking, and engages in creative problem solving and collaborative learning. The teacher only helps him to become active by building on his natural desire to explore, understand new things and to master them (Krawiec 2014: 260).

As Fautley and Savage (2011: 52) emphasize, cross-subject work (e.g. lessons, projects) is very challenging for both the teacher and the student who have to put enormous effort into this form of teaching and learning. However, what gives the educator and the student great satisfaction is the opportunity to make learning real and relevant.
4. Advantages and disadvantages of CLIL

When discussing benefits and limitations of CLIL, it is essential to describe them in a wider context of cross-curricular teaching and learning. On the ground of the extensive research evidence (Alonso, Grisalena & Campo 2008; Dalton-Puffer 2007, 2008; de Graaff et al. 2007; Jäppinen 2005; Lasagabaster 2008; Navés 2009; Pessoa et al. 2007; Ruiz de Zarobe 2008; Várkuti 2010), it is possible to identify some advantages of the CLIL application such as better language acquisition and content learning, improving motivation and attitudes, and progression in cultural awareness.

In surveys held in the last twenty years, scholars and educators have repeatedly appreciated an important role and value of CLIL as an effective form of language teaching. First of all, with its integration of content and language, this approach offers authentic communicative contexts for the language used in a classroom. It provides exposure to comprehensible input in class (Krashen 1985: 79–109; de Graaff et al. 2007: 607). As a result, a more naturalistic environment supports language acquisition and content learning (Lightbown & Spada 2006, in Harrop 2012: 59).

Studies conducted by Westhoff (1991), Bialystok (1990), Littlemore (2001), Poulisse (1989) and, in particular, de Graaff et al. (2007), indicate that techniques used in CLIL help children to develop compensatory strategies, to deal with and to manage their learning difficulties and language disorders. Anna Várkuti (2010: 76) suggests that language teaching through CLIL leads to better academic outcomes and the development of conversational skills. She emphasizes that an authentic communicative context leads also to a higher level of linguistic proficiency, mainly in listening and reading comprehension, fluency and vocabulary. However, the growing research evidence shows that progress in pronunciation, accuracy and complexity of written and spoken language is not so spectacular (Alonso, Grisalena & Campo 2008; Dalton-Puffer 2007, 2008; Lasagabaster 2008; Navés 2009; Ruiz de Zarobe 2008).

Findings reported by Jäppinen (2005) show that CLIL has a positive impact on children’s cognitive development, especially aged 7–12. English researchers have shown that this form of education is successful and has a favorable effect on pupils, in particular on their motivation, potential to collaborate with each other and language competence. It also facilitates further development of learners, including the social,
cognitive, emotional and mental growth of a child. Through its integration of content and language, this approach has the potential to lead to higher levels of integrative and instrumental motivation (Gardner 2007: 10–11). This kind of organization allows for more involvement in a lesson at a more creative and higher cognitive level and brings students’ possibilities for interactions (Grenfell 2002: 27–40). Progress made in so many areas helps to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Table 1 shows language competencies favorably affected by the CLIL educational model. It mirrors the main areas of discussion among educators and researchers.

Table 1. Language competencies favorably affected by CLIL (partly adapted from Dalton-Puffer 2008: 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorably affected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receptive skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity, risk taking, fluency, quantity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotive/affective outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLIL practice not only develops linguistic proficiency, especially in communication but also builds metalinguistic capacities and leads to an increased level of knowledge, cognitive skills, elasticity and creativity (Mehisto 2008; Baker 2006). CLIL improves motivation in all learners. Good practice during CLIL lessons benefits students of all abilities. An active effort will also lead to increased intercultural awareness (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010).

In the discussion about CLIL, it is also essential to present disadvantages of CLIL. As educators (Sobczyńska 2016: 107–108; Pepłowska 2016) note, CLIL is a very time-consuming and demanding approach. Before a lesson, the teacher has to put effort into the collaborative preparation of tasks and source materials for learners. Team teaching will also need a lot of time and energy.

Another problem, described by Sobczyńska (2016: 108), relates to the lack of transparency and justification of assessment. The main question is whether it is possible to evaluate simultaneously subject content with linguistic performance. Thus, teachers must be prepared to identify
the components of instruction and develop assessment strategies. Evaluation, therefore, will also be diverse and may be different for each learner.

As Marzenna Pepłowska (2016) notes, students “may have problems with working together, socializing and group-work activities”, which means the teacher will need to invest some time to prepare students for new ways of working.

Concluding remarks

In light of the findings presented in this paper, it is important to emphasize that cross-curricular education and CLIL are promising means of achieving the required educational aims. First and foremost, a lesson with cross-curricular content provides inspiring opportunities to build a holistic perspective in learners’ minds. It is a perfect solution for the demands of the global citizen who is able to live a fulfilling and successful life. By reviewing some of the latest evidence one may state that the value of the cross-curricular approach clearly lies in its motivational potential. The CLIL approach also leads to the development of useful knowledge and skills from different domains. Although some scholars argue that CLIL has some limitations, e.g. the tension between form and content and fossilization of errors (Snow et al. in Harrop 2012: 62), the latest research indicates, however, that CLIL is an effective and efficient way to acquire a foreign language. On the basis of all these considerations, it can be stated that cross-curricular teaching and learning and CLIL are very advantageous for the whole process of educating young people and developing their skills and knowledge.

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Introduction

In the area of foreign language didactics, there is a relentless pursuit of a perfect way to teach languages and other school subjects. Current education is rapidly developing and poses new challenges to educators and learners. One of the demanding issues that both teachers and students need to face is the idea of combining the content of different subjects with language knowledge. In order to meet this requirement, theorists suggest the implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) into teaching and learning practices. There are in fact different forms of work that can contribute to the development of this approach and which can help to integrate knowledge from different subjects.

An issue of concern of this article is thus the delineation of the theoretical standpoint of pedagogues about the idea of combining content and language learning in a foreign language classroom. The account here specifies the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning and discusses possible ways of integrating school subjects in school conditions. It also points to the role of teachers and students in cross-curricular work and highlights positive and negative effects of CLIL implementation. To illustrate the notion of cross-curricular teaching, the article presents in the final part how history can be taught through English.

1. Definition and principles of Content and Language Integrated Learning

The term Content and Language Integrated Learning is commonly associated with teaching other subjects through a foreign language. However, a seemingly simple term causes a lot of confusion because of its different realization in many languages. Familiarizing the reader with the definition and main principles of CLIL is the main concern of this section.
One of the problems that comes out while defining Content and Language Integrated Learning is the use of various terms by educators from different countries. For instance, in French “EMILE” (Enseignement d’une matière par l’intégration d’une langue étrangère) is an abbreviation which is used interchangeably with English “CLIL” (Content and Language Integrated Learning). In Germany, the term “Bilingualer Sachfachunterricht” is widely used, whereas in Poland the two terms appear, such as: “nauczanie dwujęzyczne/bilingwalne” or “zintegrowane kształcenie przedmiotowo-językowe”. Although the terminology varies in many countries the differences between their teaching programmes are not so significant (Wolff & Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2010: 7–8).

Another obstacle to reach a unanimous version of the CLIL definition is the existence of different approaches to this type of teaching. Consequently, numerous CLIL models emerge in scholarly literature. Some of them will be presented and discussed in the second section of this paper. However, at this point, it seems reasonable to quote one of the most common CLIL definitions proposed by Marsh (2002: 15), which states that “CLIL and EMILE refer to any dual-focused educational context in which an additional language, thus not usually the first language of the learners involved, is used as a medium in the teaching and learning of non-language content”.

What David Marsh (2002: 15) is trying to emphasize here is the process of simultaneous learning of a foreign language and another subject where the language is used as a tool for mastering a new topic. Therefore, CLIL is often named dual-focused education (Pawlak 2010; Wolff & Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2010; Marsh et al. 2005). It is necessary to note however that in CLIL not all subjects have to be taught through a foreign language (CLIL matrix 2005).

An explanation of a term closely connected with the concept of CLIL is presented by Jonathan Savage (2011). In his considerations he highlights the notion of ‘cross-curricularity’ which, as he notes, “is characterized by sensitivity towards, and a synthesis of, knowledge, skills and understandings from various subject areas. These inform an enriched pedagogy that promotes an approach to learning which embraces and explores this wider sensitivity through various methods” (Savage 2011: 40).

According to this view, cross-curricularity emerges as an approach in which a skilful teacher should be able to use his/her thorough subject
knowledge in a broader context beyond his or her subject area in a sensitive way. The teacher’s familiarization with the new enriched pedagogy of cross-curricular teaching enhances teacher’s sensitivity towards other subject areas (Savage 2011: 41–42).

Apart from the presented definitions and concepts, the discussion on CLIL must be supplemented here by the presentation of the most frequently mentioned principles of CLIL, namely the Four Cs, which stands for content, communication, cognition and culture (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010).

Focusing on the first item from the list, one can state that CLIL refers not only to the foreign language but also to the content. However, it needs to be emphasized that teaching the content of a new subject is not conducted “in” a foreign language but “through” this language (Wolff 2003).

Moreover, CLIL teaching and learning offers natural situations where the language can be used in a spontaneous way. This happens during a conversation about other subjects, putting a foreign language in this way can be highly motivating (British Council 2017).

Another important characteristic of CLIL is the development of cognition. Through challenging tasks, connected with language and content, students have the opportunity to practice thinking skills and to make sense of the world surrounding them (Krawiec 2014: 247).

Broadening cultural knowledge is another inherent feature of CLIL. The use of a foreign language in learning necessitates familiarization of students with the cultural world of others, and as a consequence, development of tolerance among them towards people who represent an entirely different set of values, beliefs and behaviours (CLIL matrix 2005).

Although various terms of Content and Language Integrated Learning exist in different countries, most scholars agree that CLIL is one of the teaching approaches in which simultaneous learning of language and content enhances cultural awareness, communication abilities and cognitive thinking. The problem in finding a unanimous definition of CLIL may result from different approaches to this type of teaching. It is thus worth discussing now possible models of CLIL and point to some of their features.
2. CLIL models

Content and Language Integrated Learning may take different forms, which vary depending on the frequency of using a foreign language during the lesson, the educational context and preferable ways of integrating school subjects.

While discussing the types of CLIL, it seems reasonable to mention first the immersion programs which were popular in the 1970s and 1980s. In terms of age, immersion programs are divided into early, middle or late, where early refers to the level of kindergarten or primary school, middle is present at junior high school and late at secondary school (Marsh 2002: 56; Pawlak 2010: 15).

Moreover, one of useful distinctions in the area of CLIL teaching was made on the basis of the criterion of the exposure to the target language. Four kinds of programs can be distinguished here, namely: total, partial, homogenous and mixed. In total immersion, the whole process of teaching is conducted through a foreign language, whereas in partial immersion, as the name suggests, only a part of the teaching program is performed through a foreign language. Quite often, there are only non-language lessons. Then, this kind of the immersion program is labelled as homogenous. When the teaching program consists of both foreign language lessons and subject lessons, then we deal with a mixed immersion program (Pawlak 2010: 15).

By taking into account the educational context in the simultaneous use of the mother tongue and the foreign language, it is possible to distinguish different types of programs as well, such as (Pawlak 2010: 16):

- transitional bilingual programs – the simultaneous teaching of the mother and foreign language is conducted until immigrants’ children reach the satisfactory level of the target language;
- maintenance bilingual programs – the mother tongue is taught during several school subjects in order to prevent this language from vanishing;
- enrichment bilingual programs – the program created for students living in their homeland who want to broaden their foreign language knowledge by means of learning other subjects through a foreign language.
A different classification of CLIL teaching is proposed by Inez Luczywek (2009), who focuses on the ways of integrating school subjects. The classification suggested by her is as follows: a monodisciplinary model, a multidisciplinary model and an interdisciplinary model.

The first model refers to the “investigating teacher” who extends his/her subject knowledge into the area of other subjects by asking colleagues about interesting themes that can be introduced in his/her lesson. It requires from the teacher a lot of effort but in the eyes of students, this kind of teacher becomes a model to follow (Luczywek 2009).

The multidisciplinary model, contrary to the monodisciplinary one, involves the work of several teachers. A team of educators come up with one theme which is discussed during their subject lessons. However, each educator focuses on one specific aspect of the given topic. The lessons are conducted at different times, which requires good team cooperation (Luczywek 2009).

The interdisciplinary model is performed by a group of teachers who also have to cooperate. Nevertheless, their lessons must be conducted in chronological order. For instance, they may start from one specific issue of the given theme in one subject (which according to the timeline occurs first), then this knowledge is used in the lesson from the next subject and so on. This enables students to systematize their knowledge and to reach a holistic vision of the topic (Luczywek 2009).

It is necessary now to discuss the last division concerning CLIL teaching, namely on account of the frequency of using a foreign language during a lesson. Marsh, Zająć and Gozdawa-Gołębiowska (in Pawlak 2010: 19–20) suggest here four types of CLIL:

1. Model A – a mother tongue is used sporadically only to explain important terms, whereas a foreign language dominates during the lesson.
2. Model B – during the lesson, code-switching is acceptable because 50% of the lesson is conducted in a foreign language and 50% in a mother tongue.
3. Model C – in this type only 10% to 50% of the whole lesson is devoted to a foreign language and code-switching is frequently used.
4. Model D – the foreign language is rarely used, for instance, lessons are conducted in a mother tongue but with the use of foreign materials.
The table below briefly summarizes the above-mentioned models of CLIL.

Table 1. CLIL models (table mine: AP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for classification</th>
<th>CLIL models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. On account of the age of introducing CLIL into school</td>
<td>early (kindergarten or primary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>middle (junior high school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>late (secondary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. On account of exposure to the target language</td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>homogenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. On account of the educational context</td>
<td>transitional bilingual programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maintenance bilingual programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>enrichment bilingual programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. On account of the ways of integrating subjects</td>
<td>monodisciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>multidisciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interdisciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. On account of the frequency of using the second language during a lesson</td>
<td>model A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>model B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>model C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>model D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conclusion, CLIL is a broad notion which can be viewed from different perspectives. Looking at various aspects of this approach, one may distinguish a plethora of models. Different as these models may seem, all the types are inspired by the idea of combining a foreign language and a subject knowledge.

3. Advantages and disadvantages of CLIL

Since Content and Language Integrated Learning is one of the progressive approaches that is used to face the challenges of the modern world, many researchers have a positive attitude towards it. However, as it can be noticed, new solutions are frequently accompanied by many challenges and apprehension about the unknown. The possible problems that may
occur during the implementation of CLIL teaching and its positive effects are the main point of interest in this section.

While discussing the advantages of CLIL, emphasis on the subject and language teaching must be the starting point. As Infante, Benvenuto and Lastrucci (2009: 160) suggest, the integration of language and content encourages collaboration between teachers. To bring the issue closer, educators, before performing their lessons, need to consult different aspects and plan their work together. They supplement each other in such a way that the language teacher can get indispensable content information from a subject teacher and vice versa.

Not only does the teacher benefit from language and content integration but also students. Firstly, learners are willing to study a foreign language even more when it is put in context. References to the real world situations and a natural setting increase their motivation. Besides, students find studying the content through a foreign language more interesting since this way of learning is more challenging and involving (Infante, Benvenuto & Lastrucci 2009: 161).

These aspects are inseparably connected with the next positive feature, namely authenticity. The natural setting in CLIL learning is created by the use of authentic materials (texts, movies etc.) which are adjusted to students’ current needs and interests (Pawlak 2010: 17).

According to Wolff and Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2010: 12), Content and Language Integrated Learning paves the way to learner autonomy. CLIL gives students the opportunity to actively participate in a lesson. Moreover, they work in groups, which develops cooperation skills and the feeling of responsibility for one’s own actions.

In the view of Pawlak (2010: 17–18), CLIL enables students to systematize and transform already acquired knowledge to other subjects. He maintains that this form of teaching develops tolerance towards other cultures and creates a safe and natural learning environment where students may use and experiment with a language. Furthermore, development of creativity and critical thinking is emphasized by this scholar with regard to CLIL.

Apart from benefits, there are, however, some negative aspects of Content and Language Integrated Learning. While discussing drawbacks of this approach, it is worth highlighting two general areas of difficulties, namely administrative and educational challenges.
The researchers from the University of Cambridge maintain that Content and Language Integrated Learning may be difficult for both teachers and students. When it comes to teachers, it can be problematic for the language educator to master the content of other subjects, whereas for the subject teacher lack of confidence about his/her language competence to present some issues through a foreign language can also cause trouble (University of Cambridge 2013). For this reason, many teachers are obliged to change or supplement their qualifications, which demands great determination on their side. Furthermore, one of the most frequently mentioned hindrances in CLIL teaching is the restricted availability of the materials or lack of them. Thus, the teacher has to put a lot of effort to prepare his/her own teaching program and materials in order to be successful in the implementation of CLIL in his/her lessons (Wolff & Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2010: 12).

As far as learners are concerned, the initial stages of learning the content through a foreign language may be problematic for them. This kind of learning requires from students basic subject knowledge at first. Then, they need to express content by means of a foreign language. However, sometimes learners’ low level of language knowledge does not allow them to present information freely and spontaneously (Infante, Benvenuto & Lastrucci 2009: 161).

Unfortunately, CLIL frequently struggles with the obstacles of administrative nature. Wolff and Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2010: 12) highlight the fact that schools encounter hindrances in creating bilingual branches, which is caused mainly by restrictive law. Moreover, higher costs of maintenance of bilingual schools are the additional possible reason for not implementing CLIL programs in many countries.

All in all, one can state that there are both positive and negative sides of Content and Language Integrated Learning. Expressing the content knowledge through a foreign language definitely makes language acquisition more substantial and natural. On the other hand, CLIL causes a lot of problems to both teachers and students, and therefore needs to be viewed as a rather challenging task to perform.

4. Teaching history through English

The idea of Content and Language Integrated Learning may have its application in teaching history by means of a foreign language. As every
subject, history requires specific techniques. Therefore, while teaching history through a foreign language, the teacher needs to bear in mind a variety of factors that result from the nature of this subject. This section presents the aspects that should be taken into account while teaching history through English, highlights its importance and enumerates ways of implementing a history lesson through the use of a foreign language.

The discussion on teaching history through English ought to begin with recognition of the place and importance of history in the curriculum. As Harris, Harrison and McFahn (2012: 15–16) assert, the knowledge of history gives students a sense of identity and helps them to find their place in a community. Moreover, history lessons develop learners’ skills of analyzing and evaluating evidence, formulating questions and interpreting past events with reference to the current affairs. Not only does history enable students to learn about the past or the present, but it also prepares students for the future adult life in a democratic society. Finally, knowledge of the history of different countries helps learners to understand the cultural diversity and to develop tolerance towards other nations.

In the opinion of Szelągowska (2002: 205–206), an increase in the awareness of multiculturalism is additionally supplemented by the use of language during the history lesson. She suggests several ways of fulfilling the aim of broadening cultural awareness of students.

First of all, she proposes to supplement the general curriculum of history with some additional topics about the history of the country whose language is used during the lesson. For instance, for students who learn English, she recommends a discussion on the topics from British history (Szelągowska 2002: 205).

Secondly, providing students with English translations of specific words or processes in history may also turn out to be valuable because it can enhance their understanding of historical events. As Szelągowska (2002: 205) notes, concentration on equivalents of historical terms in another language may however be tough for learners because they can find it difficult to properly interpret the words which reflect the diversity of historical processes in a given country.

Another important practice that may contribute to an increase in cultural awareness is the use of foreign resources and materials during history lessons. Depending on the students’ level, the teacher may introduce into the lesson some extracts from foreign history coursebooks,
popular science texts or even for more advanced students excerpts from monographs, historical science literature syntheses or historical source materials. However, the teacher needs to bear in mind that the methodology of history teaching in Poland differs from the one in Britain (Szelągowska 2002: 206). Thereby, if the teacher decides to conduct a lesson by means of foreign coursebooks or historical resources, he/she should be aware of differences between Polish and British techniques, methodologies and ways of interpreting various historical processes.

The discussion must be supplemented here by the presentation of crucial aspects that should be taken into account while implementing a foreign language into history lessons. The researchers from the University of Cambridge (University of Cambridge 2013) suggest following several steps while preparing and conducting a CLIL lesson.

First of all, the teacher should equip students with both content-obligatory and content-compatible language. The former refers to the specific vocabulary of a particular subject, whereas the latter refers to the general vocabulary that students can learn during English classes (University of Cambridge 2013).

Secondly, the teacher ought to activate prior knowledge. To bring the issue closer, the teacher should find out if the level of students’ subject knowledge is relevant to their language abilities. Some of the learners may have broad content knowledge but they might not be able to express it freely because of their language barriers. For this reason, it is acceptable for students to use their mother tongue in presenting their ideas which subsequently are translated by the teacher (University of Cambridge 2013).

When it comes to students’ responses in a non-native language, the period of time between the question and the answer should be lengthened. It results from the fact that learners need more time to transform their content knowledge into a foreign language (University of Cambridge 2013).

Finally, it is recommended to perform collaborative tasks. The activities connected with subject-specific vocabulary at the word or sentence level should be conducted in pairs or small groups. Furthermore, at the sentence level, the teacher ought to remember about asking questions that will enhance students’ lower order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher order thinking skills (HOTS) (University of Cambridge 2013).
The former refers to the “what”, “when”, and “where” questions, whereas the latter involves “why” and “how” questions which are definitely more challenging for students, especially for CLIL beginners (University of Cambridge 2013).

In conclusion, it needs to be stated that history teaching contributes to an increase in awareness of multiculturalism. Multicultural awareness can be boosted by the additional use of language during history lessons. However, this task requires from the teacher the knowledge of both subject and foreign language methodology and techniques in order to be prepared for conducting a CLIL lesson.

**Concluding remarks**

The above considerations seem to perfectly illustrate the reason of the growing importance of Content and Language Integrated Learning. The number of substantial benefits of CLIL presented in this article clearly highlight the incontestable evidence that Content and Language Integrated Learning does have a positive influence on students’ motivation, autonomy, interest in the foreign language as well as general cognitive and social development. One can thus state that CLIL is a valuable approach which can contribute to the development of students, teachers and the educational system as such. However, what should not be forgotten is the limitations of the approach which derive primarily from teachers’ inhibitions and the situational context present in many schools. Therefore, it can be suggested that the first step towards modernization of foreign language didactics should be focused on the administration of CLIL teacher training and construction of CLIL teaching materials.

As the article suggests, the application of CLIL approach can be especially useful in history teaching, where the knowledge of history can be successfully passed on to students via the medium of a foreign language. Thanks to this form of teaching, learners can develop a better understanding of the social and political changes in the world as well as intercultural awareness and tolerance, which prepares students to become mindful and cultured members of society.
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CHAPTER 10:
PROJECT WORK IN LANGUAGE CLASSES
Introduction

Currently, project work is one of the most effective methods in foreign language teaching (Krawiec 2008: 125). It is viewed as a form of work that contributes to the development of knowledge and skills of students at different educational levels and which leads to the mastery of foreign language competence. It is thus considered a very attractive method that can successfully facilitate the process of foreign language learning and teaching (Krawiec 2015).

Having recognized the significance of the project method, it is worth providing some theoretical evidence on the subject in question. Therefore, it is essential to discuss the notion of project method and to present its historical background. The rules governing project work also need to be described here and features of a good project must be distinguished in this account as well, underlying how the project influences students, teachers and the school where it is conducted.

1. Project method and its historical background

The notion of the project method was introduced into methodology in the early 20th century. Scholars who contributed to formulating this notion were John Dewey, Ovide Decroly and William H. Kilpatrick. They are mentioned as the first ones who formed the idea of the project method. As stated by Marta Kotarba-Kańczugowska (2015: 2), the project method emerged in opposition to insufficient traditional methods which were applied in the times when the above-mentioned scholars lived.

William H. Kilpatrick is known as the creator of the project method. He presented the foundations of project work in his publication The Project Method in 1918. The scholar viewed the project method as a contradiction to the traditional way of teaching which he strongly criticized. He claimed that the traditional school system presented by Johann
Friedrich Herbart was insufficient and inadequate. Kilpatrick criticized the way of teaching in which a student was treated as a passive knowledge receiver instead of an active learner. According to him, students were not taught responsibility or useful skills, and as a result, they were not prepared for functioning in society. Moreover, he maintained that the school system did not give students the opportunities to gain knowledge on their own. The way of teaching did not create the possibilities for students to verify and to make use of theoretical knowledge, which they possessed in practical situations. Kilpatrick also claimed that the teaching content was not adjusted to students’ needs and interests (Kotarba-Kańczugowska 2015: 2).

Opposed to all weak points of the traditional school system, Kilpatrick presented the project method as a new way of teaching which involves practical skills and learners’ self-reliance. The scholar encouraged educators to reject the subject-based curriculum and to focus on cross-curricular educational projects (Kotarba-Kańczugowska 2015: 3).

2. Project method – definition and main principles

Kilpatrick (1918: 320) defined the project method as a “wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment”. For the modern definition of this concept, it is necessary to relate to Klimowicz (2015: 3), who views the project method as a planned activity with a deadline which involves various problems solved by students. The project is prepared by a teacher or by a group of teachers, but in fact, it is performed by students. Hence, the project method focuses on learners’ activities and engagement. Moreover, the project as such is an activity which provides students with new information, teaches them how to use the possessed knowledge, develops their skills and influences their emotional attitude towards learning. In other words, the project method is an activity which has a lot to do with students’ autonomy and which encourages young people to acquire knowledge in an active way. Defining the term of the project method, Klimowicz (2015: 3) pays also attention to two crucial features which are characteristic of the method. Firstly, the project method establishes a cross-curriculum enterprise. Secondly, students are allowed to solve most problems on their own, and thereby their self-reliance plays a crucial role.
The project method is also described by Kotarba-Kańczugowska (2015: 6), who defines it as a method which involves students’ self-reliance and responsibility. As she notes, the method creates opportunities for students to direct their learning process on their own. Thanks to group work, students learn effective communication, active listening and collaborative problem-solving. As a result, students are better prepared for further functioning in society. Kotarba-Kańczugowska maintains that the most appreciated projects are activities that involve cross-curricular or multi-cultural tasks.

Szymański (2010: 19) describes the project method by discussing its major principles. Firstly, the project method concentrates on learners and their individual process of learning during the realization of project work. Secondly, project tasks involve practical assignments which are conducted in a non-school setting. Thirdly, the method underlines the importance of the final project which is the result of multi-curriculum undertakings.

The next point to be discussed in this paper refers to requirements for project work. According to Szymański (2010: 82), the first requirement applies to the roles of a teacher and a student. The significance of the teachers’ role decreases in this type of work, whereas the role of students becomes more visible. Students are in fact leading performers in this type of work. They are expected to take responsibility for their work and its results. The teachers’ role is marginalized, and consequently teachers become supervisors who support students but never give them direct solutions to tasks. As noted by Szymański (2010: 82), the role of the teacher may be more important at the beginning of the project. However, during its realization it is students who play a more significant role.

The second issue mentioned by Szymański (2010: 82) recognizes the importance of subjectivity. As emphasized by this scholar, project work influences not only the educational process but also students’ personalities. Project work provides opportunities to work as a group and take on shared or individual responsibilities for performing a task. It may bring various benefits because students develop their skills and qualities necessary to achieve success in their lives. Consequently, they are better prepared to function in society.

The third notion, called “entirety”, refers to presenting the problems to students in a broader perspective than it is done during traditional lessons. Project work enables the student to elaborate on the task by considering
different points of view and using school and non-school settings. The requirements of project work create opportunities for students to link theoretical knowledge, which they acquire during the lessons, with practical knowledge necessary in everyday life. Students are expected to notice the correlation between what they learn about at school and what they may encounter in their lives. Moreover, project tasks encourage students to analyze different types of tasks with which modern society is faced (Szymański 2010: 82).

The fourth requirement which is mentioned by Szymański (2010: 82) refers to the way of assessment. It is implied that the traditional way of evaluating students should not be present in the case of project work. Assessment of students’ work should include not only the final product but also their engagement during the realization of the project. Evaluation of students should be treated as a part of the project and should motivate young people to work hard. Moreover, evaluation of the tasks should give learners short and clear feedback about their work.

Requirements for the realization of project work are also discussed by John Stevenson (in Kotarba-Kańczugowska 2015: 7). The scholar holds that the methodological approach can be called project work when four basic features correlate with one another. As for the first feature, Stevenson identifies students’ self-reliance. Students are treated as autonomous learners; hence, their process of learning should be proceeded by self-reliant thinking and solving problems instead of learning by heart. Secondary, Stevenson underlines the importance of student’s involvement, which should be appreciated not only because it may simplify memorization of knowledge, but also because it may change students’ attitude to learning. Students are expected to be aware of their process of learning and become active learners. The third requirement concerns students’ needs and interests. It is believed that students are highly motivated in project work when it corresponds to their interests. Moreover, students should work on the problems and gather the knowledge which they wish to possess. The last requirement which is mentioned by Stevenson applies to theoretical knowledge. Although it is claimed that students should gain practical knowledge, theoretical information is not excluded. Stevenson holds that the presentation of theoretical information should be done only when students have problems with solving project tasks. It is also worth underlining that the theoretical knowledge should only be a complement to practical activities.
3. Positive effects of project work

Positive effects of project work are pointed out by many scholars. One of them is Anna Klimowicz (2015: 6) who notes that this type of work is beneficial for the educational process. She maintains that a project is of significant contribution to the school in which it is conducted. Such work extends the school curriculum and promotes modern and active methods of teaching and learning in a particular place. It also integrates the community of teachers and students and allows for cooperation of the school with other institutions.

Besides, project work, as Klimowicz (2015: 6) indicates, affects students and their attitude to learning. It helps young people to become more self-reliant and responsible. It teaches them to work properly in a group as well as individually. It also encourages young people to make use of their theoretical knowledge in practical tasks which they are expected to do by using this method. Thanks to their engagement in project work, their confidence and self-esteem increase.

What is more, project work has a positive influence on teachers who thanks to it become more creative and motivated. They are encouraged to use unusual methods and techniques in the educational process. Besides, this type of work allows them to learn about their students and their interests and hobbies, and to adjust the process of teaching to learners’ needs. With the success of project work, their authority and job satisfaction rise and their teaching becomes more effective (Klimowicz 2015: 6; Lubina 2015: 6). The author of the article entitled “Designing effective projects: Characteristics of projects: Benefits of project-based-learning” (Intel Teach Program 2007) indicates that teachers in this form of work can cooperate not only with other teachers but also with students. By introducing the project method into educational practices, they satisfy students’ expectations and demands for innovative ways of teaching.

Krawiec (2015: 448–449), for example, points to advantages of the project method with reference to different skills that students master during realization of the project. Among the most important advantages of this method, he distinguishes the development of teamwork skills. As he notes, performing project tasks is a good opportunity for students to develop the skills of collaboration, and as a result, to become successful group members (Krawiec 2015: 452). Performing the project task as
a group gives young people opportunities to learn from each other and to solve problems together (Lubina 2015: 6). It is necessary to emphasize here that learners working in a group in a project also improve their communicative skills. To perform tasks together, they need to communicate effectively and only by doing so can they achieve success and a feeling of satisfaction (Krawiec 2015: 452; Szewczyk 2010: 3).

Another advantage of the project method is the development of students’ ability to solve problems. Thanks to this method students learn how to work out the most effective solutions to given tasks and, as underlined by Krawiec (2015: 453–454), become aware of how to properly function in “real life”. Solving problems involves using various resources, which results in enhancement of students’ self-reliance, creativity and responsibility. To perform project tasks, young people need to gather information from various materials. They must collect, select and synthesize necessary information to complete the project tasks appropriately (Krawiec 2015: 454).

Another important benefit which springs from the project method refers to the cross-curricular way of teaching. This method involves integration of different school subjects and allows for combining theoretical knowledge which is taught in different lessons at school with practical skills (Lubina 2015: 6).

It is also worth pointing to the development of creativity which is shown in the tasks performed by students in a project. In this type of work students are encouraged to present their own ideas and since they are engaged in the project, they memorize new material more easily and quickly (Lubina 2015: 6).

**Concluding remarks**

Theoretical considerations presented above suggest that the project method plays a crucial role in modern language learning and teaching and brings benefits to students, teachers and the school as an educational institution. Thanks to this method students become more motivated, independent and responsible for their own process of learning, teachers more creative and innovative in their teaching, and the school more effective in its functioning. The information presented in the article allows one to conclude that project work definitely contributes to
the improvement of teaching and learning in school conditions and should be treated as an indispensable element of preparation of school community for facing a variety of challenges in 21st century.

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Introduction

Currently, the educational system tends to focus on the comprehensive development of students. The school’s aim today is not only to pass on knowledge, as it was in the previous years. It is essential that students gain the key competences and they are able to use their knowledge in life. That is the reason why scholars reach for efficient and alternative teaching methods. One of them is project work which engages students to learn creatively and successfully.

The purpose of this article is to describe and discuss the project method and its contribution to education, particularly to foreign language learning and teaching. The article is divided into five parts, each of which presents different aspects of project work.

1. General characteristics of a project

There are various definitions presented by scholars regarding the notion of a project. This section describes some of them and provides the general perspective on project work. Moreover, it features the origins and history of the project method.

Considerations on the issue in question shall begin with the implications of Lilian G. Katz (1994: 2), who claims that “a project is an in-depth investigation of a topic worth learning more about”. A project has a lot to do with inquiring and looking into the problem. As Katz (1994: 2) notes, “the goal of a project is to learn more about the topic rather than to seek right answers to questions posed by the teacher”. Therefore, it is necessary to choose an appropriate topic adequate to the capabilities of students.

In his deliberations, Michael Knoll (1997: 59) points to effects of the project method. He argues that “it is generally considered a means by which students can (a) develop independence and responsibility, and
(b) practice social and democratic modes of behaviour”. Project work allows students to learn autonomously and in non-standardized conditions. Based on working in small groups, it teaches them how to socialize with other people.

An insightful explanation of the term is also provided by Marek Krawiec (2008: 126), who maintains that “a project is a recognizable unit of work with a series of activities that are linked to form a tangible end-product. It is a form of teaching which involves the overall development of a student who, after the successful completion of the project, may gain a real sense of achievement”. A project consists of several activities and leads to the enhancement of students’ skills.

According to Ann-Marie Clark (2006: 1), there are three components in project work: “(1) content, (2) processes, and (3) products”. Content includes real-work topics which are processed by students in various ways. The results are presented as “products” of the work.

Michael Knoll (1997: 59–80) describes the beginnings and development of the project method. He notes that the project movement began in the 19th century in the United States. However, the origins reach the 16th century and European architectural schools. The first mention of learning through projects can be found at the Academies of Art in Rome and Paris. The Academy in Rome opened an independent specialization for architects, whose curriculum was not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills. The students in the academy were given assignments such as designing churches or monuments. Those tasks were called “progetti”. The Academie Royal d'Architecture in Paris followed the steps of Rome and introduced the project method to the program as well. Students were to complete projects – in French named “projets” – in several months’ time. In the 18th century, technical and industrial universities and colleges also started using the project method. Apart from European countries, the method was introduced to Boston and other American universities. In America, Professor Stillman H. Robinson established a new point of view, claiming that designing should not be the final result, in fact, he asserted the practical construction ought to be considered the final outcome. However, Robinson’s conception was not ideal. John D. Runkle and Calvin M. Woodward suggested moving the practical works to secondary school. As a result, Woodward founded the Manual Training School in St. Louis, where students worked in carpentry, machine
shops and other places. A few years later, John Dewey and then Charles R. Richards suggested that the project method should start with identifying a problem and working toward a solution. They regarded the method as a whole educational concept. Another important philosopher was William H. Kilpatrick, who described the project method in detail. According to Kilpatrick, projects had four phases: purposing, planning, executing, and judging. In such a form of learning the children worked by themselves from the first stage, which gave them independence and freedom. Kilpatrick’s idea became very popular and started to be treated as a general method of teaching. However, there were educators who disagreed with Kilpatrick. One of them was John Dewey, who maintained that children were not able to work without teachers, and they needed guidance and correction of teachers. At the beginning of the 20th century, the American project idea moved back to Europe. Russian educators promoted the project method and wanted to establish it as a national way of teaching, yet the Soviet government rejected the idea. The same situation was in other countries under Soviet domination after the Second World War, including Poland. In Western Europe, there was a different approach, where the project idea became very popular and widely used in education, especially in Germany.

Nowadays, educators often combine project work with traditional teaching methods. The project idea has, in fact, become an indispensable element of modern teaching practices and has been widely appreciated by both educators and students. The way how this method has been implemented in Polish conditions will be described in more detail in the next section.

2. Projects in Polish schools

The history of the project method in Poland reaches the beginnings of the 20th century. It was introduced to Poland during the interwar period (1918–1939). The first book on this issue was translated into Polish and published in 1930, written by J. A. Stevenson (Morka & Pilat 2012: 85). Nevertheless, it was difficult to implement project work into the existing curriculum. Despite the problems, schools were interested in the method and attempted to use projects. There were also schools which introduced projects during classes, yet they were not called “projects”. The works
from that period can be found in the paper of Wanda Dzierzbicka (Mikina & Zając 2012: 71–72).

After the Second World War, the project method was avoided or marginalised in Polish publications. It was reintroduced with the change of the social and economic system when Polish scholars had the opportunity to familiarize with the experiences of Western European teachers (Mikina & Zając 2012: 72). In 1999–2009 it was recommended that the project method should be used to carry out cross-curricular teaching (Morka & Piłat 2012: 85).

Since 2010 each student of junior high school has been obliged to participate in an educational project. Quoting Morka and Piłat (2012: 83), “this method is to help achieve educational goals and develop skills which a student should acquire by the end of the third education stage”. According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education, the main aim of the project is to solve a certain problem by the use of various methods. There are four stages of the project:

a. selecting the topic;
b. defining the aims and scheduling the stages of the project;
c. performing the planned actions;
d. presentation of results in public.

The project is made by a group of students under the supervision of the teacher (Mikina & Zając 2012: 7). Although projects have already been made compulsory in junior high schools for almost ten years, they are still regarded as a burden. It may be caused by inadequate knowledge and insufficient qualifications of teachers to perform projects. Perhaps Polish schools require more time to practice and implement this method on an educational ground.

There are, however, a lot of schools in Poland which use the project method very eagerly. Alicja Pacewicz and Danuta Sterna (2012: 1) point to the Polish programme called “School with Class” which promotes the use of project work at schools. According to these scholars, there have been over 3000 projects performed by students in recent years. Their projects have referred to all domains, such as nature, language, history, future, the universe, and many others.

An example of project implementation in Poland is presented and discussed also by Katarzyna Kaczorowska (2007: 12–15), who conducted project work during English lessons in a secondary school.
The assignment for students at this level was to prepare the project on a selected country from the European Union. Students worked in pairs during after-class activities. Kaczorowska maintains that the project was extremely attractive to students. The research among students showed that the projects activated young people and motivated them to learn foreign languages. Besides, this form of work helped them to acquire information from different sources and to connect school subjects with problems of everyday life. Kaczorowska states that the aim of progressive education is to demonstrate the overall picture of the world and to prepare students to participate in society in an active way.

In addition, it is worth presenting the project “Agent” described by Marek Krawiec (2008). The project is performed by secondary school students in out-of-school conditions and makes use of a foreign language. Students in this project are given a series of tasks and activities which are to be solved in some places of a city or town. Learners in this project are divided into groups of four or five. In his paper, Krawiec (2008: 132) quotes students’ well-rated opinions about the project and enumerates various benefits deriving from it:

The project … encouraged students to develop their linguistic, intellectual, motor-physical and social skills. It particularly allowed them for mastering accuracy in English writing and reading (e.g. understanding of written texts, detailed reading, translating). It was also a good example of dictionary work which led to the familiarization of students with the spelling, meaning and pronunciation of unknown words and expressions. It also tested students’ ability of searching the places and recognizing the objects …, as well as of negotiating (e.g. negotiating the price of the rose), and operating the inventions of modern technology (e.g. taking pictures with a built-in camera in a mobile phone).

The project has been successfully repeated throughout the last years (Krawiec 2013a: 103–104).

Examples presented above demonstrate how project work has been implemented in Poland and what a successful method it is in many Polish schools. However, there is still not enough knowledge on the issue among some Polish teachers and principals, who sometimes consider projects as an additional task to their duties. Analysing scholarly literature, it can be noted that an important role needs to be mostly assigned to the person of an educator, who should introduce students to the world of projects.
The role of teachers in relation to project work will be discussed and connected with the role of students in the section to follow.

3. Role of teachers and students in projects

The project method is based on students’ autonomous learning and gathering information. Therefore, the roles of teachers and students in project work differ from their roles in traditional teaching methods. A teacher in a project is considered to be a guide, a mentor and a person who makes preparations. Students, on the other hand, perform the tasks assigned to them from the first stage to the end of the project (e.g. Krawiec 2008, 2015).

The role of a teacher in a project is, for instance, described by Pacewicz and Sterna (2012: 1). According to these two scholars, the teacher’s task is to:

a. prepare and provide materials, for example, a computer lab;

b. define objectives and tasks;

c. formulate rules for groups;

d. supervise the work and provide assistance.

A similar point of view is presented by Krawiec (2008: 126–127), who claims that the role of teachers is to carefully introduce the project. Students need to know what they should do at each stage. Besides, teachers are expected to establish the rules and to present them in an understandable way. Moreover, they ought to plan the work for each group, not only for the whole class. Every student must have the assignments to fulfil. The teachers’ role is also to prepare all the materials and deliver them. Some materials may be given in several periods of time, or different groups may receive different kinds of materials. Furthermore, teachers provide instructions for each stage of project work. They ensure that all the students have been familiarized with the tasks. The last point mentioned by Krawiec (2008) is that teachers check and verify students’ work. They must be certain that “all the students participating in the project are working satisfactorily” (Krawiec 2008: 127).

According to Katz (2003: 377), the teacher’s role is to be a consultant who is available for students during all project work. The teacher “facilitates the work by maintaining a productive working environment through supervision and monitoring the children’s progress” (Katz 2003: 377).
The role of students in project work differs from the traditional educational process. In the project method, students are active and learn independently. The project questions are not possible to be answered without an active participation of students. Therefore, the student becomes (Intel Teach Program 2007: 1):

- problem solver;
- decision maker;
- investigator;
- documentarian.

Learners are given a problem that is supposed to be solved by them. They do not expect the teacher to find a solution for them. Performing the project, students need to make decisions about the most suitable ways of acting. They also investigate available sources to find appropriate solutions. Finally, students gather information, provide documentation and present products of their work in front of the class.

The role of students may be described by the tasks assigned to them. Quoting Heilman and Stout, Krawiec (2013b: 62–63) points out that students need to:

- choose the subject;
- plan and structure the work;
- determine the outcomes;
- generate ideas;
- consider materials and resources;
- do the research;
- collect, synthesise and organize information;
- present the results of work;
- evaluate and reflect on the project.

Students are responsible for the whole project. They prepare all the stages and present the final results. Their task is to search for information and learn by themselves. A teacher is needed only when students have difficulties with performing the assignments.

One can note that the roles of teachers and students shall be clearly established and specified in project work. Their roles are connected to the tasks given in the project. Students must be informed of all the details in advance and every aspect of the project needs to be precisely defined.
4. Organisation of project work

In the organization of project work educators, for example, Katz and Chard (1992: 17–20) distinguish several phases:

Phase I: Getting started. In this phase, the subject is chosen and an overview of the project is made. The topic may be selected both by the teacher and students. It is important to choose a proper subject for students which must be interesting and adequately challenging for them. The first phase is also a stage of reviewing students’ current knowledge and establishing the “baseline”.

Phase II: A project in progress. The second phase involves the collection of new information, especially from the real world. Katz and Chard (1992) mention two types of sources: primary or secondary. Primary sources are called “field work” where students visit the places, such as stores or parks. After doing recollection and research, participants gather information and prepare results of their work in order to present them in the classroom. Secondary source materials are books, charts, leaflets, maps and pictures. They also may be successfully used at this stage of the project.

Phase III: Concluding a project. In this phase, students summarise and present the project in the class, school or to the other group of observers. This phase also involves evaluation of the project and discussion on the effects. Students can make their own assessment of what they have achieved.

Stages of project work are also discussed by Morka and Piliat (2012: 88–91), who enumerate seven phases:

a. choosing the topic;

b. defining the objectives and planning the steps of project;

c. writing down the contract / providing instructions;

d. performing planned tasks;

e. public presentation of the results;

f. reflections / report;

g. evaluation.

Regardless of the project’s topic, all the stages should be kept in order to guarantee successful implementation of the method.
5. Benefits coming from project work

Project-based learning and teaching brings a lot of benefits. The benefits have been described by scholars in a number of publications (e.g. Krawiec 2008, 2013a, 2013b, 2015).

Quoting Figarski, Kolber (2012: 33), for example, states that projects teach students the skills that help them in social and adult life. He points to such advantages of project work as (see Figure 1):

![The project method teaches:](image)

Figure 1. Benefits coming from project work (Kolber 2012: 33)

Academic research reveals that projects “engage students, cut absenteeism, boost cooperative learning skills, and improve academic performance” (Intel Teach Program 2007: 1–2). Because the project involves and motivates students, they willingly attend school and change their attitude towards learning. They also take responsibility for their own education. The project method provides an opportunity to develop all learning skills, which are expected to be taught in the traditional education (Intel Teach Program 2007: 1–2).

Moreover, there are several benefits for teachers who use the project method. First of all, project work helps educators to develop professionalism and cooperation with other teachers. Many educators take the opportunity of reaching different styles of learning in the classroom and finding effective ways of teaching their students (Intel Teach Program 2007: 2).
Other advantages are distinguished by Katz (1994: 1), who juxtaposes project work to traditional methods. According to the scholar, the project method gives one the opportunity to apply skills, channels proficiency, and allows students to work independently and according to their needs. In comparison, project work offers more benefits than traditional education in every area of teaching.

Concluding remarks

Information presented in this article demonstrates that the project method is definitely a progressive way of teaching and learning, which allows students to be more creative and motivated to learn. It has been successfully used for hundreds of years all over the world. It also has its history in Poland, where it has been implemented by a growing number of educators. The method offers a wide range of benefits to both teachers and learners, who identify it as an effective way of teaching which encourages students to learn autonomously and independently and helps them to develop different skills which they can use in real life, for example, in group work or public speaking, which unfortunately are not commonly taught in the Polish educational system. Furthermore, students learn how to overcome problems which they can encounter on an everyday basis and how to react and behave in various situations.

Using the project method is highly appreciated by students today and may be successfully repeated in Polish conditions. Not only does such a method of teaching encourage and motivate students to learn, but it also promotes creative thinking and individuality, which are significantly important to young people's psychological and social development. All the benefits of the project method enumerated in this article support the premise that the method needs to be seen as an important shift from traditional learning, which will significantly benefit both students and teachers.

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Introduction

The project method is one of the most popular methods used in the contemporary school. It plays an essential role in modern education because as researchers indicate, it contributes to the process of effective and attractive teaching and learning. Also, language education may be effectively supported by project work (Krawiec 2015: 441).

Information which is presented in this paper provides an insight into project-based learning and teaching. The main aim of this part is to look at the project method from the perspective of its value in the modern school, especially during foreign language classes. To give a complete picture of the issue in question, this article discusses the role of the teacher and of the student in project work. It also reports difficulties and benefits resulting from learners’ participation in project activities.

1. The project method

As one of the Internet sources indicates (www.nowaera.pl), a project, as a form of teaching and learning, was introduced in the USA in 1917. At first, it was used in a practically-oriented training course and due to this reason, the term project was often associated with practical actions. A new dimension to this concept was added mainly due to the philosophy and pedagogy promoted by John Dewey. In Poland, interest in this method developed gradually before the First World War but the year 1930 brought a breakthrough. In the 1970s and 1980s, the project method experienced explosive growth in popularity in the world. In the 1990s, the method appeared again in Polish schools. The importance of the project approach was emphasized by the Minister of National Education and Sport who introduced Regulation dated 20th August 2010 (item 1046), requiring an obligatory realization of an educational project in lower secondary school.
An education project concept was based on many innovative pedagogical and educational approaches. Pragmatism is the main pedagogical theory which, according to Iosif Fragoulis (2009: 113), exerted a fundamental impact on the creation of project-based learning. This philosophical movement developed in the middle of the 19th century and John Dewey and William Heard Kilpatrick in the USA, as well as Hugo Gaudig and Georg Kerschensteiner in Germany, are reported as the precursors of the new trend. Pioneers of the theory of pragmatism were proponents of “action and practical application of knowledge in everyday life” (Fragoulis 2009: 113). According to John Dewey, the school should be similar to the life in society and the upbringing of children should take into account the child’s own activity and interests (Karpeta-Peć 2011: 23).

As Fragoulis (2009: 113) rightly notes, project-based learning was also created in accordance with the pedagogical principle learning by doing, which means “that learners acquire knowledge after having experienced or done something new”. The scholar further develops the issue and states, referring to the opinions of Silberman (2007) and Kolb (1984), that only an experience which gives the student the possibility to reflect on his/her own operation is transformed into knowledge. Proponents of the pedagogical principle learning by doing also indicate that experiential learning should lead to the transformation of the student’s way of thinking and to an important shift in attitudes (Fragoulis 2009: 113).

An educational dimension of the project method, as it is highlighted by Beata Karpeta-Peć (2011: 23), was also reinforced by many other theories and pedagogical concepts such as: child-centered approach, learner-centered teaching, problem-based learning, experimentation, open learning and teaching, learner autonomy and obviously holism. According to all these concepts, the student should be involved as much as possible in the process of planning and organizing his/her learning (Krumm 1993: 102), leading to the creation of an autonomous learner.

Scholarly literature, in fact, mentions many different definitions and aspects of the project. This issue was defined, among others, by Kilpatrick (1918), Hutchinson (1991), Philips, Burwood and Dunford (1999), Fried-Booth (2002), Borek (2011), Grąz (2014) and Krawiec (2008, 2015). Presentation of the views on the issue in question shall first start with Kilpatrick’s definition which suggests that a project is a “wholehearted
purposeful act” (Krawiec 2015: 441). According to Agata Borek (2011), a project is a form of activity, which is planned by teachers and learners and whose main aim is to gather some ideas. A very similar concept of a project is provided in the *Merriam Webster Dictionary* (2017). At this point, it is necessary to quote the explanation of the term presented by Marek Krawiec (2008: 126) who maintains that “a project is a recognizable unit of work with a series of activities that are linked to form a tangible end-product. It is a form of teaching which involves the overall development of a student who, after the successful completion of the project, may gain a real sense of achievement”. In line with the Regulation of Minister of Education of 20th August 2010, which obliges students from a junior high school to participate in an educational project, one can define a project as team and problem-solving work which may be carried out in different ways.

Although there are several definitions and models of a project, all researchers agree on the point that project work is an effective instrument leading to set targets. This highly motivating form of work gives a chance to obtain new knowledge and to develop skills which could be used both in everyday life and in school. Because tasks are tailored to the learners’ needs and interests, it guarantees students’ involvement and their multidimensional development (Krawiec 2015: 453–454).

Having discussed various crucial aspects related to the principles, nature, content and main goals of project work, it is necessary now to turn our attention to the typology and main organizational assumptions of project-based learning.

In deliberations on project work, it is essential to present the typology proposed by Krawiec (2015: 443–445). The scholar in his article suggests several criteria which decide about the classification of projects. Taking into account the notion of a place, Krawiec (2015: 443) divides projects into “ones which are performed in school and out-of-school conditions”. Another distinction is based on the criterion of time/duration. The scholar points here to short-term projects which are realized only for several hours, and long-term projects, which involve students’ work throughout several months. Another distinction is made on the basis of forms of students’ work. This criterion helps to differentiate between the projects done individually and done in groups or pairs. Essential for classifying projects is also the criterion of content. In this respect,
a mono-disciplinary project relates to one school subject, whereas an interdisciplinary project combines contents from different domains. The last criterion identified by Krawiec (2015: 445) is organization. Considering this aspect, the scholar distinguishes: structured, semi-structured and unstructured projects. The first type of a project forms a globally harmonized system in which the teacher is the main creator and organizer of all activities. The second type is “organized in part by the teacher and in part by students” (Krawiec 2015: 445). The third type allows students to be entirely responsible for the realization of the project.

Concentrating on organizational aspects of project work, it is necessary to mention such names as Kriwas (1999), Fragoulis (2009) and Krawiec (2016). They all point to four stages of project work such as: speculating, designing project activities, concluding project activities and evaluating.

Bearing in mind the overall organization and stages of a project, it is essential now to characterize teachers’ and students’ roles in this kind of activity.

2. Teachers’ and students’ tasks in project work

Considering the issue of the project method, it is necessary to note that project work has a number of characteristics which differentiate it from other forms of teaching and learning. From the very beginning, work with the use of the project method requires acceptance of totally different attitudes. As Fragoulis (2009: 114) emphasizes, “in implementing the project method, the focal point of the learning process moves from the teacher to the learners, from working alone to working in groups”. Thus, in light of these words, the teacher and the student are obliged to adopt totally different roles than in traditional education.

2.1. Teachers’ role

A project is a challenge but also a chance for the teacher. The educator in project work is not a leading master, but the one who provides conditions for gaining knowledge in practice and who creates non-schematic contexts, which may be interesting for students because the learner is at the centre of the project work.
According to Fragoulis (2009: 117), the teacher is not a source of knowledge and a provider of solutions, he or she has to accept the role of a facilitator and a coordinator who provides a general framework of the project, writes a checklist, defines objectives, competences and methodology.

Because, as Małgorzata Wojnarowska (2017) notes, the role of the teacher in a project is to motivate and encourage students to undertake more challenging and more complex tasks, the educator should act as an inspirer, an advisor and a mentor who is able to provide consultancy, to keep students’ motivation high and – if need be – to respond to possible problems.

Through project-based learning, the teacher reveals students’ skills and stimulates young people to achieve certain goals in life. A well-organized project has a favorable impact on relationships between students, as well as between students and the teacher. Moreover, as Wojnarowska (2017) points out, appropriate implementation of a project associated with active empirical exploration, connection with real life, active methods and experiential learning builds up the educator’s authority in the school community.

Another aspect which is relevant to the discussion is connected with teachers’ development in different spheres of human life because projects in schools nowadays have an interdisciplinary character. Thus, educators are faced with the task of using and combining knowledge from different areas. It requires intricate and detailed thought, procedures and, in particular, application of various methods, and they all affect teachers’ professional development positively (Wojnarowska 2017).

All the undertakings listed above may give the educator great satisfaction. However, the teacher should acquire adequate internal control mechanisms and prevent himself from providing ready solutions to his students. The educator should allow learners to divide tasks and to solve project problems on their own. However, as Wojnarowska (2017) emphasizes, it is very problematic and needs pedagogical experience, elasticity, openness and tact.

2.2. Students’ role

The key aim of project implementation in school conditions is the development of an individual learner who should react flexibly and creatively
to new challenges connected with project realization and who should take “responsibility” for his/her actions in this type of work (Wojnarowska 2017).

The main task of students in project-based learning is to decide about materials, tools and ways of work. Sometimes it may be difficult for students to accept this form of work, because during lessons based on traditional methods the teacher tells them what they should do, formulates the requirements and evaluates assignments. In project work, it is the students who are responsible for formulating a set of questions and problems, for planning, carrying out and assessing their own work. It means that every participant has to take part in the decision on what he or she would like to do at each stage of the project realization. The need to achieve established goals leads to the cooperation of young people and to the development of their collaborative skills (Krawiec 2015).

A desired effect of project-based learning is an individual who can effectively analyze, speculate, integrate and interpret different factors or phenomena and who can successfully solve problems because in this form of work, as Wojnarowska (2017) points out, the teacher only helps learners to become active by building on their natural desire to meet new people, visit new places and learn new things which are interesting for them.

3. Advantages and disadvantages of project work

When discussing the project’s potential and its limitations, it is essential to mention the growing research evidence which has appeared in the last few years (e.g. Fragoulis 2009; Grąz 2014; Haines 1989; Krawiec 2015, 2016; Levine 2004). The project method has been a source of many observations, comments, and implications of scholars and teachers, as this method has provoked extreme reactions of those who have focused on and worked with this method. On the one hand, methodologists emphasize that project work is an interactive training method which holds several benefits for students. On the other one, project implementation raises some doubts or even leads to resistance of some teachers.

In the surveys held in the last twenty years, the project method has been identified as an effective form leading to the multidimensional development of students. Most studies have concentrated not only on
the enhancement of knowledge but also on personal, especially social and emotional, development (Grąz 2014: 95). Moreover, educators claim that its “character and potential” bring positive results at different levels of education (Krawiec 2015: 441).

In the context of language learning and teaching, many researchers (e.g. Fragoulis 2009; Haines 1989; Krawiec 2015, 2016; Levine 2004) highlight that in this form of work the priority is given to the development of language skills, especially conversational skills because the project method creates many opportunities for using the language by students in a genuine and goal-oriented way. In project-based learning, an individual acquires the competences of leading successful interpersonal communication. Moreover, an authentic communicative context leads to the development of both receptive and productive skills. As Fredricka Stoller (2006: 33) emphasizes, a project is an ideal environment for “the natural integration of language skills” and a basis for effective communication and development of flexibility.

Because project work is a form of task-based teaching and learning, a student has many possibilities for the development of cognitive skills, especially higher order critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In a training setting, students may generate, develop and examine tasks from different perspectives, which results in their ability to synthesize knowledge from different domains (Fragoulis 2009: 114; Krawiec 2016: 28–30). Project tasks also help learners to use their previous knowledge, language and experience in new contexts, which is very motivating. Such benefits of project implementation are emphasized by Beata Karpeta-Peć (2011: 25–26), who appreciates an important role of project work as an effective form which guarantees a considerable increase of competences, skills and knowledge.

Studies conducted by Fragoulis (2009) and Krawiec (2015, 2016) show that project implementation helps students to develop their confidence and independence, self-esteem and positive attitudes towards learning. Besides, project work provides opportunities for the enhancement of students’ autonomy.

A project’s effectiveness is also highlighted by the findings reported by Barbara Podgórska (2017: 14–17) who maintains that this method allows young people to take responsibility for their actions and to coordinate these actions. It also requires thoughtful planning. Thanks to this
form of teaching, students learn to communicate and share their ideas in an atmosphere of confidence. Besides, it is very important to consider its development of feelings which are very rarely fostered in the school setting.

Another benefit is the increase of motivation which is evident in the involvement of students in the project realization and their satisfaction. According to Karpeta-Peć (2011: 26), project work has a positive impact on the student’s well-being and the work atmosphere. The same view is held by Marek Krawiec (2015: 449) who notes that a project leads to the creation of a non-stressful atmosphere and, in consequence, to the enhancement of student motivation.

The rationale for project realization in school conditions rests on the findings which show that a project helps the students who have difficulties in learning to become involved in the activities. A project is a great opportunity for them because it allows them to achieve success and to show real life-skills such as cognitive curiosity, creativity, diligence, responsibility, resourcefulness, which are not always revealed during traditional lessons (Wojnarowska 2017).

It is interesting to note that the project method is perceived as the best way of social learning because the student in this form of work is faced with the task of “integrating with other students and cooperating with them in a group” (Krawiec 2015: 447). Due to project work, young people can contact and communicate with one another and can develop skills in an effective exchange of information.

In the discussion about project work, it is also essential to point to disadvantages of this method. Scholars in their accounts indicate, for example, that project work is a very time-consuming and demanding form (Karpeta-Peć 2011; Krawiec 2015; Szaforz 2002; Urbańczyk 2002). Project implementation places great demands on educators. It requires not only a certain level of creativity and initiative but also professional competences and knowledge which many teachers lack. Before the start of the project, the educator has to put effort into the preparation of tasks and source materials for learners. He also needs to spend some time on preparation of students for new ways of working because in the beginning learners cannot benefit from freedom which the project offers to them. They may also not be able to cope with new forms of tasks and can be resistant to work in a new model of teaching. As Karpeta-Peć
notes, during project work, students may have problems with working together and with conflicts which can function as an obstacle. Discussing negative effects of project work, Urbańczyk (2002) and Szaforz (2002) point to an unequal contribution of students to the project realization as some students can adopt a passive attitude to teamwork and can rely on the work of other members of the team. Among the arguments presented by the above educators are also difficulties with monitoring and evaluating students, especially in out-of-school conditions. Transparency and justification of assessment of learners are also disputed by them.

Concluding remarks

Observations and implications of scholars and teachers provide sufficient evidence that the project method is perfectly capable of meeting the demands of the modern educational system. Therefore, it is appropriate to state in concluding remarks of this paper that the project method is an essential tool which leads to a lot of positive teaching and learning outcomes. Despite the above described drawbacks, which may be eliminated through appropriate training and following a set of guidelines, the project method brings a number of benefits. It promotes, for example, knowledge acquisition and the development of student communication, collaboration and independence. It also creates contexts for synthesizing knowledge from different domains and for reasoning, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving and evaluating. It, in fact, has a positive effect, not only on the student but also the teacher; thus, leading to their overall development and to their preparation concerning facing challenges of real life.

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