

Problems of and Perspectives on Language Acquisition

Edited by Diāna Laiveniece



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INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN LATVIA AND LITHUANIA: OVERVIEW OF THEMES AND PROBLEMS

DIĀNA LAIVENIECE

This is the second volume of *Language Acquisition: Problems and Perspective*, compiled from a selection of articles about research done on language acquisition mainly in Latvia and Lithuania. The first volume was published in May 2016 by *Cambridge Scholars Publishing*. The results of the studies have been presented at Liepaja University's annual science conference "Language Acquisition: Problems and Perspectives" since 2000. Every year, researchers in language acquisition, experienced researchers and PhD students as well as language teachers come together to discuss the problems and possible solutions. The research range is wide; involving various aspects of language acquisition – both contents and process. During the first decade of the 21st century researchers paid more attention to such issues as language acquisition in a multicultural environment, learners' independence in setting goals, planning the learning process, and evaluation of learning outcomes as well as bilingual education and multilingualism while during the second decade researchers focused more on the acquisition of particular language skills, especially reading and writing, the importance of thinking skills related to the acquisition and application of reading and writing skills, the development of writing skills, and the importance of the text in language acquisition. More attention is being paid to learning Latvian as a foreign language. Research on language acquisition at different life stages and age periods is being carried out.

In this book, research has been grouped under five themes: text and reading, language and culture, Latvian as a foreign language, lifelong language acquisition, and language teacher's competence. As the conference is multilingual, the volume is also in several languages. Apart from

English there are also some articles in Latvian and German, with abstracts in English.

The aim of the editorial is to characterize briefly the problems touched upon in the articles compiled in the volume to help the reader become acquainted with the research in linguodidactics offered by the authors and learn about the problems in this sphere of applied linguistics. **The target audience** of the book is the scholars of language acquisition – scientists, lecturers involved in research and language teachers as well as anyone interested in research or practical activities concerning language education in Latvia and Lithuania.

Part I: Text and Reading includes research done by researchers from Latvia, Lithuania and Germany on the usage of text in the acquisition of languages to develop students' knowledge on text formation and writing skills. Both fiction and non-fiction texts are used. Closely related to the textual approach in language acquisition is reading with comprehension and according to the learning task or one's own goal. Nowadays, reading has become a basic skill in any sphere of life, studies or profession, hence reading has been paid special attention to.

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences **Dagnija Deimante**, in her article "Challenges in Promoting the Development of Reading Skills" looks at secondary school students' reading skills that are still not good enough for the labour market. In order to help students develop their reading skills, influencing factors should be explored. At the same time, it is important to motivate students to develop reading skills outside the learning process at school and also in their further life. Taking into consideration the fact that reading is closely linked with thinking processes, cognitive and metacognitive skills should be integrated in the learning process (Koda 2005; Grabe 2009). It is the most important issue because students, even if they understand the importance of reading skills, do not link them with cognitive and metacognitive spheres.

Egita Proveja, Doctor of Philology, in the article "Knowledge of Text Formation – Tacit Competence of Language Users", puts forward a hypothesis that users of the native language are subconsciously aware of the conventions of text formation and keep to them when working on their texts. Fifty recipes, written by users of the language, from *www.receptes.lv* were chosen to analyse their microstructure and macrostructure in order to test the hypothesis. The results of the analysis show that on the one hand recipes bear similar traits with other types of electronic texts (for example, e-mail messages, on-line communication, etc.) and on the other hand, the recipe as a text type is developing and changing in the Latvian language.

The identification of text types has to become a principle of language classes (Heinemann 2001) because work with various text types activates knowledge of text formation.

Lithuanian researcher **Solveiga Sušinskienė** looks at features of popular science texts and the possibilities of application of these texts in language acquisition in her article “Teaching for Scientific Text Reading through Integration of Information and Communication Technology”. She uses suggestions made by Klaus Brandl (2002) on how to work with a scientific text available on the Internet. It has been concluded that popular science texts are exceptionally useful for content-based analysis because they are simpler than academic texts, they are not overcrowded with complicated terms and, moreover, they are easily available on the Internet.

French lecturer **Inese Veisbuka**, in the article “Literary Text in French as a Foreign Language Classes”, gives a short insight into the usage of the literary text in linguodidactics in different periods to date. Poetry written by French poet Arthur Rimbaud is used as illustrative examples. The author makes the conclusion that the literary text is going through a renaissance; it has also been promoted by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001), where the significance of national and regional literature in European heritage has been emphasized. Basically, the focus is on language learners from level B1 to C2. However, there is an opinion among teachers and researchers (Balazs 2005; Cervera 2009, etc.) that texts can be used at all language acquisition levels.

Scientists **Marina Novika** (Latvia) and **Larisa Petre** (Germany) in their article “Selection of Reading Texts for Russian as a Foreign Language Acquisition in Secondary School” bring up a problem related to choosing texts for reading in Russian as a foreign language in secondary school. Interest in this issue appeared when secondary school students (Forms 10–12) faced difficulties reading texts from textbooks. About 50 % of students do not understand long texts due to a large number of unknown words and complicated constructions. Moreover, reading takes up a lot of time. Therefore, the research aim is to set criteria for reading tasks in secondary school and based on them it would be possible to choose and offer texts to students with a low level of language skills, such as the third foreign language skills.

In her research, reflected in the article “Contribution of Gotthard Friedrich Stender to the Literacy of Latvian Children in the 18th Century”, **Diāna Laiveniece**, methodologist of the Latvian language as a native language and Doctor in Pedagogical Sciences, provides an insight into the history of methodology of teaching the Latvian language. The first ABC

book appeared at the end of the 17th century (possibly around 1683). However, two G. F. Stender ABC books – *New Teaching of ABC and Reading* („*Jauna ABC un lasīšanas mācība*”, 1782) and *Pictorial ABC* („*Bildu ābice*”, 1787) – occupy a special place in the history of Latvian pedagogy. At the end of the 18th century, G. F. Stenders arranged the contents of teaching and learning (letter combinations and syllables in reading tasks) and instructions for teachers on how to make the difficult learning process easier for children.

Part II: Language and Culture includes research that looks at language acquisition in the context of culture because the acquisition of a foreign language is also the acquisition of another culture – to acquire a language means to “take in” the culture of that particular country and “obey” the values of the country where the language is the language of the nation (Schumann 1978). There are many cases where misunderstandings appear not because of poor knowledge of the language but because of ignorance about the cultural facts or not being able to understand them.

Doctor in Pedagogical Sciences **Antra Roskoša**, in the article “The Role of Language in the Intercultural Communication Process of the Modern Latvian Multicultural Society”, focuses on the role of language in the context of Latvia’s multicultural society. It is still one of the most controversial and most discussed issues. The aim of the article is to analyse the role of language in the process of intercultural communication in Latvia nowadays – in situations where language functions as a bridge that promotes positive communication between different cultures and in situations where it is like a barrier to intercultural communication and hinders its development. The article researches European Union regulations on languages and their relationship to the situation in Latvia. The research also reveals students’ views on solutions to the language issues in Latvia.

In her article “Importance of Context in the Acquisition of Language and Culture Phenomena”, researcher of English language acquisition **Vita Balama** claims that knowledge of cultural facts is the first step in learning about another culture. The article contextually analyses lexical units specific to the particular culture that differ from the reader’s culture of the target audience. Translation quality has also been analysed. The analysis of the lexical units characterizing the particular cultural environment is based on texts taken from John Grisham’s novels and stories. The importance of the approach chosen by the translator in transferring cultural facts from the source language into the target language has been emphasized. The author concludes that literary works can be successfully

used in learning about language and cultural facts. When reading authentic literary works, readers usually go through several stages of language acquisition. Authentic texts that are rooted in the author's culture help to establish a link between language acquisition (word stock, style, expression) and learning about cultural facts.

Doctor of Psychology **Irina Straziņa** in her article "Language as a Tool for Developing a Sense of Humour in Preschool Children" provides an insight into her research about social psychological aspects of the development of preschool children's sense of humour. The author concludes that the development of a sense of humour in preschool children is promoted by good education and an intelligent social environment. In families that enjoy humour and fun, children grow up with laughter and jokes. A sense of humour, language and speech should be developed at the same time. However, first of all, children should acquire human values; they should be taught what is good and what is bad, what they can laugh about and what they should not laugh about. Humour is a tool to manage one's emotions, improve one's concept of emotional self, and maintain a positive attitude to people and life in general. Children with a well-developed sense of humour are happier and more optimistic; they are able to perceive non-traditional, non-stereotypical ideas and ways of thinking. A sense of humour can promote children's creativity.

Part III: Latvian as a Foreign Language is, as far as we know, the first serious attempt to introduce the audience reading in English with the acquisition of the Latvian language as a foreign language, both in Latvia and abroad. It has already been mentioned that research in this field is growing as the number of students is growing. A large number of these students are overseas students studying in the universities in Latvia. Students of linguistics and language researchers as well as descendants of Latvians who for several generations have not lived in Latvia but still use Latvian in the home, are interested in learning the Latvian language.

In her article "Learning Latvian as a Foreign Language in the Baltic States", doctoral student of Philology **Inga Laizāne** gives a historical overview of the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, pointing out that the situation has changed over the years, and what the main tendencies in acquiring Latvian as a foreign language in the Baltic countries are. The information used in the article has been obtained from teachers who teach Latvian in the Baltic countries. The research done in 2007 into the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language in European universities (Šalme 2008) has been made use of. The author's empirical experience in teaching Latvian as a foreign

language in several higher educational establishments in Latvia, as well as in courses of informal education, has been taken into account.

Latvian lecturer **Iveta Grīnberga**, who has been teaching Latvian in the University of Washington, Seattle, USA, in her article “The Art of Teaching Latvian as a Heritage Language: Research and Practice” claims that a new type of learner has appeared, the so-called learners of ethnic heritage, who bear characteristics of learners of both the first and the second language. They are usually representatives of an ethnic minority in their home country whose grandparents or parents (one or both) are speakers of the Latvian language and have had some relationship with their mother’s or father’s language (Kagan and Dillon 2011). On the phonological level, these language learners have some advantages because they have already developed the mechanisms of pronouncing Latvian sounds in their childhood but in learning morphosyntactic forms they have no advantages when compared to other learners. These students are usually very interested and motivated to learn the Latvian language. They want to identify themselves with a definite ethnic minority and want to know as much as possible about the culture and traditions of their parents’ or grandparents’ country.

Professors of Liepaja University **Linda Lauze** and **Dīana Laiveniece** in their article “Use of Intermediary Language and Translating in Acquiring Latvian as a Foreign Language” pay attention to two categories of foreign language acquisition – intermediary language and translation. When speaking about the lexical and grammatical aspects of Latvian translation, work with a dictionary has also been characterized. The article promotes a discussion about situations where intermediary language use in the teaching and learning process is possible and how useful or intrusive it could be; what the advantages and disadvantages of translation during the process of a foreign language learning could be; and what kind of dictionaries are necessary so that the usage of the translation during the learning process of the Latvian language is most productive.

Japanese researcher **Daiki Horiguchi** in his article “Togetherness in a Language Classroom – Example from Japanese Learners of the Latvian Language” writes about his experience teaching Latvian as a foreign language in the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Attention has been paid to the language learning group’s climate, dynamics and attitudes. One of the successful elements of language acquisition is interaction (Malamah-Thomas 1987; Dörnyei and Malderez 1999). The sense of community is created by several factors: (1) the group’s self-awareness of the acquisition of the Latvian language as a rare foreign language; (2) mutual understanding

and respect in the group; and (3) the use of Latvian names as a form of address in class.

In **Part IV: Lifelong Language Acquisition** there are mostly articles by Lithuanian researchers about language acquisition in different age groups, including schools, universities and adults. Language acquisition is part of lifelong learning that people are doing for professional reasons or simply for fun and to make their brain work more actively. Recent research on the positive impact of the process of language acquisition on the mind, which is often published on the Internet as popular science articles (for example, Mackey 2014), strengthen people's willingness to learn foreign languages after finishing school.

Doctor in Pedagogical Sciences **Vaiva Šoroškienė** focuses on primary school students' ability to build up arguments in her article titled "Primary School Students' Argumentation Skills: Statement of the Thesis". In 2015–2016, research was carried out with the objective to find out whether pupils in Form 4 can build arguments on a given topic in both spoken and written language expressing the thesis statement. Research respondents were 117 pupils from 15 schools in Lithuania. In spoken texts only 19 % and in written texts 24 % of pupils could express the thesis statement without repeating the sentence with which the topic was stated.

Doctor in Pedagogical Sciences **Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė**, in the article "Speaking and Listening Abilities: The Basis of Integrated Didactics", looks at the integration of language teaching and learning in the lessons of other subjects. The author's experience in integrated language didactics during her internship at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, (Erard and Schneuwly 2005; Pantet and Grobet 2011) gave her the idea to develop it in Lithuania, where there is little research and few examples of best practice in integrated language didactics. During the teaching of other subjects the most useful is the development of speaking and listening skills. This can be done when actions that involve active speaking and listening are carried out and tasks are focused on active learning.

Lithuanian scientist **Virginija Jūratė Pukevičiūtė**, in the article "Students' Approach to the Development of their Metacognitive Competences in Foreign Language Classes", researches the expression and significance of metacognitive competence in the process of foreign language acquisition. During the research, 356 second-term students from different universities in Lithuania were surveyed to find out the results of metacognitive competence on the following levels: skills (1) to plan, (2) to control and evaluate, and (3) analyse their own learning process. The

results of the survey show that students are able to set their learning goals at the cognitive level and choose strategies to reach these goals but face difficulties at the metacognitive level. Students often lack the knowledge or skills to evaluate the level of learning material objectively. Only one-third of language learners analyse their learning process.

Latvian scientist **Sintija Vālka**, in the article “Specifics of Teaching English to Seniors”, reveals her experience in teaching English to elderly people aged 67–82. Nowadays, elderly people are active and for various reasons start or resume learning foreign languages. The research shows the needs and problems related to learning at this age. Language teaching to elderly people in methodological literature (Formosa 2012; Ramírez Gómez 2016) is called *educational gerontology* and *geragogy of foreign languages*. The term *educational gerontology* refers to the integration of educational establishments and processes taking into consideration ageing processes and elderly people’s knowledge and needs whereas *geragogy* refers to teaching and learning strategy management when the target audience is elderly people.

In **Part V: Language Teachers’ Competence**, researchers turn to particular issues that are important in the development of language teachers’ competence. As we know, the development of teachers’ professional knowledge and practical skills is a lifelong task, which in most cases is self-education. Therefore, research in this sphere and its promotion through conference proceedings and scientific monographs are very important.

Lithuanian scientist **Roma Kriaučienė**, in the article “Development of Future Teachers’ Critical Thinking as a Precondition for Making Moral Judgements”, researches how to develop future teachers’ ability to make moral judgements during the study process (Benninga 2003; Huitt 2004). It is an action characterized by evaluation, therefore critical thinking skills (identification of problems, interpretation, analysis, making conclusions, foreseeing the possible decisions and their consequences) are necessary. It is a skill to be orientated towards ethical values. Analysis of the diagnostic research data show that during the study process not all possibilities have been used to ensure that future teachers develop the skills to make moral judgements. Students should be encouraged to think critically about the needs and interests of other people, about how to prevent ignorance of ethical values and foresee the personal and social consequences of the decisions taken.

Latvian scientist **Solvita Pošeiko**, Doctor of Philology, in the article “The Linguistic Landscape as a Tool for Mastering and Improving

Pragmatic Competence”, characterizes whether and how language signs and the linguistic landscape can promote the determination of the functions of the language and language signs and usage according to the context and communication situation so that the language user can achieve the desired goal. To illustrate and analyse the way language use and language functions, Mark Haddon’s literary work *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is used as well as interviews, observations and language signs from the linguistic landscape in Latvia and Estonia. In formal language learning, the authentic usage of the language and language signs in the linguistic landscape are replaced with made-up examples, thus creating clichés about what it should be like, what the correct way of language use is. The linguistic landscape encourages the person to carry out a particular action, including communication. Its use is necessary in planning and implementing social life activities where pragmatic competence plays an essential role.

The themes and contents of the articles included in the volume not only make readers think, ask questions and discuss the issues but also give an direction for new research in the sphere of language acquisition. As was written in the introduction of the first volume,

The content of the articles in the volume does not always provide clear answers to the questions that are brought forward, and it is not the aim of the authors of the articles on language acquisition to provide clear answers, suggest actions, or give examples and suggestions for the learning process or the organization of language learning process. [...] The aim of the literature on linguodidactics is to stimulate the readers – researchers and language teachers – to go into the details of the proposed subject, its problems, to ask questions, think of solutions, argue and propose counterarguments (Laiveniece 2016, 9).

The plurilingual approach to the concept of personality development in the 21st century gives confidence that language acquisition is and will always be a topical issue in both formal and informal education. And there will always be problems that await research and solutions that show the perspective.

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PART I:
TEXT AND READING

CHAPTER ONE

CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING SKILLS

DAGNIJA DEIMANTE

Keywords: reading comprehension, reading skills, reading strategies, strategic reader.

1. Introduction

Reading skills are fundamental in every sphere of life, concerning both the native language (L1) and a foreign language. Globalisation and migration have resulted in the necessity of enhancing foreign language learning. And reading skills are considered of utmost importance. More advanced readers in L1 are usually more successful in acquiring reading skills in a foreign language. This article deals with reading comprehension in English at the level of upper-secondary school students, which means that students have a good command of L1 and their proficiency in English (L2) is satisfactory, even excellent, as they have been learning English at school for 8–9 years. The acquisition of a foreign language at this stage differs from the development of the native language, although there are also similarities in these processes.

During the last decade, upper-secondary students' overall English skills have improved in Latvia. The results of the Year 12 National Exam in English demonstrate a slight rise – in 2009 the average percentage in Latvia was 49.28 %, in 2010 – 51.24 %, in 2011 – 49.94 %, in 2012 – 52.96 %, in 2013 – 54.72 %, in 2014 – 56.20 %, and in 2015 – 54.1 %.¹ At the same time, the fact that reading skills have not developed to such an extent that they could fully satisfy the needs of the labour market cannot be neglected. The goal of upper-secondary school is to help students

¹ Information from National Centre for Education of the Republic of Latvia, 2009–2015.

prepare for their studies at university and become highly qualified professionals and academics.

Hence, the aim is to research reading comprehension, factors that influence the development of English reading skills, and strategies that can be used by students so they can improve their reading skills not only in classroom settings but also outside the classroom and later in their lives.

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading in a foreign language faces multiple complexities and consequently complex skills need to be developed.

Successful comprehension emerges from the integrative interaction of derived text information and pre-existing reader knowledge. Simply – comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known. (Koda 2005, 4)

Keiko Koda (2005) argues that comprehension success varies according to reading purposes. In less demanding gears like scanning and skimming, competence implies information extraction while in higher gears accurate and complete text understanding is more important than speed. Therefore, why and how texts are read must be considered when determining reading competence.

It is a complex task to assess the level of reading comprehension. Nevertheless, there are tests considered reliable in assessing students' reading comprehension. In Latvia it is the Year 12 National Exam in English, which consists of five parts: Reading, Listening, Use of Language, Writing, and Speaking. Preliminary research has been conducted aimed at describing the current situation concerning the reading skills of upper-secondary school students, finding out the reasons for good and poor reading skills, and determining the ways of improving students' reading skills.

First, a short insight into the results of the Year 12 National Exam in English. Research base – a secondary school in one of the towns of Latvia. Average number of students in the school – 600. Average number of students taking the English exam in their final year of studies (Form 12) – about 96.

As can be seen in Table 1, the level of the acquisition of reading skills is one of the lowest when compared with other English language skills.

Table 1: Year 12 National Exam in English

School Year	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Use of Language	Writing
2013/14	0.65	0.66	0.79	0.73	0.70
2012/13	0.64	0.59	0.76	0.62	0.71
2008/09	0.66	0.53	0.72	0.49	0.63
2007/08	0.52	0.53	0.85	0.55	0.60

At the same time, upper-secondary school students admit that good reading skills are essential for their future. They believe that good reading skills are necessary to compete in the labour market (44 %) and to study at university (38 %). Just 11 % of the respondents claim that reading skills are important when travelling and 7 % when communicating with friends. Hence, a conclusion can be drawn that students understand the importance of improving their reading comprehension of specific and academic texts. However, there should follow research on reading comprehension – how students’ beliefs on how well they have comprehended texts are correlated with reliable testing on reading comprehension.

Students were also asked to explain what they understand by “excellent reading skills”. The majority of the respondents (58 %) answered that it means understanding the main idea while 32 % claimed that excellent reading skills mean that the reader can understand every word in the text. This could testify on students’ understanding of a deep learner as the majority (58 %) claim that understanding the main idea makes an excellent reader.

It is impossible to refute that reading skills are important at any age. However, what we read in our childhood, teenage years and as adults differs. The goals of reading are basically – reading for pleasure and reading for information. It is interesting to point out that students use their reading skills in English in their everyday life, for instance, 46 % of the respondents read articles online, 24 % read books and 23 % communicate with their friends via the Internet. At this point it is difficult to determine what prevails – reading for pleasure or reading for information.

Thus, it can be concluded that reading skills are important in students’ everyday life and also for their future. Accordingly, reading comprehension needs to be paid a great deal attention both by developing appropriate strategies and monitoring the process of developing reading skills, which will result in improving reading comprehension.

3. Factors Influencing Development of Reading Skills

Reading comprehension is a very complicated process as there are a number of interactive variables involved. Readers make use of such cognitive procedures as retrieval and storage of new input (Luchini 2015). Koda (2005, 5) claims that reading success is governed by three competency groups:

- 1) visual information extraction,
- 2) incremental information integration,
- 3) text-meaning and prior-knowledge consolidation.

William Grabe (2009, 195) states that the major components that combine to build reading comprehension abilities are:

- 1) syntactic knowledge and processing skills,
- 2) reading strategies that support comprehension,
- 3) the integration of reading strategies and higher-level processing to develop the strategic reader,
- 4) the role of discourse knowledge,
- 5) the centrality of vocabulary knowledge.

In order to boost the development of students' reading skills so that their reading comprehension can improve, L2 teachers should not only pay attention to lexical units and sentence structures but also integrate cognitive and meta-cognitive skills in the teaching – learning process. It is not the inability to reconstruct the writer's message but the inability of the reader to relate the idea gained through reading to himself and the world he lives in. As Grabe (2009, 195) puts it,

in other words – reading is a thinking process and it has to be perceived by all the actors like this. It means that reading comprehension is closely linked with cognition skills and vice versa.

According to Grabe, cognitive skills that combine to form reading abilities are goal setting, inferencing, working memory, phonological awareness, and word-recognition efficiency. Moreover, Michael Burke (2011, 5) admits that reading comprehension depends on the activation and availability of experience based on prior knowledge located in the mind.

However, it cannot be denied that the development of vocabulary knowledge is an important element in learning to read. Students who have a good knowledge of vocabulary can be expected to improve in reading

and comprehension, while those who do not have certain words in their oral vocabulary may not understand them when they appear in print.

In the preliminary research, 70 % of the upper-secondary school students claimed that difficulties in reading comprehension are caused by their limited vocabulary. For students at an upper-secondary level, the development of reading vocabulary shifts to academic language and the vocabulary used to communicate concepts within and across disciplines such as mathematics, science and history. Academic vocabulary within disciplines tends to be highly specialised and differs from the everyday vocabulary that is used to communicate on a less formal level outside the classroom. Academic reading requires strategic reading. In this aspect students' background knowledge and their cognitive skills are a great help.

Hence, reading comprehension involves both linguistic and cognitive processes which interact during reading as the reader is trying to extract and create meaning from a written text. Cain (2010) claims that reading involves the coordination of a range of abilities, strategies and knowledge. First, it is word knowledge, i.e., the reader should read and access the meanings of individual words as some may be unfamiliar. Then, the words should be combined into meaningful clauses and sentences. Next, the ideas are integrated in successive sentences and, finally, the reader should make sense of the text as a whole.

4. Reading Strategies

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to go beyond the words, to understand the ideas and the relationships between the ideas conveyed in a text.

Arthur C. Graesser (2007, 4) states that

deep comprehension requires inferences, linking ideas coherently, scrutinizing the validity of claims with a critical stance, and sometimes understanding the motives of authors.

He adds that shallow readers believe they understand the text while they actually miss a lot.

Reading comprehension can be improved by teaching students to use specific cognitive strategies or to reason strategically when they encounter barriers to comprehension as they read. Teaching reading comprehension strategies should be an integral part of education both in L1 and L2. When students acquire reading comprehension strategies, they become strategic readers able to deal with complicated texts in any field in their future studies and work.

Grabe (2009) defines a strategic reader as one who automatically and routinely applies a combination of effective and appropriate strategies depending on reader goals, reading tasks and strategic processing abilities.

A strategic reader

- builds connections with background knowledge to support coherence – building inferences,
- directs attention to key words and sentences that may be sources of difficulties,
- integrates information,
- summarizes the main points,
- builds coherent interpretation of the text,
- clearly evaluates the text information. (Grabe 2009, 195)

The teacher generally explains the purpose of the strategies, demonstrates models and guides students in their acquisition and use until students are able to use them independently. Six strategies appear to be most effective for improving reading comprehension in students.

- Comprehension monitoring, where readers learn to monitor how well they comprehend.
- Cooperative learning, where students learn reading strategies and discuss reading materials together.
- Use of graphic and semantic organisers (including story maps), where readers answer questions posed by the teacher and receive immediate feedback; teachers should be trained to ask questions that not only ask to recognize and recall but also explain and evaluate.
- Question generation, where readers learn to ask and answer inferential questions themselves.
- Story structure, where students learn to use the structure of the story as a means of helping them recall story content and answer questions about what they have read.
- Summarisation, where readers are taught to summarise ideas and generalise from the text information. (Grabe 2009, 208)

Grabe (2009, 209) mentions the following reading strategies: summarizing, forming questions, answering questions and elaborative interrogation, activating prior knowledge, monitoring comprehension, using text – structure awareness, using visual graphics and graphic organizers, inferencing. The researcher makes a distinction between cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies are guessing from the context, noting discourse organisation, recognising a transition phrase, skipping a word, forming a question, and identifying a main idea while metacognitive strategies require an explicit awareness of reading

itself and most strongly support the goals of reading – learning to monitor comprehension, intention to learn information.

To summarize, strategic readers have to be aware of their goals in reading and they have to be able to use appropriate strategies effectively. Current researchers of metacognitive processes in reading comprehension take a constructivist approach and recognize the importance of motivation, self-efficacy and collaboration among students and/or between students and teachers (Israel, Duffy 2014, 379).

5. The Role of Motivation in Reading Comprehension

Cynthia White (2008, 3) argues that constructing a personally meaningful interface with the learning context and strategies plays a key role in reading comprehension. Motivation is also about believing one can influence one's own learning. White claims that it is important to raise learners' awareness and knowledge of themselves, their learning needs and preferences, their beliefs and motivation, and the strategies they use to develop TL competence.

In order to help students develop their reading skills teachers should learn about how students perceive the difficulties they have to deal with. In the preliminary research, the majority (68 %) believe that the biggest issue is vocabulary. Just 18 % admit that poor knowledge of grammar rules can be an obstacle. English sentence structure can cause difficulties for 10 % and 4 % have mentioned punctuation problems. At the same time, 72 % admit that a rich vocabulary is the main factor that promotes understanding of the text, 20 % believe that background knowledge helps in comprehension and just 8 % think that note-taking can help in understanding the text.

This could mean that students are not really aware of methods of how to improve their reading strategies because background knowledge plays an important role in reading comprehension. Moreover, taking notes using mind maps promotes the development of reading skills significantly.

Grabe (2009, 227) states that strategic readers actively engage in reading, read far more extensively, and have the motivation to read for longer periods of time; they use reading to seek out information relevant to their needs and interests; they build efficiency and automaticity in strategy use; and they have heightened levels of metacognitive and metalinguistic awareness that they can use when needed. When teachers have learned what students read and why they read, and how they assess their reading skills, they can assist in developing reading skills by maintaining students' motivation and offering them appropriate reading strategies they can make

use of. This will result in strategic reading that creates the motivation to read more extensively.

7. Conclusion

The findings of the preliminary research show that basically students consider English reading skills as important to compete in the labour market (44 %) and to study at university (38 %). And this takes us back to the importance of the acquisition of reading strategies that would enable students to develop their reading skills independently when studying at university and later as employees and employers. Therefore, it is important to meet the needs of upper-secondary school students they themselves have indicated as doing so will reduce the gap between secondary school and university education.

Moreover, nowadays, when information literacy has become a basic skill, by equipping students with good reading comprehension skills through the use of appropriate reading strategies, students will be able to enhance their information literacy.

By helping students develop reading comprehension skills we can reach the goal of education – to teach students to think.

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CHAPTER TWO

TEXTWISSEN: EINE UNBEWUSSTE KOMPETENZ DER SPRACHTEILHABER?

EGITA PROVEJA

Schlüsselwörter: Textsorte, Text bei elektronischen Kommunikation, Mikro- und Makrostruktur der Texte, Kochrezepte.

1. Vorbemerkungen

Tagtäglich werden die Mitglieder einer Sprachgemeinschaft mit diversen Texten bzw. Textsorten konfrontiert. Schriftlich und mündlich generierte und rezipierte Texte bilden sowohl im familiären als auch im beruflichen Alltag der Sprachgemeinschaft die Grundlage der kommunikativen Interaktion. Texte sind ein durch die Interaktion der Gesellschaft gebildetes Produkt, und somit prägen und widerspiegeln sie die Gesellschaft, ihre Werte, Symbole und Traditionen und gewinnen einen kulturellen Status. Texte “bilden also nicht nur die Realität ab, sie erzeugen auch Realitäten” (Schwarz-Friesel, Consten 2014, 8).

In der modernen Textlinguistik bzw. Textsortenlinguistik haben deskriptive Untersuchungen von diversen Textsorten, Textmustern, Textstilen, Textroutinen, um nur einige der gängigen Bezeichnungen zu nennen, Konjunktur. Im Zentrum des Forschungsinteresses stehen somit Texte, “denn Sprache kommt in Texten vor, so dass Texte zum zentralen Medium der Wissens- und Sprachvermittlung geworden sind” (Freudenberg-Findeisen 2016, 9). Von den empirischen Ergebnissen der text(sorten)linguistischen Forschung wird indes auch in der Sprachdidaktik Gebrauch gemacht und man spricht bereits von einer „Textsortendidaktik“ (ebd.). So plädieren Sprachdidaktiker für einen Paradigmenwechsel, indem mehrdimensionale bzw. holistische Textanalysen und ihre Ergebnisse, Textvergleiche, Herausarbeitung von

Textprozeduren im mutter- und fremdsprachlichen Unterricht zum Einsatz kommen sollen (vgl. z. B. Sammelbände von Bachmann, Feilke 2014; Feilke, Lehnen 2012; Freudenberg-Findeisen 2016). In diesem Sinne stehen Texte “im Zentrum didaktischer Überlegungen und bilden einen Dreh- und Angelpunkt in der Sprachvermittlung” (Stein 2016, 27).

Eng verbunden damit ist der Begriff der Textkompetenz bzw. Textsortenkompetenz, d. h. das Wissen um Texte, Textsorten und ihren kontextgebundenen Gebrauch. Der Großteil der Textsorten zeichnet sich durch eine “Prototypikalität, Musterhaftigkeit” (Freudenberg-Findeisen 2016, 10) – also Standardisierung und Konventionalität aus. Es herrscht die Meinung vor, dass vor allem die stark konventionalisierten Textsorten zum Alltagswissen der Sprachteilhaber gehören (vgl. etwa Freudenberg-Findeisen 2016, 10). Man könnte damit annehmen, dieses Wissen sei bei den Sprachteilhabern infolge der alltäglichen Kommunikation allgegenwärtig, sogar unbewusst vorhanden. Ausgehend von dieser Annahme soll im vorliegenden Beitrag anhand einer Stichprobenanalyse überprüft werden, ob die Sprachteilhaber der lettischen Schriftkultur die in ihrem Alltagskursiv vorkommenden Textsorten, die kein schulischer Lehrstoff gewesen sind, auf der makro- und mikrostrukturellen Ebene beherrschen.

2. Vorüberlegungen zur Anlegung des Forschungskorpus

Zur Überprüfung des bei den lettischen Sprachteilhabern vorhandenen Textsortenwissens soll eine Textsorte gewählt werden, die im Sprachgebrauch der Sprachteilhaber eine längere Tradition hat, die eher kein Gegenstand des schulischen muttersprachlichen Unterrichts gewesen ist und die sich durch ihre rekursive Verwendung zum Usus herausgebildet hat. Exemplarisch werden in der vorliegenden Stichprobenanalyse als Gebrauchstextsorte Kochrezepte mit einer für die lettische Schriftkultur längeren Tradition gewählt (das erste lettische Kochbuch stammt aus dem Jahre 1795). Als nächster Schritt gilt die Wahl der Textquelle. Die zu untersuchenden Texte sind einer Quelle zu entnehmen, die allgemein und öffentlich zugänglich ist, in der Kochrezepte enthalten sind, die von Muttersprachlern verfasst wurden, die keine Sprach- bzw. Literaturwissenschaftler sind, und die keinem externen sprachlichen Lektorat unterzogen worden sind. Am besten eignet sich hierzu die webbasierte Kommunikation, sprich Texte aus dem Internet, da hier das oben erwähnte Kriterium der allgemeinen Zugänglichkeit im Vergleich zu anderen Medien am treffendsten erfüllt wird. Dies belegen unter anderem auch die neuesten statistischen Daten des Lettischen Internetverbandes, die belegen, dass in Lettland 82 % der Einwohner Zugang zum Internet hätten

(LIA 2017, 8). Daraus folgt, dass ein sehr breites Auditorium das Internet als Medium seiner alltäglichen Kommunikation verwendet, was dem Anspruch der vorliegenden Studie genügt.

In der lettischen webbasierten Kommunikation der Kochkunst gilt das Webportal *www.receptes.lv* als die bekannteste Online-Plattform für das Thema Kochen. Selbst positioniert es sich als “Das größte Kochbuch im Internet”. Einerseits dient diese Internetplattform dem Austausch und der Gewinnung von Informationen, andererseits funktioniert sie auch als Basis für die Kommunikation und Diskussionen der interessierten Community (zu Arten der computervermittelten Kommunikation siehe z. B. Höflich 1997). Auf diesem Portal kann jeder Sprachteilhaber seine Kochrezepte allen Interessenten öffentlich zugänglich machen. Die Plattform *www.receptes.lv* entspricht dem allgemein üblichen Konzept eines Hypertextes, der keine lineare Sequenzialität aufweist. Der Leser kann selbst die gewünschten Informationen auswählen. Die Kommunikation dieser Community kommt vor allem dadurch zustande, dass die Nutzer dank Kommentierfähigkeit der online gestellten Kochrezepte in Dialog kommen können. Dieses Webportal erfüllt auch das Kriterium der fehlenden sprachlichen Korrekturen durch Linguisten, denn nach einem Gespräch mit Vertretern dieses Portals konnte der Schluss gezogen werden, dass jeder Interessent seine Texte direkt in die Online-Plattform stellen kann und diese Texte seitens des Portalbetreibers keinem externen Lektorat unterzogen werden. Dies lässt die Annahme zu, dass die Texte auf dieser Plattform auch das ‘wahre’ Textmusterwissen der Sprachteilhaber aufdecken können.

3. Zum Sprachgebrauch im Internet

3.1. Allgemeines zur Sprache und Internet

Während der letzten zehn Jahre ist der Sprachgebrauch infolge der Auswirkungen der sog. neuen Medien, also der webbasierten Kommunikation aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven untersucht worden. Als Ausgangspunkt für die Untersuchungen dienen verschiedene Textsorten wie E-Mails, auch die Kleinformen wie SMS, Chats, Twitter- oder WhatsApp-Texte sowie diverse Hypertexte größeren Formats. In der lettischen Forschungslandschaft mangelt es bis zum aktuellen Zeitpunkt an eingehenden, breit angelegten Studien zum Gebrauch der lettischen Sprache bei der Internet-Kommunikation, wobei die einzelnen webbasierten Textsorten bisher kein Forschungsinteresse geweckt haben. Eine Übersicht zu allgemeinen Trends der webbasierten Kommunikation

und zum sprachlichen Verhalten der lettischen Gesellschaft gibt das im Jahre 2007 durchgeführte Projekt “Modernes Lettisch im Internet”, bei dem vor allem auf die sprachliche Qualität des Lettischen bei der Webkommunikation eingegangen wird (siehe unter <http://www.lu.lv/filol/valoda/index.htm>). Wie Inta Urbanoviča im Rahmen dieses Projekts schlussfolgert, lassen sich die online verfügbaren lettischen Texte in zwei Gruppen einteilen: Zum einen sind das auf Lettisch verfasste Beschreibungen, die vor der Veröffentlichung lektoriert wurden. Zum anderen lässt sich ein vielfältiges Sprachmaterial auffinden, bei dem der schriftlich “fixierte sprachliche Ausdruck nicht zensiert wurde¹” und “eine linguistische Willkür vorherrscht” (Urbanoviča 2007). Diese durchaus kritische Aussage zur Sprachqualität verleitet dazu, vor der Betrachtung der Besonderheiten der im Internet gebrauchten lettischen Sprache Ergebnisse aus weitergreifenden Untersuchungen anderer Sprachen in der Webkommunikation zu beleuchten. So stellt etwa Jörg Meier (vgl. 2004, 23) fest, dass im Zusammenhang mit dem Sprachgebrauch in den sog. neuen Medien zwei unterschiedliche Stellungnahmen vorherrschen: Einerseits postulierten die Forscher, im Internet lasse sich ein gänzlich abgeänderter Sprachgebrauch der schriftlichen Kommunikation feststellen. Auch Julia Johanna Marterer stellt in ihrer Studie zum Gebrauch der deutschen Sprache in der E-Mail-Kommunikation dar, dass hinsichtlich der E-Mail-Texte davon ausgegangen werde,

sie seien mit Fehlern gespickt, unstrukturiert und dadurch schwer zu lesen oder gar unverständlich. In der E-Mail-Kommunikation würden sich demnach vor allem im Bereich der Orthografie zahlreiche Abweichungen von den herkömmlichen Schreibkonventionen finden. (Marterer 2006, 120)

In der Folge kommt sie aber zu dem Schluss, dass in den E-Mails entgegen der Annahme von Degrammatikalisierung “wenige grammatikalische Fehler” vorkommen (Marterer 2006, 141). Auffällig sei jedoch,

dass strukturelle Einheiten wie Kommata, Ausrufe- oder Fragezeichen neue Funktionen bekommen haben. (...) So werden Satzzeichen als typografische Zeichen eingesetzt und fungieren beispielsweise als Abkürzungen. Anstelle der Äußerung “ich habe mal eine Frage” schreiben die Nutzer “ich habe mal eine?” (ebd.)

¹ Hier und weiter die Übersetzungen der Zitate bzw. Beispiele aus dem Lettischen ins Deutsche von E. P.

Viele Fehler seien allerdings auf das schnelle Verfassen von E-Mails zurückzuführen.

Andererseits führt Jörg Meier (2004, 24) an, dass so eine Annahme der Degrammatikalisierung keinesfalls verallgemeinert werden sollte. Dies sei keine neue Erscheinung, da gerade bei der elektronischen Kommunikation, die zurzeit allgemein zugänglich ist, diejenigen Sprachformen weiterentwickelt würden, die beim privaten Schriftverkehr auch im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert üblich waren. Bei einer kontrastiven Untersuchung ausgewählter sprachlicher Erscheinungen in dem privaten Schriftverkehr des genannten Zeitraumes ließe sich feststellen, dass sich bei der elektronischen Kommunikation kein wesentlicher Wandel *der Formen* des Sprachgebrauches vollzieht. Eher sei hier die Rede von einer wandelnden Einstellung gegenüber *den Normen* des Sprachgebrauchs (vgl. Meier 2004, 24).

3.2. Besonderheiten des Lettischen im Internet

Bei der Analyse der Besonderheiten des Gebrauchs der lettischen Sprache im Internet unterscheidet Urbanoviča graphemische, orthographische, morphologische, grammatische und lexikalische Besonderheiten. Hinsichtlich der graphemischen Besonderheiten weist die Autorin auf die Nutzung der diakritischen Zeichen hin: Vor allem handelt es sich dabei um Schrift ohne diakritische Zeichen, die durch zwei gleiche Buchstaben (z. B. *aa* anstatt von *ā*) oder durch Apostroph (z. B. *a'* anstatt von *ā*) ersetzt werden. Unter den orthografischen Besonderheiten nennt sie die Niederschrift der phonetischen Phänome der gesprochenen Sprache im schriftlichen Text, die fehlende Unterscheidung zwischen Groß- und Kleinschreibung bzw. einen chaotischen Gebrauch dieser, fehlerhafte Schreibung von Fremdwörtern, das Zusammenschreiben von Wortgruppen, Tippfehler sowie einen zufälligen Gebrauch von Interpunktionszeichen (vgl. Urbanoviča 2007). Hinsichtlich der morphologischen Besonderheiten wird die Wortbildung behandelt, indem auf den Trend von Bildung von Neologismen sowie derivativen Ableitungen hingewiesen wird. Die grammatischen Besonderheiten kommen nach Urbanoviča bei den Varianten diverser grammatischer Kategorien zum Ausdruck, insbesondere bei den Nomina (insbesondere die Abänderung der Kategorie des Genus oder ungenauer Gebrauch der Kategorie des Numerus). Darüber hinaus stellt Urbanoviča den Gebrauch von unterschiedlichen morphologischen Neubildungen nach Vorbild der gesprochenen Mundarten, nichtliterarische Formen von Possessivpronomina und Präpositionen sowie eigenartige Wortfolge in Sätzen fest. Die lexikalischen Besonderheiten der im Internet

verwendeten lettischen Sprache werden vor allem auf den informellen Charakter der Online-Kommunikation und somit auf die diesem charakteristischen stilistischen Grundzüge der Umgangssprache bezogen. Des Weiteren lässt sich nach Urbanovičaöfters die graphische Darstellung von Emotionen in Form von Emoticons feststellen, die die Stimmungs- und Gemütslage der Schreibenden zum Ausdruck bringen (Urbanoviča 2007).

In einer kurzen Analyse kommt auch Jānis Sīlis zu einem ähnlichen kritischen Schluss. Er resümiert, dass sich im Lettischen eine besondere Internetsprache “mit ihren eigenen sprachlichen Normen” gebildet hat, bei der aus der Sicht der stilistischen Paradigma die Umgangssprache sowie die Nichtbeachtung der lexikalischen und grammatischen Normen der literarischen Sprache vorherrschen (vgl. Sīlis 2009, 172). Sīlis betont dabei allerdings, dass so ein Sprachgebrauch keinesfalls mit fehlenden Sprachkenntnissen oder Bildungsmangel zu verbinden sei, denn die Verfasser solcher Texte seien öfters auch Menschen mit Hochschulbildung und “sogar Philologen mit einem Dokortitel” (Sīlis 2009, 173).

4. Zum Korpus der Stichprobenanalyse

Zur Überprüfung der getätigten Annahme wurde im März 2009² auf der Webplattform *www.receptes.lv* ein Stichprobenkorpus aus 50 Rezepttexten zusammengestellt, indem aus jedem Teil des Hypertextes die zu dem Zeitpunkt neuesten Texte exzerpiert wurden. Der Korpusumfang ist zwar als bescheiden anzusehen, er lässt aber zu, einen ersten Eindruck von Sprachhandlungen und Sprachverhalten der auf Lettisch schreibenden Sprachteilhaber zu gewinnen und erste Schlüsse über das vorhandene bzw. fehlende Textsortenwissen zu ziehen. Insbesondere angesichts der Tatsache, dass die auf diesem Webportal gestellten und öffentlich zugänglichen Texte ihre echte, ursprüngliche Darstellungsweise abbilden, sie von keinen Sprachexperten lektoriert worden sind, wodurch angenommen werden kann, dass sie auch das wahre Text(sorten)wissen der Muttersprachler der lettischen Gesellschaft darstellen.

Vom ursprünglichen Bild und fehlenden sprachlichen Verbesserungen der Texte zeugt die bei der ersten Durchsicht getätigte Feststellung, dass auch bei diesen Texten die von Urbanoviča beschriebenen sprachlichen

² Nach einer stichprobenartigen Überprüfung der aktuellen Texte auf dieser Webplattform (2017) lassen sich kaum Abweichungen von den ursprünglich festgestellten Ergebnissen feststellen. Geändert wurde der Hypertext selbst, dies beeinflusst allerdings nicht die Aussagen über das zu überprüfende Textsortenwissen und das Sprachverhalten der lettischen Sprachgemeinschaft.

Besonderheiten vorkommen. Die zum Korpus angelegten Texte weisen z. B. einen Schriftzug ohne diakritische Zeichen (keine Dehnungszeichen) auf (*Samaisa un parlej par vistu*³) [dt. man vermischt das und gibt über das Hähnchen] bzw. anstelle der diakritischen Zeichen werden Doppelbuchstaben oder Zusatz von „j“ verwendet (*Baudiĵit ar labu maizi*) [dt. mit gutem Brot genießen]; (*pievienojiet greifruuta daljinas*) [dt. Geben Sie Grapefruitteilchen dazu] sowie weitere graphemische Besonderheiten. Einzelne Texte weisen auch fehlerhafte Verwendung von Groß- und Kleinschreibung auf: Entgegen Regeln der lettischen Rechtsschreibung, die keine Großschreibung von Gattungsnamen zulassen, lassen sich einzelne Gattungsbezeichnungen in Großschreibung feststellen (*Vienkārši gatavojams Bucīņš pīlē*) [dt. ein einfach zuzubereitendes Rehböckchen in Auflaufform]. Eine sprachkritische Betrachtung legt auch nahe, dass im Korpus viele Texte vorkommen, bei denen überhaupt auf Satzzeichen, insbesondere auf Kommas verzichtet wird (*Ik pēc neliela laiciņa pārbaudam vai pīlē nav beidzies ūdens un sautējam līdz gaļa ir mīksta un jau ir mazliet sašķīdusi*) [dt. immer wieder überprüfen wir ob in der Auflaufform Wasser nicht alle ist und schmoren wir das Fleisch bis es gar und schon etwas zergangen ist]. Die Rezepttexte weisen des Weiteren auch umgangssprachliche Elemente auf, etwa einen starken Deminutivgebrauch (*zivtiņas, dakšiņu*) [dt. Fischchen, Gabelchen] oder veraltete, in der lettischen Umgangssprache allerdings immer noch belegbare Entlehnungen (... *un ar dakšiņu vieglūtēm pārvelk pāri, lai izveidojas kāds musturs* (aus dem Deutschen: Muster)) [dt. ... und man zieht mit einem Gabelchen leicht darüber, bis es sich ein Muster bildet]. Zur Kompensation des sprachlichen Ausdrucks werden auch Wörter in Kombination mit Ziffern verwendet (*atkarīgs cik liela plāts un vai 4kantaina vai apaļa*) [dt. es hängt davon ab, wie groß das Backblech ist und ob es 4kantig oder rund ist]. Zur Darstellung der Stimmungs- und Gemütslage werden die untersuchten Kochrezepte (insbesondere zum Abschluss der Textsequenzen) mit Emoticons (*sagriez gabaliņos un mielojas ☺*) [dt. dann schneidet man es in Stückchen und genießt es ☺] oder Interjektionen (für besonders lecker *Mmmmmmm!*) [dt. mmh!] ergänzt.

Diese nach der ersten Durchsicht festgestellten und kurz geschilderten Besonderheiten stehen aber bei der vorliegenden Stichprobenanalyse nicht im Vordergrund und werden somit keiner eingehenderen Analyse

³ Hier und weiter unten werden die den Rezepttexten entnommen Beispiele im unveränderten Schriftbild dargestellt, die angesprochenen Phänomene durch Unterstreichungen hervorgehoben, wobei abschließend eine wortwörtliche Übersetzung ins Deutsche gegeben wird.

unterzogen. Diese Phänomene sind meines Erachtens eher auf den informellen Gebrauch der Sprache im Internet, nämlich auf die innerhalb der jeweiligen Community verwendete Umgangssprache bei der internetbasierten Webkommunikation und das lockere Sprachverhalten der Communitymitglieder zurückzuführen und gibt somit keine Aussagen über die Text(sorten)kompetenz der lettischen Sprachgemeinschaft im weiteren Sinne.

5. Ergebnisse der Stichprobenanalyse

5.1. Ergebnisse auf der makrostrukturellen Ebene

Die deskriptiven Untersuchungen zu der modernen Textsorte Kochrezept⁴ legen nahe, dass der globale Textaufbau in der Regel aus drei konventionellen Textbausteinen besteht: Am Anfang steht die Überschrift, auf die graphisch abgesetzt die Zutaten mit Maß- und Mengenangaben und letztendlich der eigentliche Rezeptteil mit den erforderlichen Arbeitsschritten folgen. Als zusätzliche erweiternde Bausteine können Personen-, Kalorienangaben, Empfehlungen hinsichtlich geeigneter Beilagen, Tipps und Vorschläge für das Servieren, Varianten zum Zubereiten der jeweiligen Speise u.ä. vorkommen.

Die Analyse der im Korpus enthaltenen Rezepttexte bringt zum Ergebnis, dass die exzerpierten Texte kaum allgemein geltende Aussagen zum Wissen der Schreibenden über den Textaufbau und seine Konventionen ermöglichen: Um ein Kochrezept auf die internetbasierte Plattform der Kochrezeptsammlung schalten zu können, wird dem jeweiligen Interessenten eine vorgefertigte Maske angeboten, in der die erforderlichen Daten einzupflegen sind. Geht man auf den Link “Pievienot recepti” [dt. Rezept zufügen], so werden vier Themenbereiche eingeblendet, die man mit Texten ergänzen kann: “Kas tas ir?” [dt. Was ist das?]; “Kā to pagatavot?” [dt. Wie wird es zubereitet?]; “Cik ilgi un viegli tas būs?” [dt. Wie lang dauert es und wie einfach es ist?] und “Kam mēs varam teikt paldies?” [dt. Bei wem können wir uns bedanken?]. Diese thematischen Blöcke werden noch weiter unterteilt, indem einzelne Felder für Titel, Kategorie, Art der Speise, Zutaten, Zubereitung usw. ausgegliedert werden. Diese sollen dann mit Texten online gefüttert werden. Somit wird letztendlich eine mehr oder minder einheitliche Gestaltung der Makrostruktur bei allen in der virtuellen Sammlung enthaltenen Kochrezepten sichergestellt.

⁴ Zur Genese der lettischen Kochrezepte und der einzelnen textbildenden Bausteine siehe Proveja 2015.

Dies bedeutet allerdings nicht, dass die Nutzer bzw. die Schreibenden auch immer alle angeführten Felder ausfüllen. So gab es in dem analysierten Textmaterial zwei Belege, bei denen keine Angabe der Zutaten enthalten war.

Interessante Ergebnisse liefert die Durchsicht des letzten, fakultativen Bausteins der Kochrezepte: Bei 30 Belegen von insgesamt 50 Kochrezepten wird nach dem Zubereitungsteil ein graphisch ausgegliederter Absatz eingefügt, in dem die Autoren Vorschläge für das Servieren und Genießen versprachlichen (*Un ēd ar mērci (kā gatavo mērci tu vari izlasīt citur)*) [dt. Und iss das mit einer Soße (wie eine Soße zuzubereiten ist, kannst du anderswo lesen)]; (*Est var gan siltu, gan aukstu. Garšīgi ir, ja pieēd klāt baltmaizīti (ar vai bez sviesta).*) ☺ [dt. Dies kann man sowohl warm als auch kalt essen. Lecker schmeckt's, wenn man dazu Weißbrötchen isst (mit oder ohne Butter).☺]; (*Baudiit ar labu maizi (piem kraukshkjiga baguette!) un salaatu lapaam (peec veelmes). Ja esat iists gourmand, var dariit ko liidziigu ar kazas sieru.*) [dt. Mit gutem Brot (z. B. knuspriger Baguette!) und Blattsalat (nach Wunsch) genießen. Wenn Sie ein wahrer gourmand sind, kann man was Ähnliches auch mit Schafskäse machen.]. Diese Beispiele legen nahe, dass im Gegensatz zum eher sachlichen Stil der gedruckten Kochbücher die Texte von Empfehlungen und Darstellung der eigenen Erfahrungen emotional geprägt sind.

Diese eher lockere, emotional und persönlich geprägte Ansprache des potentiellen Lesers wird beim Großteil der Texte auch weiter entfaltet: Die Analyse der exzerpierten Texte bringt eine weitere Besonderheit zum Vorschein, die – soweit bekannt – in den gedruckten Kochbüchern nicht verbreitet ist. Bei 21 Rezepttexten kann ein weiterer Textbaustein herausgegliedert werden, der als abschließendes Strukturelement dient und emotional geprägte Wünsche, Kommentare und Anmerkungen persönlichen Charakters enthält (*Bon appétit!*), (*Lēti, ērti un garšīgi... Labu apetīti!!!*) ☺ [dt. Preiswert, einfach und lecker... Guten Appetit!☺]; (*Labu ēstgribu*) ☺ [dt. Gutes Genießen☺]; (*Varu aizbraukt un paradīt ka to dara, grūti ta uzrakstīt*) [dt. Ich kann zu Ihnen kommen und zeigen, wie es geht, es ist schwierig so zu beschreiben]; (*Manai ģimenei ļoti garšo!*) ☺ **LABU APETĪTI!!!** ☺ [dt. Meine Familie mag es sehr! GUTEN APPETTIT!!!] ☺. Einerseits lässt sich dieses Phänomen mit der virtuellen Umgebung, ihrer informellen, sogar lockeren Atmosphäre im Rahmen der Kommunikation unter gleichberechtigten Mitgliedern der involvierten Community erklären. Dies scheint für das Sprachverhalten der lettischen Sprachgemeinschaft charakteristisch zu sein (vgl. auch weiter oben die Aussagen von Urbanoviča 2007). Da eine Face-to-Face-Kommunikation nicht sichergestellt werden kann, versucht der Verfasser der Texte den Leser

aufmunternd und wohlwollend anzusprechen. Somit wäre als Erklärung so einer lockeren Ausdrucksweise das Medium der Kommunikation Internet angebracht. Andererseits könnte dieses Phänomen in Anlehnung an Ieva Zauberga (2008) als Ergebnis des vorherrschenden Sprachkontakts erklärt werden: Infolge des Einflusses moderner Kontaktsprachen, insbesondere des Englischen und der aus dem Englischen entstandenen Übersetzungen, verlieren auch die lettischen Kochrezepte allmählich ihren sachlichen, sogar “akademischen Stil” (Zauberga 2008, 251). Gerade in der virtuellen Kommunikation erfolgen die ersten Anzeichen des sprachkontaktbedingten Wandels: Die Texte passen sich z. B. auf der makrostrukturellen Ebene an die Traditionen der jeweiligen Kontaktsprachen, sprich an das Englische an, indem in die einst mehr oder minder starre sequenzielle Abfolge von sachlichen Anleitungen persönlich und teilweise auch emotional geprägte Kommentare und Anmerkungen aufgenommen werden.

5.2. Ergebnisse auf der mikrostrukturellen Ebene

Der mikrostrukturellen Analyse wurden die einzelnen konventionellen Textbausteine – Überschrift, Zutatenangabe und Zubereitungsteil – unterzogen.

5.2.1. Überschrift

Die Überschrift bildet bei der Textsorte Kochrezept, ähnlich wie bei vielen anderen Textsorten, den ersten makrostrukturellen Bestandteil. Im Allgemeinen soll mit der Überschrift “das Tätigkeitsziel, das intendierte Ergebnis” (Sandig 1996, 366) benannt werden. Darauf verweist auch Glaser (1996, 233), indem sie feststellt, dass in den Überschriften “die Möglichkeit der schnellen, groben Information über die Speisen/Getränke, deren Herstellung in den Rezepten erläutert wird.” Diese Feststellungen und auch die Funktionen von Überschriften (das BENENNEN) legen nahe, dass der Leser gleich von der Überschrift die ersten Informationen erhalten soll, die Zubereitung welcher Speise in dem jeweils folgenden Text beschrieben wird (*Miklā cepta līdaka ar sinepem un ķiplokiem*) [dt. Im Teig gebratener Hecht mit Senf und Knoblauch]; (*Jēra stilbiņi ar bumbieriem un rozīnēm*) [dt. Lammschenkelchen mit Birnen und Rosinen]. Kurz gefasst: Bereits in der Überschrift des Kochrezepts wird dargestellt, “woraus”, “wie”, “womit”, “wo” die jeweilige Speise zubereitet wird.

Syntaktisch gesehen werden die Überschriften der modernen Kochrezepte (in den gedruckten Kochbüchern) vor allem als determinierte

Nominalphrasen gebildet. Die Nominalphrasen werden im Lettischen in der Regel entweder mit einer Genitivergänzung (*Vistas šķinkīšu plovš*) [dt. Plov der Hühnerschenkel] oder einer Adjektiv- oder Partizippphrase als Attribut (*Pildītais kartupeļu biezenis*) [dt. Das gefüllte Kartoffelpüree] determiniert. Hervorzuheben ist hierbei, dass in den untersuchten Texten bei 20 Belegen die Überschrift in Form einer Nominalphrase mit einer eingegliederten Präpositionalphrase gebildet wird (*Silts kamambeers ar karameli un pipariem*) [dt. Warmer Camembert mit Karamell und Pfeffer]. Des Weiteren konnten in den Rezepttexten auch sechs Belege für einfache Nominalphrasen mit einer Lokativergänzung (*Cūkgaļa medus mērcē*) [dt. Schweinsfleisch in Honigsoße]; (*Vienkārši gatavojams Bucīņš pīlē*) [dt. einfach zuzubereitendes Rehböckchen in Auflaufform]. Dagegen einfache Nominalphrasen (*Pankūkas*) [dt. Pfannkuchen], darunter auch zwei oder mehrere syndetisch verbundene Nominalphrasen waren bei den exzerpierten Rezepttexten bruchstückhaft bzw. gar nicht vertreten. Besonders hervorzuheben ist dieses Ergebnis deswegen, weil bei bisher quantitativ vorgenommenen Analysen der Überschriften von gedruckten Kochrezepten Überschriften mit eingegliederten Präpositionalphrasen und Lokativergänzungen eine viel kleinere Frequenz aufweisen (vgl. Proveja 2015, 123 ff.). Diese Feststellung könnte ein Indiz eines eventuellen Entwicklungstrends der Sprachhandlung sein, indem bereits bei Überschrift mittels Präpositionalphrasen und Ergänzungen möglichst viele Informationen zu dem in der Folge beschriebenen Text dargeboten werden.

Des Weiteren ist hervorzuheben, dass bei sieben Rezepttexten die Überschriften nicht nach dem gängigen Muster gebildet wurden. Bei diesen Fällen handelte es sich um "fiktive" bzw. expressive Benennungen, denen man nicht eindeutig entnehmen kann, welche Speise damit gemeint ist. Kann man von der Überschrift *Akniņu paradīze* [dt. Leberchenparadis] noch ableiten, dass es sich bei der jeweiligen Speise offensichtlich um ein aus Leber als Hauptzutat zubereitetes Gerichthandelt oderes bei *Mīlestības salāti* [dt. Salat der Liebe] um einen Salat ohne genaue Benennung der jeweiligen Zutaten geht, so haben Phantasie-Überschriften wie *Franku dārznieces* [dt. Frankengärtnerinnen] oder *Ņammmmm* [dt. yummi] keinen erst erwarteten Informationsgehalt und geben keinen Hinweis auf die in der Folge beschriebene Speise. Offensichtlich sollen solche Überschriften dem kommunikativen Zweck dienen, die Aufmerksamkeit des Lesers zu gewinnen und in so einer Appellfunktion den Leser zu bewegen, das jeweilige Kochrezept – und eventuell auch weitere Kochrezepte dieses Nutzers – zu lesen.

5.2.2. Angabe der Zutaten

In der sequenziellen Abfolge der Textbausteine eines modernen Kochrezepts folgt der Überschrift in der Regel der Textbaustein der Zutatenangabe. Die Versprachlichung der Zutatenangabe erfolgt grundsätzlich nominal: Im Mittelpunkt steht eine Nominalphrase, die als Denotat eine Substanz bzw. ein Lebensmittel hat. Diese Nominalphrase wird meistens zwecks einer quantifizierenden Determination erweitert. Die Erweiterung der Nominalphrase kann bei zählbaren Zutaten mit einem Zahlattribut erfolgen: 3 Äpfel; 1 Zwiebel. Darüber hinaus kann die Zutatenangabe in Form einer Numerativkonstruktion ausgedrückt werden. Als eine Numerativkonstruktion wird in Anlehnung an Zifonun, Hoffmann und Strecker (vgl. 1997, 1979) eine Phrase verstanden, die aus einem Zahlattribut, einem Gewichts- oder Maßausdruck und einem substanzdenotierenden Substantiv oder einem Substantiv im Plural⁵ besteht: *500 Gramm Mehl, 1 Liter Milch, 3 Kilo Kartoffeln*. Zur sprachlichen Realisierung der Gewichts- und Maßangaben können auch “Behälterkonstruktionen” (Zifonun, Hoffmann, Strecker 1997, 1979) oder “Vergleichsausdrücke” (Wolańska-Köller 2010, 200) verwendet werden. In diesem Fall wird anstatt einer metrischen Angabe des Gewichtes oder Maßes von einer Bezeichnung für einen Behälter wie *Glas, Päckchen, Löffel* oder ähnlichen vergleichenden Elementen Gebrauch gemacht. Laut Wolańska-Köller (2010, 200) basiert die Verwendung solcher Vergleichsausdrücke “auf die jahrhundertealte (noch heute gebräuchliche) Praxis des Abwiegens und Abmessens von Zutaten mithilfe von Geschirr, Besteck, Verpackungseinheiten, Münzen und Körperteilen.” Zu solchen Vergleichsausdrücken zählt Wolańska-Köller (vgl. 2010, 201) Bezeichnungen für Geschirr und Besteck (*Glas, Löffel*), für Verpackungseinheiten (*Flasche*), für kleine Münzen (*Zweipfennig-Stück*) sowie Bezeichnungen, die von Bezeichnungen für Körperteile (*Handvoll*) und von Bezeichnungen für bestimmte Lebensmittel (*nussgroß, in der Größe einer Kirsche*) abgeleitet wurden.

Betrachtet man die der virtuellen Kochrezeptsammlung entnommenen Texte, lässt sich feststellen, dass eine den beschriebenen Konventionen entsprechende Versprachlichung der Zutatenangabe bei 36 Kochrezepten belegt werden kann. Bei neun Belegen werden nur die erforderlichen Zutaten ohne eine Mengenangabe aufgelistet. fünf Kochrezepte enthalten eine ‘verkehrte’ Auflistung der Zutatenangabe, indem zunächst die erforderlichen Zutaten und dann ihre Mengen genannt werden (*Makaroni – Penne pasta 200g; Vistas gaļa – 200g; Milti (3*

⁵ Substantiv im Plural steht bei zählbaren Zutaten.

ēdamkarotes) [dt. Nudeln – Penne pasta 200g; Hühnerfleisch – 200 g; Mehl (3 Esslöffeln)]. Laut Birkenmaier und Mohl (1991, 184) ist eine solche Abfolge der Zutaten- und Mengenauflistung auch bei russischen Kochrezepten üblich: (*Грибы свежие – 500 г, лук репчатый – 1 шт.*) [dt. Pilze frische – 500 g; Zwiebel – 1 St.]. Eventuell ist so eine Abfolge auch durch Einfluss des Russischen als früherer und immer noch aktueller Kontaktsprache zu erklären.

5.2.3. Beschreibung der Zubereitung

Den zentralen Baustein der Kochrezepte bildet die Beschreibung der Zubereitung. Diese dient der Versprachlichung der Handlungsanweisungen, des ‘Wie’ der Zubereitung. Das Hauptaugenmerk bei der Analyse dieses Textbausteins gilt den syntaktischen Formen der Versprachlichung der Handlungsanweisungen. Bei den modernen lettischen Kochrezepten erfolgt dies über das syntaktische Muster mit Verb im Indikativ 3. Person Singular. Dies belegen diachronisch und synchronisch angelegte Untersuchungen zu lettischen Kochrezepten (vgl. Zauberga, 2008; Proveja 2010; 2012; 2015). Hierbei ist zu anzumerken, dass dieses Muster wortwörtlich der bei deutschen Kochrezepten früher konventionellen *Man-nimmt-Formentspricht*.

Die Analyse der exzerpierten Texte legt nahe, dass beim Großteil der Kochrezepte (36 von 50) das konventionell geltende syntaktische Muster der Versprachlichung von Handlungsanweisungen verwendet wird (*Smalki sagriež ķiplokus, saku olas*) [dt. Man schneidet Knoblauch fein, man verquirlt die Eier], (*Notīrītas gailenes samal gaļas mašīnā*) [dt. Geputzte Pfifferlinge lässt man durch Fleischwolf]. Es lassen sich aber auch Ausnahmen feststellen: Bei sechs Belegen kann der Infinitivgebrauch des Verbs festgestellt werden, was der lettischen Konvention entgegenspricht (*Salikt papriku uz cepešpannas*) [dt. Paprika auf Backblech legen], (*pasālīt un papīparot*) [dt. salzen und pfeffern]. Einerseits kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass die Verfasser der Rezepttexte dadurch den Leser dazu bewegen, die Schritte der beschriebenen Handlungen unbedingt zu befolgen. Vor dem Hintergrund der Rezepttexte und ihrer Funktion scheint aber der Gebrauch des Infinitivs unangebracht zu sein, denn laut der lettischen Grammatik (*Mūdienu latviešu literārās valodas gramatika* 1959, 609) verleiht der mit Infinitiv zum Ausdruck gebrachte Appell der Aussageeine strikte Färbung: “Infinitiv wird in der Regel dann benutzt, wenn man striktere, kategorischere Arten des Appells zum Ausdruck bringt”. So eine Funktion der infinitivischen Aussagen lässt die Eignung dieses syntaktischen Musters im lettischen Diskurs der

Kochrezepte bezweifeln. Andererseits kann als Erklärung für den Gebrauch der Infinitive der unmittelbare und mittelbare Einfluss von Kontaktsprachen angenommen werden, denn auch z. B. bei russischen oder deutschen Rezepttexten gelten infinitivische Anweisungen als konventionell (ru. *Баранину вымыть, обсушить* [dt. Lammfleisch waschen, abtrocknen]; dt. *Kartoffeln garen, abgießen und vierteln*).

Die analysierten Texte liefern auch Belege für den Gebrauch von Verben im Imperativ. Imperativische Aussagen im Singular konnten bei drei Kochrezepten festgestellt werden (*Panem kartupeļus un nomizo tos tad sagriez salmiņos un liec vārīties līdz kļūst mīksti* ☺ *Un ēd ar mērci*) [dt. Nimm die Kartoffeln und schäle sie dann schneide sie in Stäbchen und koche bis diese gar sind ☺ Und iss sie mit einer Soße]. Imperativ Plural kann bei drei weiteren Kochrezepten belegt werden (*Kāpostus apvāriet ūdenī*) [dt. Kochen Sie den Kohl im Wasser]; (*sīpolus sagrieziet*) [dt. Schneiden Sie die Zwiebel klein]. Im untersuchten Korpus weisen zwei Belege auch das wir-Imperativ auf (*Nemam to, kas mums no buciņa ir un sagriežam gaļu nelielos gabalos. Kamēr aņcepās gaļa, pīlē ielejam nedaudz ūdens un pievienojam piparus un 100 g sviesta.*) [dt. Nehmen wir das, was wir von dem Rehböckchen haben und schneiden wir das Fleisch in nicht große Stücke. Als das Fleisch angebraten ist, geben wir etwas Wasser in die Auflaufform und fügen wir Pfeffer und 100 g Butter dazu.]. Auch bei diesem syntaktischen Muster kann auf einen eventuellen Einfluss von Kontaktsprachen verwiesen werden, bei denen der Imperativ in Kochrezepten als konventionell gilt. Der Gebrauch des wir-Imperativs könnte auch mit seiner Verwendung bei den populärsten Kochshows erklärt werden. Dieses in der gesprochenen Kommunikation rekursiv benutzte syntaktische Muster hat sich als Textsortenmuster einzelner Sprachteilhaber verfestigt, indem sie es sich durch regelmäßiges Hören im Fernsehen angeeignet haben. Beim Verfassen eines schriftlichen Textes haben sie dann auf dieses verfestigt Muster zurückgegriffen.

6. Resümee

Betrachtet man die Ergebnisse der qualitativen Stichprobenanalyse, lässt sich der Schluss ziehen, dass die eingangs gestellte Annahme eine Bestätigung findet: Die Muttersprachler verfügen über das Textsortenwissen und verfassen Textsorten (hier: Kochrezepte) entsprechend den konventionellen Mustern. Hinsichtlich der Makrostruktur kann dies allerdings nicht eindeutig behauptet werden, da in der vorliegenden Stichprobe Texte analysiert wurden, die auf der virtuellen Plattform in eine vorgefertigte Maske einzupflegen sind. Allerdings lassen sich auch

hier Abweichungen feststellen. Auch auf der mikrostrukturellen Ebene konnten Abweichungen von den im Lettischen geltenden Konventionen belegt werden, die sich eventuell mit den Auswirkungen von Kontaktsprachen erklären lassen. Die Analyse hat gezeigt, dass sich Abweichungen von den traditionellen Mustern bei den Textbausteinen der Zutatenangaben und der Zubereitung belegen lassen. Insbesondere kommt das bei der Wahl der Versprachlichung der Handlungsanweisungen zum Ausdruck: Abgesehen davon, dass beim Großteil der Kochrezepte (36 Belege) das für die lettischen Kochrezepte konventionelle syntaktische Muster mit Verb in "man"-Form verwendet wird, belegen die restlichen 14 Texte eine abweichende Versprachlichung. Dies kann als ein Indiz dafür dienen, dass sich die Textsorte und ihre Konventionen in einem Wandlungsprozess befinden.

Die Bestätigung der Annahme kann mit dem rekurrenten Gebrauch der Textsorte im Alltag der jeweiligen Sprachteilhaber erklärt werden. Offensichtlich handelt es sich um ein unbewusstes Textsortenwissen, das sich im Zuge der wiederholten Verwendung dieser Textsorte in der schriftlichen und/oder mündlichen Kommunikation herausgebildet hat. Zielt man aber auf eine definitiv bewusste Textkompetenz der Sprachteilhaber ab, sollte auf jeden Fall beim Spracherwerb der Text mit seinen (kulturspezifischen) Konventionen im Vordergrund stehen. Die Ermittlung und Identifizierung von Textbausteinen und textuellen Merkmalen einer Textsorte in der Muttersprache kann weiter als seriöse Basis für eine bewusste, zielgerichtete Aneignung der Besonderheiten der jeweiligen Textsorte in der Fremdsprache dienen.

Primärliteratur

- . *Receptes*, o. J. Zugänglich: www.receptes.lv [50 Kochrezepte, exzerpiert am 09.03.2009. Jetzt: receptes.tvnet.lv]

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Knowledge of Text Formation – Tacit Competence of Language Users

Keywords: text-type, electronic text, macrostructure and microstructure of text, cooking recipe.

Summary

The article focuses on text type conventions and the awareness Latvian native users have of them. Its author proposes a hypothesis that Latvian native speakers have a subconscious awareness of text type conventions and follow them when creating texts. To test this hypothesis, a small-scale study was carried out in 2009, with the sample of 50 cooking recipes selected from the recipe website in Latvian *www.receptes.lv*.

The choice of cooking recipes as a text type was justified by it being a well-known text type for the majority of native language users; it is an everyday procedural text and language users may have subconsciously

acquired its conventions through continuous communication or the use of such texts. The reason for choosing texts published on the Internet is the free access provided by many Internet sites to read and publish, i.e., create, texts (such as comments), which also holds true for the Internet site *www.receptes.lv*, which positions itself as the biggest electronic data base of cooking recipes. As such it was initially assumed that such reader-created content has not been edited/proofread, which was also confirmed by the website administrators in the response to the question asked by the author of this article. With no texts being edited or proofread, the selected sample of texts offers an insight into everyday written language use and also allows for drawing initial conclusions concerning the text-creation competence language users have.

The underlying theoretical assumptions concern modern language peculiarities in the electronic media. It must be admitted, however, that in the Latvian language there is insufficient research that would provide an in-depth look into the different text genres used in electronic communication or their specifics (texts such as emails, comments, text messages, tweets, and WhatsApp messages). A small contribution to the field was made by Inta Urbanoviča through the 2007 project *Latviešu valodas īpatnības internetā* (Peculiarities of Internet Latvian) but it should be regarded as a review focused on language culture issues, and its view of the Internet user's language is very critical. The present paper agrees with some foreign scholars and argues that generalizations and severe criticism of the modern Internet user's language, especially about it being degrammatized, are often inappropriate. For example, Jörg Meier (2004, 24) maintains that the language used in electronic media nowadays largely resembles that of private correspondence in the 19th and 20th centuries and its peculiarities, with the only difference being that the modern electronic environment allows for such data storage that the texts are instantaneously accessible to the public, and also to its instantaneous analysis and/or criticism.

The paper offers an analysis of the micro and macrostructure of the excerpted texts. It builds on the previous sizeable study in Latvian (see Proveja 2015) and analyses text structure – the conceptual recipe division into three or four parts – by looking into language usage features typical of each of these text parts: syntactic models in recipe titles; typical language use in the ingredient part; and use of verbs in the procedure description part.

On the one hand, the research findings and their analysis suggest that the recipes published on the Internet share some features with other electronic text types (such as emails, Internet communication, etc.):

misspelled words due to speed and insufficient care, absence of diacritical marks or their substitution with other marks ('aa' to denote the long 'ā'), or emotions expressed through emoticons. On the other hand, separate textual features suggest that the recipe as a text type in Latvian is in a constant flux and development. This is possibly the result of language contact (currently – English as a contact language in translated recipes), where some new changes in the use of grammatical forms of the verb serve as evidence. At the same time, a conclusion can be made that the majority of text producers have observed unwritten text-type conventions in the Latvian language. The excerpted texts largely correspond to the linguistic features identified in the texts in printed cookbooks. It must be noted that the 2009 study has been extended – in the form of currently selected examples from the given recipe website and their analysis; the findings match those of the 2009 study, which means that the conclusions drawn in 2009 can also be attributed to the current situation.

CHAPTER THREE

TEACHING FOR SCIENTIFIC TEXT READING THROUGH INTEGRATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

SOLVEIGA SUŠINSKIENĖ

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, information and communication technologies, popular science texts.

1. Introductory Observations

Recent decades have witnessed the emergence of language as an integral part of science literacy. According to Michael A. K. Halliday and James Martin (1993), scientific writing contains unique linguistic features such as informational density, abstraction, technicality, and authoritativeness that construe special knowledge claims. To put it in Jerry Wellington and Jonathan Osborne's (2001, 139) terms, "Knowing and understanding the language of science is an essential component of scientific literacy". The spread of information and communication technologies (ICT) may prove to be one of the most pivotal factors in motivating the students to read and analyse a wide variety of science texts.

The use of the World Wide Web (WWW) as a resource for language teaching/learning material is gaining popularity among both secondary and higher education English language teachers. The present study focuses on the exploration of authentic materials available on the World Wide Web in textual modes. Many researchers have investigated how to integrate such materials along with well-designed reading tasks into the foreign language curriculum (for more information, see Grellet 1981; Lee and VanPatten 1995).

Thus, the aim of the present paper is twofold: to analyse scientific language from a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective and to demonstrate how ICT can raise higher education students' awareness of

science texts. In other words, the research is based on the integration of ICT while teaching reading of popular science texts and at the same time improving scientific literacy among higher education students.

2. Methodological Considerations

The Internet as a resource can not only enrich and expand language interaction in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom but also promote the awareness of culture and technologies. To cite Joel Walz (1998, 104)

competence in more than one language and culture enables people to gain access to additional bodies of knowledge; that all students learn in a variety of ways and settings and that language and culture education incorporate effective technologies.

For this reason, three different approaches, suggested by Klaus Brandl, to using Internet-based resources are presented in the present study: teacher-centred, teacher-facilitated and learner-centred (Brandl 2002). By applying these approaches, the students are motivated and encouraged to read and analyse popular science texts.

Generally speaking, ICT is the umbrella term used to describe a range of technologies for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing, and transmitting information. However, for the present article the Internet as a teaching/learning tool is analysed in more detail. As recommended by Mark Warshauer, computer-mediated communication activities have to be experiential and goal-oriented and the tasks have to be consistent with principles of situated learning (Warshauer 1997) (i.e., the students engage in meaningful tasks and solve meaningful problems that are of interest to them and can also be applied in multiple contexts).

Science is construed through specialized lexico-grammatical constructions. Such grammar is functional in that it facilitates the effective presentation of the information of arguments in science. At the same time, it also renders scientific language dense, technical and abstract. To this end, attention is drawn primarily to the work that has been done on this topic from an SFL perspective (e.g., Halliday and Martin 1993; Martin and Veel 1998). Although scientific genres are typically multimodal and scientific meanings are often conveyed through a combination of words, images, diagrams, and mathematical/graphical signs, the purpose of this discussion is to focus on the verbal resources (i.e., lexico-grammar) used in science texts.

To investigate the research question we built a corpus comprising science popularization text genre. The analysis of such texts is based on the on-line English magazine *Popular Science* (see <http://www.popsci.com/>). *Popular Science* is an American monthly magazine carrying articles on science and technology for the general reader. It deals with topics on the military, gadgets, technology, science, medicine, etc., each covering a variety of subtopics.

3. Theoretical Assumptions

ICT includes any communication device covering television, radio, mobile phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems, etc., as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video conferencing and distance learning.

Technology and science are tightly linked and cutting-edges occur in both at astounding rates. The integration of ICT into the teaching/learning of science texts is increasingly important for engaging and motivating today's ESL students. The students have the opportunity to operate in a scientific world via the Internet.

Science texts contain unique linguistic features that construe special realms of scientific knowledge, values and beliefs. The understanding of science and the processes of science is essential to full participation in modern world. However, while analysing the science texts of any register or genre the students face a number of difficulties. What is it about science texts that makes them so complicated for students? Many factors related to this issue should be taken into consideration but, as several scholars (e.g., Lemke 1990; Wellington and Osborne 2001) have argued, the biggest barrier is the language of science itself.

Popular science texts focus on people and what they say and think. According to Jean Parkinson and Ralph Adendorff (2004), popular texts function as narratives of research, reporting on new knowledge claims not yet endorsed as fact by the research community. The sources of information in science popular texts are the human participants. In SFL, a participant refers to the nominal groups associated with processes (verbal groups) in the clause.

Traditionally, language has been perceived as a vehicle that transmits thought or reality. SFL (see Halliday 1978; 1994; Halliday and Martin 1993; Hasan and Martin 1989) conceptualizes language as a semantic tool involved in the negotiation, construction and reconstrual of human experiences. This approach demonstrates how linguistic choices (i.e., grammar) contribute in a systemic way to the realization of social context.

Within the framework of this conception, language is more than a conduit of meaning: it is a principal resource for making meaning.

One of the distinguishing features of scientific language is that it has a high density of information. The information density of a text can be measured by an index called “lexical density”. This phenomenon of lexical density is achieved through the number of content (i.e. lexical) words per clause (Halliday and Martin 1993). Such words include nouns, the main parts of the verb, adjectives, and adverbs. Consider the examples drawn from a popular science text from the above-mentioned website:

Still, **Google argues** that its **consumption really** isn't so **bad**. Its **data centers carry** out **billions of operations** – a **billion searches** per **day alone** – and many of those **save fuel**. **Google searches save trips** to the **library** or the **travel agent**, for instance, **offsetting** the **power consumed** by its **processing farms**.

The second feature of scientific writing is *abstraction*. Scientific language theorizes concrete life experiences into abstract entities. Such theorizing involves turning processes or features (as expressed by verbs and adjectives, respectively) into participants (as expressed by nouns). Through nominalization, actions, events and qualities are construed as nouns, and thus represent objects (Halliday and Martin 1993, 52). Consider the example in which the actions *to develop*, *to compute*, and *to communicate* are construed as nominalizations (i.e., abstract nouns):

It's perfectly conceivable that future **developments** in physics would conflict with scalable quantum **computing**, in the same way that relatively conflicts with faster-than-light **communication**, and the Second Law of Thermodynamics conflicts with perpetuum mobiles.

The third feature of scientific texts is *technicality*. Technicality is necessary in order to realize the specialized contents of science. This feature in science typically involves the use of technical vocabulary and verbs of relational process. Technical vocabulary refers to terms that are expressed by words or phrases that allow scientists to construct classes/categories and establish taxonomic relationship among entities in the scientific world. They (i.e., technical terms) can also derive from nominalization. Verbs of relational processes are verbs that can be used to define, classify, compare/contrast, or characterize. For instance:

The scanning tunneling microscope isn't an optical microscope. **A robot arm** moves a tiny needle (its tip is a single atom) across the copper surface in a scanning pattern, [...].

An additional feature of scientific text is its *authoritativeness*. In science, information is typically presented accurately and objectively. In order to do so, the author must distance him/herself from the text. In scientific texts, authoritativeness is typically conveyed through the use of technical vocabulary, declarative sentences and passive voice:

The needle is programmed to stay a certain distance away from the surface, so when it encounters an atom, it pulls up and creates a bump in the image.

In popular science articles, the writer presents him/herself as not making any evaluation but rather as reporting the evaluation of authorized experts.

4. Teaching for Scientific Text Reading: Description of *Scientific Discourse*

The remarks in this section relate to *Scientific Discourse*, a subject taught by the author of the present study. In line with other topics analysed during this subject, the popular science texts as reading materials are discussed. The *Scientific Discourse* course aims to familiarize the fourth-year students of English Philology of Šiauliai University with the scientific genres (i.e., research articles, textbooks, popular science articles) needed for the analysis of scientific texts. A pivotal idea of the course is reading popular science texts, from which the students may extract content knowledge, which they reframe and transform in order to produce their own texts and interpret them. The texts are given from *Popular Science* and drawn from the above-mentioned website. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the content of popular science texts is simpler than that of academic texts, particularly research articles. Writers of popular texts do not expect readers to be specialists and as a result they use fewer technical terms and provide the meanings of the technical terms they do use. To cite Jean Parkinson and Ralph Adendorff (2004),

popular texts are a valuable addition to the teaching of both science and scientific writing because they give readers an idea of ‘science in the making’ – what the issues were before information became fact.

Popular science texts give the students insights into the scientific process via language means. It is this that makes popular science articles a valuable addition to the teaching of reading scientific texts. The students deepen their knowledge of the popular science register as well.

Nowadays, the Internet is a pivotal tool in searching for information, i.e., finding authentic materials on the Internet. A number of studies proved that online reading differs significantly from print-based reading (cf. Brandl 2002; Hanson-Smith 2003; Coiro and Dobler 2007; Coiro 2005; 2011, and many others). The students can develop respective scientific literacy outside of class via homework projects, enhanced through numerous reading exercises.

As already mentioned, the author of the present article uses three approaches, proposed by Klaus Brandl: teacher-centred, teacher-facilitated and learner-centred, to integrating web-based reading materials into the foreign language curriculum (Brandl 2002). The basic points of these approaches are outlined below.

The reading activities and materials in the teacher-centred approach are comparable to the computer as an online electronic workbook. The teacher selects reading materials from Internet-based resources and designs comprehension activities. The significance of this approach lies in the text-specific approach to exploring authentic cultural (textual or pictorial) resources. By pre-selecting and preparing the readings, the teacher adapts the contents and tasks to the students' proficiency level. The tasks are designed to support a student's comprehension process, focusing on textual, linguistic and cultural features. However, the question that may arise is what the actual advantages of Internet-based reading activities over the reading activities based on authentic printed resources are. Reading is a silent process that is best done individually. The students get to explore authentic reading materials outside of class at their own pace. This frees up classroom time that can be spent more effectively by getting students involved in communicative language learning activities.

The Internet-based reading activities that have gained the most widespread attention and popularity among language teachers and students are those in which the instructor provides a set of learning tasks that engage the students in exploring reading materials in their authentic environments. The teacher-facilitated approach to Internet-reading lessons can be simply described in the following way. The teacher determines a particular topic and set of goals for his/her lesson. The teacher selects a set of sites to ensure the contents are appropriate for their pedagogical goals. Through a particular task design, the teacher facilitates the students' reading process and guides them to explore a variety of pre-selected resources, thus providing a clear goal to be accomplished by the students. Furthermore, the teacher controls the navigational scope and the number and kind of Internet sites that the students access. Despite the restriction, the student has some autonomy as the tasks give the learner a choice in the

sites he/she accesses and explores. Task types usually include comparisons, gathering factual information, descriptions, and short summaries. The outcome of the student assignments is clearly defined but open-ended. The teacher's role can best be described as a facilitator. The students follow the teacher's guidance but get to explore the contents themselves.

Learner-determined lessons follow an approach to integrating an Internet-based resource that is entirely learner-centred. The students determine the topics, the reading materials, the way they go about exploring the readings themselves, and decide how the outcomes should be evaluated. In this way the students take on the roles of self-directed and autonomous learners and take full charge and responsibility for their outcomes. The teacher only gets involved in the role of a facilitator, offering support and guidance throughout the process. Assessment of learner outcomes may be teacher-directed or student-determined. Examples are short writing assignments, essays, mini-projects, or presentations that show the students' analytical and interpretative skills in reading scientific texts.

Summing up, these approaches of integrating Internet-based materials lead to long-term assignments and facilitate the teaching/learning of English language in the WWW environment.

5. Conclusions

Popular science texts contain a number of unique features that encode the specialized knowledge, values and worldviews of the scientific community. The language features of such texts are realized through a distinct set of lexico-grammatical resources. Furthermore, these linguistic resources do not occur in isolation. The students who are not familiar with the specialized meaning-making lexico-grammatical resources of science language are likely to encounter significant difficulties when reading and writing science texts.

While analysing popular science texts, the students must ultimately cope with the specialized language of science, i.e., have to read and comprehend popular science texts. They must also be able to employ appropriate linguistic resources (i.e., lexical density, abstractness, technicality, and authoritativeness) to communicate what they have learned from empirical activities and from what they have read.

There is no doubt; the large number of authentic resources on the Internet provides students with an opportunity to immerse themselves in a field of scientific readings. Yet, to make the integration of WWW-based

activities a successful learning experience requires effective organization and presentation of that information.

To put everything in a nutshell, the teacher's aim is not only to develop students' scientific language skills but also to foster a multi-cultural, international perspective for our ever-changing, interdependent scientific world.

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CHAPTER FOUR

LITERĀRAIS TEKSTS FRANČU VALODAS KĀ SVEŠVALODAS STUNDĀS

INESE VEISBUKA

Atslēgvārdi: literārais teksts, franču valoda kā svešvaloda, pamatnostādnes, mācību līdzekļi, mācību priekšmeta standarts, mācību programmas paraugs, uz darbību orientēta pieeja, starppriekšmetu saikne.

1. Ievads

Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes valodu apguvei: mācīšanās, mācīšana, vērtēšana (EKP; Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006), kas dod kopīgu pamatu valodu mācību programmu, vadlīniju, pārbaudījumu, mācību grāmatu izstrādei visā Eiropā, uzsver valodas tēlainā un mākslinieciskā lietojuma lielo nozīmi izglītībā. Valodas mākslinieciskais lietojums ietver arī literāru tekstu radīšanu, uztveršanu un izpildīšanu, tāpat tādu tekstu kā stāstu, romānu, dzejas u. c. tekstu lasīšanu un rakstīšanu.

Raksta mērķis ir noskaidrot literārā teksta lomu franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās. Šim nolūkam vispirms sniegts ieskats tajā, kā literārais teksts izmantots lingvodidaktikā dažādos laika posmos līdz pat mūsdienām, analizētas EKP, lai noskaidrotu, kuros valodas prasmes līmeņos tiek ieteikts strādāt ar literāro tekstu, aplūkots franču valodas kā svešvalodas pedagogu viedoklis un pieredze, sniegts pārskats par literārajam tekstam atvēlēto vietu pēdējā laikā izdotajās franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatās, balstoties uz Estelles Rikuā (*Estelle Riquois*) doktora darbā veikto pētījumu, kā arī aplūkota literārā teksta vieta franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās Latvijas kontekstā, vadoties pēc mācību priekšmeta standarta svešvalodā un mācību programmu paraugiem pamatizglītībā un vispārējā vidējā izglītībā franču valodas kā svešvalodas apguvei. Raksta beigu daļā sniegti piemēri darbam ar franču dzejnieka Artura Rembo (*Arthur Rimbaud*) dzeju, ilustrējot šobrīd aktuālo uz darbību orientēto pieeju, kā arī starppriekšmetu saikni.

2. Literārais teksts lingvodidaktikā dažādos laikposmos

Dažādos laikposmos literāro tekstu statuss, funkcijas un vieta ir mainījusies. Līdz 19. gadsimta beigām, kad aktuāla bija gramatiskā tulkošanas metode, tika uzskatīts, ka literārais teksts ir perfekti piemērots svešvalodas mācīšanai. Gramatiskās tulkošanas mācību metodi sākotnēji izmantoja klasisko valodu apguvei. Valodas apguvēja vārdu krājums un intelektuālais potenciāls tika paplašināts, lasot un tulkojot tekstus, kā arī atbildot uz teksta izpratnes jautājumiem. Izmantojot literāro tekstu, mācīja arī gramatiku, jo tika uzskatīts, ka tieši literārais teksts ir pareizas gramatikas paraugs. Tika izpildīti vienvēidīgi gramatiskie vingrinājumi. Literārais teksts nebija tiešs mācību mērķis, bet tikai sekundārs elements, modelis, kam jāseko. Skolēna radošās izpausmes līdz ar to tika ierobežotas. Rezultātā tika iegūtas zināšanas par apgūstamās valodas sistēmu un kultūrvidi, bet valodu lietot saziņā valodas apguvējs nespēja. (García Pradas 2004; Skujiņa, Anspoka, Kalnbērziņa un Šalme 2011, 37; Riquois 2010)

Par 20. gadsimta prioritāti vairākās valodas mācību metodēs kļūst mutvārdu runa. Literārais teksts kā mācību līdzeklis gandrīz izzūd franču valodas kā svešvalodas apguvē, arī pētījumi vairāk veikti par darbu ar neliterāru tekstu. Tomēr ārpus Francijas literārais teksts vēl tiek izmantots franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās, ko skaidro ar pastāvošo franču kultūras prestižu. Literārais teksts mācību grāmatās sāk atgriezties, sākot ar komunikatīvo pieeju 20. gadsimta 70. un 80. gados, un pedagogi literāro tekstu sāk uzskatīt par līdzvērtīgu neliterāram tekstam. Tomēr vēl bieži literārā teksta izmantošana saistīta ar gramatisko tulkošanas metodi, tātad nesaderīgu ar komunikatīvo pieeju. Literārais teksts tiek noraidīts kā mācību līdzeklis, pamatojoties uz to, ka literārā teksta valoda atšķiras no valodas, ko lieto ikdienā. Lielākoties literāro tekstu uzskata vienkārši par autentisku mācību līdzekli. (Balazs 2005; García Pradas 2004; Günday 2010; Riquois 2010)

90. gadu otrajā pusē literārais teksts piedzīvo renesansi, tomēr atšķirībā no citiem valodas aspektiem (gramatikas, tulkošanas, fonētikas u. c.) šo renesansi nevar attiecināt uz metodiku. Mūsdienās pastāv interese par literārā teksta izmantošanu franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību stundās. Kopš 1999. gada franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatās literārais teksts bieži atrodams kā autentisks mācību līdzeklis. Tomēr pedagogiem ir tendence vairāk izmantot gan mācību grāmatās iekļautus, gan neiekļautus preses materiālus, uzskatot, ka literārie teksti ir grūtāk pieejami un pārāk attālināti no valodas prakses, no tā, ko skolēni lasa savā dzimtajā valodā. Arī mācību mērķi, kas saistīti ar literāro tekstu, ne vienmēr ir skaidri

formulēti. Tāpat lasīšanai neseko rakstīšanas vingrinājumi, kas veicinātu radošumu. (Balazs 2005; Riquois 2010)

EKP (pirmizdevums 2001. gadā) uzsver nacionālo un reģionālo literatūru lielo ieguldījumu Eiropas kultūras mantojumā; Eiropas Padome to uzskata par „vērtīgu kopīgu bagātību, kas jāaizsargā un jāattīsta”, akcentējot, ka „literatūras studijām nav tikai estētiski, bet arī izglītojoši, intelektuāli, morāli un emocionāli, lingvistiski un kultūras mērķi” (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006, 57). Pamatnostādnēs tiek izteikts aicinājums dažādu līmeņu literatūras skolotājiem iepazīties ar tām, padarot caurskatāmākus savus mācību mērķus un metodes.

Saskaņā ar pamatnostādnēm B1 valodas prasmes līmenī jāprot izstāstīt stāstu, izklāstīt grāmatas saturu un izteikt par to savu viedokli, tomēr pastāv iespēja, ka grāmata izlasīta dzimtajā valodā. Literārā teksta lasīšana svešvalodā tiek iekļauta B2 valodas prasmes līmenī, pastiprināti tai pievēršot uzmanību C1–C2 līmenī. B2 līmenī jāsaprot mūsdienu prozas darbi, C1 līmenī jāsaprot gari un sarežģīti dažāda tipa teksti un jāizprot stila atšķirības, C2 līmenī bez grūtībām jāsaprot literārie darbi un jāprot uzrakstīt pārskatus un recenzijas par literārajiem darbiem. (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006)

Tomēr vairāki autori (Balazs 2005; Cervera 2009; Poletti 2003) iesaka literāros tekstus izmantot visos valodas prasmes līmeņos, integrēt tos valodas mācībās pēc iespējas ātrāk, uzskatot, ka literārajiem tekstiem ir vieta arī valodas, ne tikai literatūras stundā. Faktiski pedagogi paši sevi ierobežojot (Berchoud 2010), pakļaujoties šīm nostādnēm. Pedagogu pieredze (Collès un Dufays 2007) liecina, ka nav viegli arī pārliecināt valodu apguvējus, ka literāros tekstus nepieciešams lasīt franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās, jo iesācējiem nepieciešams *izdzīvošanas* līmenis, bet citiem, īpaši pieaugušiem, kas mācās augstākos līmeņos, ir mērķi, kas saistīti ar profesionālo darbību. Maz ir to, kas atzīstas, ka turpina valodas apguvi, lai labāk saprastu kultūru vai atklātu franču literatūru. Izeja rodama pragmatiskajā pieejā.

3. Literārais teksts franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatās

E. Rikuā veikusi pētījumu par 53 franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatām, kas izdotas Francijā no 1999. gada līdz 2008. gadam, periodā, kad pedagogijā parādījās uz darbību orientēta pieeja. Kopumā tie ir 20 dažādi gan pieaugušajiem, gan pusaudžiem domāti valodu mācību līdzekļu komplekti A1–C1 līmenim, iznākuši 3 galvenajās izdevniecībās, kas izdod franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatas, – *Didier FLE, Clé*

International un *Hachette FLE*. Ir izpētīts teksta apjoms lappusē, noskaidroti, kuru autoru darbi iekļauti, noskaidrota teksta žanriskā piederība, tas, kuras valodas prasmes attīstīšanai teksts domāts, piedāvātie mācību uzdevumi un tēmas. Izpētie valodu mācību līdzekļi ir plaši izplatīti ārpus Francijas, tie tiek izmantoti arī Latvijā.

Visvairāk literāro tekstu ir valodu mācību līdzekļa komplekta augstākajam valodas prasmes līmenim domātajā 4. grāmatā. 1. grāmatā tikai 2,2 % no lappušu kopskaita ir saistīti ar kādu literāru darbu – tās ir vai nu vāka reprodukcijas, vai literārie teksti. 2. grāmatā tie ir 4,6 %, 3. grāmatā – 9,2 % un pēdējā valodu mācību līdzekļa komplekta grāmatā – 13,6 %. Visvairāk literāro tekstu ir *Panorama* (pat 20 % 4. grāmatā un 19 % 3. grāmatā). Arī *Campus*, *Tout va bien!*, *Belleville* un *Alter Ego* dažās komplekta grāmatās literārais teksts aizņem vairāk nekā 10 % no grāmatas apjoma, kas ir augstāks par vidējo rādītāju – 5 %. Jāatzīmē sakritība – pirmās četras minētās mācību grāmatas izdotas izdevniecībā *Clé International*. Tomēr gandrīz pusei izpētes korpusā ietilpstošo grāmatu šis rādītājs ir zem 5 %, lielākoties tās ir 1. un 2. līmeņa grāmatas. Literārais teksts ir sastopams ne visās mācību grāmatās. (Riquois 2009; Riquois 2010)

Šajās mācību grāmatās pārstāvētos autorus var iedalīt trīs grupās. Pirmkārt, tie ir pie literārā kultūras mantojuma pieskaitāmi autori (56 %), kā Emīls Zolā (*Émile Zola*), Aleksandrs Dimā (*Alexandre Dumas*) vai Gistavs Flobērs (*Gustave Flaubert*), daudzi no tiem ir 19. un 20. gadsimta pārstāvji. Otrkārt, tie ir tie 20. gadsimta autori (24 %), kuru darbi ir pieprasītākie un pirkākie, kā Amēlija Notomba (*Amélie Nothomb*) vai Anna Gavalda (*Anna Gavalda*). Treškārt, tie ir nesen iznākušo darbu mazāk pazīstami autori (20 %). Mācību grāmatās atrodami ne tikai franču autoru (85 %), bet arī frankofono autoru darbi (12 %), lai parādītu franču valodas variantus, kā arī pat citās valodās rakstošu autoru darbi (3 %). (Riquois 2009)

No E. Rikuā pētījuma izriet, ka franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatās tiek iekļauti teksti ar dažādu žanrisko piederību. Lielākoties tie ir fragmenti no romāna vai noveles, mazāk ir lugu fragmentu vai dzejoļu. Pamatlīmenim (A1–A2) domātajās mācību grāmatās (valodu mācību līdzekļa komplekta 1. grāmatā) gan pārsvarā tiek iekļauti dzejoļi (52 %), tad seko fragmenti no romāna vai noveles, pārējie žanri ir mazāk pārstāvēti. E. Rikuā uzskata, ka jau A1.2 apakšlīmenī skolēns ir spējīgs lasīt īsus tekstus. Dzeja šajā līmenī dominē tāpēc, ka tās īsā forma ir piemērota pamatlīmenim. Ar literārajiem tekstiem saistīti arī mutvārdu un rakstveida vingrinājumi, kā dzejoļa lasīšana, deklamēšana, atdarinājumi. 2. grāmatā (parasti A2 un B1 līmenis), 3. grāmatā (B1 līmenis), 4. grāmatā

(parasti B2 līmenis) jau dominē fragments no romāna vai noveles. (Riquois 2009; Riquois 2010)

E. Rikuā secina, ka literārais teksts ļauj reizē gan apgūt valodu, gan iepazīties ar kultūru. Piemēram, romāna fragmenti ir iekļauti mācību grāmatās tur, kur runa ir par gramatiku, vārdu krājuma apgūšanu, kultūras studijām vai lasītā teksta sapratni. Tomēr literārais teksts nebūtu jāsaista tikai ar gramatikas uzdevumiem. Reti ar gramatikas uzdevumiem saistīti ir poētiskie teksti, kuri tādā gadījumā zaudē poētisko raksturu, paliekot tikai to valodas aspektam. Poētiskie teksti ir piemēroti izrunas vingrinājumiem, lasīšanai skaļā balsī un atdarināšanai. Ja teksts ir kā pamats vienam vai vairākiem gramatikas uzdevumiem, tad grāmatā tas atrodas attiecīgās mācību stundas vidusdaļā. Ja teksts atrodas stundas sākumdaļā, tad tas saistīts ar teksta sapratnes, leksikas uzdevumiem vai arī skolēns tiek rosināts izteikties; ja – stundas beigās, tad teksts ir saistīts ar kultūras aspektu vai lasīšanas paņēmieni iemācīšanos. Lai tuvinātos tam, kā grāmatas tiek izvēlētas lasīšanai ārpus mācību stundas, tiek izmantots parateksts – grāmatas vāka noformējums, pēc vāka liekot uzminēt grāmatas saturu. (Skujiņa, Anspoka, Kalnbērziņa un Šalme 2011, 61; Riquois 2009; Riquois 2010)

4. Literārais teksts franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās Latvijas kontekstā

Latvijā mācību priekšmeta standarts svešvalodā paredz, ka 9. klases beigās skolēnam, sākot apgūt otro svešvalodu no 6. klases, būtu jāasniedz A2–B1 valodas prasmes līmenis. Valodas un komunikatīvā kompetence ietver arī vienkāršu literāru tekstu lasīšanu un sapratni; viņam jāprot sameklēt konkrētu informāciju dažādu stilu un žanru tekstos, pastāstīt par lasīto, izsakot savu attieksmi. (Ministru kabineta noteikumi 1027 2006)

Laī gan EKP paredz literāra teksta lasīšanu, sākot ar B2 līmeni, redzams, ka Latvijā tas tiek darīts jau iepriekšējos līmeņos.

Saskaņā ar franču valodas kā otrās svešvalodas programmas paraugu Latvijā 6.–9. klases skolēnam ir jābūt spējīgam lasīt, saprast un detalizēti izprast literāros tekstus, ieskaitot galveno varoņu attieksmi, domas, emocijas, kā arī teksta vispārējo jēgu. Šie teksti var būt stāsti vai literatūra jaunatnei. Ieteiktie valodu mācību līdzekļu komplekti ir *Fréquence jeunes*, *Junior*, *Ado*, *Pile ou face*, kas neietilpst to mācību grāmatu korpusā, ko analizējusi E. Rikuā. Programmas paraugā ieteikts veidot starppriekšmetu saikni, pamatā ir komunikatīvā pieeja ar pragmatisku ievirzi. (Franču valoda 6.–9. klasei 2005)

Turpinot franču valodas kā otrās svešvalodas apguvi vidusskolā, skolēnam jāsasniedz B2–C1 līmenis. Ja franču valoda tiek apgūta kā trešā svešvaloda, tad jāsasniedz B1 līmenis. Svešvalodas mācību priekšmeta standartā komunikatīvās un valodas kompetences saturs paredz arī saprast un uztvert dažādus teksta veidus, analizēt un izvērtēt tekstus un to saturu. Sociokultūras kompetences saturs paredz izmantot literatūru citu kultūru izpratnei un sevis pilnveidošanai, veidot literārus tekstus, izmantot daudzveidīgas teksta interpretācijas iespējas. (Ministru kabineta noteikumi 715/2008)

Abos franču valodas kā svešvalodas programmu paraugos vidusskolām redzams, ka skolēniem, lai iegūtu komunikatīvo un valodas kompetenci, jāprot iegūt pamata un detalizētu informāciju, tā jāuztver un jāinterpretē, lasot un klausoties dažādus mutvārdu un rakstveida tekstus, tostarp literāros tekstus. Sociokultūras kompetence tiek sasniegta, lasot literāros tekstus kā komunikatīvas situācijas, uztverot tos kā nacionālās kultūras atspoguļojumu, apgūstot literārā teksta lasīšanas un tā tēlu sistēmas izpratnes stratēģijas, tēlaini un radoši uztverot valodas līdzekļus. Franču un latviešu kultūra jāsalīdzina, toleranti izturoties pret atšķirībām. (Franču valoda (svešvaloda) 2008; Franču valoda (3. svešvaloda) 2008)

Tomēr visiem trim pamatizglītības un vispārējās vidējās izglītības programmu paraugiem franču valodas apguvei ir ieteikuma raksturs, pedagogs šīs programmas var konkretizēt un papildināt, viņam ir arī tiesības veidot savu mācību priekšmeta programmu, izmantojot papildliteratūru. Jāpiebilst, ka nav saraksta, kas ieteiktu mācību līdzekļus franču valodas kā svešvalodas apguvei vidusskolā.

5. Ilustratīvi piemēri literārā teksta izmantošanai franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās

20. gadsimta 90. gados komunikatīvo pieeju nomaina uz darbību orientēta pieeja. EKP teikts, ka uz darbību orientētas pieejas „pamatā ir valodas lietojums, veicot konkrētas darbības, jo valodas lietotāji un apguvēji pirmām kārtām ir „sociālas būtnes”, t. i., sabiedrības locekļi, kuriem noteiktos apstākļos, konkrētā situācijā un specifiskā darbības sfērā jāpilda dažādi uzdevumi (ne tikai ar valodu saistīti)”, šī pieeja „ņem vērā to, ka persona kā sociāla būtne izmanto kognitīvās, emocionālās un gribas iespējas” (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006, 17). Uz darbību orientētā pieeja mudina skolēnus būt aktīviem, autonomākiem un pašiem apgūt zināšanas, sagatavojoties dzīvei sabiedrībā un dažādām komunikatīvām situācijām.

Šobrīd aktuālā pieeja ilustrēta, izmantojot A. Rembo dzejoli „Mana bohēma” (*Ma bohème*) un mācot, piemēram, tēmu *Ceļojumi*. Šis franču dzejnieks ir to 19. gadsimta autoru vidū, kas pieder pie literārā kultūras mantojuma un ir iekļauts arī Francijā izdotajās franču valodas kā svešvalodas mācību grāmatās. Priekšnoteikums ir tāds, ka skolēni jau ir iepazinušies ar atskaņu izvietojumu un tiem ir atbilstošs vārdu krājums, lai varētu izteikties par dzejoļiem. Izložējot skolēni tiek sadalīti 4 grupās, katra grupa pie sava galda veic atšķirīgu uzdevumu, pēc kāda laika grupas pulksteņrādītāja virzienā mainās. Nesaprotamos vārdus skolotājs paskaidro vai skolēni tos paši sameklē vārdnīcā. Uz viena galda atrodas aploksne ar dzejoļa rindām, skolēnu uzdevums ir atrast rindu pareizo secību. Pie otra galda skolēnu grupa strādā ar A. Rembo biogrāfiju – tekstu ar tukšām vietām, kas jāaizpilda. Trešā grupa pēc atskaņām noskaidro, ka dzejolis „Mana bohēma” ir sonets. Ceturtā grupa zīmē savus iespaidus, izlasot dzejoļa nosaukumu. Pēc darba grupās katras grupas pārstāvis prezentē uzdevuma izpildi. Var būt arī papildu uzdevums uzrakstīt dzejoli, iekļaujot vārdus *chemin* (‘ceļš’), *liberté* (‘brīvība’), *nature* (‘daba’), *rêve* (‘sapnis’). Dažādās darba formas skolēnus motivē un liek ieklausīties grupas biedru piedāvājumos, akceptēt dažādus viedokļus, tiek apgūta arī lingvistiskā kompetence. (König 2009)

Starppriekšmetu saikni ilustrējošs piemērs ir spēle „Pastaiga ar Rembo”. Tā ir kolektīva spēle bez uzvarētājiem un zaudētājiem, kuras mērķis ir ļaut skolēniem izteikt savas izjūtas attiecībā uz dažādiem A. Rembo dzejoļiem un brīvi raisīt asociācijas ar mākslas darbiem. Nepieciešamas 10 kartītes ar dažādu A. Rembo dzejoļu fragmentiem. Uz viena spēles dēļa A3 formātā atrodas 10 franču u. c. gleznotāju gleznu reprodukcijas. Lai palīdzētu skolēnam, kuram radušās grūtības, var izsniegt arī iespējamo atbilstošu lapu ar gleznu nosaukumiem, autoriem, pārstāvēto mākslas stilu, dzejoļu nosaukumiem, gleznas atslēgvārdiem. Uz galda blakus spēles dēlim kaudzē atrodas 10 kartītes ar aprakstīto pusi uz leju. Katrs skolēns pēc kārtas no kaudzes izvelk kartīti ar dzeju, nolasa dzejas fragmentu un izvēlas gleznas reprodukciju, argumentē savu izvēli un noliek dzejas kartīti uz gleznas reprodukcijas. Nākamais spēlētājs dara to pašu. Vienmēr ar citu spēlētāju piekrišanu pēc diskusijām ir iespējams labot sākotnējo izvēli. Spēle ir beigusies tad, kad katrai gleznas reprodukcijai ir pievienota kartīte ar dzejoļa fragmentu. (*Jeu pour les rencontres finales* 2004)

Nākamais piemērs, kas ilustrē starppriekšmetu saikni, saistīts ar A. Rembo dzejoli „Patskaņi” (*Voyelles*), kurā katrs patskanis tiek asociēts ar krāsu, smaržu, skaņu, kustību. Šie uzdevumi domāti, sākot no B1valodas prasmes līmeņa ar mērķi atklāt asociācijas un sakarības.

Vispirms skolēni, kuri sēž lokā, izvēlas dažādu krāsu kvadrātiņus no skolotāja piedāvātajiem, atbild uz jautājumiem un pamato, kāpēc ir izvēlējušies tieši šo krāsu, ar kādu audiālu un vizuālu sajūtu viņi to asociē, ar kādu priekšmetu vai būtni šī krāsa saistās, kāda muzikāla kompozīcija vai kāds mūzikas veids vislabāk varētu raksturot šo krāsu, par kādām pozitīvām vai negatīvām īpašībām tā liek domāt, kādas atmiņas tā viņos rada, kā arī asociē šo krāsu ar kādu patskani. Pēc tam tiek izdalītas lapas un izlasīts viss dzejolis, salīdzinot skolēnu un dzejnieka asociācijas. (Machuca 2007)

Inspirējoties no A. Rembo dzejoļa „Patskaņi”, skolēni var radīt savu mākslas darbu zīmējuma vai kolāžas veidā. Minētajos piemēros redzams, ka izveidojas starppriekšmetu saikne starp literatūru, mākslu un mūziku. Par sinestēzijas fenomenu, kad valodas vai mūzikas skaņas tiek asociētas ar krāsām vai formām, darbā „Strukturālā antropoloģija” (*Anthropologie structurale*) rakstījis franču antropologs Klods Levī-Stross (*Claude Lévi-Strauss*). Fonētisko simbolismu pētījis jau amerikāņu antropologs Edvarts Sepīrs (*Edward Sapir*), bet ungāru lingvists Ivāns Fonaģs (*Iván Fónagy*) darbā „Dzīvā balss” (*La vive voix*) vēlreiz atgādina, ka ar fonāciju ir saistīta metafora. Valodas skaņām tiek piedēvētas kādas īpašības, tās var būt, piemēram, vīrišķas, sievišķas, gaišas, drūmas u. tml. Savukārt, eiritmijā, ko praktizē Valdorfa pedagoģijā, skaņas tiek attēlotas ar kustību palīdzību. (Fónagy 1983; Horni 2007; Lévi-Strauss 1974)

6. Secinājumi

Izpētot literārā teksta nozīmi franču valodas kā svešvalodas apgūvē dažādos laikposmos līdz mūsdienām, iespējams izdarīt vairākus secinājumus.

1. Literārā teksta loma lingvodidaktikā laika gaitā ir mainījusies. Kādreiz novērtēts, pēc tam noliegts, tagad literārais teksts piedzīvo renesansi franču valodas kā svešvalodas stundās.
2. Lielu nozīmi literārā teksta izmantošanai piešķir EKP, kurās uzsvērts nacionālās un reģionālās literatūras ieguldījums Eiropas kultūras mantojumā un daudzveidīgie literatūras studiju mērķi.
3. Lai gan pamatnostādnēs darbs ar literāro tekstu paredzēts no B1 valodas prasmes līmeņa līdz C2 līmenim, tomēr pedagogu vidū pastāv viedoklis, ka tos var izmantot visos valodas apguves līmeņos.
4. Arī Francijā izdotos mācību līdzekļos darbs ar literāro tekstu paredzēts visos valodas prasmes līmeņos. Pamatlīmenī dominē dzeja, augstākos līmeņos ar literāro tekstu tiek strādāts vairāk un

- dominē romāna vai noveles fragmenti. Pārsvarā ietverti gan populāru, gan mazāk pazīstamu 20. gadsimta franču un frankofono autoru darbi.
5. Francijā izdotos mācību līdzekļus franču valodas kā svešvalodas apguvei izmanto arī Latvijā, un mācību priekšmeta standarts svešvalodā paredz, ka literārais teksts svešvalodā tiek lasīts jau pirms pamatnostādņēs minētā B1 līmeņa.
 6. Literārie teksti palīdz veidot un sasniegt gan komunikatīvo un valodas, gan sociokultūras kompetenci.
 7. Darbā ar literārajiem tekstiem var izmantot šobrīd aktuālo un pamatnostādņēs minēto uz darbību orientēto pieeju, kā arī veidot starppriekšmetu saikni.

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Literary text in French as a Foreign Language Classes

Keywords: literary text, French as a foreign language, framework, teaching/learning materials, subject standard, curriculum standard, activity-oriented approach, cross-curricular links.

Summary

The *European Common Guidelines for Language: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR), which provide a common basis for the development of language learning curricula, guidelines, testing knowledge, and textbooks throughout Europe, emphasize the great importance of imaginative and aesthetic use of language in education. The aesthetic use of language also includes literary text production, reception and performance of literary texts; it means reading and writing of such texts as stories, novels, poetry, etc.

The article aims to clarify the role of the literary text in French-as-a-foreign-language classes; for this purpose an insight is provided into how the literary text has been used in linguistic didactics at various periods of time to the present day, CEFR has been analysed to determine at what language proficiency levels work with literary texts is recommended, teachers' views are dealt with, an overview has been given of the place of the literary text in the recently published textbooks of French as a foreign language, as well as its place in French as a foreign language classes in the context of Latvia, following the subject standard *Foreign Language*, and curricula models for learning French as a foreign language are recommended. The end of the article provides illustrative examples for work with French poet Arthur Rimbaud's poetry.

During different time periods, the status, function and place of literary texts have changed. Once estimated, and then denied, the literary text is

now experiencing a renaissance in French language classes. It has also been facilitated by CEFR, which highlights national and regional literature contributions to European cultural heritage and diverse literature study objectives. The literary text allows learning the language and getting acquainted with culture at the same time. CEFR envisages work with the literary text from B1 to C2 language proficiency level; however, there is an opinion among teachers that they can be used at all language proficiency levels and not only during literature classes. However, this renaissance cannot be attributed to the methodology; literary texts are considered to be more difficult and too far removed from language practice, there are no writing exercises for promoting creativity. It is not easy to convince students that literary texts need to be read in order to discover French literature.

The study materials in French as a foreign language and published in France after 1999 include work with the literary text at all levels of language acquisition, with an increasing percentage at higher levels, yet the literary text is not found in all textbooks. If, at the basic level, poetry dominates due to its short form, at higher levels extracts from novels or short stories are more common. Mostly represented are both popular and lesser-known 20th-century French and Francophone writers. Literary texts are also associated with oral and written exercises; however, poetry texts should not be associated with grammatical tasks.

These textbooks, published in France, are also used in Latvia. The curriculum model for learning French as a foreign language at the basic level recommends books, but there are no lists suggesting teaching aids for learning French as a foreign language in secondary school. Although the CEFR provides literary texts starting at B2 level, in Latvia this is already done at previous levels. Literary texts help build and achieve communicative, language and socio-cultural competence, working with the topical activity-oriented approach mentioned in the CEFR; this encourages students to be more active and autonomous. This approach and the cross-curricular links recommended in the sample programme are illustrated by examples from A. Rimbaud's poetry for work during French-as-a-foreign-language classes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SELECTION OF READING TEXTS FOR RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

MARINA NOVIKA AND LARISA PETRE

Keywords: text, reading, foreign (Russian) language, secondary school, criteria, type of reading, type of texts, content of texts, alternative texts.

1. Introduction

In the methodology of teaching, foreign language reading texts take significant part since texts are of great importance for the successful formation of reading mechanisms and communicative-oriented learning.

Methodologists, teachers and textbook authors use various approaches for the selection of texts for reading, utilizing methodological or psycholinguistic approaches, while taking into account the objectives of teaching a foreign language, the stage of training, the training program, the age of students, etc. However, the practice of working in schools shows that it is necessary to take into consideration other factors too: the real language level of students for reading certain texts, the number of students in the group who can or cannot cope with reading the texts offered and the motivation to learn a foreign language, in our case – Russian.

In various informal conversations with teachers at conferences and seminars on Russian as a foreign language, the following difficulties in improving reading skills in secondary school (10–12 grades) were mentioned:

- reading mechanisms that should have been formed in the basic school (grades 6–9) have not reached the required level, which leads to a focus on the technical side of reading and is a big obstacle to understanding the text,

- the texts are too long, which, because of the imperfection of the reading technique, require a lot of time to be read,
- the texts are not close to the real-life situations and are not relevant for a particular age,
- the tasks relating to the texts are too complicated,
- the texts contain a lot of unfamiliar vocabulary, which makes understanding difficult and requires either translation or additional explanations. (Петре 2016)

Our observations have shown that reading texts in Russian lessons often turns into “decoding”, in a “word for word translation”. Thus, the purpose of reading to get information gets lost. Some students at the advanced stage of training have not acquired mature reading skills. They cannot ignore language difficulties (for example, the presence of unfamiliar vocabulary) and concentrate on a common understanding of the content of the text.

The above-mentioned difficulties are confirmed by our study, which revealed that about 50 % of students in the 12th grade had a low level of proficiency in a foreign (Russian) language (Петре 2016). Therefore, there is a need to offer students alternative texts that can be read for a limited time, gaining an opportunity to develop other types of language skills based on the information gained from reading texts.

A low level of motivation to learn Russian as a foreign language can also be noted. A foreign language has its own specific motivation. According to various sources, several types of motivation for studying a foreign language can be distinguished: broad social motivation, motivation related to the future development of the individual, communicative motivation, and motivation generated by the educational activity itself (Дзилихова and Андиева 2016).

A broad social motivation presupposes the role of this or that language in the society. If the English language has a very high status in Latvia, then the Russian language does not. The pupils in Latvian schools connect their further perspectives in their education and social life, as well as choice of profession and occupation, first of all, with the English language. Their motivation to study Russian as a foreign language is weak or non-existent. The students substantiate their choice of Russian as a second foreign language by the following reasons:

Parents know Russian and will be able to help me in my studies; It seems to me that it is easier to learn Russian than German (the second foreign language to choose); Parents (mother or father) said that you need to know Russian; A friend chose Russian, and I followed his example; I can already speak Russian. (Петре 2016)

As can be seen from the statements of the students, they lack social, that is, external, motivation. This is also confirmed by the fact that only one of the 12th-grade pupils who took part in the approbation of the texts for reading chose to take an exam in Russian as a foreign language to obtain the certificate.

All the above determines the relevance of the topic: correctly selected text will help not only improve the reading mechanisms but also, by its simplicity, motivate the learning of a foreign language.

The aim of the study is to determine the criteria for selecting alternative texts for reading in secondary schools on the basis of which it becomes possible to select and offer the texts to pupils who have a low level of Russian as a foreign language.

In the special literature on the methodology of teaching foreign languages, great attention is paid to the criteria for selecting reading texts.

2. Criteria for Selecting Reading Texts

There is an extensive list of criteria for selecting reading texts in a foreign language. Some of the fundamental moments in their drafting and definition are: the purpose of education (schooling, vocational, etc.), the age of the students, the stage of training (initial, advanced, proficiency), the conditions for training, etc. Of the variety of criteria in the framework of this article, we will focus only on some.

The criteria for selecting reading texts can, in our opinion, be divided into several groups; for example, criteria related to the type of texts, criteria defining the type of reading and criteria that determine the content of texts.

2.1. Types of Texts

Leading scientist in the theory of text Nina Valgina (*Нина Валгина*) points out that the typology of a text, despite its central position in the general theory of the text, has not yet been sufficiently developed. There are no general criteria that can be taken as the basis for typologisation (Валгина 2003).

There is a fairly large number of classifications of texts on various grounds. The scope of this article does not allow a complete analysis of types and styles. Here are some of the classifications existing in the scientific and methodological literature:

- according to the way of thinking: artistic, non-fiction (Валгина 2003),

- according to the structure: continuous, non-continuous (PISA 2014),
- according to the purpose of use: for personal purposes, public, educational, etc. (Фоломкина 2005),
- according to the purpose of creation (for native speakers or for foreign language learners): authentic, non-authentic (Киян 2015),
- the completeness and degree of presentation of the author's plan: authentic, adapted (Сабина 2009).

Currently the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) classification is widely used:

- 1) non-continuous (without visual images):
 - description (fictional and technical),
 - narration (story, report, reportage),
 - explanation (explanatory essay, definition, interpretation, summary),
 - argumentation (comment, scientific justification),
 - instructions (instructions for the performance of work, rule, statutes, laws);
- 2) non-continuous (with visual images):
 - graphics,
 - charts,
 - tables,
 - maps,
 - forms (tax, visa, questionnaires, etc.),
 - information sheets and announcements. (PISA 2014)

This classification successfully combines many characteristics of texts and can be used to select them.

Every researcher distinguishes a particular specific feature of the text and on the basis of this suggests its classification. In real life, each text has a set of characteristics.

Let us consider in more detail the above-mentioned classifications. In the teaching of a foreign language, it is considered that fiction texts should be offered for reading (Воронцова 2011). It is in the fiction text that students become acquainted with the imagery of words, with the peculiarities of their compatibility; that the meaning of the words are revealed in the context, etc. Reading fiction texts involves enriching vocabulary and improving oral speech skills. However, experts correctly point out that the original fiction text in Russian represents a special difficulty for students who learn Russian as a foreign language (Соловова 2002).

First of all, fiction texts are offered for home reading. Such a task is not obligatory, and with the lack of motivation to learn Russian as a foreign language, students do not choose to read fiction texts voluntarily.

Textbooks for secondary school include texts from the works of Russian writers: L. Tolstoy, A. Chekhov, V. Gilyarovskiy, E. Schwartz, L. Ulitskaya, D. Rubina, B. Akunin, and others (Марченко and Савельева 2011). In our opinion, it is ineffective to give passages from a large work to read. Students do not know all the characters and only a few of them are represented in the text. They are not familiar with the plot of the work; they cannot understand the logic of the actions and behaviour of the characters, which influences the understanding of the subtext, the author's intention.

The fiction texts in the textbooks contain a lot of less-used vocabulary as well as outdated vocabulary, which, in our opinion, makes understanding the text very difficult. This affects the interest in the fiction and does not stimulate the desire to read the fiction work completely. We believe that secondary school students with a low level of language proficiency should not be offered the abstracts from the fiction works. It makes sense to offer popular science and informative texts.

The issue of text adaptation is debatable. Some scientists are categorically against it while others believe that adaptation is necessary. In our opinion, the adaptation of texts for students with a low level of language proficiency is needed. It is preferable to adapt them in two ways. The first direction is to reduce the length of the text, excluding those parts that do not affect the main content, and the second direction is to replace uncommon words with their synonyms.

The issue of using the authentic and non-authentic texts is topical nowadays. Authentic text is traditionally considered a text that was not originally adapted for educational purposes. This text was written by native speakers for native speakers. Non-authentic texts are texts written specifically for students of a foreign language (Киян 2015).

There are two points of view regarding the use of authentic texts. The first is that they motivate students because they are more interesting and are a greater incentive for learning than artificial or non-authentic texts (Lewis and Hill 1991). The second is that authentic materials reduce students' motivation because they are too difficult (May 1986; Bachman 1990).

We believe that it is possible to use both authentic and non-authentic texts that are popular science texts and informative texts. If necessary, they can be adapted to the language level of the students.

2.2. *Types of Reading*

Analysis of the methodical literature has shown that improving the reading skills requires taking into account the type of reading. The type of reading will determine the choice of text and tactics.

Classifications of types of reading are:

- according to the form – aloud, silent,
- according to the use of logical operations – analytical, synthetic,
- by the depth of penetration into the content of the text – intensive, extensive,
- according to the targets – scanning, skimming, reading for detail, reading for gist,
- according to the level of understanding – full/detailed understanding, general/global understanding.

Following the leading psycholinguists, we believe that when teaching a foreign language schools should allocate and take into account the types of reading that depend on the aim set, on the task the students are faced with (skimming, scanning, reading for detail, for gist) (Фоломкина 2005). These particular types of reading consider the communicative direction of reading and also more clearly determine the speed of reading and the length of the text.

Scanning implies a precise understanding of not only the factual content of the text but also the subtext. There are several points of view on the use of scanning in school practice. Some methodologists believe that this type of reading is not only a target but also a means of teaching reading so they offer shorter texts with a certain degree of language difficulty. This type of reading is only realized aloud (Клычникова 1983). Others point out that the task of learning reading is also the formation of the ability of the student to overcome difficulties in understanding a foreign text independently (Рогова, Рабинович and Сахарова 1991). The object of “learning” with this type of reading is the information that the text contains but not the language material. The optimal rate of reading is 40–50 words per minute. Proponents of this approach offer texts of cognitive value, informative value and of the highest difficulty for this stage of instruction, both in content and in language (Шибко 2015).

Skimming is a kind of reading that is used to get basic text information (about 70 %). Long texts with language difficulties are used. With skimming as a type of reading, the main communicative task is to extract from the text the basic information, that is, to find out what issues are talked about in the text, what exactly is said through questions, etc. This

kind of reading requires the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary information. To practice this type of reading comparatively long texts are used, light in language terms, containing at least 25–30 % of secondary information. The speed of skimming as a type of reading in Russian should not be lower than 110–120 words per minute. The reading for gist assumes getting a general idea of the material being read. This is a fluent, selective reading. When reading for gist, the text is not completely read. This type of reading requires a fairly high qualification as a reader as well as proficiency in a significant amount of linguistic material. The speed of this type of reading should not be less than 500 words per minute. Reading for detail is focused on reading newspapers and special literature. The purpose of this type of reading is to quickly find certain information in the text or in a group of texts (Шибко 2015).

Our observations showed that in secondary school (grades 10–12) teachers often use reading aloud, not taking into account the length of the text and its language complexity, because this kind of reading allows them to monitor and correct the reading technique. This means that in the lessons of Russian as a foreign language, reading can take up a significant part of the lesson, and the teacher has little time to develop other types of language skills.

As we have already mentioned, many students have not formed sufficient reading mechanisms at this stage of language learning. They cannot make abstractions due to certain language difficulties (for example, the presence of unfamiliar vocabulary) and concentrate on the general understanding of the text. For this group of students, the text should correspond to their language level.

Thus, the texts should be intended for explanatory reading aloud and have to be short. In the process of reading the teacher should monitor and correct. For students with insufficiently developed reading techniques it is a necessary condition.

2.3. Content of the Texts

The content of texts is of great importance. The following are the selection criteria:

- the content of the texts should correspond to the lexico-grammatical topics approved in the second foreign language programme: ‘Family’, ‘School’, ‘Interests and hobbies’, etc. (Krievu valoda (svešvaloda) 2008),

- texts should also contain culturological material, form an idea about the specificity of another culture, the peculiarities of everyday life, the habits of native speakers (Носонович and Мильруд 1999),
- texts should correspond to the age and psychological peculiarities of secondary school students, to cause emotional, mental and speech responses in students,
- texts should be accompanied by visual material that attracts the attention of students and facilitates understanding of the communicative task, establishes a connection with reality (Носонович and Мильруд 1999).

In accordance with the criteria considered, we selected specific texts. To confirm our approach to the selection of alternative reading texts for students with a low level of proficiency in a foreign language, an experimental verification was carried out.

3. Approbation of Reading Texts

The texts that acquaint readers with the culture of Russia were offered. They corresponded to the lexical and grammatical themes: “The Most Famous Alyonka”, “The Story of the Girl from a Chocolate Wrapper”, “The Shawl and the Headscarf”, and “Interesting Facts Facts about Arbat”. The texts were accompanied by illustrations.

The research technology consisted of several stages. At the first stage, the level of Russian language proficiency of the 12th-grade students of the Grobiņa (Latvia) Gymnasium (class X) and the Nīca (Latvia) Secondary School (class Y) was determined.

The students were assessed according to the following criteria: general level of Russian language proficiency, level of reading proficiency, performance of post-textual tasks, the possibility of discussing the text orally.

Three pupils in class X and three pupils in class Y (total – six students) had a high level of proficiency in Russian. Description of the high level of proficiency: the student reads fluently; rarely uses a dictionary; performs all tasks related to the text; discusses the material read; and performs creative post-reading assignments without much difficulty. She/he considers the knowledge of the language important when choosing a further profession.

An average level of proficiency in Russian was shown by four pupils in class X and six pupils in class Y (ten students in total). Description of the level: the student uses reference literature in the process of reading to understand certain moments of the text; she/he does some types of

assignments to the text without any difficulties, some of the tasks require translation and explanation and, therefore, additional time; discusses the content of the text with difficulty; when performing creative tasks as post-reading tasks, she/he needs more time and often uses the dictionary. She/he believes that in the future, she/he will need minimal knowledge of the Russian language.

Seven students in class X and six students in class Y had a low level of Russian (13 students in total). Description of the level: the reading is a purely mechanical process for these students. While reading they try to translate each word, do not perceive information as a whole; translate every word, and need explanations. The students try to do some tasks without understanding the text and, of course, they cannot cope. When discussing the text, they use their native language. This group of students assumes that they will not need Russian in the future.

In the second stage, we asked students to read the texts selected in accordance with our approach and intended, first of all, for students with a low level of reading skills. When working on the text during the experiment, the traditional system was used: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading exercises.

After the lessons, a survey was conducted – this was the third stage. The 12th-grade pupils of school X and school Y were asked to answer a questionnaire after reading the alternative texts (see the questionnaire at the end of the article). The questionnaire consisted of nine questions to determine the simplicity and accessibility of the texts offered, as well as the preferences in the choice of material for reading and the language of reading (Latvian – native, English – first foreign, Russian – second foreign). Twenty-six students (15 students of school X and 11 students of school Y) took part in the survey.

The format of the article does not allow us to fully analyse the answers to all nine questions of the questionnaire so we will focus only on three of them (No. 1, No. 2, No. 4).

To the first question: “Did you like the texts that you had read?” the overwhelming majority (23 students) answered positively; the “no” was noted only by three.

The answers to the second question “What did you like about the texts?” were the following:

- ten respondents noted that they liked the topic,
- the length of the text (short) was liked by 20 students,
- the variant of “few unfamiliar words” was noted by six students;
- three students chose the option “everything is clear”;
- the information the texts contained was interesting for 14 students.

It must be noted that all the students of the school X (15 students) who took part in the survey noted the small number texts as a positive feature, while only about half of the school Y (five people) found this feature positive.

When answering the fourth question: “What texts would you like to read in the Russian language lesson?” the overwhelming majority of the respondents noted that they would like to read short texts. We emphasize that, in answering this question, the students were not indifferent. They care about what they read. Students of both schools were unanimous in choosing the length of texts – 20 (X10 + Y10) (Пирпе 2016).

However, this does not mean that the teacher should follow the students and offer only short texts for reading. The length should be determined by taking into account the level of knowledge of the foreign (Russian) language.

The approbation of the texts, the results of the survey and the observation of reading and working with the texts in a real educational situation showed:

- the students preferred short texts,
- the texts offered were read in the lesson completely,
- the teacher had the opportunity to assess the understanding of the texts and conduct oral tasks on the basis of the reading,
- short texts took an adequate time, providing an opportunity to involve the entire system of exercises and develop other language skills based on the information obtained,
- visuals helped to understand the text,
- the texts about the culture of Russia aroused interest.

4. Conclusions

1. Reading as one of the four language skills should be formed and developed in interrelation with other language skills (listening, speaking and writing). This approach assumes that reading should be given a certain amount of time in the lesson; that is, reading cannot take the whole lesson. This should be considered when selecting texts.
2. Reading texts for students who have a low level of proficiency in a foreign (Russian) language should:
 - be short so that they can be read in a limited time, having the opportunity to develop other language skills based on what had been read,
 - be of popular science genre or informative,

- correspond to the lexical and grammatical topics of the learning/teaching,
 - have a cultural orientation,
 - be accompanied by visuals,
 - be intended for reading aloud.
3. In accordance with our approach, reading texts considering the real level of Russian as a foreign language proficiency in the context of low motivation to learn it were chosen and successfully tested in schools.

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Questionnaire

1. Did you like the text you have read?
yes
no
2. What did you like about the text? (you can mark more than one)
topic
short
few unknown words
could understand everything
interesting information
3. What did not you like about the text? (you can mark more than one)
topic
long
many unknown words
could not understand a lot
information not interesting
4. What kind of texts would you like to learn in the Russian (as a foreign language) lessons?
long texts
short texts

it does not matter

I do not want to read, it is too difficult

5. What information would you like to get about Russia?

about sport

about music

about singers

about traditions

about history

about politics

about literature

_____ (your own)

6. In your free time, you (you can mark more than one)

do sports

listen to music

surf the Internet

read books

help parents

spend time with friends

7. I read in Latvian:

school literature

magazines

texts in Internet

literary texts corresponding to my interests

do not read

8. I read in Russian:

school literature (obligators)

magazines

texts on the Internet

literary texts corresponding to my interests

do not read

9. I read in English:

school literature

magazines

texts on the Internet

literary texts corresponding to my interests

do not read

CHAPTER SIX

GOTHARDA FRĪDRIHA STENDERA IEGULDĪJUMS LATVIEŠU BĒRNU LASĪTMĀCĪŠANĀ 18. GADSIMTA BEIGĀS

DIĀNA LAIVENIECE

Atslēgvārdi: ābece, lasītmācīšanas metodika, burts, burta, resp., skaņas izruna, metodikas vēsture.

1. Ievads

Latviešu valodas mācības metodikas vēsturē Gotharda Frīdriha Stendera vārds saistīts ar pirmo latviešu ābeču autorību un lasītmācīšanas metodikas sākotni. Stenders tiek dēvētas par racionālistu – apgaismības laikmeta inteliģences pārstāvi, „kas zināšanas un izglītību atzina par cilvēka dzīves apstākļu galveno uzlabošanas līdzekli” (Villerušs 1988, 33) –, kas balstās uz saprātu un loģiku (Antoloģija 1991, 38). Stenders izprata gan bērnu mokas, mācoties burtot jeb boksterēt, kā tolaik sauca lasītprasmes apguvi, gan skolotāju un arī vecāku bezspēcību bērniem palīdzēt šajā procesā, jo trūka atbilstošas izpratnes un metodisko zināšanu. Vecā Stendera devums – divas ābeces latviešu valodā – uzlūkojams ne tikai par ieguldījumu ābeču izdevniecībā vien. Ir pamats runāt par mēģinājumu izstrādāt sistēmu un piedāvāt metodiskus līdzekļus, kā bērniem ātrāk iemācīties lasīt un kā skolotājiem vieglāk iemācīt viņiem lasīt.

Ir svarīgi saprast, ka, runājot par Stendera devumu latviešu bērnu lasītmācīšanā, mēs raugāties apmēram divsimt trīsdesmit gadus senā pagātnē. Savus priekšstatus par mokām, kurām bērniem bija jāiziet cauri, lai iemācītos lasīt, galvenokārt esam guvuši no latviešu klasiskās literatūras, bet paši to piedzīvojuši neesam.

Stendera laikā attiecībā uz latviešu valodu, protams, vēl nebija ne atbilstošas metodikas un ne mācību līdzekļu, kas pieskaņoti ne vien bērna spējām un vecumposma attīstībai, bet arī konkrētajai valodai un tās skaņu

sistēmai, lai gan Stenders nebija pirmais latviešu ābece autors. Pirmās latviešu ābece radās gandrīz simts gadu agrāk – 17. gadsimta beigās (domājams, ap 1683. gadu). Par Stendera priekštecī šajā jomā tiek uzskatīts Rīgas pilsētas spiestuves vadītājs Georgs Matiāss Nellers, kurš izdevis pirmo latviešu ābeci, un Stendera amata brālis – Alūksnes mācītājs Ernests Gliks (par šo plašāk sk.: Anspoka b. g.).

Raksta mērķis ir izpētīt un analizēt Vecā Stendera sarakstīto ābeču saturu, kā arī vērtēt skolotājiem sniegto metodisko ieteikumu lietpratību tā laika kontekstā – 18. gadsimta otrajā pusē.

Tolaik skaņošanas metode, lai arī izstrādāta 16. gadsimta pirmajā pusē, konkrētāk, 1527. gadā, bija jau atkāpusies klasiskās burtošanas metodes priekšā (Nesterovs 1973, 12), un uz pirmo latviešu ābeci „Bērnu prieks” (Spāģis 1844), kas sastādīta pēc skaņošanas metodes principiem, būs jāgaida vēl vairāk nekā sešdesmit gadu. Skaņošanas metodes pamatprincipu autors ir Valentīns Ikelzamers – vācu gramatiķis, kurš divdesmit septiņu gadu vecumā saraksta un Erfurtē izdod darbu *Die rechte weis, aufs kurtzist lesen zu lernen* („Īstā gudrība, kā īsā laikā iemācīties lasīt”, 1527) (par šo plašāk sk. Velten 2012). Humāni domājošie prāti, saprazdami burtošanas metodes bezjēdzību, meklēja veidus, kā no tās atteikties, liekot vietā ko bērniem piemērotāku. Taču jautājums galvenokārt nebija par to, ar ko aizstāt burtošanas mācību, bet gan vairāk par to, kā pārliecināt vācvalodīgos skolotājus un arī bērnu vecākus par līdzšinējās lasītmācīšanas nepiemērotību, jo tā lasīt bija mācījušies gan viņi paši, gan viņu vecāki, kuriem šis izglītības līmenis bija pieejams. Tātad būtībā nav runa tikai par jaunas metodikas izstrādi un piedāvājumu, bet gan par laikmeta domāšanas, pieņēmumu, tradīciju un priekšstatu laušanu.

2. Stendera ābeču saturs, tajās lietotā terminoloģija un rakstība

Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders ir divu latviešu ābeču autors – 1782. gadā Jelgavā Johana Frīdriha Stefenhāgena apgādā iznāk „Jauna ABC un lasīšanas mācība” (Stenders 1782a)¹ un piecus gadus vēlāk – 1787. gadā – jau daudz lielāku popularitāti iemantojusī „Bildu ābice” (Stenders 1787). Abas ir saucamas par pirmajām. „Jauna ABC” ir pirmā laicīgā latviešu ābece², savukārt „Bildu ābice” ir pirmā ilustrētā latviešu valodas

¹ Šīs ābece atkārtotie izdevumi datēti ar 1787. un 1797. gadu (Karulis 1988a, 61).

² Tā kā gan pirms Stendera, gan pēc viņa ābeču lasāmo tekstu materiālam tradicionāli tiek izmantoti Bībeles teksti, bet Stendera „Jaunā ABC” ir bērnu uztverei vairāk piemēroti izteikumi, tā tiek dēvēta par laicīgu ābeci.

mācībgrāmata. Šo grāmatu pirmizdevumi līdz mūsdienām ir saglabājušies ļoti nelielā skaitā: trīs eksemplāri 1782. gada un septiņi 1787. gada ābeču.

Latviešu valodniecības un literatūras vēstures nezinātājiem Stendera vārds visupirms saistās ar „Augstas gudrības grāmatu” un „Bildu ābici”, zinot pamata faktu, proti, ka tajā katrs latviešu valodas alfabēta burts ir ilustrēts ar bildīti un tai atbilstošu pantīņu. Lai gan „Bildu ābice” ir nozīmīgs latviešu kultūras artefakts un kā tādu to augstu novērtējuši daudzi Stendera literārā un zinātniskā devuma pētnieki (Apīnis 2007; Frīde 2003; Strode 1987), saturiski pilnīgāka un metodiski nozīmīgāka ir Stendera pirmā ābece.

„Jaunas ABC un lasīšanas mācības” titullapu rotā zīmējums, kur no saules apspīdētiem mākoņiem uz leju nāk svāri, kuru kausos likti, pēc ābece autora pārliecības, divi radikāli pretēji nojēgumi – Dieva vārds, ko simbolizē grāmata, un brandvīns, ko simbolizē dzēriena blašķe.³ Starp abiem, ceļot svāra kausu ar Dieva vārdu augstāk, ziedu viņjetē ietverts un vaļā attīts vīstoklis ar ābece nosaukumu.

Stenders pats rūpējies par savu grāmatu noformējumu (Frīde 2003, 31–35; Villerušs 2007), izmantojot gan melnbaltas ilustrācijas kā pirmajā ābecē, gan izkrāsotus zīmējumus, darinātus asējuma tehnikā, kā „Bildu ābice”. Mākslinieks Valdis Villerušs (2007, 42), raksturodams Gotharda Frīdriha Stendera „Bildu ābices” ilustrācijas, uzsver, ka ar šo grāmatu

latviešu bērniem pirmo reizi dota iespēja attēlos redzēt pašiem sevi gluži ikdienišķās situācijās. Tam jāceļ mazā lasītāja pašvērtības sajūta un jāstimulē kāre pēc zināšanām.

„Jaunas ABC” titullapas zīmējumu papildina ievada dzejolis „Tās Bilde izstāstīšana” (Stenders 1782a):

Kā Grāmata še cilājas, / Tā ceļas bērna prāts iekš mācības.
Kā Blašķe velk uz dibeni, Tā postā iegrimst dzērāji.

Ak, kaut jel Brandvīns nebūtu, / Tad ļaudis prātu cilātu,
Un savus bērnus vadītu / Pie Dieva Vārda mācību.

Bet, kamēr Brandvīns vilina, / Tie jau par prātu nebēdā,
Kā lopus bērnus audzina / Un sevīm elli kurina.

Bet tu, mans Bērns, tā nedari, / Ej labāk skolā mudīgi,
Un mācies labprāt Grāmatas, / Tas vedīs tev uz Laimības.

³ Kā trāpīgi norādījis Teodors Zeiferts, „Brandvīns sver smagāk” (Zeiferts 1922).

Zīmīgi, ka ar lielajiem sākuma burtiem rakstīti vārdi kā *grāmata*, *skola*, *Dieva Vārds*, *laimība* un uzruna *bērns* pēdējā pantā, kas liek domāt par lielā sākumburta lietojuma simbolisko nozīmi, uzsverot šo vārdu augsto vērtību. Taču tāpat ar lielo burtu rakstīti vārdi *brandvīns* un *blašķe*, kas iepriekš izvirzīto pieņēmumu noraida. Tas nav arī vācu ortogrāfijas paraugs, jo tad ar lielajiem sākuma burtiem būtu rakstīti visi lietvārdi. Šo Gotharda Frīdriha Stendera rakstības īpatnību neizskaidro arī Konstantīns Karulis, analizējot viņa rakstību, kas ar nelieliem pārveidojumiem balstās uz Georga Manceļa iedibināto un vēlāk Kristofora Fīrekerā, Heinriha Ādolfija un Ernesta Glikā precizēto ortogrāfiju (Karulis 1988b, 550).

Stenders uzskatīja, ka bērniem pirms lasītmācīšanās vispirms ir labi jāpārzina visi burti un to iedalījums. Latviešu valodas alfabēta burtu klasifikācija atbilstoši lasīšanas mācības vajadzībām, resp., latviešu skaņu sistēmas iedalījums, pirmo reizi dots 1782. gada izdevumā un atkārtota „Bildu ābicē”.

Vispirms visi burti tiek sadalīti mazajos un lielajos. Mazos burtus Stenders sauc par „tiem maziem bokstābiem”, lielos – par „priekšniekiem”. Tālāk seko latviešu skaņu dalījums sešās grupās, lietojot attiecīgus terminus to nosaukšanai: „skandinieks” – ‘patskanis’, „jumis” – ‘divskanis’,⁴ „neskanis” – ‘līdzskanis’.

1. Tie pieci īsi skandinieki – a, e, i, o, u.
2. Tie gari skandinieki ar garu zīmi virsū – ā, ē, ī, ō, ū [par garuma apzīmētāju lietots jumtiņš [^] – *D. L.*].
3. Tie gari skandinieki ar garu zīmi sānos – ā, ē, ī, ō, ū [par garuma apzīmētāju lietots burts *h* – *D. L.*].
4. Tie pieci jumi – ie [rakstīts *ee* – *D. L.*], ai, ei, au, ui.
5. Tie neskaņi – b, c, d, g, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, z, ž, t, v, č.
6. Tie zīmēti neskaņi – ģ, ķ, ļ, ņ, ū, š, š (Stenders 1782a).

Būtiski norādīt, ka Stenders nerunā par skaņām un burtiem, resp., viņš nešķir fonētikas un ortogrāfijas līmeni, bet tālāk savos metodiskajos ieteikumos skaidro burtu izrunu, kas nepieciešama lasīšanai. Tāpat būtiski uzsvērt, ka Stendera vārds netiek saistīts ar latviešu valodas fonētikas terminoloģijas attīstību, lai gan viņa lietotie vokāļu un konsonantu apzīmējumi („skandinieks”, „jumis”, „neskanis”) izmantoti ābecēs un metodiskajos norādījumos skolotājiem vēl 19. gadsimta pirmajā pusē, piemēram, Grobiņas apriņķa prāvesta Kristiāna Frīdriha Launica darbā

⁴ Ļoti trāpīgi izraudzīts nosaukums: Jumis kā latviešu mitoloģijas dievība, ko simbolizē divas kopā saaugušas vārpas, pārņests uz jumi kā terminu, lai apzīmētu divas kopā saplūdušas skaņas.

„Jauna skolu ābece” (Launics 1827).

Pēc teorētiskā ievada – latviešu alfabēta burtu iedalījuma – sākas burtošanas jeb bokstavierēšanas daļa, kas grūtību pieauguma dēļ sadalīta vairākās nodaļās, dodot tām nosaukumu pēc skaņu stāvokļa, kādu ieņem vokāļi attiecībā pret konsonantiem.

1. Neskanis ar īsu skandinieku – ba, be, bi, bo, bu.
2. Īsais skandinieks ar neskaņu – ab, eb, ib, ob, ub.
3. Neskanis ar jumi – bie, bai, bei, bau, bui.
4. Garais skandinieks ar neskaņu – āb, ēb, īb, ūb, ūb.
5. Jumis ar neskaņu – aud, aug, auj, auk, iet.
6. Skandinieks starp divi neskaņiem – bar, ber, bir, bur, cir.
7. Divi [brīžam ir trīs – D. L.] neskaņi priekš skandinieka – bra, bre, bri, bro, bru.

Sistēma nav ievērota konsekventi. Visvairāk tas attiecas uz garajiem patskaņiem, kas pēc iepriekš dotās klasifikācijas veido otro grupu – „tie gari skandinieki ar garu zīmi virsū” (Stenders 1782a). Burti ar garumzīmi (juntīņu) piedāvātajā burtošanas sistēmā neparādās; pagarinājumam izmantots tikai burta *h* pievienojums aiz patskaņa. Savukārt pēdējā sadaļā, kur doti vairāku līdzskaņu apvienojumi vienā zilbē ar patskani, piemēros parādās arī divskaņi (piemēram, *prei*, *smui*, *smei* utt.), lai gan sadaļas nosaukumā dota vien norāde uz skandiniekiem.

Pēc burtošanas daļas seko nodaļa „Grūtāki vārdi”, kam dots sīkāks paskaidrojums – „kur skandinieks starp daudz neskaņiem stāv”. Šeit kolonnās, līdzīgi kā iepriekš zilbes, uzskaitīti vienzilbes lietvārdi, vietniekvārdi, īpašības vārdi, darbības vārdi un to formas: *mums*, *piens*, *sāls*, *sirds*, *pirkt*, *grib*, *čirkst*, *smuidrs* u. c.

Tad seko apjoma ziņā lielākā ābece daļa – „Tā vispirmā kopālasīšana”, ko veido tematiski vienotu pamācību kopums ar nosaukumu „Ceļa rādītājs uz taisnu dzīvošanu”.⁵ Būtiski, ka šī daļa saturiski saistīta ar ievada dzejoli un simbolisko titullapas zīmējumu, kas, no vienas puses, raksturo Stendera pārliecību un morāli par pareizu dzīvošanu, bet, no otras puses, ļauj nojaust par tā laika latviešu dzīves paradumiem, ko pēc piecpadsmit gadiem, 1796. gadā, tik skaudri aprakstīs Garlībs Merķelis (1936) darbā *Die Letten* („Latvieši”):

..zemnieka visspilgtākās rakstura īpašības ir verdziskas bailes un neuzticība. [...] Arvien viņš iztēlo sevi par nozēlojamu un nabagu; arvien

⁵ Pēc Stendera pārliecības, „kristīga ticība pastāv taisnā dzīvošanā. Bez tās neder ne kristība, ne pātari, ne baznīca, ne Dieva galds, ne visa ticība” („Tās kristīgas mācības grāmata” Stenders 1776).

tam ir ko uzskaitīt.

Piecdesmit sešās pamācībās, kas bērniem piedāvātas kā lasītmācīšanas teksti, stilizēti ir ietverti Bībeles baušļi un norādes godīgai, kārtīgai dzīvei un savstarpējām attiecībām. Tās ir ritmizētas un atskaņotas četrriņdes. Līdzīgi kā garīgo dziesmu grāmatās, acīmredzot arī savā izdevumā vietas taupīšanas nolūkā visus piecdesmit sešus pantus Stenders ir sakārtojis rindkopās. Panta un rindas sākumu norāda lielais sākuma burts, piemēram:

- Kad Dievs tev bērnus dāvina, Tad ne vien vēderu, Bet vairāk prātu audzina Uz visu tikumu.
- Jauns būdams pelnies, sataupies, Tad vecumā būs ko ēst. Kas tas par bēdām, pasarg, Dievs! Sirms būt un badu ciest.
- Netopi pasauls staigulis, Posts bēgli visur rod. Uz vietas labi dzīvojis, Tas pilnu maizi dod.
- Lai brandvīns tavai muti riebj. Tas iekšas brucina, Tas mantu rij, un prātu šķiebj, Un elli kurina (Stenders 1782a).

Latviešu valodas mācību metodiķis un metodikas vēstures pētnieks Oto Ņesterovs, analizēdams Stendera lasītmācīšanas metodiku, uzskata, ka kopā lasīšanas tekstos vairs netiek ievērots pakāpenības princips, savukārt satura ziņā šie teksti nav piemēroti bērnu zināšanām un izpratnei (Ņesterovs 1974, 9). Tā gluži apgalvot nevarētu. Stenders pats vairākkārt norādījis, ka „Jauna ABC” domāta ne tikai bērniem, bet arī tiem, kas „savu lasīšanu atkal aizmirsuši, tāpēc ka slikti mācīti” (Stenders 1782b). Turklāt tekstu didaktiskais saturs ir vienkārši uztverams un saprotams arī bērniem.

Otras ābece uzbūvi noteikuši citi apsvērumi. Te vispirms atbilstoši nosaukumam „Bildu ābice” tiek piedāvāts latviešu alfabēts, ko veido divdesmit trīs burti, kopā ar zīmējumiem un divrindi pie katra burta. Zīmējuma kreisajā pusē dots burta grafiskais atveids, labajā – burta nosaukums. Tas vedina domāt par zināmu atkāpšanos no skaņošanas metodes uz burtošanas metodes pusi, lai gan zīmējuma pievienojums katram burtam un divrinde kā burta iegaumēšanas paņēmieni, protams, vērtējams kā progresīvs solis jaunas lasīt mācīšanas metodikas virzienā.

Pēc iepriekš Stendera izstrādātās klasifikācijas jāsecina, ka „Bildu ābice” ievietoti „tie pieci īsi skandinieki” (īsie patskaņi), septiņpadsmit „tie neskaņi” (līdzskaņi) un viens „tas zīmētais neskanis” (mīkstinātais līdzskanis š), turklāt – tikai „priekšnieki” jeb lielie burti: *A, B, C, D, E, G, J, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, Z, Ž, S, Š, T, U, V, Č*.

Divrinde sākas ar to burtu, kuru tā ilustrē:

N: Nams un lauks, un darba rokas klāt, / Te var dzīvot un vēl mantu krāt.
 Š: Šūplis sāk, un kaps beidz dzīvību: / Svēts, kas gājis Dieva ceļiņu
 (Stenders 2007).

Atsevišķās divrindēs izmantots paralēlisms, kas tik raksturīgs latviešu tautasdziesmām:⁶

B: Bites ziedos medu salasa: / Tā no grāmatām nāk gudrība.
 S: Skudra krāj uz ziemu barību: / Pelnies, taupies tu uz vecumu (Stenders 2007).

Stenders ir centies divrindēm veidot atskaņas, bet tas ne vienmēr izdevies – biežāk atskaņas veido tikai pēdējā skaņa, nevis zilbe. Tomēr ir atsevišķi labi izdevušies pantiņi, kas ir gan ritmiski veikli, gan saturiski asprātīgi veidoti, piemēram,

U: Ugunsgrēks daždien no pīpes nāk: / Tas ir kauns, kad knauķi smieķēt
 sāk (Stenders 2007).

Divrinde kopā ar attēlu iecerēta kā mnemonikas jeb iegaumēšanas mākslas paņēmieni, līdz ar to liela nozīme ir vārdam, ar kuru sākas katra divrinde, jo vārdam, precīzāk, lietvārdam, šajā gadījumā jāizraisa asociācijas ar attiecīgā burta grafisko attēlu. Stenders šim nolūkam izvēlējis pašus vienkāršākos, bērna tuvākajā apkārtnē sastopamo lietu un dzīvu būtņu, augu nosaukumus: bite, cīrulis, debess, gailis, jērs, koks, lācis, nams, ozols, pils, roze, skudra utt. Domājams, ka Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders bijis pazīstams gan ar jau pieminētā Valentīna Ikelzamera metodiku, gan ar čehu pedagoga Jana Amosa Komenska uzskatiem par skaņu metodi un uzskates nozīmi lasītāmcīšanā (Strode 1987, 25).

Ābece turpinājumā nemainītā formā un saturā ir atkārtots tas pats, kas iepriekšējā ābecē – mazo un lielo burtu nošķirums, skaņu klasifikācija sešās grupās un burtošanas materiāls, kā arī nodaļa „Grūtāki vārdi”. Tas viss aizņem 16 lappuses, kas ir atbilstoši 18. gadsimta otrās puses ābecēm (Villerušs 1988, 32). Arī „Jaunas ABC” apjoms kopā ar titullapu un ievadzejoli ir 16 lappuses.

Norādāms, ka „Bildu ābice” vairākkārt izdota mūsdienās kā faksimilizdevums, 1977. gadā – 190 gadus pēc pirmizdevuma – izdevniecībā „Liesma” (Stenders 1977) un atkārtoti 2007. gadā – 220 gadus pēc

⁶ Daudzkārt un dažādos avotos pieminēts fakts, ka Stenders latviešu tautasdziesmas saucis par „blēņu dziesmām, tanīs redzēdams izsakāmiem agrāko pasaules uzskatu un tās tikai mazā mērā pazīdams” (Zeiferts 1922). „Bildu ābice” ievietotais materiāls gan šos izteikumus neapstiprina.

pirmizdevuma – izdevniecībā „Bizis” (Stenders 2007). Šos izdevumus publicēšanai sagatavojis Aleksejs Apīnis, pievienojot ābece tekstus jaunajā ortogrāfijā, kā arī iekļaujot savu rakstu „Vai ābece vien?” (Apīnis 2007, 28–36), kurā raksturo „Bildu ābices” nozīmi latviešu grāmatniecībā, un Valda Villeruša rakstu „Laikmeta dokuments” (Villerušs 2007, 37–44), kurā raksturotas un novērtētas ābece ilustrācijas. Par godu Gotharda Frīdriha Stendera trīssimtajai jubilejai izdevniecībā „Neputns” 2014. gadā izdoti Stendera abu ābeču faksimili kopā ar tekstu transkripciju un dokumentāliem materiāliem. Izdevumu sagatavojis Valdis Villerušs⁷ (c2014).

3. Stendera izstrādātā lasītmācīšanas metodika

Stendera raksts „Tā mācība, kā tie skolmeistari pēc šo jaunu ABC tiem skolasbērniem to lasīšanu it viegli var izmācīt”⁸ (Stenders 1782b) ir pirmais darbs latviešu valodas mācību metodikā. Tā apjoms bez titullapas ir 13 lappuses. Tas sākotnēji pievienots pirmajai ābecei, bet 1797. gadā arī publicēts atsevišķi (Frīde 2003, 137). Līdz ar to par šī raksta pirmpublicējumu uzskatāms 1782. gads, nevis 1797. gads, kā tas, piemēram, norādīts Konstantīna Karuļa pētījumā (Karulis 1988a, 62).

Metodiku Stenders sāk ar norādi skolotājiem – pirms bērniem mācīt lasīt, jāzina, kā mācīt. Saukdams sevi par latviešu draugu, Stenders norāda, ka „Jauna ABC” ir īpaši veidota latviešu valodai, tāpēc skolotājiem nav jāseko vācu paraugam. Lai tas būtu labāk izprotams, Stenders parāda atšķirības starp vācu un latviešu valodas burtiem, atsevišķi norādot uz tā saucamajiem čupu burtiem, kas izrunājami kā viena skaņa, nevis nosaucami katrs atsevišķi. Kā piemēru rādot vārda *žēl* (gotiskajā ortogrāfijā – *schehl*) lasīšanas apguvi, Stenders izskaidro, kāpēc boksterējot – *zē, cē, hā, e, hā, el* – to nevar iemācīties lasīt. Raugoties uz šādiem piemēriem, ir saprotams, kāpēc latviešu valodas metodikas vēsturē Stenders tiek dēvēts par skaņošanas metodes aizsācēju.

Stendera izveidotajā sarakstā skolotājiem ir dotas norādes par latviešu skaņu atšķirībām no vācu valodas skaņām un piemēriem nosaukti latviešu vārdi, piemēram, „lasi ž, it kā tas viens vienīgs bokstābs būtu, gandrīz tā, kā tas vārds žēlīgs iesākās. Sargies, ka tu to neliec bokstavierēt z. c. h.” (Stenders 1782b). Tomēr, joprojām pievienojot līdzskaņiem patskaņus, piemēram, latviešu alfabētā rakstot: *b* – lasi *bē* [rakstīts: *bee* – D. L.], *c* –

⁷ Vairāk par šo var sk.: <http://neputns.lv/book/gotharda-fridriha-stendera-abeces-numurets/#.VKE5zshEA>

⁸ Oriģināla nosaukuma rakstība: *Ta Mahciba, kā tee Skohlmeisteri pehc scho jaumu ABC teem Skohlas behrneem to Lassischanu it weegli warr ismahciht.*

lasi *cē* (ne *cet*) (Stenders 1782b) utt., Stenders daudz no burtošanas metodes neatkāpjas, un burtu nosaukšana ir un paliek burtu, nevis skaņu izruna. Būtībā viņš centās burtošanas metodi pielāgot latviešu valodai (Antoloģija 1991, 40), radot latviešu valodas fonētiskajām un tā laika rakstības grafiskajām īpatnībām atbilstošu lasīt mācības metodiku.

Sākumā skolotāja uzdevums ir iemācīt bērnam pazīt visus burtus, nošķirot lielos no mazajiem un protot nošķirt patskaņus, divskaņus un līdzskaņus. Tālāk seko zilbju lasīšana.

Metodikas daļā Stenders devis arī skaņu definīcijas – „skandinieks ir tāds bokstābs, ko bez citu bokstābu ar vaļu muti skanīgi var izsacīt”, „neskanis bokstābs ir, ko bez skandinieka nevar izsacīt”, „jumi tā jālasa, it kā tas viens vienīgs bokstābs būtu” (Stenders 1782b). Redzams, ka skaņu skaidrojumi doti, balstoties uz to izrunu, tātad – atbilstoši lasīšanas mācības vajadzībām.

Atšķirīgi tiek definēta zilbe, ko viņš sauc par vārda locekli: „[...] cik skandinieku katrā vārdā, tik locekļi tanī pašā vārdā iraid. Un Jumis top par vienu vienīgu skandinieku rēķināts” (Stenders 1782b). Šeit izmantota cita pieeja – nevis zilbes izruna, bet gan zilbju skaits vārdā. Arī tas saistāms ar lasīšanas mācību, jo sākumā bērni mācās izlasīt vienzilbes vārdus, tad – divzilbju un visbeidzot vārdus ar trim, četrām un vairāk zilbēm.

Zilbju metode radās 18. gadsimta beigās. Tās pamatā ir

veselu zilbju lasīšana bez burtošanas. [...] Skolēnus tik ilgi mehāniski vingrināja zilbju lasīšanā, kamēr viņi prata tās lasīt. [...] Skolēniem vajadzēja mehāniski iegaumēt, kāda zilbe veidojas, ja kādu līdzskaņa burtu pievieno patskaņa burtam, piemēram, b un a – ba, a un b – ab (Nesterovs 1973, 11–12).

Piebilstams, ka šāda veida lasīšanas mācība un burtu salikumu materiāls Latvijas skolās ir ticis piedāvāts līdz pat 20. gadsimta 80.–90. gadiem.

Stendera izstrādātā lasīšanas mācība raksturojama kā mēģinājums atkāpties no burtošanas metodes, vismaz tik daudz, cik tas attiecas uz čupu burtiem un *h* kā patskaņu pagarinājuma zīmi, un pietuvoties zilbju metodei (Cibuļš 2009, 19), par ko liecina „Jaunā ABC” ievietotie zilbju saraksti. Savukārt Aleksejs Apīnis uzskata, ka Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders burtošanai domātās zilbes tuvinājis reālajai valodai un izkārtojis sistemātiski (Apīnis 2007, 30). Zināma sistēma tiešām te veidota: ievērojot patskaņu secību – *a, e, i, o, u* –, tie pēc kārtas pakāpeniski savienoti ar visiem līdzskaņiem, bet, sākot mācīt divskaņus saukt kopā ar patskaņiem, to savienojumi doti izlases veidā, atsakoties no tām zilbēm, kas latviešu valodai nav raksturīgas. Piemēram, ar burtu *b* ir savienoti visi divskaņi –

bie, bai, bei, bau, bui, bet ar *c* – tikai divi – *cie* un *cau* utt. Tāpat, veidojot zilbi, kur patskanis atrodas starp diviem līdzskaņiem, dotas tikai tās zilbes, kas latviešu valodā ir sastopamas, piemēram, *bar, ber, bir, bur*, bet ne *bor* u. tml.

Jāsaka gan, ka šī burtojamo zilbju saraksta pilnīgums var būt tikai tik lielā mērā, cik pilnīgas bijušas Stendera zināšanas par latviešu valodas vārdu krājumu. Stendera biogrāfijas pētnieki un viņa atstātā mantojuma vērtētāji gan norāda, ka viņš cītīgi vācis un pierakstījis latviešu valodā saklausītos vārdus un izteicienus, īpaši pievēršot uzmanību izrunai, izjūtot latviešu valodas fonētiskās īpatnības; viņa valoda bijusi leksiski bagāta un viņš pārzinājis sinonīmus (Frīde 2003, 35, 151). Karulis uzskata, ka Stendera fiksētā 18. gadsimta latviešu valoda ir precīza, tādējādi tas ir svarīgs materiāls valodas vēstures pētniecībā (Karulis 1988a, 87). Valodniece Liene Roze, rakstot par Gotharda Frīdriha Stendera sakārtoto vārdnīcu *Lettisches Lexikon* („Latviešu leksikons”, 1789), vērtē viņu kā izcilu valodnieku (Roze 1989, 12). Savukārt Teodors Zeiferts „Latviešu rakstniecības vēsturē” par Stendera latviešu valodas prasmi raksta šādi: „Tomēr vispār Stendera valoda ir diezgan pareiza, smalki no tautas noklausīta, spēcīga” (Zeiferts 1922). Zināms, ka Stenders latviešu valodu apguvis, sarunājoties ar pašiem latviešiem; viņa uzskats, ka „latviešu valodas savdabīgums jeb gars izpaužas tās īpatnībās, tas ir, vārdu un izteicienu pareizā lietošanā pēc latviešu izteiksmes un domāšanas veida” (Stenders 1873, 219; Karulis 1988b, 539), savu vietu rod arī lasītmācīšanas metodikā, jo Stenders vērš uzmanību uz latviešu vārdu izrunas, galvenokārt uzsvāra, nozīmi. Viņš liek skolotājiem bērnu ieradināt, „ka viņš iekš visiem vārdiem tā vārda iesākumu cilā [uzsver – D. L.]” (Stenders 1782b). Ar dažiem piemēriem parādot, kā jālasa, pareizi vārdu uzsverot, un kā izklausās, ja vārda uzsvāru no pirmās zilbes pārvieto uz otro vai trešo zilbi, Stenders izsmej tos skolmeistaros, kas „paši ieņēmušies ērmīgi lasīt. [...] Gandrīz vēmiens pie tādas lasīšanas nāk. Latvieši tiešām tā nerunā” (Stenders 1782b).

Tāpat Stenders uzskatījis par nepieciešamu dot norādes par „tām zīmēm”, proti, pieturzīmēm. Šeit redzama tā laika terminoloģija – pieturzīmju nosaukumi (piemēram, „starpzīme” – ‘komats’, „galazīme” – ‘punkts’, „stāstīšanas zīme” – ‘kols’, kā arī „jautāšanas zīme” un „izsaukšanas zīme”), ko, domājams, veidojis Stenders pats līdzīgi kā dodot burtu klasifikāciju ar attiecīgiem nosaukumiem. Norādot, ka „starpzīmi” vācieši sauc par *Komma*, bet „galazīmi” – par *Punkt*, Stenders, visticamāk, pašam to nenojaušot, ir devis norādi uz tiem pieturzīmju nosaukumiem, kas lietoti arī mūsdienā latviešu valodā.

Piebilstams, ka Stendera lietotos burtu nosaukumus savos mācību

līdzekļos un metodikā konsekventi pārņēmis un lietojis Kristiāns Frīdrihs Launics vēl 40 gadus vēlāk (Launics 1819a; 1819b; 1821; 1827). Turpretī pieturzīmju nosaukums Launics no Stendera pārņēmis tikai daļēji.

Pēdējā lasīt mācīšanas norāde attiecināma uz izteiksmīgo lasīšanu. Stenders uzsver, ka ir svarīgi neieradināt „skolas bērnu vienā vienīgā skaņā kā ar dūksanu” (Antoloģija 1991, 44) [raksts „kā ar duršanu” – komentārs mans, D. L.], nedz arīdzan

ziņģes vīzē un kā kaucin kaucot, bet skaidri lasīt, itin tā, kā prātaļaudis mēdz samanīgi runāt, proti, kur vajag, balsi cilāt, un kur vajag, balsi nolaist, un visus vārdus ne ar pusmuti, nedz putru putrām, bet lēnām un skaidri izsacīt, tas ir, ar vārdu sakot, ar prātu lasīt (Stenders 1782b).

Šis pirmais metodiskais lasīt mācīšanas sacerējums latviešu valodā mūsdienās nav ticis atkārtoti izdots līdz pat 2014. gadam – iepriekš pieminētajam izdevniecības „Neputns” faksimilam. 1991. gada antoloģijā „Pedagoģiskā doma Latvijā līdz 1890. gadam” ir nodaļa, kurā aplūkota Vecā Stendera pedagoģiskā darbība (autors – Alfrēds Staris), un tur citu starpā ir ievietoti stipri īsināti šā darba fragmenti (Antoloģija 1991, 43–44).

4. Nobeigums

No mūsdienu viedokļa Stendera lielākie nopelni attiecināmi tieši uz lasīt mācīšanas metodiku, jo, būdams pirmais, kurš saprata burtošanas metodes nepiemērotību lasīt mācīšanai latviešu valodā, viņš piedāvāja citu veidu, tuvinot burtošanas metodi zilbju metodei un tālāk – skaņošanas metodei.

Līdzīgi kā Nīcas un Bārtas mācītājs Gustavs Braše ir pirmais⁹, kurš, izdodot mācību līdzekļus latviešu rakstīt mācīšanai (Braše 1857; 1879; vairāk par šo sk.: Laiveniece 2008), kļūst par nozīmīgu spēku latviešu rakstprātības attīstīšanā, tā Sēlpils un Sunākstes draudzes mācītājs Gothards Frīdrihs Stenders ir kļuvis par pirmo, kurš savu misiju saskatījis latviešu lasīt mācīšanas veicināšanā.

Ar mācību vielas sakārtošanu ābecē (burtkopu un zilbju izkārtojumu

⁹ Vēsturiskas precizitātes dēļ jānorāda, ka pirms Gustava Brašes jau 1821. gadā tika izdota Kristiana Frīdriha Launica „Pamācīšana no rakstīšanas ar latviešu priekšrakstiem” [oriģināla nosaukuma rakstība – *Pamahzischana no rakstischanas ar Latweeschu preekchraksteem*] (Launics 1821), taču latviešu valodas rakstīt mācīšanas metodikas vēsturē šis darbs palicis bez plašākas ievēribas un pieminēšanas.

lasīšanas vingrinājumos) un norādēm skolotājiem, kā atvieglot bērniem grūto lasīšanas apguves procesu, Stenders 18. gadsimta beigās aizsāk latviešu valodas lingvodidaktikas vēsturi ar ābece un lasīšanas mācības metodiku. Lai notiktu šīs zinātņu nozares attīstība rakstīšanā, vajadzēs gaidīt vēl septiņdesmit piecus gadus, bet līdz pirmajām latviešu valodas mācības grāmatām un latviešu valodas kā mācību priekšmeta ieviešanai latviešu skolās – vairāk nekā deviņdesmit gadus.

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Contribution of Gotthard Friedrich Stender to the Literacy of Latvian Children in the 18th Century

Keywords: ABC book, reading methodology, letter, pronunciation of a letter, resp., sound, methodology history of teaching the Latvian language.

Summary

German Pastor Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1714–1796), or Old Stender, is the author of two Latvian ABCs. In 1782, *The New ABC and Teaching Reading (Jauna ABC un lasīšanas mācība)* was issued by the Johann Friedrich Steffenhagen publishing house in Jelgava (reprints of this ABC are dated 1787 and 1797), and five years later – 1787 – *The ABC in Pictures (Bildu ābice)*, which attracted a lot of attention. Both short books (only 16 pages each) can be called “the first”. *New ABC (Jauna ABC)* is the first secular Latvian ABC, and *ABC in Pictures* is the first illustrated Latvian language textbook. The first editions of these books have been preserved as bibliographical rarities to the present day: three copies from the year 1782 and seven ABC copies from 1787.

The aim of the article is to investigate the content of the ABCs written by Old Stender and assess the competence of methodological recommendations given to the teachers in the context of that time – the second half of the 18th century.

The first part of the article deals with the content of Stender’s ABCs and the terminology used in them.

Stender believed that before learning to read, children should first and foremost know all the letters and their division. First, letters are divided into small and capital letters. Then, division of Latvian sounds into six groups follows, with appropriate terms for their naming: *skandinieks* “a vowel”, *jumis* “diphthong” and *neskanis* “consonant”.

Stender does not speak about sounds and letters; he does not distinguish between phonetic and orthographic levels. Pronunciation of the letters is explained to the extent that is needed for reading. Stender’s name is not related to the development of phonetic terminology in the Latvian

language, although the designations of vocals and consonants were still used by Stender in his ABCs and methodological recommendations for teachers in the first half of the 19th century.

After the classification of Latvian alphabet letters, the so-called alphabetic method part starts; it is divided into several chapters. They are given titles corresponding to the sound position of the vocals in relation to the consonants. Spelling is followed by the chapter “More difficult words” (*Grūtāki vārdi*), which includes one-syllable nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs and their forms: *mums, piens, sāls, sirds, pirkt, grib, čirkst, smuidrs*, etc. So far, the content of both ABCs is similar, although they are arranged differently in sequence.

In terms of volume, the biggest part in the first ABC after spelling is “The first reading together” (*Tā vispirmā kopālasīšana*), which consists of a thematically uniform set of instructions entitled “A road map for a fair living” (*Ceļa rādītājs uz taisnu dzīvošanu*). The content of this ABC section characterises Stender’s convictions and morality for proper living. The author calls on parents to raise their children according to the principles of morality and honesty, save money for their old age, not to use alcohol and not to smoke but above all – to help discover the spirit of enlightenment given by books and education.

The structure of the second ABC is based on other considerations. Here, at first, – according to the title *ABC in Pictures* – a Latvian alphabet consisting of 23 letters is offered, with drawings and a distich with each letter. On the left side of the drawing, a graphic depiction of the letter is given, on the right – the name of the letter. Then the classification of the Latvian alphabet, as described above, and material for teaching reading follow.

The distich, which together with the picture illustrates each letter, is intended as a mnemonic technique. Consequently, the word with which the distich begins is very important because it must create associations with the graphic image of the corresponding letter. For this purpose, Stender chose the simplest objects, things, names of plants, and living beings most commonly found in the child’s immediate vicinity: bee (*bite*), skylark (*cīrulīis*), sky (*debess*), rooster (*gailis*), lamb (*jērs*), tree (*koks*), bear (*lācis*), oak-tree (*ozols*), palace (*pils*), rose (*roze*), ant (*skudra*) and so on.

When investigating the content of both ABCs, it should be assumed that Old Stender was known for both the tuning method of the German grammarian Valentin Ickelsamer in teaching reading (already in the early 16th century) and the views of the Czech pedagogue Jan Amos Komenský on the importance of visuals in teaching reading.

The second part of the article deals with and evaluates Stender’s

methodology of teaching reading.

Old Stender's written piece, consisting of 15 pages, *The Doctrine How Those Skilled Masters Using This New ABC Can Teach the Schoolchildren to Read Easily* (*Tā Mācība, kā tie Skolmeistari pēc šo jaunu ABC tiem Skolasbērniem to Lasīšanu it viegli var izmācīt*) is the first work on the methodology of teaching the Latvian language. Originally, it was added to the first ABC, but in 1797 was also issued separately.

Being aware that these were German teachers teaching the Latvian children reading in the Latvian language, Stender points out that the *New ABC* is specially designed for the Latvian language. Therefore, the teachers themselves must first understand this fact and they should not look at the German sample. In order to make it more understandable, Stender showed the differences between the letters in the German and Latvian languages, particularly focusing on letter combinations that should be read as one letter and not pronounced separately.

Although nowadays Stender is attributed the title of pioneer of the sounding method in teaching reading to Latvian children, his methodological instructions on the pronunciation of Latvian letters when reading do not confirm this fact. Undeniably, there is an attempt to deviate from the alphabetic method as much as it refers to letter combinations and *h* as a vowel-lengthening mark. Stender came a little closer to the syllabic method, as evidenced by the syllable lists placed in his ABCs. They take into account the system that corresponds to the real Latvian language: maintaining a single sequence of vowels – *a, e, i, o, u* – they are gradually connected with all consonants. In turn, when starting to teach diphthongs to name them together with vowels, their connections are given selectively, eliminating those syllables that are not typical of the Latvian language. However, in suggesting that vowels should be added to consonants, for example: *b* – lasi *bē* (written *bee*), *c* – read *cē* (not *cet*), etc., Stender does not deviate much from the alphabetic method. Naming letters is and remains letter naming, not the pronunciation of sounds. His efforts should rather be considered as an adaptation of the alphabetic method to the Latvian language, thus creating reading teaching methodology corresponding to the phonetic peculiarities of the Latvian language and graphic features in writing at that time.

It should be noted that Stender himself learned Latvian by communicating with his parish members – Latvian peasants. Therefore, he paid special attention to the correct pronunciation of words in Latvian – using stress on the first syllable, a characteristic of the Latvian language. Also, during reading lessons, focus was on punctuation marks and expressive reading.

In conclusion, it is worth pointing out a significant parallel: just like Nīca and Bārta (Latvia), Pastor Gustavs Braše was the first to issue teaching aids for writing in Latvian; and the pastor of the Sēlpils and Sunākste (Latvia) parishes, Gotthard Friedrich Stender, was the first to focus on teaching reading in Latvian. The time gap between the contributions of both German pastors to educating Latvians is 75 years.

With the study material arrangement in his ABC (letter and syllable combinations in reading exercises) and recommendations for teachers on how to facilitate the difficult reading process for children, at the end of the 18th century, Stender starts the history of Latvian linguodidactics with the methodology of teaching ABC and reading. It was necessary to then wait for more than 90 years before the first Latvian language textbooks appeared and the Latvian language as a subject was introduced into the schools of Latvia.

PART II:
LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS OF PRESENT-DAY LATVIA

ANTRA ROSKAŠA

Keywords: linguistic identity, language diversity, multicultural society, intercultural communication.

1. Introduction

The role of language in Latvia is still one of the most controversial and most discussed issues. That is why the aim of the research is to analyse the role of language in the intercultural communication process of present-day Latvia both when language is like a bridge and promotes positive communication among people of different cultural origin and when it is like a barrier and obstructs its development. The European Union (EU) guidelines on language issue and their connection with the language situation in Latvia have been researched in the article. The opinion of students on the solution of this problem has also been expressed.

2. The Language Issue in the European Union

As Latvia is one of the member countries of the EU, it is important to identify which norms regulate the use of languages and their development possibilities in the EU. According to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (2007), the EU respects the diversity of cultures, religions and languages. Any kind of discrimination is forbidden in the EU, including discrimination because of language.

Jānis Valdmanis – the author of the introduction of the study “The Influence of Migration on the Language Environment of Latvia” (Kļava (ed.) 2012), carried out by the Latvian language agency – also emphasizes

that the basis of the EU is “unity in diversity” – diversity of cultures, traditions, opinions, and also languages. Respect of person, an open-minded attitude to different cultures, tolerance and language diversity are the basic values of the EU. The development of language diversity is the basis of the EU language policy, and the equal coexistence of many languages in Europe strongly symbolizes the aim of the EU to be united in diversity (Valdmanis 2012, 7).

A similar view was expressed in “The Fundamental Guidelines of the Language Policy of Latvia for the Period of 2015–2020” (Valsts valodas politikas pamatnostādnes 2014), which concludes that according to the way of thinking characteristic of the 21st century, the diversity of languages and cultures is the heritage and wealth of humanity and civilization. Languages are no longer considered to be only a code of communication but also as a deposit of cultural traditions and the basis of national identity. Therefore, every language has its place in the system of human values and every language should be taken care of.

Kristīne Motivāne (2012) also considers it very important to develop such policy which not only favours the acquisition of the widespread languages but also the preservation and development of the small and endangered languages because the danger to one of the small European languages is also a danger to other languages. And the only way to fight the dominance of popular and economically strong languages is to work out a united language policy.

As we can characterize our present-day society of Latvia as a multicultural and multilingual society, it is important to research how students evaluate the status of the Latvian language and other languages in Latvia. Do languages help to promote intercultural communication, kindness and tolerance? Could the environment of Latvia be characterized as an environment favourable for every language development and progression?

3. The Specifics of the Language Issue in the Context of Latvia

The language issue and language policy are some of the most discussed and controversial issues in the society of Latvia. Dzintra Hirša has the opinion that the territory of Latvia has always been of interest to its neighbours (Sweden, Germany, Poland, and Russia) and people from these countries have often arrived and settled down here. Therefore, the Latvian culture and language have always been in close relationship with other cultures and languages – the Livs or Livonian, Estonian, Belarusian, and

Lithuanian languages as the neighbours and minorities of Latvia, and the Russian, German, Polish, and Swedish languages as the administrative languages in different periods of the history of Latvia (Hirša 2012). These historical preconditions may promote the development of an environment favourable for the progression of different languages and cultures in Latvia.

A very topical problem of present-day Latvia is the status of the Latvian and Russian languages. Dz. Hirša emphasizes that modern Latvia in comparison with other European countries could be characterized as a country with the highest number of people whose mother tongue is different from Latvian – the state language of Latvia. In almost every country of Europe, minority languages do not endanger the existence of the state language, except for Latvia (Hirša 2012).

According to the data of the Central Statistical Bureau, at the beginning of 2015 there were Latvians (61.6 %), Russians (25.8 %), Belarusians (3.4 %), Ukrainians (2.3 %), Polish (2.1 %), Lithuanians (1.2 %), Gipsy (0.3 %), and other nationalities (3.3 %) living in the territory of Latvia. The ethnic structure of inhabitants in different regions of Latvia is diverse – most Latvians live in the Vidzeme (86.5 %) and Kurzeme regions (76.2 %); the fewest live in the capital city Riga (45.9 %) and Latgale region (45.4 %). Latvians are less than 50% in three cities of Latvia – Daugavpils, Riga and Rezekne (Centrālā statistikas pārvalde 2015).

Moreover, with the entering of Latvia into the European Union and the processes of globalization – migration and immigration – there is a tendency in Latvia for an increase in the English language popularity, which influences the development and usage of local languages.

One of the authors of the research done by the Institute of Baltic social sciences “Ethnical Tolerance and Integration of the Society of Latvia” (Zepa (ed.) 2004), Inese Šūpule, characterizes the situation of language in Latvia as the striving of the Russian community to preserve the prestige and status of Russian in the society. Conversely, these processes have also had an impact on the community of Latvians trying to increase the progression of their linguistic identity.

Taking into consideration that there are many people who have different linguistic and cultural identities living in Latvia, the strivings of Latvians to preserve and develop their native language and culture are well-grounded and understandable. However, it is significant for the Russian-speaking people to also be aware of the importance of and necessity to preserve and develop the Latvian culture and language because they are endangered. K. Motivāne has a point of view that a motivation to acquire and learn languages for both the Latvians and

Russians may be economical – the skills of many languages are an advantage in the labour market: companies seek employees who have different (several) language skills. A lack of language skills is often considered to be the main barrier to finding a good job (Motivāne 2012).

As students are potential job seekers, the research focuses on the identification of Riga Technical University (RTU) students' opinions on the role of language in the intercultural communication process. Is language like a bridge, promoting the intercultural communication process? Or is it like a barrier, delaying the development of communication?

One hundred RTU students of different faculties and study years participated in the research (45 Latvians, 31 Russian-speaking students, 24 foreign students – 9 Uzbeks, 4 Czechs, 3 Turks, 3 French, 2 Azerbaijani, 1 German, 1 Nigerian, and 1 Algerian). The essay “Language as a Bridge or a Barrier in the Intercultural Communication Process” was organized in the second semester of the 2014 /2015 study year.

According to Andrejs Geske and Andris Grīnfelds (2006), the content analysis of the essays was done in the following way:

- 1) the quotations of responders that characterized and/or interpreted their experience and which had similar ideas were grouped in analytical categories,
- 2) the categories were united, forming broader concepts, the basis of which was the content of the categories,
- 3) the data of the research were summed up in the tables, including the most impressive quotations from the students' essays, grouping them into analytical categories and concepts and also giving information on the number of students and their cultural background.

4. The Role of Language and its Development Possibilities in the Context of Latvia

One of the main aspects emphasized by students in their essays is the role of language and its development possibilities as well as the importance of language preservation. The Latvian students put more emphasis on the necessity to preserve their native language, which could be explained by the danger of Latvian language development and its decline in usage because of emigration and immigration. The Latvian students, in comparison with the Russian-speaking students and foreign students, are more concerned about the necessity for immigrants to acquire the local language, considering it a precondition to promoting immigrant integration into local society.

In contrast, Russian-speaking students and foreign students put more emphasis on the importance of language to develop their personality and professional career; they think that knowledge of languages may help them make friends, grow professionally and travel around. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the Latvian students are more concerned about the preservation of their native language and linguistic identity but the Russian-speaking students and foreign students concentrate more on the acquisition of foreign languages and their usage (see table 1).

Another language aspect emphasized by students in their essays is the importance of language in the process of intercultural communication, which is analysed in the following paragraph.

Table 1: The role of language and its development possibilities in the context of Latvia

Quotations	<p><i>.. nobody wants to lose his/her native language. That is why there are so many languages in the world. (Latvian student)</i></p> <p><i>.. every nation considers its language as the most important. (Latvian student)</i></p> <p><i>.. language is like a live being – emotional and impulsive but at the same time it can die out and lose its importance any moment. That is why it is necessary to take care of your native language and also appreciate highly other languages. (Latvian student)</i></p>
Analytical categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language can die out and lose its importance any moment - It is necessary to take care of your native language preservation and development - Every language is important. That is why it is significant to respect other languages
Concepts	The importance of native language preservation
Number of students	<p>Latvians – 9</p> <p>Russian-speaking students – 3</p> <p>Foreign students – 2</p>
Quotations	<p><i>.. it is necessary to learn Latvian for those who arrive in Latvia for living. It is a common tradition in all the world countries that for immigrants who start their life in other country it is important to learn this country's language. (Latvian student)</i></p> <p><i>Every nation has its own language but sometimes it is necessary to adapt to a different language, for example, when we move to other country. It is very good if you know the language of this country. Then people will be more open-minded and welcoming because they will know we respect their language, nation and country. It is a duty for those people who live in the other country for a long time to know its language. Ignorance of the language is the main obstacle between groups of the society. People may have an</i></p>

	<i>opinion that immigrants do not respect the locals. It does not matter which country has this problem. It is everywhere. (Latvian student)</i>
Analytical categories	- It is necessary for immigrants to know the local language to integrate more successfully in the society
Concepts	The status of the local language
Number of students	Latvians – 11 Russian-speaking students – 2 Foreign students – 2
Quotations	<i>.. we can change our life with a help of a language – live better, improve our status and develop our personality – get a better education, job, travel around. (Foreign student)</i>
Analytical categories	Language as a means to improve and develop both professionally and personally
Concepts	The role of a language in the development of an individual and society
Number of students	Latvians – 5 Russian-speaking students – 7 Foreign students – 8

5. The Importance of Language in the Intercultural Communication Process in the Context of Latvia

Most students (Latvian, Russian-speaking and foreign students) consider language important in the process of intercultural communication, characterizing it as a means for cultural exchange and interrelated enrichment. Students also give preconditions for a successful intercultural communication – an open-minded attitude and tolerance towards the people of different cultural background.

Most students (from all three groups) characterize language as a bridge that unites people of different cultural origins but language as a barrier to intercultural communication is emphasized more by the Latvians and Russian-speaking students (see table 2). This may be explained by the sensitive problem of the Latvian and Russian language status in Latvia and the preservation and development possibilities of these languages.

However, the data from the research include more information on the status of the Latvian and Russian languages in Latvia. Students also emphasize the influence of globalization on the development of languages in Latvia. This data has been analysed in the following paragraph.

Table 2: The role of language in the intercultural communication process in the context of Latvia

Quotations	<i>.. it is very important for every nation to have its own language because there is a share of culture during the communication process – we teach our culture for others and we learn, enrich from other cultures. We have to be open-minded to communicate more successfully.</i> (Russian-speaking student)
Analytical categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share of culture, enrichment - People have to be open-minded to participate in intercultural communication
Concepts	Interrelated enrichment in the process of intercultural communication
Number of students	Latvians – 18 Russian-speaking students – 15 Foreign students – 15
Quotations	<i>.. language is like a bridge because in the process of communication the thinking of people and their opinion changes – they become broader and more tolerant. If there is no communication, there is no development.</i> (Latvian student)
Analytical categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main role of the language is to ensure the communication - As a result of communication, people's outlook broadens and attitude changes, becoming more tolerant
Concepts	Language as a bridge in the process of communication
Number of students	Latvians – 22 Russian-speaking students – 13 Foreign students – 16
Quotations	<p><i>.. the understanding among people of different cultural origin does not always depend on the skills of the language they have. The attitude towards the people of different cultural background and their language is also important. Most people are reserved. We do not want to accept "strangers". People, even when they do not know the language but are open-minded and accept differences, can make a successful communication.</i> (Latvian student)</p> <p><i>.. the more languages you know, the more intelligent you are. It does not matter which your native language is. You are the same as the others. Why should we argue about languages? Maybe we should help each other?</i> (Russian-speaking student)</p>

Analytical categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge of language does not always mean that intercultural communication will be successful - Attitude towards people of different cultural backgrounds, their language and culture is of a high importance. If it is open-minded, the intercultural communication process will be successful
Concepts	Language as a barrier in the process of intercultural communication
Number of students	Latvians – 21 Russian-speaking students – 16 Foreign students – 5

6. The Influence of Globalization on the Development of Languages in the Context of Latvia

Students expressed the point of view that the importance of internationally recognizable languages is increasing in present-day Latvia. According to students, the languages used in the labour market of Latvia and are recommended to know for every inhabitant of Latvia are Latvian, Russian and English. Professional cooperation and use of different languages in the companies, offices, etc. may also promote intercultural communication and a more positive and democratic atmosphere in the society of Latvia (see table 3).

Table 3: The influence of globalization on the development of languages in the context of Latvia

Quotations	<p><i>... the issue of language is not painful for people who want to develop professionally</i> (Russian-speaking student)</p> <p><i>... many companies in Latvia offer their services and products in three languages – Latvian, Russian and English or German. It gives the opportunity to cooperate with foreign companies and favour the development for both local and foreign companies. If people cannot communicate with each other, professional cooperation will also be a failure and will delay the progress. Language should be a means to do something good and fruitful, develop and grow</i> (Russian-speaking student)</p>
Analytical categories	- The necessity of internationally recognizable language skills in a modern globalized world
Concepts	Language skills as a means of professional development
Number of students	Latvians – 6 Russian-speaking students – 3 Foreign students – 2

7. Conclusions

1. The EU respects linguistic diversity. Every language is of a high value.
2. The Latvian language and culture have always been close to different cultures and languages – German, Polish, Swedish, Russian, Livs (Livonian), Estonian, Lithuanian, Belarusian, etc. That is why the cultural and linguistic environment of Latvia could be considered favourable for the development of different cultures and languages.
3. Due to the fact that there is a very high number of Russian-speaking people living in Latvia, the Latvian students are more concerned about the preservation of their native language and culture while the Russian-speaking and foreign students concentrate more on foreign language studies and usage.
4. The issue of Latvian and Russian language status and opportunities for their preservation and development are serious problems in Latvia. That is why language as a barrier to intercultural communication is emphasized more by the Latvian and Russian-speaking students compared to foreign students.
5. Economic considerations could be a motivating factor to study languages as different language skills aid success in the labour market and promote the development of a positive and democratic atmosphere in the society of Latvia.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT IN THE ACQUISITION OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PHENOMENA

VITA BALAMA

Keywords: role of context, culture references, culture environment, graded texts.

1. Stages of Learning Culture Facts and Culture References

The first stages of learning culture facts and further culture references take place while the person is still at school. Here the acquisition covers the basic stage and later also the stage of additional interest. This additional interest in culture facts and references during later life can be caused by the necessity for deeper studies or for work, for communication or simply out of interest in the issues.

The learning of culture facts and culture references takes place for several reasons. First of all, it is the subject of interest for the person himself. Second, it is the subject of studies. Then, one of the reasons for learning culture facts can be the formation of a general opinion. And finally, there is unconscious learning, without the special purpose of acquisition of culture facts.

The role of the context in learning culture facts and culture references is very obvious when reading fiction of a certain culture environment. The initial procedure of learning culture facts and culture references is almost the same for all the above-mentioned stages and purposes. Recognition of culture facts and culture references in general is the first step. When the definition is found, and some examples recognized, the real finding of culture facts and culture references starts. When the reason for learning is the subject of interest or general studies, the role of the context is very

important. It helps also to find the basic facts. During the process of learning, it could be used as a task assignment so the learner recognizes the facts that could be acquired in the given text. The further and much deeper studies involve the translation of the found culture facts, and then in the final stage the comparison of the translation with the source culture fact takes place.

When using literary works for culture studies, especially their original language as a sample, recognition is the first thing that should be trained. Usually it is done by well-known facts about culture. The further finding is based on differences in cultures and languages. With the help of literary works and their translations, it is possible to acquire knowledge about certain culture facts. It happens every time a literary work is read. The difference lies in whether it is done unconsciously or on purpose.

2. Culture References

Culture references in a literary work are used to create the local and culture-specific background. When reading a literary work, first of all there are recognized culture references that are similar to the reader's own culture. Sometimes the readers belonging to another culture recognize more culture-specific lexical units than readers belonging to the culture described in the literary work. When analysing the culture references that are similar to the reader's culture, they refer basically to certain common traditions, like Christmas, but at the same time there are introduced also differences in the manner of celebration. Basically, the culture-related lexical units describe either items connected with food or decorations, or activities, as is shown in the following pairs of examples in the source language and target language.

Food items sold in supermarkets characterize the eating habits in this (American) culture:

A stock boy was working hard on *a display of Christmas chocolates*. A sign by the butcher demanded that all **good** customers order their *Christmas turkeys* immediately. New *Christmas wines* were in! And *Christmas hams*! (Grisham 2001, 7)

Noformētājs cītīgi nodarbojās ar *Ziemassvētku šokolādes klāstu*. Zīme pie gaļas nodaļas visiem pircējiem ieteica nekavējoties pasūtīt *Ziemassvētku tītarus*. Bija pievesti jauni *Ziemassvētku vīni*! Un *Ziemassvētku šķiņķis*! (Grišams 2004, 10)

Street decorations during public holidays in some places are very characteristic and popular but certain background knowledge is needed to understand proper names such as “Frosty” and “Rudolph” because they are not originally characteristic for the target-language reader. Separate culture-related lexical items may be misinterpreted if looked upon individually. The context is very important to transfer the atmosphere, the image and the features of celebration decorations.

The same Frosty on every Hemlock roof, an eight-foot Frosty with a goofy smile around a corn cob pipe and a black top hat and thick rolls around the middle, all made to glow a brilliant white by a two-hundred-watt bulb screwed into a cavity somewhere near Frosty’s colon. The Hemlock Frostys had made their debut six years earlier and were a smashing success— twenty-one houses on one side, twenty-one on the other, the street lined with two perfect rows of Frostys, forty feet up. A color photo with a cute story ran on the front page. [...] The next year, Stanton Street to the south and Ackerman Street to the north had **jumped in** with *Rudolphs* and *silver bells*, respectively... (Grisham 2001, 39)

Vienādi Frostiji uz katru Hemlokas jumta: astoņas pēdas garš Frostijs ar muļķīgu smaidu un kukurūzas vāļīti pīpes vietā, melnu cilindru galvā un platu jostu ap vidu, ko žilbinoši baltā krāsā izgaismo divsimt vatu spuldze, kas ieskrūvēta dobumā Frostija resnās zarnas tuvumā. Hemlokas Frostiji debitēja pirms sešiem gadiem un guva lieliskus panākumus: divdesmit viena māja ielas vienā pusē, divdesmit viena – otrā; iela ar divām nevainojamām Frostiju rindām četrdesmit pēdu virs zemes. Krāsains foto un pievilcīgs apraksts laikraksta pirmajā lappusē. [...] Nākamajā gadā Stentonstrīta uz dienvidiem un Akermanstrīta uz ziemeļiem **pieteica Rūdolfus** un *sudraba zvaniņus*.. (Grišams c2004, 36)

The biggest issue here is the quality of translation in general and especially of the culture-related lexical items. The next quote shows a very peculiar event characteristic for the USA, and not every target culture (here: Latvian) reader will understand that. The parade during Christmas is not characteristic in Latvia. That could be marked as a complete culture difference.

The *Christmas parade* was launched every year from Veteran’s Park, in midtown. With *floats and fire trucks and marching bands*, it never changed. **Santa** always brought up the rear in a sleigh built by the Rotarians and escorted by **eight fat Shriners on mini-bikes**. The parade looped through the west side and came close to Hemlock... (Grisham 2001, 87)

Katru gadu *Ziemassvētku parāde* sākās pilsētas Veterānu parkā. Gadu no gada nekas nemainījās, *zemas platformas, ugunsdzēsēju mašīnas un maršējoši orķestri*. Parādi vienmēr noslēdza **Ziemassvētku vecītis** rotariešu būvētās ragavās, ko pavadīja **astoņi motorolleri**. Parāde izlocījās cauri pilsētas rietumu malai un tuvojās Hemlokai.. (Grišams c2004, 76)

The analysis in the given paper deals basically with culture-specific lexical items that are different from the reader's own culture. The evaluation of the translation quality is also involved. The culture-specific lexical items or culture references can be divided into two main groups:

- 1) culture references attributed to everyday life happenings, such as description of food, eating habits, houses, cars, entertainment, sports, etc.;
- 2) culture references specific to public relations and political life – description of the legal system, political system, banking, company description, etc.

3. Fiction of Certain Culture Environment

The research paper is based on semantic and lexical material picturing the American culture environment described by John Grisham in his novels and stories. The analysed fiction is a pure statement about the American life style, its customs and traditions. The reader of the source text sometimes does not recognize the facts and details of the culture environment but the reader of the target text, i.e., translation of the source text of fiction, recognizes the differences first of all, and then realizes the culture-specific lexical units. The following sample of the source text and its corresponding translation into the target language gives several aspects of culture environment, such as architecture, entertainment, place description – interior, activities, people, and their purpose of visiting such places:

As if by some unwritten city ordinance, most of the nightclubs and watering holes in Ada were on the periphery of the town, banished to the edges to keep the riffraff and their mischief away from the better folks. The Coachlight was one such place, a cavernous metal building, cheap beer, jukeboxes, a weekend band, a dance floor, and outside a sprawling gravel parking lot where dusty pickups greatly outnumbered sedans. Its regulars were what you would expect – factory workers looking for drink before heading home, country boys looking for fun, late-night twenty-

some things, and the *dance and party crowd* there to listen to live music. (Grisham 2006, 5)

*Visi naktsklubi un **bāri** atradās Adas nomalē, lai turētu **sabiedrības padībenes un pudelesbrāļus** pa gabalu no **godīgajiem pilsoņiem**. Viena no šādām vietām bija „Vaduguns”, **alai līdzīga celtne no skārda**; tur bija sliktis apgaismojums, **lēts alus un mūzikas automāti**. Katru nedēļas nogali te spēlēja kāda vietējā mūzikas grupa, un kluba **putekļainajā stāvvietā** bija vairāk **pikapu** nekā **limuzīnu**. Patstāvīgie apmeklētāji bija rūpnīcu strādnieki, kas **pa ceļam mājup iegriezās iedzert alu**, vietējie puīši, kas **meklēja izpriecas**, un studenti, kas nāca **klausīties dzīvo mūziku**. (Grishams [2010], 9)*

As can be seen in the example, the translation is not the best quality as not all culture-specific lexical items have been translated. Here different types of translations of culture-specific lexical items can be mentioned as well as translation quality. The translator's approach is significant in the process of transference of cultural references from the source language into target language. Besides the subjective factor of identifying the cultural references, the process of translation is very subjective itself. The difference of perception of the cultural references makes the basic subjectivity of the translation issue. The cultural reference and its translation is a “precise investigation of meanings, changes in meaning, and differences in meaning” (Wierzbicka 2007).

The analysis of a translation of cultural references may involve several different translation procedures, such as direct transference of a cultural item; transference of a cultural item with explicitness; transference of a cultural item with explanation; target-language expression referring to the source culture; neutral explanation of a cultural item; omission of a cultural item; and, finally, substitution of a cultural reference with a cultural equivalent of the target language (Olk 2013). Not all translation procedures are applied in every translation of fiction. Although the works written by American writer John Grisham in connection with culture environment reflection could be regarded as a textbook for studying the American cultural environment, certain background knowledge to recognize culture – specific references – is needed.

4. Reading of Authentic Literary Texts

Reading authentic literary texts requires more than a very good command of a language. It requires also a perception and an interpretation of

literature. Several features characteristic for the reading of literary works are:

- 1) one needs to understand such texts (to know and to use the language at a certain level);
- 2) one needs to be able to search for and discover new relations and meaning in these texts;
- 3) one needs to possess certain experience and the ability to undergo such a process.

At the very beginning, with less language knowledge, it could be difficult to read such texts in the original language; therefore, there are introduced different levels of reading authentic literary texts. As the role of the content is very important, there should be created certain relationships between the language learning and the culture phenomena studies. During the language and culture acquisition process, it is advisable to start with graded readers, later proceed with adapted classics and finally the learners can read just simplified versions of original readers. These steps, when acquired properly, will lead to enough background knowledge to read original texts and understand them, and learn the other cultures properly.

5. The Graded Texts

In her studies, Susan Bassnett mentioned that “much time and ink has been wasted attempting to differentiate between *translations*, *versions*, *adoptions* and the establishment of a hierarchy of ‘correctness’ between these categories” [italics in the original] (2002, 81). Some schools of researchers have come to the conclusion that graded readers have achieved a dominant position in the area of foreign language learning (Krashen 1981; Skopečková 2013).

The graded version of an original literary text is believed to make the reading of the classics easier and more accessible to language learners, especially in the early stages of the second-language acquisition, and far more enjoyable. In the present-day situation of globalization, in order to learn about different cultures, the original literary works step in as a powerful means of studies. The reasons for such studies were mentioned previously.

The learner’s comfort is very often reached through the graded texts because they form “a sort of shelter” from (1) the difficult and confusing vocabulary and (2) stylistic constructions. The graded texts are created more often to suit the learner’s own language ability. More attention when producing graded texts is paid to the selection of the vocabulary. It is

elaborated according to the specified level of the learner's language knowledge. The same could be said about the style and the content. These three basic things are levelled in reference to a particular language level.

Very often the graded texts are created as translations. The very concept of literary translation is a very complex one and it requires more than the mere transference of the plot line and the list of characters. For certain aspects literature cannot be simplified since culture-related lexical units represent the very essence of any literary text.

6. Conclusions

1. Literary works can be successfully used in the language learning process; moreover, they are a very rich source of culture phenomena studies.
2. The learners usually undergo different stages of knowledge acquisition during the reading of authentic literary texts.
3. Authentic literary texts based in the author's culture help to build the relationship between the language learning (vocabulary, style, expression) and the culture phenomena studies.
4. Representing the concept of intralingual translation, the shortened or adapted versions (graded texts) could be accepted as introductions to authentic literary texts at a certain stage of learning.

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CHAPTER NINE

LANGUAGE AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING HUMOUR IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

IRINA STRAZDIŅA

Keywords: preschool-aged children, language and speech development, sense of humour development.

1. Introduction

Children engage in the communication process from their childhood. Language for the child is everything that revolves around them and what they observe. Language is the application of symbols with a goal to pass on information. Language acquisition is a hard but natural process.

As language is closely related to speech, language development is closely related to the increase of speech act levels since a masterful language practice reflects both a developed, articulate language and cultural language ser (Vīgante 1999, 13).

In the article, humour as an intellectual and social phenomenon, the significance of preschool-aged children and their parents' mutual communication in the development of children's thinking, language and speech, imagination and emotional sphere, as well as the initial sense of humour are studied. The development of the child's emotions and feelings, thinking, speech and imagination, socialization and sense of humour has been studied in ontogenesis.

Maija Kūle (1989, 75) writes:

Understanding is based on language. Language is rich, it is hard to subjugate it, it teaches us, it sets tasks for us, makes us look at the world through the existing words and think in compliance with the language.

Language is one of the most important features of a nation and its people; it is a means of communication and influence, a means of thinking,

cognition, manifestation of human consciousness, and language is a means of culture (Vīgante 1999, 14–15). In its turn, speech is the process of language application.

The goal of the research is to study the socially psychological aspects of sense of humour development in preschool-aged children's language and speech development processes.

The qualitative research method, study and analysis of scientific literature, emphasizing the process and study of meanings, reveals the means and conditions for the potential development of preschool-aged children's sense of humour in the context of language and speech, as well as the personality's socialization development. A descriptive, non-experimental study based on theoretical viewpoints and research has been carried out.

2. Language and Speech Development Opportunities

In cognitive psychology, language research is interesting because:

1. Language development in *Homo sapiens* is a unique way of abstraction; it is the basis of cognition.
2. Language is especially important in the person's cognitive activity.
3. Language participates in many ways of human thinking and problem-solving.
4. Language is one of the main means of human communication. Information exchange mostly happens with its help.
5. Language affects perception. Language development is based on the world view perception. (Солсо 2006)

One of the conditions for successful Latvian language vocabulary acquisition is the speech of family, teachers and other adults, their language skills and level of quality. Adults have to be aware that children imitate them all the time. If we do not nurture our language, our children will not nurture theirs either. Preschool children have to acquire such vocabulary that provides comprehensive communication, prepares them for successful learning at school and would help them perceive folklore and fiction, radio and television programmes, etc. (Kuzina 2016b, 413).

Language experience affects a child's vocabulary. The more an adult talks to a child, the faster the child acquires new words and enriches their vocabulary. Adult communication with a child is affected by birth order and the family's social economic status, which is related to the parents' level of education. A first-born child has an advantage in the

communication process with parents since communication takes place more often and the child receives the parents' undivided attention.

Tija Zīriņa (2017) mentions that parents with a higher level of education usually talk to their children more for they are aware of the significance of communication for their speech development, and therefore the children's vocabulary is wider. Also, the figurativeness in the adults' speech is essential for the child's speech development. The more synonyms, epithets and comparisons, etc. adults apply in conversations with their child, the faster their vocabulary increases, but if the adults' speech provides simplified expressions, then the child's vocabulary will develop at a slower rate. Of course, this cannot be exaggerated. The mother's response, as well as the children's individual character features, plays an essential role in the child's vocabulary development. A faster language development will be noticed in extravert children as they possess a more distinct desire for communication and speech can be developed only in the communication process (Zīriņa 2017, 109).

Jerome Bruner (1996) considers that the child's provision with activities, resources and means, which comply with the particular form of action, helps develop their cognitive abilities. However, Marianne Saccardi (2014) thinks children need to get used to thinking in a different way. If a person thinks in a different way, they try to combine ideas that seem incompatible, and as a result, combinations emerge that can lead to unexpected problem solutions. Different thinking even exceeds creative thinking. Such thinking can transform the impossible into a pleasant reality. A simple thing, which can be expected from those who think in a different way, is surprises (Saccardi 2014, 14).

In order to express their own ideas fully and confidently and implement their creative intentions fully, a certain level of a child's language and speech development is essential. The child's speech development is closely related to imagination development – the richer the child's experience is and thus the more developed language, the richer the child's imagination. Everything seen, heard and felt by the child is the basis for the child's further imagination and creativity – the child accumulates the material which will be applied later in their creative activity (Purmale and Uršuljska 2016, 171).

3. Sense of Humour as a Social and Intellectual Phenomenon

Humour is rather important in interpersonal and social relationship formation. In his research, Rod Martin (Martin and Kuiper 2016) carried

out several studies in which different personalities and social relationships related to humour were looked at.

I have always considered healthy personal relationships as an essential part of the general psychological health. We develop in small groups and in order to perform well, we have to be able to collaborate well with others in both our closest relationships and casual interactions. There are lots of researches supporting this idea. Humour is basically a social phenomenon. Thus, studying the potential advantages of humour in the mental health sphere, it is natural to turn to interpersonal relationships in addition to emotional well-being. (Martin and Kuiper 2016)

A sense of humour is the ability of the brain to perceive, bind and experience a situation and judge whether it is funny. It is an intellectual phenomenon, a person's ability and awareness to see things in a funny way or express something in a funny way, while laughing is one way of manifesting the sense of humour. Humour is the cause and laughing is the effect, which provides the body with physiological and biochemical changes. People laugh to avoid low spirits and shyness, as well as express enjoyment, joy, satisfaction, and gratification. A sense of humour is first of all related to divergent thinking – the ability to see things and events from different points of view and search for various problem-solving types. If a person tends to look at things only from one particular point of view, seeing the comic side becomes difficult. Secondly, the peculiarities of the surrounding environment are also important. If in a family the mother and father do not complain about the lack of humour, most probably the child will also not have any problems with that, but if during childhood humour has been insufficient, what is lacking can be obtained by mixing with more joyful company. Thirdly, a good sense of humour is based on the individual's ability to create associations. It means distancing oneself from the particular event and therefore looking at things from afar (KJava 2000).

Thus, in order to create conditions for sense of humour development in preschool-aged children, the parents themselves need to have a healthy sense of humour.

A good sense of humour can improve a person's quality of life. A better understanding of humour can help to overcome stress and physical pain and inspire one to use it in daily problem-solving. The main feature of intellectual humour, or wits, is economy, which is based on the shortness, the laconism of the narrative and every detail or fact. A joyful person can overcome difficulties and carry out unconventional tasks more easily. In

public awareness there is a conception about humour as a feature of psychological health.

When talking about the correlation between the logical structure of humour and emotional dynamics, it can be said that the amalgamation of incompatible content or ideas into the human brain takes place, then a sudden change from one – an expected situation – to another – an unexpected one, creating fast stress relief, which is expressed through spontaneous laughter since some energy has been accumulated and the tension is looking for a way out.

The term *humour* is used in the most varied situations and it has several meanings. It can mean both the feature that relates to the funny, strange and ridiculous and the mental condition when the person encounters, expresses and understands something funny, strange and ridiculous; it is also a comic phenomenon which has appeared to amuse (Merriam-Webster online dictionary n. d.).

Humour is the stimulus phenomenon that causes laughter, and laughter is the response phenomenon. Humour is an emotional experience of paradox.

Humour can be an attack weapon (derision), a tool for contact establishment and information transfer – a joke, humorous sketch, topical satire, an upbringing tool for teaching moral standards – proverbs and sayings, as well as a peculiar defence to hide one's attitude or opinion when necessary – funny stories, returning a joke, changing the topic (Дрозд 2012).

Adults have already acquired and can apply the following means to express their attitude, opinion or stance:

1. Sarcasm – biting derision. The use of irony to convey contempt.
2. Humour – kind-hearted bantering attitude (towards something); a skill to see the comic and show it in a comic way, depict events; also a short piece of art in which the comical or funny side is reflected.
3. Hyperbole – excessive exaggeration of an image or idea (in a piece of art); a figurative expression in which there is such an exaggeration.
4. Grotesque – a kind of rendering in literature and art characteristic of a satirical or comical exaggeration; sharp, unexpected contrasts.
5. Parody – satirical or comical imitation of an art work, an author's style.
6. Paradox – contradiction (sometimes apparent) to something conventional, familiar.
7. Irony – subtle, hidden derision. (Dictionary.com n. d.)

Juriy Sobolevsky (Соболевский 2014), when describing humour, mentions that one of the survival mechanisms is the brain's ability to

quickly identify dangerous situations, which activates the self-preservation reaction. Humour is the experience of emotional paradox.

Alastair Clarke (2014) mentions that the ability to make jokes is a complex mechanism of human evolution, whose task is a fast analysis of the heard information and identification of the truth and imagination in it.

Thomas Hills (2017), in the article “Humour Psychology: The Funniest Words in the English Language”, writes that if a person can laugh, they form characteristics of a positive personality that lead to a higher psychological and physical well-being.

According to Peter McGraw (2011), humour provides a physical and emotional benefit.

A good sense of humour can improve essentially human life. Better understanding of humour can improve human life both helping to overcome stress and physical pain and inspiring humour application in daily problem-solving.

In the stress research context, humour is described as a behaviour which in a playful way suddenly changes the meaning of an object, event or situation, causing amusement. A sense of humour characterizes the human ability to see unexpected alternative meanings in the ongoing situations, assess the ongoing process as less threatening and change the emotional background from serious to playful, experiencing amusement in such a way (Stokenberga 2010).

Awareness of humour is related to awareness of oneself.

Juriy Tambergs (Тамберс 2005, 15) describes a sense of humour as the ability to understand humour, perceive the funny. It is a complex gamut of feelings – both moral and aesthetic, and emotional and intellectual feelings. The base of wit is the ability to see a hidden relation between unrelated things or create it, awarding a purpose to the seemingly useless (Freud 1974). Sigmund Freud mentions that the base of any wit is the craving for well-being. It is also common for the comic manifestations (wordplays and thinking errors, which cause cheerfulness) related to amusement appear through observations of different situations which change unexpectedly in a different way than expected.

4. Opportunities for Preschool-Aged Children’s Sense of Humour Development in a Family

Lev Vigotsky (Выготский 1997) emphasises that each age has a definite level of learning capacity; this means that only at a certain age should

certain activities be offered to children. The acquisition of cognitive skills is the outcome of the interiorization of social processes. To study the interiorization of social interaction processes and its impact on the cognitive processes, it is necessary to look at the coherence between individual cognitive possibilities and social relations. Vigotsky pays special attention to the social environment in the process of the child's cognitive development. In order to facilitate the child's learning process, in which the adult is a helper and supporter, it is necessary to state what the current stage of the child's development is and their potential development opportunities. The difference between the two stages is the "nearest zone of development"; Vigotsky defines it as

[...] the difference between the age of mind or the actual development level, which is determined with the help of tasks to be solved independently, and the level which the child can achieve solving the tasks together with adults. (Выготский 1997)

All the skills the child can perform without adult help are included in the actual development zone. In the nearest development zone are the skills the child is not able to perform without adult help yet but will soon be able to.

In order to specify preschool-aged children's opportunities for sense of humour development, attention was paid to the development of the children's emotions and feelings, thinking and speech and language as well as socialization in ontogenesis in relation to the preconditions of sense of humour development and possibilities in the family. The obtained information is collated in tables 1, 2 and 3.

Every child has individual emotional needs. The way these needs are satisfied – whether with love, patience, cordiality, understanding, empathy or punishments, indifference towards the child – determines, first of all, the child's self-sentiment – the child is kind or angry, depressed or cheerful; secondly, it determines their behaviour – the child is either obedient or disobedient, tearful, stubborn, cheerful, or secluded.

Table 1: Development of emotions and feelings from birth to 7 years of age in relation to sense of humour development possibilities

Development of emotions and feelings	Sense of humour development possibilities
Age group: from birth to 3 months of age	
<p>The newborn is calm and observant when awake. The child sometimes smiles. Loud noises can arouse different emotions in the child – they can get scared, scream, frown, or freeze suddenly; in their cry, various nuances can appear from which it can be understood what the child wants. The child starts smiling in about the 6th week. Their behaviour depends on the parents' mood. They are able to express their mood with the movements of arms and legs, some grimaces, e.g., blinking or tightening the mouth. Screaming is differentiated and demonstrates the child's mood. Timidity and shyness can already be expressed in the third month of life. The range of different mimics and facial expressions has increased to express emotions. The child smiles more often and wider, laughs and cries less (Attīstība no piedzimšanas līdz pirmā gada beigām 2017; Elnebiņa 1992).</p>	<p>Laughter and smiles as a sign of joy or satisfaction already appear in newborns. The first smile is a social smile, which is caused by the parents' presence. Infants start smiling and laughing when they are 3 months old. These emotional expressions are not related to a sense of humour. In the beginning the child smiles if they recognize their parents, if they are satisfied as they have eaten and if nothing hurts them. But this is not a sense of humour yet.</p>
Age group: 3–6 months	
<p>The child starts laughing at this age. The child laughs, grunts, plays with sounds, smiles, tightens the face into various grimaces. The child cries when they wet themselves; they show signs of pleasure when seeing the breast or milk bottle and understanding that it means food. The child smiles when they see themselves in a mirror. When in touch with the surrounding world, the child is open and happy, cries a little (Lika 2003). The infant's happy mood is expressed through loud jubilation. The more satisfaction the child experiences, the more it smiles. If the mother is restless, the child tends to be shy of strangers, shows dissatisfaction (Flēminga 1987).</p>	<p>The baby smiles a lot when somebody speaks to them and plays with them, or when they are allowed to play on their own. The child can laugh and giggle when they feel well. They laugh when they are tickled, kissed on the belly, back and feet or when a warm breath is blown on their skin.</p>

Age group: 6–9 months	
<p>An addressed child smiles and tries to grab the hair, i.e., looks for contact with a human and plays with them. The child's behaviour is more differentiated. The child smiles and laughs when attracted to something.</p> <p>The child shows clearly their likes and dislikes. The baby shows dissatisfaction if the toy is not given: they cry, get angry when feeling desperate and unhappy, and use gestures when angry (Geske 2005).</p> <p>The child becomes grumpy when not allowed to do something. Depending on the reason, the child cries either loudly or quietly, thus making it clear what their needs are. The baby experiences at this time not only a jump in physical but also in psychological and emotional development. The child shrieks or screams to show their emotions, to attract attention (Flëminga 1987; Hadañonoka and Hadañonoka 2014).</p>	<p>The child is happy, smiles and laughs when parents pay attention to them. The child is curious and tries to get acquainted with the environment, happy about adult help that complies with their needs.</p>
Age group: 9–12 months	
<p>Enjoys the parents' closeness but rejects strangers, cries. Many different positive emotions. The emotional reactions become more differentiated. The adults' jokes and games with them arouse the strongest positive emotions. The surrounding mood is felt. Instinctive imitation of feelings. Moody, but kind-hearted towards parents and other members of their family. The child can manifest anger when not willing to cooperate.</p>	<p>When growing up, the child starts feeling the surrounding people's mood and imitates their behaviour. For instance, the child laughs if the adult smiles or laughs. When the child is 9–12 months old, they can distinguish between unconventional situations and daily situations.</p>
Age group: 1–3 years	
<p>Lots of things are perceived with surprise. Such feelings as affection, love, anger, and joy are familiar. When children are 2 years old, they have more objective relationships – this means they touch each other, feel, push, step on each other, but they do not pay any attention to emotional reactions yet. However, if a child is bumped into, then they will show great dissatisfaction or will try to reciprocate with the same.</p> <p>Two year olds react negatively to their peers more often than positively. Too sensitive regarding their</p>	<p>If the mum appears in a funny dress, the child starts laughing.</p> <p>The child wants a positive reaction towards their achievements. The child is sensitive to critical attitudes and condemnation. Constant endearments are necessary from the</p>

own body, they cry about every scratch. The child is easily vulnerable, can cry over the smallest trivia (Bērna attīstības posmi 2011; Irbe 2014; Piedzīvotais 2–3 gadu vecumā 2010).	parents.
Age group: 3–7 years	
The child acquires social norms of feeling expressions; the role of emotions changes in the child's activity; the emotional attitude is formed; feelings become more intentional, less dependent on the situation; the highest feelings start to emerge: moral, intellectual, aesthetic. The child can control emotions although with difficulty due to a strong emotional impact (Chant n. d.; Kā pārbaudīt psiholoģiskās attīstības līmeni 2011; Milestones at 4 Years n. d.).	The sense of humour, when the child is able to make others laugh consciously, develops around the age of 4. This is the time when it is necessary to start to work with the child in order to develop their ability to make others laugh and understand jokes. During this period children like to repeat funny situations several times with the intention to make others laugh (Грицук 2015).

Psychotherapist Evija Ziemele (cited in Odiņa 2013) explains that humour is the defence reaction of a healthy psyche in emotionally saturated life and relationship situations. It becomes topical in the situations of fear, anger and offence as well as joy and wonder, decreasing the direct verbal and non-verbal expressions of the feelings and the experiences related to it. It is much easier and simpler to solve situations with humour than with anger. It is how people cope with anger when they are angry with somebody else and also dissatisfied with themselves. Humour helps to delay reactions to anger, hatred and offence; it provides an emotional discharge and creates a more peaceful solution to a situation or conflict. Humour can be learnt from a relationship model existing in the family, in which the humour is applied as a type of communication in cases of both positive and negative feelings. Children laugh spontaneously and when they are provoked to laugh. Laughter disappears if too many admonishments, prohibitions, strictures, and condemnations are expressed.

A sense of humour cannot develop in situations of fear and anger. The child will be afraid of not only everything else but also of joking since a joke may insult the parents even more. Such fear can serve as a resource for sarcasm development. If the reaction to a parental joke is laughter or humour, then there will be security that they are allowed to make jokes

and express themselves, and the humour will develop freely. In turn, irony and sarcasm may be expressed with the intention to hurt another or affect them emotionally, with a more powerful dose of anger, with the intention to protect oneself or deliberately hurt the other (Odiņa 2013).

Humour is an efficient way to manage one's emotions, to remain positive, improve the mood and maintain a positive attitude towards life. When a child is playing, laughter is a reaction to the pleasant activity. Laughter can help create a cheerful and happy condition even if the child did not feel like that before. The child's ability to see comical characteristics or phenomena in daily life can stabilize self-esteem in the child, for when they communicate a happy emotional atmosphere, the child receives positive feedback from other children and adults, and it strengthens good self-sentiment in the child. The child has to be offered a few basic cognitive skills in order to communicate with jokes, not only attracting attention with a funny facial expression. Imagination, the ability to perceive a different perspective and language are the most important.

Humour is the child's ability to deal with restrictions, accept them and acquire them. Sense of humour development affects the development of the emotional and intellectual spheres.

Table 2: Development of thinking, speech and imagination from birth to 7 years of age in relation to sense of humour development possibilities

Development of thinking, speech and imagination	Sense of humour development possibilities
Age group: from birth to 3 months of age	
<p>The baby observes the parents' faces more often when they speak to them and tries to imitate their facial expressions.</p> <p>At about 1 month of age, a child is able to utter simple sounds: <i>a-a, u-u, e-e</i> (Attīstība no piedzimšanas līdz pirmā gada beigām 2017; Lika 2003).</p>	<p>Parents' kind-hearted, affectionate, calm, gentle attitude to the child.</p>
Age group: 3–6 months	
<p>The baby lies and babbles by themselves, repeats own sounds. The baby changes the vocal volume and sound pitch. A 6-month-old baby utters different sounds. Cooing sounds are replaced by babbling, acquiring consonants. The difference is perceived between the sounds /b/ and /p/ or /d/ and /t/. The baby starts chuckling (Attīstība no piedzimšanas līdz pirmā gada beigām 2017; Lika 2003).</p>	<p>Responsive reaction to adult speech, imitation of separate sounds, intonations, speech base – emotional communication with the parents.</p>

Age group: 6–9 months	
Different sounds are combined, they are stretched or cut abruptly, the child plays with the sound rhythm, pitch, repeats the sounds. Cooing sounds are replaced with babbling, acquiring consonants.	The child starts using the adult actively to achieve the goals, e.g., to give a toy, open a box, make a sound. The child looks at one object then at another to compare them.
Age group: 9–12 months	
<p>The child utters double syllables, repeats the heard ones, modulates own voice. The voice is clear with a varied tone. Two syllables are used consequently, e.g., <i>papa</i> and <i>mama</i>. The first word is pronounced, which can be unclear. The child signals actively if interested in an object.</p> <p>The child pronounces a set of syllables, says <i>mamma</i>, <i>papa</i>. The self-pronounced or heard sounds are repeated, the voice is modulated, ranging from loud to quiet, whispering. The tongue is played with; saliva is applied to make sounds. Different syllables are used one after another, e.g., <i>mama</i>, <i>papa</i>. One or two words are pronounced constantly but they are not always pronounced clearly. Rhythmical sounds are pronounced, which do not have any meaning (Elnebija 1992; Geske 2005; Hadaņonoka and Hadaņonoka 2014).</p> <p>In familiar situations the child starts using a syllable, double syllable or any other sound about objects or people spontaneously. For instance, seeing a dog, the child says “woof”. The child is able to pronounce 1–3 words with a definite meaning. The voice is changed from loud to quiet. Preparation for speaking has finished and the child pronounces the first words. Interest emerges about things that go together, e.g., a cup and saucer, pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Simple instructions are heard and performed, e.g., “give me a cup, please.” The child likes games in which objects of different shapes have to be put in the right place (Flēminga 1987).</p>	<p>Imagination starts appearing when children are 12 to 18 months old. Interestingly, it complies with the time children start copying their parents’ jokes; a sense of humour starts developing in the children. Indeed, babies younger than 7 months can repeat intentionally any behaviour that causes laughter, e.g., a funny, cheerful facial expression or a hiding game. The child tries to imitate the parent’s activities.</p>
Age group: 1–3 years	
<p>1 year old: repertoire of 3–50 words, the words are not ordered into phrases, the sequence of the uttered sounds and intonation resembles speech, progress in the language comprehension.</p> <p>1.5 years old: the vocabulary is about 50 words.</p> <p>2–2.5 years old: the vocabulary is more than 50</p>	<p>Up to the age of 3, children do not make jokes, they laugh due to satisfaction and joy (Дрозд 2012). It is essential to develop</p>

<p>words, most often two-word phrases, a special interest in verbs. Every day new words and expressions consisting of 3 or more words are acquired; everything said to the child is understood; in speech there are still a lot of grammar mistakes. Objects, which are asked for, are shown in a picture or environment. The child asks for something and says, “thank you”, is able to say their own name and point at their own nose, mouth, eyes, and ears. At the age of 2.5, the child can find different- sized objects in one colour; distinguishes between 4–6 geometrical forms, is able to arrange buildings according to a sample with 10 or more logs of different colours and sizes. From 3 years, all children change to symbolical activities – toys are exposed to imaginative ideas. At 3 years, they have the ability to generalize, find new associations between the familiar function of the object or its meaning and a new one. The child starts indulging in different fantasies (Bērna attīstības posmi no 1 līdz 3 gadu vecumam 2011; Elnebija 1992; Irbe 2014; Lika 2003; 25 Piedzīvotais 2–3 gadu vecumā un ieguvumi 2010).</p>	<p>imagination in the child so they can make jokes. This, according to Paige Davis (2017), starts at about the age of 2. Jokes are based on objects, e.g., putting clothes on their or their parents’ head, or concept, e.g., saying that a cat says “moo”.</p>
Age group: 3–7 years	
<p>The visually concrete or visually active thinking dominates in children – the child perceives, remembers and understands better information that has been obtained through the senses – seeing, hearing, tasting, touching; the child is not able to abstract and generalize. Vocabulary is about 1000 words, of which about 80% is understood; expressions and grammar are similar to the adults’ speech. Syntax errors become frequent, predictable. 3–5 years-olds – apply sentences consisting of 4–5 words. Pronounce sounds /r/, /l/, and /sh/ with difficulty, able to memorize and reproduce a sentence consisting of about 8 words. At the age of 3, role plays become the most important activity. The child starts acting like the adult and imitates them. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between truth and reality. The child likes making up events and stories. The child’s drawings have become more specific. Invented events are told and exaggerated; imagination is highly developed and changeable. In a few minutes a cardboard box can be converted into a house, pet-shop or train. The child’s games have become more creative, there is more</p>	<p>Humour makes something funny; a sense of humour is their ability to recognize it. A good sense of humour is a tool initially developed in the family, in the interaction with parents, so parents can help children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - notice and see things from several perspectives, not only the obvious ones, - be spontaneous, - perceive unconventional, non-stereotypical ideas or kinds of thinking, - see beyond the surface of the things, - enjoy and participate in a busy everyday life, - not to take themselves

<p>fantasy in them. More time is devoted to fantasy games, daydreaming. The child speaks a lot, even when nobody is in the vicinity. Their speech consists of full and complex sentences, but difficulties can occur when explaining ideas or experiences. The child understands more than they are able to say, 5–10 new words are learnt every day. Lots of questions are asked. The child speaks in lots of situations where they feel at ease. Words are pronounced absolutely clearly. Generalization is acquired. Logical judgements are expressed and relatively correct conclusions are made. Interest in the nature of things has appeared, different questions emerge to which the child expects replies (Chant n. d.; Hadaņonoka and Hadaņonoka 2014; Irbe 2014; Kā pārbaudīt psiholoģiskās attīstības līmeni 2011; Lika 2003; Milestones at 4 Years n. d.).</p>	<p>too seriously. Children with a well-developed sense of humour are happier and more optimistic; they have got a higher self-esteem (Gavin 2015).</p>
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Humour facilitates the language acquisition process. Imagination plays an important role in non-conformity identification. It helps the children to place themselves somewhere different, introduce social roles which they usually would not need, and even pretend that their nose has detached from their body.

Nevertheless, Paige Davis (2017) states that the main condition for sense of humour development in children is socialization. Prior to the sense of humour development, the child has to be aware that they are sharing their experience with somebody else. In the interaction process with the parents, it happens through laughter and smiles. Preconditions for sense of humour development can appear as soon as the newborn can look into somebody’s eyes and smile. Such social interaction promotes the child’s cognitive development.

Table 3: Socialization from birth to the age of 7 in relation to sense of humour development possibilities

Socialization at preschool age	Sense of humour development possibilities
Age group: from birth to 3 months of age	
<p>The infant’s facial expression changes in reaction to the adult’s smile. If the infant is addressed, it is already able to keep in touch with the environment. The infant smiles and observes faces carefully unless they are too close. Body language and movements are observed when somebody speaks to them. Parents</p>	<p>Eye contact, perception of the mother’s touches. The child’s need to communicate with the adult emerges, thus the child’s needs obtain a</p>

Socialization at preschool age	Sense of humour development possibilities
and others' attention is enjoyed. The baby starts to perceive feeding not only as eating but also as a means of communication with the mother. If somebody communicates with the baby, the baby can stay awake for a longer time (Attīstība no piedzimšanas līdz pirmā gada beigām 2017; Bērna attīstības posmi no 1 līdz 3 gadu vecumam 2011; Elnebija 1992; Geske 2005).	social content and such a meaning becomes a personality creation. At this age the child smiles at the parents. Smiles are more and more frequent when attention is paid to the baby.
Age group: 3–6 months	
Noticing either known people or strangers, the child starts smiling and at the same time moving both arms and legs. The child looks at the person and focuses on him/her. The people's faces are examined. The infant looks for contact with the surrounding people, sometimes afraid of strangers, but if the mother's attitude encourages this contact, then after some time the child gets in touch with the stranger. Distinguishes between a friendly or angry voice and facial expressions (Elnebija 1992).	Understands the adults' speech (with what emotions) e.g., smiles when somebody speaks in a friendly voice.
Age group: 6–9 months	
The child is timid in the presence of strangers but is not always afraid, distinguishes between a strict and kind speech; notices changes in mimicry and reacts to them. The child can be restless in the presence of strangers, can start crying, and searches intensively for contact with the surrounding people. The child chooses for themselves pleasant people (Bērna attīstības posmi no 1 līdz 3 gadu vecumam 2011; Flēminga 1987/)	Parents' attention and love help the child to develop fully as a personality (Kuzina 2016a); the most important thing is whether the adult is happy next to the baby, and whether the adult has looked for and been able to find a common language – the language of emotions and activities in which the idea – you are little, but I love you so much and I am so happy to be with you – is reflected. Have the mum and dad been able to invent the “cuckoo” game, have they been able to understand the baby's fears and joys?

Age group: 9–12 months	
<p>The child is willing to get in touch with the surrounding people, responds to eye contact, a smile, a kind and peaceful voice; strangers are viewed sceptically. Not everybody can touch and pick up the child; the child turns away from strangers, prefers getting in touch mostly with the mother, and observes other people's activities, cuddles up to the parents, especially in a public place if feeling anxious about the presence of many strangers. Sometimes the child is shy and not willing to get in touch with the people who are not familiar. The child enjoys other babies' company but does not play with them yet. There is good eye contact, the child has got a friendly look but strangers are viewed sceptically and contact is avoided if not wanted. The child "tells" his/her desire aloud. The child waves their hands if somebody waves at them, is interested in other babies of their age and can glance at them closely or nudge them (Attīstība no piedzimšanas līdz pirmā gada beigām 2017; Elnebijā 1992).</p>	<p>The child gets involved in games with parents apart from only playing in the adults' presence.</p>
Age group: 1–3 years	
<p>From 1.5 to 2 years: the child starts playing with peers, wants adults' participation (play a game, sing, arrange logs etc.). Satisfaction of basic needs is not sufficient any longer as the need for a playmate has emerged.</p> <p>The child meets relatives with outstretched arms and laughter, calls the familiar ones with their right names. Reaching the age of 2, the little one shows emotions distinctly in communication with relatives – smiles, gesticulates, looks into eyes, but the contact with strangers may be avoided. The child is cautious towards unfamiliar people in the beginning, but if their attitude is kind-hearted, the child is responsive and friendly. The child demonstrates joy over their achievements and in communication with other people (Bērna attīstības posmi no 1 līdz 3 gadu vecumam 2011; Lika 2003; 25 Piedzīvotais 2–3 gadu vecumā un ieguvumi 2010).</p>	<p>Parents' participation in games is important.</p>
Age group: 3–7 years	
<p>At preschool age, there is a distinct disposition for object-manipulative competence, i.e., need to acquire the meaning and functions of different objects in the surrounding world, acquire their chances to</p>	<p>The child's sense of humour can be developed, playing and speaking to the child, applying jokes,</p>

<p>manipulate with them. Such a competence increases the personality's power and independence; it is the base of further creative self-realization. The desire to obtain, receive positive evaluation, support, sympathy, and recognition is typical of this age. External positive evaluation increases the child's confidence – the sense of one's own personality's power is not possible without a systematic creative activity; a critical attitude towards adults' and peers' judgements appears. It helps the children to assess themselves, to be aware of their physical capacities, skills, moral peculiarities, experiences, and different mental processes. A differentiated, correct self-assessment is created; self-awareness in time appears. Memory development relates to personality development.</p> <p>3 years: experience is acquired of other person's behaviours, attitudes, manifestations through communication with other people – through which the child becomes acquainted with himself/herself. The first 5–7 years in the child's development are crucial in the personality and mental process development. Experience is obtained in communication with other people (Chant n. d.; Irbe 2014; Kā pārbaudīt psiholoģiskās attīstības līmeni 2011; Milestones at 4 Years n. d.).</p>	<p>kind-hearted teasing. The jokes directed towards the child always have to be nice (e.g., putting on a cap on each other the other way around and laughing at it); the child will find out about cruel irony later during their lifetime. At the age of 5–6, children can imitate and they like imitating in a funny way.</p>
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The ability to make and understand jokes helps the child to deal with difficulties in life, broaden the circle of communication and feel good in any conditions. True laughter not only lightens the mood but also decreases emotional tensions and tiredness (Грицук 2015).

Unfortunately, according to Viktorija Kuzina, nowadays archaic techniques in children's upbringing can be noticed, with parents using insulting words and expressions in spontaneous anger. This phenomenon relates not only to low-educated parents; thoughtlessness and lack of self-control can be encountered also in educated families. In childhood sensitivity towards parents is especially great, thus the parents and teachers should pay attention to their language and take care of the children's speech development and speech culture formation (Kuzina 2016a, 154–155).

Good education, erudition and general culture promote sense of humour development during the preschool period. An intelligent social environment plays a significant role. In the families where jokes are enjoyed and applied, the children also like jokes and humour. Sense of

humour can be developed simultaneously with language and speech development. First, however, children need to acquire the human values; they have to be taught to understand what is good and what is bad, what can be laughed at and what cannot be laughed at (Тамбеpr 2005, 118–120).

Only self-sufficient personalities can apply humour to themselves and their actions. Parents have to know the difference between *self-irony* and *self-derogation*. In the first case, the talk is about the skill to perceive trouble with humour, maintaining self-respect and psychological balance. The second situation can lead to an exacerbation of inferiority complexes. Playing together with the child creates joyfulness, e.g., blindfold drawing. It is important to teach the child to distinguish humour from derision and sarcasm (Odiņa 2013).

So, humour is applied to get rid of problems and conflicts, it makes people feel happy, to be in harmony; humour eliminates or reduces contradictions and conflicts and diminishes human alienation.

5. Conclusions

In choosing problems and problem-solving types due to psychological pressure or by one's free will, human beings are in social and cultural interaction with other people, gaining success in solving set tasks and incurring losses. Communicating and interacting with other people in everyday life, on the basis of the analysis of the positive and negative outcomes and on the reflection of the obtained experience, as well as having a sense of humour allow people to change their individual image of the world. Humour is both a social and intellectual phenomenon.

An adults' favourable attitude, interest in the child's development and its specifics and the provision of a developmental environment are important preconditions for a child to successfully acquire thinking and speech, imagination and creativity from birth to the age of 7. The quality of adult speech is important to the child's language and speech development in terms of wealth of vocabulary, speech emotionality and figurativeness.

Children develop a sense of humour after being influenced by the relationship model in the family in which humour is applied as a means of communication in order to feel and show both positive and negative emotional conditions. A child's fear is the basis for sarcasm development.

Humour is a way to control one's emotions, improve emotional self-sentiment, and maintain a positive attitude towards other people and life in general. Children with a well-developed sense of humour are happier and

more optimistic, able to perceive unconventional, non-stereotypical ideas and ways of thinking. A sense of humour can promote the children's manifestations of creativity.

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PART III:

LATVIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

CHAPTER TEN

ACQUISITION OF LATVIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE BALTIC STATES

INGA LAIZĀNE

Keywords: Latvian language as a foreign language, the Baltic states, formal and informal education, teachers.

1. Introduction

The restoration of Latvia's independence in the 1990s allowed for the opening of a new chapter in the history of Latvian language acquisition. After Latvia regained its independence, foreigners started to show an increasing interest in Latvia. Foreign students came to our country for the purpose of experience-sharing programmes or to obtain a higher education in Latvia. Therefore, it was necessary to organize practical Latvian language courses in some Latvian universities. Over time, foreigners came to Latvia in search of work, thus increasing the demand for practical Latvian language acquisition in various informal courses, summer schools and self-study courses. In this way, alongside the field of Latvian as the mother tongue and Latvian as a second language, it became necessary to create a new field of language didactics – Latvian as a foreign language (LATS).

Although in Latvia the language courses for foreigners were organized only after the restoration of Latvia's independence, in some universities outside of Latvia this had been done already much earlier, including in some of the higher education institutions of the Baltic states. Thus, it can be concluded that historically LATS has developed in two directions – in Latvia and outside of Latvia.

The aim of the article is to provide a historical overview of the possibilities to learn Latvian as a foreign language in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, focusing also on the topicality of this field, namely, to assess how

the situation with regard to Latvian as a foreign language in the Baltic states has changed over time.

This article is part of a broader research that studies the situation of Latvian in different universities of Latvia and the world. As the main method of this research, contact interviews with teachers who have obtained rich experience in this field were used in order to obtain information on the various organisational and pedagogical issues related to the LATS field in certain universities. With individual teachers, electronic correspondence was also organized. During the course of the study, interviews with Estonian, Lithuanian and Latvian teachers were recorded; email correspondence with the teachers of this field was also maintained and theoretical and reference literature used.

In 2007, under the guidance of Arvils Šalme, the study “Acquisition of the Latvian Language as a Foreign Language in Universities of Europe” (Šalme 2008) was developed. It was used as the basis for this article but the situation has changed in the course of almost 10 years so there is a need to update the data, which is done in this article.

2. Acquisition of the Latvian Language as a Foreign Language in Estonia

Historically, there have been two universities in Estonia that offer practical Latvian language courses – Tallinn University and the University of Tartu.

The Language Centre of the Tallinn University has offered practical Latvian language courses for A1 and A2 levels since the 2009/2010 study year. Latvian was a course of free choice, and the number of students in the group varied from 8 to 19 people. After the restructuring of Tallinn University in 2015, the Latvian language course is no longer offered (Lapinska 2016).

After the reforms, the Tallinn University teaches those foreign languages that are mandatory in a particular curriculum. Unfortunately, Latvian is not included in this category, and from a financial perspective it is not possible to teach foreign languages at the university, Latvian included. Estonian colleagues are hoping that one day the situation will improve and it will be possible once again to offer a practical Latvian language course, but they do not see it happening in the near future (Meristo 2016).

2.1. University of Tartu

Latvian language and culture acquisition possibilities are offered by the Department of Languages of the Baltic Region of the College of Foreign Languages and Cultures at the University of Tartu. In addition to the practical language, other courses of free choice are offered, namely *the Latvian literature course; the Latvian and Lithuanian cultural history course in Estonian; and the cultural history course of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in English*, which is of great interest as it is chosen by many foreign students.

The practical Latvian language course was included in the study programme for the first time in the academic year 1997/1998 (Šalme 2008, 14). Latvian has been taught with breaks by several lecturers. Since 2006, Ilze Zagorska, who also created special educational materials for students – *Latvian Language for Estonian Students* (Zagorska 2014) – teaches Latvian at the University of Tartu without any breaks.

In the University of Tartu, it is possible to acquire Latvian as an optional course. The group consists of students of mixed disciplines, one of which is philology. Although the main criterion for students learning Latvian is knowledge of Estonian, because teaching Latvian is based on Estonian, by the comparison-based methods as well, the group consists of not only Estonian students but also students from Finland, America, China, Hungary, Lithuania, and Russia. Furthermore, students of any degree level (bachelor, master, doctoral) study programmes can study Latvian as an optional course; therefore, there is sometimes a situation where students of all three degree levels are in the same group (Zagorska 2014 [interview]).

At the University of Tartu, the Latvian language course is divided into levels. In the first semester, the Latvian language is acquired to level A1, in the second semester from level A1 to A2. Each semester consists of 32 lessons (the duration of one lesson is 45 minutes). The student can choose whether they want to study only one level of Latvian or study further (Zagorska 2014 [interview]).

In the academic year 2015/2016, Latvian language courses of three levels were implemented for the first time: 1) 0–A1; 2) A1–A2; 3) A2–B1.1. At the first level, there were 14 students and the second five students while the third level course had 19 students.

Unfortunately, the University of Tartu has a problem that is more or less faced by all universities, namely, a decline in the number of students. In order to attract as many students willing to acquire the Latvian language as possible, since September 2016 a practical Latvian language course for students with English language knowledge is also offered, as before that

Latvian language acquisition was possible only to those students who knew Estonian.

2.2. Other Opportunities to Acquire Latvian in Estonia

There is no data on the interest of Estonians in learning the Latvian language in informal courses or in self-study courses, but one may suppose that this interest is not high. Such conjecture is encouraged by the fact that there were attempts to open courses at private universities in Tartu but unfortunately this idea was not implemented because there were not enough interested persons.

The situation is different in the twin-towns Valka and Valga, which are the border towns of Latvia and Estonia. The Latvian-Estonian Institute offers both Latvian and Estonian language courses.

3. Acquisition of the Latvian Language as a Foreign Language in Lithuania

In Lithuania, the interest in the Latvian language has been determined by the ties of the Lithuanian and Latvian culture, language and the unity of neighbouring countries built up over the centuries. In the past, in the higher education institutions of Lithuania, just like in Latvia, the neighbouring languages were learnt mainly for academic purposes, nowadays more and more Lithuanian students learn Latvian language for professional and personal needs. (Šalme 2008, 10)

Historically, the Latvian language was taught in five universities in Lithuania: Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University of Kaunas, Klaipėda University, Šiauliai University, and Vilnius Pedagogical University.

3.1. Šiauliai University

The teaching of Latvian in Šiauliai has relatively old traditions. The Latvian language as a fully fledged subject began to be taught by the teachers of the Lithuanian language and literature in 1948 when the Šiauliai Teachers' Institute was founded. In 1954, this institute was reorganised into the Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute. During the whole period of existence of the institute, the Latvian language (and Latvian literature as a separate subject) was an integral part of the study programme, although there were several short breaks in the course as well

as various amendments; for example, from time to time, changes were implemented as regards to the study semester, the number of lessons and the knowledge testing system. This approach continued at Šiauliai University, which was founded on the basis of the Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute in 1997 (Kvašīte 2009, 61–62). Over the years the Latvian language in Šiauliai has been taught by different lecturers; since 1992, the lecturer has been Regīna Kvašīte.

Since 1992, it has been possible to acquire Latvian at the Šiauliai University in a bachelor's degree study programme *Lithuanian Philology* and in a master's degree study programme *Lithuanian Linguistics*. Over the last 20 years, in bachelor's and master's study programmes, not only has the practical Latvian language course has been implemented but also other optional philological study courses.

Currently, the Latvian language is not a mandatory study course in either bachelor's or master's degree study programmes. The Latvian language as an optional subject is offered to the students of various Bachelor of Philology study programmes. There are currently two bachelor's study programmes – *Lithuanian Philology and Communication* and *Lithuanian Philology and Pedagogy*. In the master's study programme *Lithuanian Linguistics*, the students can choose the course *Contrastive Lithuanian and Latvian Linguistics* (Kvašīte 2015).

After a longer break in the autumn semester of 2015/2016, R. Kvašīte once again had an opportunity to teach practical Latvian. R. Kvašīte emphasizes that although there have been several breaks during the course of the teaching, as well as various amendments (study semester, number of lessons, knowledge testing system), the Latvian language is an integral part of the study programme and Latvian linguistics will remain in Šiauliai (Kvašīte 2003, 198; Kvašīte 2013, 56).

3.1.1. Other Opportunities to Acquire Latvian in Šiauliai

The new direction of teaching Latvian in Šiauliai was connected with the so-called University of the Third Age (U3A), which started operating in the city in 1999. In the academic year 2002/2003, in the U3A the Latvian language was taught for two semesters, and the students were very interested in this subject. It was interesting to teach them because they had already had some experience and, at times, also basic knowledge of the language to be acquired (due to family or working conditions, several U3A students had a little knowledge of Latvian). In the later years, there was no possibility to implement the teaching of the Latvian language as often the same people continued their studies (this was more of a way of spending

time together, combining this process with the acquisition of new knowledge and skills) so the organizers of the U3A studies were supposed to offer courses that would be binding and interesting for all students (Kvašīte 2009, 63). Although it can be concluded that there is interest in Latvian, the U3A has not organized any further Latvian language courses.

3.1.2. The Baltic Center

The Baltic Center, officially registered in November 2002 as a non-governmental organization and opened on the premises of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Šiauliai in March 2003, is an institution closely associated with the Latvian linguistics in Šiauliai. In February 2004, the Baltic Center became an association, bringing together scientists, academics, cultural workers, and other professionals as well as all those who wish to expand their contacts with Latvians and carry out joint projects, study and better understand the Baltic culture (Kvašīte 2009, 63).

Although the Šiauliai University is facing the problem regarding the number of students, it is trying to keep alive the traditions of Latvian language acquisition by using not only formal but also informal language acquisition possibilities.

3.2. Klaipėda University

Latvian as a foreign language is offered as a subject at the Klaipėda University by the Department of Baltic Linguistics and Ethnology of the Faculty of Humanities. The study programme for acquiring Latvian as a foreign language was introduced in the university in 1991. Every two years 20 students enrolled in the bachelor's study programme *Lithuanian Philology and the Latvian Language*. Seven to eight students have enrolled in the master's study programme *Linguistics* per year. From 1991 to 2003, it was also possible to study Latvian as an optional subject in other bachelor study programmes (Šalme 2008, 12).

Currently, Latvian is taught at Klaipėda University by Dalia Kiseliunaitė. After contacting Dalia Kiseliunaitė, it can be concluded that currently the Latvian language can be acquired only in the master's study programme *Linguistics*. In the academic year 2015/2016, this course was chosen by six students. The bachelor's study programme *Lithuanian and Latvian language* no longer accepts groups due to an insufficient number of students. As the number of students in all philology programmes has decreased in Klaipėda University, students are admitted only in two

programs: *Lithuanian Philology and Theatrical Pedagogy* and *Lithuanian Philology and Scandinavian Languages*.

3.3. Vilnius University

It has been possible to study Latvian at Vilnius University since the end of the 1940s. A separate specialty *Lithuanian Language and Foreign Language (Latvian)* in the bachelor's study programme was created in 1999, but in 2003 the Latvian language was also included in the master's study programme (theoretical linguistics with subjects of Latvian linguistics) (Šalme 2008, 10).

Currently, practical Latvian can be studied only in the bachelor's study programme. There was once a possibility to study practical Latvian in the master's study programme as well and there was also a short Latvian language course (12 contact hours) for extramural students. Bachelor's and master's study programmes have other subjects related to the Baltic languages.

Students of Vilnius University studying Lithuanian philology in the bachelor's study programme can choose Polish or Latvian in the second semester of the first year. It is a compulsory optional subject taught for one semester. Afterwards, students can continue their studies for three more semesters but then it already is a subject of free choice. In the bachelor's study programme of the Vilnius University, the Latvian language is taught by Eglė Žilinskaitė-Šinkūnienė, Agnė Navickaitė-Klišauskienė and Vytautas Rinkevičius.

At Vilnius it is possible to choose the Latvian language as a course of free choice as well. It can be taken by a student of any faculty. This course is taught by Ērika Sausverde. In the past, it was a regular course but for the past three years it has changed due to the busy schedule of Professor Ē. Sausverde. The course was implemented in the autumn semester of 2015/2016. There was a group of beginners with 11 students. Students could choose this course in any semester and, as long as there are free credit points, continue to study it even for four consecutive semesters. Classes are held twice a week, totalling 64 contact hours. After the first semester, students reach the A1 level, after the second semester A2 level.

Since 2015, the Latvian language at the Vilnius University is also a subject that is not included in the student's study programme. This means that a student from any faculty who no longer has any credit points in his or her study programme can choose Latvian at the Faculty of Philology and study it, but of course for a fee.

In March 2008, the Centre of the Baltic Languages was opened in Vilnius University, whose scientific activity aims at developing the Baltic language studies as both a separate and interdisciplinary field (Šalme 2008, 11).

The Centre of the Baltic Languages has organized such events as the *Baltic Language Days* (together with the student conference), *Latvian Cinema Night*, and *Baltic Academy*. Teachers and lecturers from Latvia, such as Pēteris Vanags, Laimute Balode, Andra Kalnača, Valdis Muktupāvels, etc., have interesting guest lecturers.

3.4. Vytautas Magnus University

The program of studying Latvian as a foreign language at Vytautas Magnus University of Kaunas, Faculty of Humanities, was introduced in 1990. This is a compulsory subject in the study programme *Lithuanian Philology* (Šalme 2008, 12).

Unfortunately, because of the decrease in the number of students, the Latvian language is offered only as a course of free choice, and this course is not implemented every year due to lack of interest. The Latvian language at Vytautas Magnus University has been taught by Alvydas Butkus, Violeta Butkienė, Daiva Puškoriūtė-Ridulienė, and Kristina Vaisvalavičienė.

In general, Vytautas Magnus University currently offers 20 foreign languages, including Latvian, which is included in the “list of rare languages” (Vaisvalavičienė 2014).

3.5. Vilnius Pedagogical University

Vilnius Pedagogical University (formerly the Vilnius Pedagogical Institute), like the Vilnius University, has long traditions of teaching the Latvian language. It is hard to say when the first Latvian language classes were introduced because the study programmes of those days have not survived to this day. It is known that from 1951 to 1959, the Latvian language was taught by Jonas Kabelka, and after him by Ipolitas Čieska, Žaneta Markevičienė and Lilija Kudirkienė (Markevičienė 2016). Latvian was a compulsory course for bachelor’s students, and language learning material especially for students of Vilnius Pedagogical University was created – *Latviju kalba* by Ž. Markevičienė (2012). However, due to the insufficient number of students, the programme is currently closed and the Latvian language is no longer taught.

When assessing the situation in Lithuania, it can be concluded that out of the five universities at which Latvian could be acquired, at the moment it is possible to learn it in only four universities due to the decrease in the number of students. Currently, the best situation is at the Vilnius University, which is the only place where the Latvian language is still a compulsory study course. In other Lithuanian universities, Latvian is offered as a course of free choice, which is not always implemented due to the decrease in the number of students. Consequently, the long-standing traditions of teaching Latvian, which in some Lithuanian universities were established already in the 1940s and 1950s, have now almost disappeared.

4. Acquisition of the Latvian Language as a Foreign Language in Latvia

The situation in Latvia is significantly different from the situation in Lithuania and Estonia as foreigners in Latvia learn Latvian not only for study purposes but also for personal goals and professional needs.

Among students at universities in Latvia there are foreign students who have come on exchange programmes as well as foreign students studying in bachelor's or master's degree programmes in foreign students' departments. In some universities, such as the University of Latvia, Rīga Stradiņš University and Riga Technical University, there are separate courses specially organised for Erasmus students and students from the International Student Department, while other universities, such as Liepāja University, Ventspils University College, School of Business Administration *Turība*, provide Erasmus students and foreign students with the opportunity to study together in the same course.

Over the last 20 years, it has been possible to acquire Latvian as a foreign language in the following higher education institutions of Latvia: University of Latvia, Rīga Stradiņš University, Riga Technical University, Liepāja University, Rezekne University, Daugavpils University, Ventspils University College, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvian University of Agriculture, Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy, Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvian National Defense Academy, School of Business Administration *Turība*, and BA School of Business and Finance.

The earliest traditions of courses for the acquisition of the Latvian language as a foreign language in Latvia belong to the University of Latvia, the Riga Technical University and the Rīga Stradiņš University, which offered Latvian language courses already in the early 1990s when the first foreign students from Lebanon, Syria, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Israel,

and other countries arrived in Latvia. Currently, among the students studying in higher education institutions of Latvia there are foreign students from various European countries and from distant and exotic countries, such as China and Brazil.

With regard to the acquisition of LATS for full-time students at one of the Latvian universities, one important factor is to be taken into account, that is to say, often Latvian is mainly taught for professional purposes, paying much less attention to the use of the language in everyday life. For example, in Rīga Stradiņš University and at the University of Latvia, foreign students study medicine or dentistry so they have to acquire a professional Latvian language in order to be able to communicate with patients in the clinic. This means that in the Latvian language lessons professional vocabulary is practiced and the content of the course program is created considering the professional needs of the students. As the number of lessons is limited, the focus is on the professional language. This is why foreign students are very often able to communicate with patients in the clinic, that is, to use the Latvian language in a certain field of their knowledge, but they are not able to use Latvian in everyday situations, for example, in a market, shop or restaurant. Because of the number of lessons allocated, these topics were not possible to learn. Unless the student has acquired it by means of self-study, they are not able to use the language in a non-occupational situation.

Latvian is taught in Latvia not only for study and research purposes but also for professional and personal needs. Students are mainly representatives of mixed families who want to learn Latvian or foreigners working in international companies such as *Statoil*, *Evaluation Latvia*, etc., in which the working language is English and Latvian is acquired in order to be able to communicate with Latvian colleagues, as well as to be able to use it in different everyday situations. Thereby, the Latvian language is also acquired in informal courses in various language schools in Latvia as well as by means of self-study.

5. Conclusions

Summarizing the situation in the Baltic states, it can be concluded that in Lithuania and Estonia, the Latvian language as a foreign language is mainly acquired in universities that once had strong traditions of Latvian linguistics and Latvian was mostly acquired for academic purposes. Over time, as the number of students decreased, philology study programmes are closing and students can acquire Latvian as a course of free choice for professional and personal needs.

The situation in Latvia differs from the situation in Lithuania and Estonia as Latvian as a foreign language is acquired not only by foreign students who are visiting Latvia for a specific period of time but also by foreigners who have decided to associate their life with Latvia and learn the official language of our country for personal and professional purposes. Consequently, there is a need for appropriate teaching materials that correspond not only to level A but also to levels B and C, as well as appropriate study courses.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE ART OF TEACHING LATVIAN AS A HERITAGE LANGUAGE: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

IVETA GRĪNBERGA

Keywords: applied linguistics, heritage language acquisition, education.

1. Introduction

This article focuses on new trends in the area of applied linguistics known as heritage language (HL) acquisition.

In view of the large emigration that began in Latvia at the end of the 1990s and continues today, we can see developing a new type of language student, the so-called *heritage language student* (HLS). Usually these are ethnic minority representatives in a country whose grandparents or parents (one or both) are minority language speakers and who in childhood had some exposure to their father's or mother's language (Kagan and Dillon 2011, 492).

A research study was conducted at the University of Washington with the goal of characterizing Latvian as HLS to learn what advantages these students may have from their early exposure to the Latvian language.

2. Baltic Studies Program at the University of Washington

The University of Washington in Seattle is one of 26 universities around the world where the Latvian language is part of a full-time Baltic Studies program. Since the program's inception 23 years ago, more than 300 students have studied Latvian, of which approximately half have been of Latvian descent; the rest were American. Students study foreign languages to gain an advantage in the job market, develop their professional careers in the international sphere or establish personal contacts in other countries.

The children or grandchildren of immigrants study their HL in order to understand their ethnic roots and belonging to another social group. The heritage language is strongly related to their ethno-linguistic and cultural identity, which they want to preserve.

The Baltic Studies program is unique in that it is the only one of its kind in North America where students can learn Latvian. The program director is Guntis Šmidchens, and because of his untiring work and efforts this program is successful. Students can not only study Latvian but also Estonian and Lithuanian as well as related courses taught in English, such as *Baltic History*, *Cultural History of the Baltic States*, the *Baltic States and Scandinavia*, the *Baltics after 1991*, *Latvian Literary and Cultural History* and others. Baltic cultural and literary topics are integrated in other subject matters, for instance, the course *Introduction to Folklore* discusses Latvian folksongs whereas in the course *Scandinavian Women Authors* students learn about the Latvian writer Aspazija. Usually about 100 students attend the Introductory Folklore Course and, as a result, students become familiar with Latvia, the country, its people, history and culture. These are young Americans who otherwise would never have heard or learned about Latvia. Because the Baltic Studies program is part of the Scandinavian Department, students learn about Latvia along with other Scandinavian countries – Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, and Norway. The University of Washington offers 50 foreign languages to students, including Latvian.

Foreign language studies in North American universities have recently undergone significant changes. The term *heritage language* was first used in a publication in Canada in 1970 by Joshua Fishman (Fishman 1970).

Since the 1990s researchers in the USA, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe have been acquainted with HL acquisition and its research. It became topical at universities when typical language students – those who had no prior knowledge of the study language – encountered HLS – those who had previous exposure to their father's or mother's language. That usually occurred in Japanese, Spanish, Russian, Hindi, and other language classes. The majority of research that compares language acquisition processes with HL acquisition processes focuses on these language groups. Without a doubt, the comparison of these two students' groups is valuable practical material for a better understanding foreign language acquisition mechanisms. Whereas several principles are universal, research in Latvian as an HL acquisition could differ and increase understanding about psycholinguistic processes in foreign language acquisition.

Who is an HL acquirer? How does he differ from the typical foreign language acquirer? In a classroom where Latvian as a foreign language is being taught to HL and typical students, should other teaching methods and approaches be utilized? To answer these questions, a study was conducted at the University of Washington where the previously mentioned two language acquisition groups were compared. The research was conducted with the goal of characterizing heritage language acquirers. Before analysing this research, attention should be paid to previous research regarding HL speakers.

3. Characteristics of Heritage Language Speakers

The often quoted Guadalupe Valdés has described an HL speaker as someone who has been “raised in a home where a non-English language (in the case of the USA) [my note – I. G.], is spoken” and “who speaks or merely understands the heritage language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the HL” (Valdés 2000, 1). The HL speaker speaks or in some cases only hears the heritage language at home but receives their education in the majority language, which is their home country’s official language. Most of their education is not received in the HL.

Researchers, in characterizing HL speakers, emphasize certain aspects, beginning with linguistic and concluding with motivation and identity. In his characterization of an HL speaker, Joshua Fishman emphasized the close relationship of the ethnic heritage language with the individual’s family (Fishman 2001), while Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl points out that the “HL speaker has grown up in an environment with close ties to cultural traditions that are connected with the heritage language” (Van Deusen-Scholl 2003, 222).

As emphasized in Guadalupe Valdés’ definition, heritage speakers understand English, i.e., their home country’s majority language, as well as speak or at least understand their heritage or minority language. It should be noted that HL speakers is not a homogeneous group. They differ by language skill levels, frequency of language use and other extralinguistic factors.

HL speakers usually exhibit a strong desire to preserve their language in order to be able to communicate with other community members. That is why many of them attend minority schools and later study the heritage language in university, thus becoming HL acquirers.

HL acquirers are definitely not native or first-language (L1) acquirers, but they are not second-language (L2) acquirers either. They usually have:

- good pronunciation,
- a limited vocabulary,
- knowledge of the culture and traditions of their heritage language.

On the one hand, these can be viewed as advantages. L2 acquirers would have to spend considerable time to learn them. On the other hand, HL acquirers cannot be considered L1 students because their linguistic and cultural knowledge is incomplete. They are another type of student.

Over the course of a number of studies of Spanish, Russian, Japanese, and Mandarin languages, it has been found that the HL language acquisition process has both L1 and L2 acquisition characteristics. University of Illinois professor Silvina Montrul (2008, 27) concluded that two important factors impacting the differences are age and cognitive abilities. S. Montrul notes other important factors, such as intensity of input, which greatly influence the outcome of L2 language acquisition.

Characteristics that differentiate L1 from adult L2 acquisition are described in table 1 (Montrul 2008, 27). The shaded areas are characteristics typical of HL acquisition.

Table 1: Differences between L1 and L2 acquisition

Characteristics	L1 acquisition	Adult L2 acquisition
1. Input/output	Early exposure (since birth or earlier)	Late exposure
a) age		
b) intensity	Rich and uninterrupted	Fragmentary
c) manner	Spoken language	Spoken and written language
d) quality	Linguistically rich, contextually appropriate	Limited contextual and linguistic structure
e) environment	Natural	Natural and classroom
2. Individual factors	Motivation not important	Motivation important
3. Previous linguistic knowledge	None	L1 knowledge
4. Target language system:		Developmental and transfer errors
a) types of errors	Developmental errors	
b) fossilization	N/A	Occurs
5. Output	Complete, finished	Differs: often incomplete and not finished

The HL process of acquisition is only partially similar to L1 acquisition. We can describe one of the most important factors – age. We know that under normal conditions, L1 acquisition begins at birth. Because HL acquirers have early childhood exposure to their father’s or mother’s language, it can be surmised that that encourages the acquisition of those phonological aspects acquired at an early age, such as language intonation and tones as well as several morphosyntax aspects. It is well known that different mechanisms are employed in language acquisition by children and adults; for example, children acquire language implicitly. Thus, HL acquirers should have certain advantages when compared to L2 acquirers, at least in acquiring certain grammatical categories. Language acquirers preserve language knowledge acquired in childhood implicitly, which grants them advantages with the spoken language. It should be noted that complicated linguistic structures as well as writing skills are acquired in school, and if the HL language acquirer hasn’t received formal education in the language and hasn’t developed metalinguistic knowledge, then they are unlikely to have any advantage. S. Montrul, Kethleen Dillon and other researchers emphasize that while early exposure to a language presents, without a doubt, certain advantages, it does not guarantee a complete outcome (Dillon and Kogan 2011; Montrul 2008).

Another important factor that to a great degree is different among language acquirers is the intensity of input. Intensity levels can vary from passive language listening to active language usage. In order to evaluate language input intensity, one must take into account how many hours a day a child comes into contact with an HL, if one or both parents (or possibly grandparents) speak HL with the child, in which language the child speaks, what language siblings speak to the child, as well as other factors. On the other hand, L2 acquirers spend an hour or less a day on language exercises, resulting in exposure more often with the written language, grammar rules and grammatical construction usage. Thus, the language is acquired explicitly. Although early exposure doesn’t guarantee a result, it would seem that it still gives HL acquirers an advantage. The question is where and how.

4. Research Study Methodology

At the University of Washington, the two previously mentioned types of language acquisition students attend the Latvian language courses, i.e., those typical students who have not had exposure to the target language and members of the Latvian ethnic minority who have had exposure to the Latvian language in early childhood. For most, the English language is the

dominant language and is L1 while, for a variety of reasons, the students choose to study Latvian as a foreign language.

Four Latvian language students participated in the study – two had had no exposure to Latvian and two had. A comparison of spoken and written language skills was made. Using the error analysis method, mistakes were classified and analysed. The advantages of this method have been previously noted by Stephen Pit Corder and Carl James (1998), who emphasized that mistakes made by language acquirers on the path to acquiring a new language system are the key to understanding the L2 acquisition process. This study also used functional analysis, which allows looking at spoken or written texts as a whole and analysing the language acquirer's ability to use formal grammatical knowledge to form complicated texts (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005).

In order to obtain data about possible extralinguistic factors that could influence Latvian language acquisition, every student answered several questions. The questionnaire asked for the participant's age, first language, length of time studying Latvian at the university level, length of time studying Latvian outside of the university, preferred studying techniques and/or learning strategies, what they perceived as the most difficult and easiest aspects of learning Latvian, and, most importantly, for their reasons/motivation for studying Latvian and whether they had had childhood exposure to Latvian and if so, in what form.

As previously noted, errors were excerpted, and then classified and analysed. This study doesn't look at all of the errors but only those that are connected to some substantive grammatical categories and their usage. Thus, during the course of the analyses, four categories of mistakes were created:

- noun gender usage,
- noun and adjective agreement,
- the use of genitive, dative and locative cases,
- usage of the noun as a direct object.

The functional analysis showed:

- how spoken or written texts were understandable and not misunderstood,
- what kind of direct transfer mistakes from English appeared in the text.

The results of the study were used to develop a characterization of an acquirer who learns Latvian as a heritage language.

5. Study Results

Research results showed that on the phonological level HL acquirers have certain advantages because Latvian language pronunciation mechanisms were developed in early childhood. Typical language acquirers for the most part maintain an accent and are unable to acquire suprasegmental phonological elements such as intonation and tones.

Lexicon acquisition occurs simultaneously with the acquisition of phonological, syntax and morphological basics. However, the beginning phase of foreign language acquisition requires a certain amount of time until the language acquirer learns to separate individual words from the flow of uninterrupted speech. HL acquirers are able to do that from the start as they usually have a certain level of vocabulary, which at the beginning presents them with an advantage. The brain's network is only able to perform limited work during the acquisition of the lexicon of a foreign language because it is unable to soak up as large a quantity of association as an L1, thus giving them an advantage.

When discussing morphosyntax it should be noted that typical language acquirers display just as good results as HL acquirers, even surpassing them in several assignments. Therefore, HL acquirers do not have an advantage in acquiring morphosyntax forms.

In analysing student responses to the questionnaire, it was observed that HL acquirers typically have a great interest and motivation in learning Latvian. They wish to identify with a distinct ethnic minority and wish to learn more about the culture and traditions of the land of their parents or grandparents. This is related to their search for an identity.

6. Ongoing and Future Research

There are a number of conclusions and findings for future research:

1. HL acquisition process research widens knowledge regarding the psycholinguistic processes that are involved during the time of foreign language acquisition.
2. Connected to the large emigration from Latvia that began in the 1990s and continues today is the likely development of a new type of language acquisition group, the so-called HL acquirers. There has been a rapid loss of the Latvian language among the emigrants and linguistic assimilation in their new home countries. Language knowledge is important to those searching for their Latvian identity and to those who wish to preserve their language. Insufficient

language skills or loss of these skills could be a serious hindrance to those who wish to return to Latvia.

3. Based upon the theoretical conclusions regarding HL acquirer characteristics and their needs, appropriate language acquisition materials are required. L1 or L2 language learning books are not fully adequate for HL acquirers.
4. New language text books should use the so-called macro or *top to bottom* approach, not the micro or *bottom to top* approach widely used in language acquisition. To understand the micro approach, one can compare it to a house. A house is usually constructed bottom to top. Considering that HL acquirers usually have had a certain amount of exposure to the heritage language, the foundation of the house and walls already exists, but missing are a number of bricks. The new language text books should fulfil this knowledge gap.
5. As HL acquirers have great motivation to preserve their identity, they desire to learn about their culture and traditions. This information should also be included in Latvian language text books. The aim of HL acquirers in learning the Latvian language is related to the search for identity, but not the integration into Latvia's society, as it is for L2 acquirers.

HL acquirers are neither L1 or L2 or foreign language acquirers. We still need to learn how to teach them.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

USE OF INTERMEDIARY LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATING IN ACQUIRING LATVIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Keywords: Latvian as a foreign language, language acquisition, an intermediary language, translation, context, dictionary, plurilingual learning environment.

1. Introduction

Intermediary language and translation are two categories that are not much discussed at a theoretical level. The actualisation of them is especially important at the beginning of language acquisition (in levels A1 and A2) when the knowledge of the target language learners is basic, not enough or non-existent. Intermediary language and translation are important aspects in acquisition when transferring from one language into another language. It is also important to mention that despite the fact the translation is not applied as an activity in the acquisition of the target language, language learners, facing unfamiliar lexical units, mainly try to clarify them by translating them from the unfamiliar language into the language they know and again back. The acquisition of the language is a process of transferring, and direct translation is of great importance in it, especially at the beginning of the acquisition of the language.

The aim of the article is to share experience about the usage of intermediary language and translation in acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language while working with foreign students. The research is based on observations in Latvian as a foreign language classes, the study and analysis of teaching materials, including dictionaries, and theoretical literature about the actualisation of translation in the acquisition of a foreign language.

2. Intermediary Language

The usage of intermediary language in the acquisition of a foreign language has been actualised from time to time. It has been supported as well as completely rejected. Intermediary language is another language used in the acquisition of the target language to give instructions and explanations. It is also called the language of tuition (Skujiņa, Anspoka, Kalnbērziņa and Šalme 2011, 54, 86).

If possible, the native language is used as the intermediary language ; for example, Latvian is an intermediary language in comprehensive schools in Latvia. In cases where language learners do not have the same native language, any language the language learners know can be chosen as an intermediary language . For example, English is usually used in groups of foreign language students in universities in Latvia.

The usage of an intermediary language is limited if students do not have one common language or they know only their native language, which is not widely known. Such a situation can be in refugee groups where “people know only Arabic, Farsi or Kurdish and more over if they cannot read and write in their own language” (Sešiem bēgļiem no Sīrijas un Eritrejas sāks mācīt latviešu valodu 2016). The usage of an intermediary language in this situation is not possible. Such a situation was predicted in the European Community enterprise EQUAL project “Step by Step”, during which supporting system for professional and social integration of refugees in Latvia as well as provided acquisition of a foreign language without intermediary language and developed methodical suggestions for lower level groups (Ernstson, Joma, Laiveniece, Lauze and Stadgale 2006, 6) was theoretically developed.

Based on the experience with foreign student groups, it can be concluded that sometimes it is possible to use more than one intermediary language, for example, English and Russian or English and German. Sometimes students from one country use their native language, for example, Turkish, Urdu, Tamil or Hindi, to clarify some aspect that is not clear enough because of their limited knowledge of the intermediary language (usually English). It must be taken into consideration that the English language level of foreign students can be different. This is also proven by the results of the tests, when at the end of the first test students write their impressions about Latvian. Some students choose to write the words and phrases they have already learnt in Latvian but others prefer to describe their feelings, difficulties and differences in comparison with their native language and experience of language acquisition so far in English.

Acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language often takes place in a plurilingual environment, when language learners use their knowledge of several languages to acquire the target language. A plurilingual approach means that

in the acquisition of a new language, the language learner looks for interconnections with already acquired languages and that the impact of these languages appears in the usage of the language in communication. (Bliska 2015, 5)

A person does not acquire the language separately but makes connections with already acquired languages, developing metacognitive strategies called acquisition of a language and applied in the usage of the language. It is not important which language “promotes the function of recognition” in this process (Bliska 2015, 92).

The main usage of the intermediary language is to give instructions; for example, how to do the task. In the learning process, it is a technique because language learner can quickly acquire lexis and phrases connected with the learning process; for example, *lasi* “read”, *klausies* “listen”, *atbildi uz jautājumiem* “answer the questions”, *savieno teikumus* “match the sentences”, *veido dialogu* “make a dialogue”, etc. It makes the learning process easier because the number of instructions in the intermediary language decreases. Students very quickly acquire those lexical units connected with cognitive activities in the learning process.

The grammatical aspect is important in the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language. It is important to know number, gender, case or person in order to choose the correct form to make a sentence. Meanwhile, this also shows the logic construction of the language. For example, *Jānis fotografē* “Janis takes pictures of the” (what? – object is needed which is expressed with accusative) – *pieminekli* “monument”. *Mēs ēdam vakariņas* “We are having dinner” (where? – location is needed which is expressed with locative case; in some other cases it can be expressed with prepositional phrases) – *kafejnīcā* “in a café”. This is how the metalanguage of the target language is acquired; for example, such terms as *vienskaitlis* “singular”, *daudzskaitlis* “plural”, *sieviešu dzimte* “feminine gender”, *vīriešu dzimte* “masculine gender”, *locījumi* “cases”, *vārdšķiras* “part of speech”, etc. Nominal word constructions are made that agree in Latvian; for example, adjective with noun in gender, number, case, using appropriate endings; *liela māja* “big house” – feminine, singular, nominative case (see Latvian Grammar 1997).

Intermediary language is used more widely than just for giving instructions at the beginning of the acquisition of the language, when

students do not have any perception of Latvian, its construction and principles. For example, the exposition is given in English to explain the alphabet in Latvian or the declension noun case system. Pragmatic aspects and culture differences are also discussed in the usage of the language, especially the traditions in the usage of politeness phrases in society and at the university, such as two pronouns of the 2nd person – *tu* [informal *you*] and *jūs* [formal *you*] when addressing a person. The choice of the pronoun depends on how official the situation, relationship, social status, gender, age and other factors are. For example, at university, students use the formal pronoun *jūs* to address a professor but students from the same course communicate with each other using the informal pronoun *tu*.

3. Translation

In the context of intermediary language the use of translation as an approach in the learning process of a foreign language is discussed. There are two opposite points of view: from total neglect, for example, considering it as not natural, unproductive and not a suitable task in the acquisition of a language, as well as not motivating learning activity (Carreres 2006), to support, suggesting translation as an activity in the acquisition of a foreign language (Mutore 2013, 94–96). In the *European Common Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment* (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006), it is not neglected nor recommended. Translation is mentioned in connection with the types of the tasks (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006, 134) and mediation (Eiropas kopīgās pamatnostādnes 2006, 92).

Translation is one of the most important techniques in several methods of the acquisition of a foreign language (for example, grammar-translation method), which helps a language learner to understand the meaning, grammatical form and syntax construction correspondence more precisely between native language (or intermediary language) and target language. (Skujiņa, Anspoka, Kalnbērziņa and Šalme 2011, 91)

Some elements of this method are also used in combination “with new methods (for example, in reading and translation of the texts, in the clarification of grammatical form and rules)” (Šalme 2011, 85). The conclusion that translation as one of the techniques in the acquisition of a foreign language is suitable for the literal and linguistic language learner who likes to go deep into grammar and lexis but is not suitable for the “average” language learner (Carreres 2006) is interesting.

At the beginning of the 21st century, discussion about the use of translation has become more actual in the context of the communicative approach productivity and evaluation of methods nowadays (see, for example, Cook 2010; Tsagari and Floros 2013). During the previous centuries, other approaches, especially the grammar-translation method, dominated and therefore whether translation techniques are good or not was not analysed. Nowadays, the question is about “improvements of communicative approach with the help of translation tasks” (Mutore 2013, 96). There is also the noticeable influence of easily available new technologies because if a language learner has a smart phone there is a wide range of translation possibilities. In the theoretical literature about the communicative approach, the term “post-communicative approach” is used, which includes the translation technique (Ur 2016, 7–9).

More and more often, it is announced that translation is a good skill to have, and not only for translators and interpreters. Translation is a part of communication in our multi-language society, for example, as a part of announcements, labels, menus, subtitles in the news, etc. (Translation in language teaching and learning 2011); therefore, it is natural to use translation in the acquisition of a language too.

The usage of translation should be implemented only partly in the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language. It is not necessary to translate every word that a language learner does not understand but in order to get the meaning. In such cases, it is important not to translate all the text but just to ask to clarify a word, collocation or a phrase in the intermediary language. It is the same when there is a joke in the text the language learner might not understand. For example, a dialogue in Inga Klevere-Velhli and Nikole Naua (2012) teaching material in the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language:

Toms: *Sveiks, Jāni! Vai es Tevi traucēju?*

Jānis: *Čau! Tu traucē, bet nekas. Nāc iekšā!*

[Tom: Hi, John! Am I disturbing you?

John: Hi! Yes, you are disturbing me but that is OK. Come in!] (2012, 17)

The given response might be considered impolite. If students are surprised, the situation should be commented on in the intermediary language. From a pragmatic aspect there are allowed some cases “when the speech is direct, seeming impolite, for example, among very close friends because there is no social distance and there is self-respect” (Plaude 2004, 133). As soon as the number of unknown lexical units doesn’t impede understanding of the meaning of the text, translation should be left as a choice for the language learner.

One of the skills to be developed in the language acquisition process is to guess the meaning of a word, collocation and phrase from the context. That means that the meaning of the word or phrase is not clear but can be guessed or interpreted from the context: “Context can lead and guide” (Lomba 1990, 11). Therefore, the language acquisition process offers linguistic implementation, which is based on what is already known (the advisable proportion is 2/3/4:1 – depending on the level of knowledge). Well known in foreign language didactics is Stephen Krashen’s formula $i + 1$, where ‘i’ is interlanguage, the changeable in the head of language learner “where the structures of the speech are transformed from the native language or other known language to target language, making new structure with characters of two or more languages” (Skujiņa, Anspoka, Kalnbērziņa and Šalme 2011, 86), and ‘+1’ is the next level of the acquired language (Krashen 2003). It also correlates with the conclusion that linguistic information is better gained if it is a little above the level of the current knowledge of the language learner (Ellis 1985; Krashen 1985).

The awareness that a language learner already knows something gives him an increasing confidence that allows him to look at unknown things with greater confidence. Therefore, when using translation, the teacher should pay attention to the new material and not ask learners to translate what they should already know from the previous lessons. In case it is done, it can be considered as a motivating activity – a language learner gets confidence that he/she already knows a lot in the target language. It is considered that listening and reading – receptive skills – are mastered first. This can be used as a motivating factor in the acquisition of a target language (see also Mogahed 2011).

When it is necessary to clarify the meaning of a specific word, for example, *šķūnis* “barn”, *ligzda* “nest” (Auziņa, Berķe, Lazareva and Šalme 2014, 44), which language learners do not know in English, a third language is used in the translation process – the native language. The availability of electronic dictionaries on mobile phones makes it easy to quickly clarify the word. As an advantage can be considered international words or collocations that language learners recognize by sound or spelling, for example, *kivi* “kiwi”, *garāža* “garage”, *mango* “mango”, *jogurts* “yoghurt”. The meanings and the forms of the words can be easily recognized because they are similar to the words in their native languages. They are “the first keys to decrypting information” (Gridina 2006, 148).

As one of the arguments, translation is not considered a useful activity in the acquisition process of a foreign language because when the word is translated to clarify its meaning, it is used to understand the sentences but language learners do not remember it because no associations are made in

contrast to, for example, when a picture or a detailed explanation is given. Kató Lomb even claims that when we try to remember the word in a foreign language based on the word in our native language (translate) “we behave as the pole vaulters, shifting from one foot to the other before trying to jump up” (Lomba 1990, 11).

Trying to develop this idea further, to jump high we need to step back; we need a runway for thinking, which in this case is context. Therefore, the acquisition of a new word in a foreign language is not based on translation into native language but context.

Giving a translation of an unknown word in the target language is the fastest way to help language learners understand the text or do the task but it does not mean they will remember it. As we say – easy come, easy go. Therefore, if the translation is used in the learning process, language learners need to work with their individual dictionary – their notebook, where they write down all new lexical units and study them.

The use of individual dictionaries ensures the acquisition of the words’ meanings but that does not mean that they will become a part of the learner’s active vocabulary. New vocabulary should be included in the texts and tasks several times in the further learning process. Specialists suggest repeating them five to six times (Laiveniece 2011). In case the language learner does not recognize the already translated word, it is advised to give it again with the previously used context in the target language but not to translate it. Therefore, the language learner will have associations, which will help them remember the lexical unit. Cognitive and associative thinking for recalling the meaning of already translated words is a part of language acquisition.

4. The Use of Dictionaries in Translation

Language learners use bilingual dictionaries during lessons and in self-study. Language learners should pay attention to the lexical and grammatical aspects in Latvian translation while working with the dictionaries. At the beginning, language learners have difficulties in choosing the most suitable translation if they are given more versions. They do not feel the language yet and they usually choose the first offered translation in the dictionary.

For example, a language learner wants to make a collocation with the noun *nazis* “knife” and therefore it is necessary to translate the adjective *sharp* from English. The most popular electronic dictionary among students is *Google Translate* and there the first translation for the adjective *sharp* is *krass* “radical”, not *ass* “sharp”. In the additional information

section, the translations are offered in the following order: *ass* “sharp”, *krass* “radical”, *spēcīgs* “strong”, *stāvs* “steep”. Because of that, the student forms an incorrect collocation – *krass nazis* “radical knife”*.¹

There was an interview in the newspaper *Sestdiena* with Andrejs Vasiļjevs, who is the founder of the language technology company Tilde. He was asked to comment on the quality of automated translation services because we usually associate *Google Translate* with funny situations. The computer expert explains that the strength and richness is in the polysemy of the language. He admits, “Where there is no polysemy element, computers can carry out this function as well as a human being or even better” (Zirnīs and Kasparāns 2015, 21). Misunderstandings can also appear because of inattention; for example, in the incorrect phrase *Man garšo Latvijas tuksneši*.* In the English words *dessert* and *desert* there is a spelling difference of only one letter. If the word is written incorrectly in the electronic dictionary, the translation will also be incorrect.

Lack of correspondence can also appear in situations when diacritic signs in Latvian are not taken into consideration. For example, you want to translate word *gaļa* “meat” in *Google Translate* but write a different form of the word. As a result, you do not get a suitable translation – *final* (“gala”), not *meat* (“gaļa”). Another situation can be that a student in a hurry wants to translate the word *garšot* “to like” [*to like* speaking about food], but in a hurry writes only a part of the word *gars-* and as a result does not get a verb but a noun *spirit* (“gars”).

Some foreign students are interested in using bilingual paperback dictionaries and they want to know which dictionary to use. We can agree with the conclusion in the book *Vārdnīcu izstrāde Latvijā: 1991–2010* where it is said that “all in the research examined English-Latvian dictionaries are passive dictionaries, which are meant for Latvian audience” (Karpinska 2012, 71). Metalinguistic information, which is important to Latvian learners, is missing in both English-Latvian and Latvian-English dictionaries. For example, *Latviešu-angļu/ angļu-latviešu vārdnīca*, which is compiled by Dzintra Kalniņa. For example, for the verb *to buy* in the headword in English-Latvian there is the pronunciation, a part of speech, translation in Latvian, and principal forms of a verb. There is also mentioned that a word *pirkt* “to buy” can have a version with the prefix *no-* respectively *nopirkt* (Kalniņa (comp.) 2002, 37). In the Latvian-English part there is not much information for the word *pirkt*. There is

¹ Here and hereafter, the incorrect collocations made by Latvian language learners will be marked *.

only a translation and the pronunciation of a verb (Kalniņa (comp.) 2002, 476).

The Latvian language learner can find useful metalinguistic information about the word, not only semantic but also morphological description and examples, in an explanatory dictionary. In order to be able to work with this dictionary, the student has to know the basic form of inflective words. If the unknown word in the text is in case, for example, the plural form of the noun *brother brāļi* “brothers” and the third person form for the verb *to buy, perk*, there can occur difficulties in translation. Only *Google Translate* can fully ensure the translation of the previously mentioned examples. Searching for the word *brāļi* in a thesaurus (summer version in 2016), the basic form of the noun is shown (see searching results: <http://tezaurs.lv/#/sv/?brāļi>) but if you write *pērk*, there are examples with an approximate similarity and not the infinitive of the previously mentioned verb – *pirkt* (see searching results: <http://tezaurs.lv/#/sv/?pērk>). The fact that the Latvian Language Agency has published teaching material where all the verb forms are together and that makes acquisition process of Latvian much easier (Auziņa and Nešpore (ed.) 2014; Valkovska (ed.) 2015) is positive.

5. Summary and Conclusions

It can be concluded that every language learners’ needs should be taken into consideration in the usage of intermediary language and translation. Language learners want to understand the meaning of the sentence and semantic units not only in lexical but also in grammatical levels. The metalinguistic explanation in English can be used in simple cases to show the difference in sentences *Es esmu mašīna* “I am a car” and *Man ir mašīna* “I have a car” as well as in more complicated cases when there are misunderstandings. For example, the incorrect usage of the consonant interchange (l–ļ) in the 1st declination noun plural genitive case, making the collocation *āboļu sula** “apple juice”.

- When the teacher uses intermediary language for giving instructions, acquisition of lexis (*lasīt* “read”, *rakstīt* “write”, *klausīties* “listen”, *veidot dialogu* “make a dialogue”, *tulkot* “translate”, etc.) and metalanguage (*vienskaitlis* “singular”, *daudzskaitlis* “plural”, *vīriešu dzimte* “masculine gender”, *sieviešu dzimte* “feminine gender”, etc.) are improved. It can be claimed that the usage of intermediary language promotes the content-based acquisition of a foreign language because the aim is not only the usage of the language. The linguistic system is also improved and, according to plurilingualism, it

improves the development of a linguistically competent personality.

- Although pictures² ensure understanding of the word in the acquisition of a language, for translation it is the dictionary. Nowadays, Latvian has become a foreign language for foreigners who wish to acquire it. Bilingual dictionaries should be improved by adding metalingual information useful in the acquisition of Latvian as a foreign language.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

TOGETHERNESS IN A LANGUAGE CLASSROOM – EXAMPLE FROM JAPANESE LEARNERS OF THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE

DAIKI HORIGUCHI

Keywords: group dynamics, togetherness, class management, interaction, self-awareness, Latvian.

In the development of foreign language teaching theories, attention has been increasingly paid to group dynamics and the internal climate in the group and the communication between teacher and student as well as student relationships. The interaction between teacher and student is one of the most important elements of class management. Successful class management is considered a significant condition for teaching and learning the subject. The word *interaction* is understood as being a mutual relationship between class members and the teacher, which serves as a mediator for both teaching and learning. The interaction is based on the mutual relationship of teacher and learners, or among the learners themselves. Emphasising the importance of interaction, Anna Malamah-Thomas (1987, 29) argues that,

the way that participants in classroom interaction feel about each other, and about the situation they are in, has an important influence on what actually goes on in a classroom.

Earl W. Stevick (1980, 4) also points out that

success depends less on materials, techniques, and linguistic analyses, and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom.

In all learning models, no matter how diverse they are, it is the teacher who organizes the class, who initiates and defines the direction of the

group by asking questions, showing, and pointing out what to do in a concrete situation. He comments on, appraises and evaluates students' work, and when necessary, corrects their mistakes. Sometimes he encourages the group, and, depending on the situation, may even crack jokes. Students, in turn, evaluate the teacher's actions and react accordingly. This process of interaction may not relate directly to the subject but it is an essential element of good class management.

The author postulates that good conditions in the classroom are attained as a result of healthy interaction between the teacher and learners, and among learners themselves. Its positive features are a good working mood, a positive and happy atmosphere, vitality, attention to other classmates, and a feeling of togetherness. The last feature is the object of this research.

A feeling of togetherness is formed by the common aim and interests of the group. It represents self-awareness of the teacher and learners as a group. The term *group cohesiveness* is also used in the theories of group dynamics, where various activities are offered in order for the group to cohere (Hadfield 1992; Dörnyei, Malderez 1999).

This author of this article aims to analyse this feeling of togetherness in the classroom and its unifying factors based on his seven years' experience in teaching the Latvian language course for Japanese students at the Embassy of Latvia in Japan. In this article, three main aspects that enhance this feeling and thus promote a good learning environment are analysed. They are as follows:

- 1) self-awareness of learners of a minor language as a group,
- 2) mutual understanding and respect within the group, and
- 3) the use of Latvian names in the classroom.

In order to investigate the first two aspects, it is necessary to describe the Latvian language course at the Embassy of Latvia in Japan.

The first aspect, self-awareness of the learners of Latvian, a minor foreign language in Japan, must be viewed from a social context in Japan. The second aspect is related to the main linguistic aim of the course. The third aspect that deserves attention is the use of Latvian names as forms of address in the classroom, which promotes a more informal and friendly classroom atmosphere. Here, the general modes of address in Japanese culture have to be mentioned.

In 2010, the author interviewed 16 learners in the Latvian language course regularly conducted at the Embassy of Latvia in Japan. The questionnaire included 11 questions, from which the following questions are used directly and indirectly for this article:

- 1) *What kind of image does the average Japanese have of Latvia?*
- 2) *Why do you study Latvian?*
- 3) *How has your attitude towards the Latvian language, Latvia, and Latvian people changed – before learning Latvian, and now?*
- 4) *What do you think about the use of Latvian names in the classroom?*
- 5) *Have you practiced your Latvian in the classroom or outside, and how did you manage?*
- 6) *What is good or not good when you study in our classroom?*
- 7) *In your opinion, what do the people around you think about the fact that you are learning Latvian?*

The survey shows that the image of Latvia differs greatly among the average Japanese. Either they have no idea about Latvia at all or they only have a general idea about its geographical location (a Baltic state, Eastern or Nordic Europe), and its basic historical and political facts (a former Soviet country, a new EU member, etc.). On the other hand, some Japanese possess adequate knowledge about the economic situation in Latvia (the deep impact of the economic crisis in 2008), more specific historical events (such as the Baltic Way, its Singing Revolution), its tourist attractions (like the capital, Riga, and the Baltic Sea), and also express interest in Latvian culture and tradition (its Song and Dance Celebration, the world-famous musicians born in Latvia, various kinds of handicraft), etc. However, taking into account its geographical distance, the knowledge that the average Japanese possesses, that, “Latvia is one of the three Baltic countries and it is located just in the middle”, is sufficient. In Japan, they have just started to get to know Latvia. Latvian has not been taught either in the institutions of higher education or at school. The various aspects of Baltic linguistics have traditionally attracted the interest of Japanese linguists who are generally specialists in other languages, mostly Slavic languages.

In Japan, as in many other countries, the most popular foreign language is English. It is almost the only choice at school, which is explained by the fact that English is an obligatory subject in almost all the entrance exams, and good English skills are a further key to successful integration in the labour market. At the university level, it is possible to learn a second foreign language. The more popular choices are the languages of Japan’s western neighbours, China and Korea, which compete with Western European languages such as German, French and Spanish. Russian, the language of Japan’s north-western neighbour, is also sought after. NHK, the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation, offers radio (working days) and TV (weekly) courses of the above-mentioned languages, which provides an objective picture of popular foreign languages in Japan.

In comparison with other popular languages, Latvian is undoubtedly represented as a minor language. The choice of Latvian is considered a challenge because it creates certain difficulties for the Japanese due to its grammar – cases, conjugations, agreement of adjective and noun, category of definiteness/indefiniteness, for example.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the Embassy of Latvia in Japan in 2006, the official visit of the Japanese Emperor to the Baltic states in 2007, political cooperation between the two countries, active student-exchange programmes, and growing business opportunities have caused a greater interest in Latvia, and to some extent made a greater number of Japanese desirous of learning Latvian as well.

The Latvian language course is regularly conducted at the Embassy of Latvia in Tokyo, and since 2009, at the Latvian Honorary Consulate in Osaka, the second-largest city in Japan as well. In 2013, the first Latvian textbook for Japanese learners was published in the popular series of language textbooks (Horiguchi 2013). As of now, the Latvian Speech Contest has been organized at the Latvian Embassy four times (9 participants in 2011, 12 in 2012, 9 in 2013, 5 in 2016).

The Latvian language course has been conducted since 2007 and has been arranged so far by the Latvian Embassy and the Japan-Latvia Music Association. It is held every Wednesday evening. The author worked as a lecturer there for seven years, from the beginning until September 2014. The course is attended by students with different occupations and motivations. They represent a broad spectrum of age groups, from 20–60; the largest age gap is 40 years. Their occupations vary from students and graduate students to choristers, business people, interpreters, veterinary doctors, pensioners, etc. Here are some of their responses when questioned on their reasons for learning Latvian.

- *We are professional choristers and have sung some Latvian choral pieces. We want to delve into Latvian phonetics and comprehend what is hidden in Latvian words and texts.*
- *I research the singing culture and tradition of Baltic countries and my graduation thesis was about the Latvian Song Celebration. The language helps me better orient myself in my own research field.*
- *I am a political scientist and my research field is the Baltic countries. Knowledge of Latvian is necessary to do my research, for example, by reading newspapers and academic literature in Latvian. My knowledge of Latvian helps me understand Latvian people, their culture and the Latvian society. After all, it facilitates my research activity.*
- *I have some Latvian friends and want to know more about Latvia and I wish to communicate with them in Latvian.*

- *My hobby is learning foreign languages. Latvian just interests me linguistically. I want to go deeper into it, compare it with Lithuanian, Russian or German, for instance.*
- *I love travelling and have been to Latvia several times. Direct communication with local people in Latvian will enrich my travel experience.*

Their motivations can be divided into two types. The first type is motivation based on one's professional, academic activity: students want to advance in their fields by making good use of their knowledge of Latvian. The second type is motivation unrelated to work or study: Latvian is not necessary either in their professional career or study but they consider that knowledge of Latvian enriches and diversifies their life. In fact, these two aspects can be combined individually. Which type of motivation is more significant depends on individual learners. However, observation shows that those who place more emphasis on the first type of motivation study more consistently. Also, it should be noted that they tend to have studied other foreign languages and already know how to learn a foreign language in general. When they place more emphasis on the second type of motivation, Latvian becomes a hobby to them. They consider it part of a life-long education and totally equalise it with sports or cultural activities like the tea ceremony, and the Latvian class would have the same value as cooking lessons. The word *hobby* is used here in its best meaning: through hobbies, one gains inner satisfaction, develops oneself spiritually and physically, communicates with others, and thus socialises.

The student group is not homogenous in terms of age, life experience, occupation, or learning motivation. This makes it harder to manage the class since the teacher has to find a common aim and an approach that suits all. Besides, everyone has his own learning speed and level. The diversity of the learners hardly seems to be compatible with togetherness in the classroom. However, it can vitalise their interaction and diversify the learning content, thus allowing the teacher to lead the class with greater creativity and elasticity. By learning and cooperating mutually, learners enhance their motivations and learn the unknown from one another. In such an interactive atmosphere, difficulties caused by the diversity within the group can be compensated for by the cohesion of a well-developed group.

Jill Hadfield (1992, 114), mentioning self-awareness of learners as a group, notes that "a group will have a stronger sense of itself if it can define itself in contrast to another group", and at the same time warns that such emotions "can lead to nationalism, racism, and wars". However, with

their self-awareness and a feeling of self-pride in the Latvian language course participants are justified not by a political aspect but by the social aspect of language acquisition, which in no way causes a hostile attitude toward others, for example, learners of other languages.

In the modern world, where English is undoubtedly dominant as the global communication tool, learning a minor language is a challenge on one hand. On the other hand, the choice of learning a different language attests to the learner's great interest in the country where that language is spoken. Every learner of a minor language, when he communicates with its native speakers in their language, has definitely experienced something that no major language, for example, English, which is globally important, can provide. Here, one must mention the respectful attitude of Latvians themselves toward foreigners who study Latvian and try to communicate with them in Latvian.

Learners constantly have to self-consciously enumerate their reasons for choosing to study Latvian to amazed auditors. Since Latvia is still in the process of gaining recognition in Japan, learners unconsciously disseminate information about Latvia. Outside the classroom, they inform people about Latvia: its location and its reasons for fame. This is a significant factor that promotes self-awareness and even self-pride in those who learn Latvian as a minor language. And the fact that they study such a language together gives them solidarity.

A feeling of togetherness is strengthened when the group members get to know each other too. The course is designed to improve the ability to talk about oneself in Latvian in both written and oral forms of communication throughout the course.

One of the most elementary and frequent dialogues *Kur jūs dzīvojat? – Es dzīvoju Tokijā* “Where do you live? – I live in Tokyo”, already contains information that helps learners get to know each other. However, in the theory of humanistic education, “these “personal” questions are impersonal” and they just contain “factual, superficial data about students” (Moskowitz 1978, 15). According to Gertrude Moskowitz (1978, 14), “humanistic education recognizes that it is legitimate to study oneself” and “the content relates to the feelings, experiences, memories, hopes, aspirations, beliefs, values, needs, and fantasies of students”. Here, the role of the teacher is to encourage learners to arrange their thoughts about themselves.

In the classroom, this approach is used effectively, for example, in the essay *Mani mērķi, plāni un sapņi 2018 gadam* “My aims, plans and dreams for 2018”. Besides, learners have a great opportunity to practice ways of expressing desire (verbs like *gribēt* “want”, *gribēties* “feel like”,

vēlēt “wish”, *vēlēties* “desire”, *plānot* “plan”, *sapņot* “dream”, and the particle *lai* in connection with the subjunctive mood) and such ambitious and positive expressions like *būt noskaņotam uz ko* “intend to do”, *izvirzīt sev mērķi* “set oneself the task”, *nezaudēt optimismu* “not lose optimism”. The learners have to explore their thoughts profoundly in order to formulate them clearly in a foreign language and share them with other classmates.

This approach enables a learner to study himself and others. He learns to listen to others and respect them, which deepens a feeling of togetherness and creates a good atmosphere in the classroom.

The third aspect that enhances a feeling of togetherness is the use of Latvian names as forms of address in the classroom. The names are a part of language culture because they reflect the history, culture, tradition, and the way of thinking of a people. At the start of the course, learners are invited to choose Latvian names for themselves from the Latvian calendar. They will be addressed by these names for the duration of the course.

Initially, the aim of introducing Latvian first names had a practical reason. This practice allows the students to understand that personal names too are declinable as well as nouns, and also gives them the chance to practice declensions. Japanese first names ending with *-a* or *-e* can be declined according to Latvian declension models; however other names ending with *-i*, *-u*, and *-o* are not declinable. Latvian first names allow students to practice declensions more naturally, referring to situations existing in the class. For example, *Māri, kā grāmata tā ir?* “Māris, whose book is it?”; *Tā ir Jāņa grāmata* “It is Jānis’s book”; *Jāni, kas sēž blakus Rozei?* “Jānis, who is sitting by Roze?”; *Rozei blakus sēž Aija* “Aija is sitting by Roze”.

This use of foreign names turns out to have an important psychological effect. In Japanese relationships, politeness toward others reflects itself verbally in a very evident way. The Japanese change lexicon, syntactic constructions, intonation, and mode of address according to age, social status and psychological distance from the other person. Amongst people representing different generations, the traditional Japanese mode of address requires the use of the surname with the polite suffix *-san*. The use of first names in Japanese is not as widespread as in Europe. It is intimate and permitted only within the family or among the closest of friends.

In this context, the use of Latvian names as forms of address makes the group members more equal and allows them to get closer. To repeat, the greatest age gap in the classroom is 40 years. In this context, a young woman’s opinion that *mutual addressing by Latvian names has allowed me not to feel the age gap and worry about a formal way of talking with*

the older members is an interesting point. Learners sometimes use Latvian names even outside the class when they converse in Japanese, and here Latvian names fully serve as code names or nicknames that permit intimacy.

It is important that students are exposed to as much of the language as possible in the classroom. Addressing students by their Latvian names softens the teacher's instructions and helps him talk to learners more closely: *Sebastian, vai jūs sapratāt?* "Sebastian, did you understand?"; *Ko jūs domājat, Roze?* "What do you think, Roze?"; *Pārtulkojiet japāniski, Ārvaldi!* "Translate into Japanese, Ārvaldis!". A middle-aged male learner comments on this practice: *If the teacher addressed me by my Japanese surname, I would freeze because that reminded me of my English class in high school.*

The Latvianisation of one's own name would not mean denying or losing one's Japanese name and identity because the whole group knows that these code names or nicknames are a matter of convention. The survey shows that at first two learners turned out to be against the introduction of this practice. One of them says: *At the beginning I was a little bit shy. But it pleased me that the embassy staff addressed me by my Latvian name. Besides, I feel more responsible for what I am studying.*

The use of Latvian names also stimulates and develops a better understanding of Latvian culture. A respondent recognizes that the *use of Latvian names as code names has brought me closer to Latvian culture.* Researching and choosing one's own Latvian name is an interesting process for many since it allows them to look at a Latvian calendar and get acquainted with various Latvian names, going deeper into their phonetics and semantics. The experience shows that giving oneself a Latvian name can mark a good start for learning. Also, it is an opportunity to be aware of oneself in the process of language acquisition and imagine which *Jānis* and *Anna* (popular male and female names in Latvia) await them in the future. Some learners choose Latvian names for themselves that are similar to their original Japanese names phonetically (*Aya – Aija; Ryo – Reons*) or semantically (*Yuki "sniegs" – Sniedze; Mitsuko "gaisma" – Gaisma*). The etymology of Latvian names arouses profound interest in Latvian and, more generally, in European and Christian anthroponyms as well. Also, the semantic transparency of many Latvian surnames allows many Japanese surnames to be Latvianised (*Ogawa "maza upē" – Upītis/Upīte, Morikawa 'mežs + upē' – Mežupe*).

Overall, the use of Latvian names in the classroom not only facilitates the practice of declension and guarantees a culturological approach based

on anthroponymy but also creates a friendly atmosphere and enriches the communication process in the classroom.

To conclude, three aspects that strengthen a feeling of togetherness in the classroom are briefly overviewed. As to the first aspect, the group's awareness, it is difficult to relate it to class interaction in the direct sense, but to a certain degree it propagates a philosophic ground for mutual understanding and fidelity, which in turn promotes interaction. The second aspect is affected by the main aim of the class in terms of the humanistic approach. The third aspect is the most relevant one to a feeling of togetherness since this mode of addressing one another is an interactive linguistic process that plays a significant role in mutual communication.

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PART IV:
LIFELONG LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ARGUMENTATION SKILLS: STATEMENT OF THE THESIS

VAIVA ŠOROŠKIENĖ

Keywords: argumentation skills, primary education, language development, oral text, written text, statement of the thesis.

1. Research Context

Argumentation is a type of text or a way to convey a meaning; when the thesis is proved or disproved by giving arguments. There are two kinds of argumentation: (1) proving a point by appealing to the addressee's mind and logically justifying the thesis, and (2) persuading in order to affect the addressee's emotions, to change his attitude or behaviour (Ramonienė, Brazauskienė, Burneikaitė, Daugmaudytė, Kontutytė and Pribušauskaitė 2012, 25). Due to *proving a point* being mainly associated with a scientific, subject-specific text, this article will mainly focus on *persuasion*, which is known as

rational and ethical reasoning in order to prove one's beliefs and values, and to make an impact on other people's thinking and actions. (Nauckūnaitė 2007, 136)

Scientific literature devotes considerable attention to argumentation skills. Their development in scientific research is related not only to the development of the native language but also to the development of the thinking abilities of students of all ages: *causal and scientific reasoning* (Kuhn 2009), *development of critical thinking* (Kuhn and Dean 2004), *development of the ability to construct your own knowledge* (Christodoulou and Osborne 2014). It is noticed that high-order thinking skills do not develop without outside assistance; therefore, they must be

developed consistently. These abilities are an alternative for knowledge, which can quickly become outdated. Thus, students have to learn to think, draw conclusions, discover, raise questions, and form an attitude (Kuhn 2009). Argumentation and research skills are considered necessary for the future person (Kuhn and Dean 2004). Evidence-based argumentation is emphasized – i.e., “talks about discoveries”, which encourage students to construct their own knowledge, i.e., to summarize, to define. It is considered to be more effective than instruction-based learning (Christodoulou and Osborne 2014).

In language development lessons, argumentation skills are analysed in the field of development of academic reading and writing (i.e., abilities necessary for learning); their development is linked to students' discussions and debates. By taking part in discussions, students have the opportunity to use the knowledge and abilities acquired in lessons as well as develop a set of skills (verbal, social and other abilities). Development of argumentation skills can be widely defined – it is not a logical exercise but a meaningful and, therefore, inclusive process of thinking that involves students sharing their views, forming opinions and convincing each other by giving arguments. The focus is on how the argument propagates because during this process the student develops his thinking abilities and acquires thinking habits. The dialogic nature of the exercise motivates students to engage, it teaches rhetorical devices (Kuhn and Crowell 2011; Deane and Song 2015). Empirical studies reveal that argumentation can strongly differ in quality. It depends on the context and on one's knowledge of structure of arguments as well as the process of their production (Lin 2014).

A review study by Paul Deane and Yi Song (2015) is particularly important for our research. It summarizes the conducted research on the development of argumentation skills and proposes a system for their development. The authors analyse verbal and written argumentation skills as an indivisible whole and suggest starting their training already in preschool and continue development of these skills until high school. The authors believe that second-grade students should first understand the idea of persuasion and learn to evaluate another person's position in the light of the arguments presented. Students should also learn to justify their opinion and approach an argument as a chain of individual turns. By the end of primary school, students should have learned to use persuasion in a written context and to operate in a well-known and interesting context. Students should learn to understand and express their position in a written form, basing it on their knowledge. They should also learn to identify, create and specify written arguments in order to prove and express their views by

finding connections between argumentative sentences (Deane and Song 2015). Therefore, according to the authors, students' skills to understand and express their position in verbal or spoken context should be developed in primary school classes. Moreover, the authors point out some expected limitations. For example, they believe that students up to the second grade are able to work with oral or very short written texts and in familiar contexts; they may also experience some difficulties in explaining why inference is drawn. Although these difficulties are likely to occur by the end of the primary school, upper- primary school students should already be able to write audience-appropriate appeals.

In their study, P. Deane and Y. Song (2015) also analyse students' ability to formulate a thesis in argumentation. They believe that students up to the second grade should be able to explicitly state their opinion in sentence form. By the end of primary school, students should have learned to produce or revise sentence-length position statements so they have a more specific debatable focus. Possible limitations – little or no ability to narrow down a position statement; a tendency to ignore alternate perspectives. Moreover, they may choose positions without first exploring how difficult it will be to defend them. In summary, the authors of the mentioned study believe that students must have acquired taking a position skill already in primary school – i.e., they should have learned to create short, clearly structured (theses and arguments) oral and written texts. The authors stress that the proposed system is hypothetical and therefore must be based on empirical research.

P. Deane and Y. Song (2015) note the ability of primary school students to express their position in argumentation. In this case, we consider argumentation as a specifically structured text in which a thesis and its supporting arguments are important. Scientific literature distinguishes two phases of creating such texts: *pretext* and *text* (Nauckūnaitė 2007). In other words, the author of the text first thinks about the information and only later thinks about its presentation in the text. In the *pretext phase*, one determines the goal of argumentation, looks for arguments and counterarguments, chooses an argumentative structure, arranges and finds connections within information, and tries to achieve coherence between the beginning and the end. In the *text phase*, one writes and refines the text, aims to reach stylistic integrity and contemplates its presentation (Nauckūnaitė 2007).

In Lithuania, the problem of developing the argumentation skills of primary school students is only starting to be analysed. Therefore, empirical research on the current situation, i.e., already existent argumentation skills of primary school students, is of great importance.

Research purpose: to investigate fourth graders' ability to formulate a thesis in an argumentative text.

Research tasks:

- To describe fourth graders' ability to formulate a thesis in an argumentative text (oral or written).
- To describe how the thesis is expressed in fourth-grade students' arguments.

Research methods are qualitative and quantitative analyses of oral and written texts.

Research sample: study participants were 117 fourth-grade students from 15 Lithuanian schools located in seven cities of Lithuania. Students were chosen from 23 different classes. The research was based on principles of a qualitative research:

When a researcher realizes that the situation (form and content) is repeating and new information is no longer received, one may end the analysis. (Bitinas 2006, 268)

2. Research Process

The study was carried out in the school year 2015/2016. Oral and written texts created by fourth-grade students were analysed. The study participants were interviewed individually. The research was divided into two parts. First, students were asked to choose one of the two given topics and to create an oral argumentation. Later, they were asked to choose one of the other two given topics and create a written argumentation. Only texts created solely by students themselves, i.e., without the influence of the researcher, were investigated. If the researcher had to in any way influence the student's text (e.g., if the student asked the researcher a question), only the part of the text created before the interruption of the researcher was used. In order to allow students to demonstrate their skills, the given topics were related to their lives, and they could choose between two suggested alternative positions. Students were presented with different but similarly formulated topics.

Considering the stimulating effect of the question *why?* on students (Christodoulou and Osborne 2014), it was decided to formulate the topic as a question starting with the word *why*. Suggested topics are listed in table 1.

Table 1: Topics suggested for students in the research

Oral text	Written text
- Why are books better than computers?	- Why do children like reading in their spare time?
- Why are computers better than books?	- Why don't children like reading in their spare time?

The student's oral text was written down by the researcher and the written text was written down by the participants themselves. Oral and written texts were analysed and grouped into subcategories and categories (Bitinas 2006, 272).

3. Research Results

3.1. Fourth graders' ability to formulate a thesis

By analysing the texts created by students, we aimed to determine how fourth-grade students express their opinion, i.e., thesis, by giving arguments. Due to the fact that students were asked to create arguments by picking one of the two given topics, the thesis in the title of student's text was not taken into account. All submitted texts were divided into four groups (see table 2).

Table 2: Formulation of the thesis in oral and written arguments

	Oral texts		Written texts	
	Number of students	%	Number of students	%
Thesis is left out, not expressed	39	36.1	41	37.3
Thesis is a repeated part of the topic title	12	11.1	13	11.8
Thesis is a repeated topic title	36	33.3	30	27.3
Thesis is expressed originally	21	19.4	26	23.6
In total	108*	100	110*	100

* Seven students did not create written, and nine students did not create oral texts.

We analysed the proportions and distribution of how students formulated theses in their texts. Afterwards, we compared the situation in oral and written arguments. It became apparent that the situation in oral and written texts is similar: the majority of the students did not formulate the thesis in their text at all and the smallest group of students repeated part of the topic title in their thesis. The situation in the remaining two groups was slightly different: in written texts fewer students used the topic title as their thesis and more students formulated the thesis originally.

Later, each group of texts was analysed separately. As we have already mentioned, in the majority of oral and written arguments, the thesis that stated the student's position was usually left out, it remained unspoken. We noticed that in such texts students chose to use the topic as a title of their text, and they did not express their opinion in the text again. In this case, better theses revealed the author's opinion through presented arguments, whilst in the weakest ones the author's opinion remained unclear.

For example:

Child learns many interesting and useful things. He experiences a fantasy world, which is full of adventures. He discovers his abilities. He speaks with more expression. They see more good things in life. When children read books, they can relax and forget their troubles.

(No. 41, g., w., "Why do children like reading in their spare time?")*

Thesis is not stated;
the author's opinion
is clear from the
arguments

Because when I can do what I want, I choose to have fun or to spend time with my parents. Sometimes I play games on my phone but sometimes I also go to visit my cousin or grandparents.

(No. 51, b., w., "Why do children not like reading in their spare time?")

Thesis is not stated;
the author's opinion
is clear from the
arguments

Because when you watch a movie on computer, it is very different, they speak in there and there are pictures, and in books it's very different.

(No. 42, b., o., "Why are books better than computers?")

Thesis is not stated;
the author's opinion
is unclear

* Hereafter, abbreviations will be used to give information about the respondents: girl – g., boy – b., written text – w., oral text – o.

3.2. Statement of the Thesis in Fourth-Grade Students' Arguments

We further analysed argumentative texts in which students expressed their opinion with a thesis. We found that quite a few fourth-grade students partially or fully repeated the title of the chosen topic. Such a situation was recorded in 44 % of oral and 38 % of written texts. A more thorough analysis demonstrates that often the same word order (as given in the topic) was kept. In other words, even though students clearly stated their opinion in the texts with a thesis, it was still apparent that they tried to remain close to the topic sentence.

For example:

Computers are better than books, *because you can find your favourite book on a computer. You don't even need to buy the book. Then you can find many different things on computers, that you might need, or, for example, to translate some texts from Japanese to English, or from English to Lithuanian, Russian to German. You can find everything you need on a computer. Books you can only read and that's it, while on computer you can do everything: you can order food, do shopping. Also, you can play games in your free time... You can look at beautiful pictures, do school projects, you can study because you can print out some papers and do various tests.*

(No. 17, b., o., "Why are computers better than books?")

Opinion is expressed with a thesis, which repeats the given topic

P.S. hereafter, students underline the thesis in their texts

Children like reading because it's interesting for them. *And it develops your language. It is interesting to read. Sometimes a person can spend an hour reading something. Some children think that it is interesting to read a book. And others are just curious. And others do not like reading at all.*

(No. 42, b., w., "Why do children like reading in their spare time?")

Opinion is expressed with a thesis, which repeats part of the given topic

The analysis showed that a relatively small group of students stated the thesis originally, i.e., they more or less distanced their thesis from the formulation of the topic sentence. In this group we included the texts where the thesis was expressed as a slightly changed given topic sentence. For example, students used their own words or added some new ones. This occurred in 19 % of oral and 24 % of written texts. We will further

discuss this group of texts and divide them into categories and subcategories (see table 3).

Table 3: Original formulation of the thesis in students' argumentations

Subcategory	Category
Inserted words emphasize personal opinion (<i>I think, I believe, in my opinion, I like...</i>)	Thesis is specified (it differs minimally from the given topic)
Words from the topic sentence are replaced with synonyms (e.g., <i>I enjoy to I like</i>)	
Topic is specified by adding words <i>usually, some kids...</i>	
Topic is formulated in their own words (e.g., they speak not about <i>computers</i> but about <i>computer games</i>)	Thesis – a topic formulated in their own words
Thesis is distanced from the topic sentence, it is “reversed” or generalized (e.g., they speak not only about children but also about adults)	
Both themes are connected in the thesis	A new thesis
A completely new idea is expressed in the thesis	

The research showed that in their arguments, fourth-grade students rarely formulate the thesis originally. However, even in a small group of such texts we should distinguish those in which the thesis was changed minimally, i.e., the topic is slightly specified. The analysis indicates that fourth-grade students use synonyms to change some words in the topic sentence or they insert words that highlight their personal opinion, specifying the given topic.

For example:

I think that books are better than computers *because we don't damage our eyes when we read books. And computer damages our eyes.*

(No. 64, g., o., “Why are books better than computers?”)

I think that children do not like reading books, *because they can't find one that they would enjoy. Also, children don't like reading books because they find many unfamiliar words.*

(No. 38, g., w., “Why don't children like reading in their spare time?”)

For me, books are better than computers *because books are interesting, there you can find many adventures. You can find information in books, you can find it in computers too but if you spend too much*

Opinion is expressed by adding new words

time on computer, you will need glasses.
(No. 67, g., o., “Why are books better than computers?”)

Children **love** to read in their free time *because if the book is interesting, they can read it for hours (...)*
(No.100, g., w., “Why do children like reading in their spare time?”)

Children **usually** don’t read *because it’s more interesting for them to talk, to play or to listen when other people are talking. But if they are alone and they have an interesting book, they will read it. But not every time. Sometimes, when they don’t have a book, they play computer games, or games on their phones.*

(No. 47, b., w., “Why don’t children like reading in their spare time?”)

Some kids do not like reading in their free time *because most children have computers and TVs. Then they pay more attention to TVs or computers. They completely forget about books. Sometimes, kids don’t know how to read, so they just spend their spare time watching TV or playing computer games. Also, children don’t like reading because it’s boring, difficult or just mission impossible.*

(No. 74, g., w., “Why don’t children like reading in their spare time?”)

Some words from the topic sentence are changed into synonyms

Topic is specified by adding words such as *usually, some kids...*

Students who distanced themselves from the given topic slightly more formulated the thesis by rephrasing the topic in their own words. These texts revealed some decisions that students tend to make: some students narrow down the topic (e.g., by talking not about computers in general but about computer games), and others broaden the topic (e.g., by talking not only about children but also about adults; not only about free time but about reading in general). In some works, one aspect of the topic was broadened in the thesis and the other narrowed down.

For example:

I think that children like reading *because in books you can become whoever you want: a gardener or king. If you can’t travel, you can start reading and go on a journey in the world of your book. Books develop your imagination.*

(No. 67, g., w., “Why do children like reading in their spare time?”)

The topic is broadened in the thesis: student is speaking not only about reading in spare time but about reading in general

Children don't read books, *because computer games, mobile phones and television is more interesting to them. They play for a very long time and shout at their parents:*

– *Go away! You're interrupting my game!*

And so on...

(No. 79, b., w., "Why don't children like reading in their spare time?")

The topic in the thesis is broadened in one aspect (student mentions other free time activities, not only reading), and in another aspect it is narrowed down (student is only talking about reading books)

First thing, reading is better than playing computer games and damaging your eyes. Second thing, you can learn a lot while reading, for example, small children read and learn how to read the letters.

(No. 16, g., s., "Why are books better than computers?")

The topic is narrowed down in one aspect in the thesis (student is talking about computer games, not computers in general), and in another aspect broadened (student is talking about reading in general, not only about books)

We consider the texts where students formulated the thesis their own way and were not afraid to distance themselves from the given topic sentence to be the most mature. One can again notice several different decisions in these texts. Some students "reversed" the given topic, i.e., they expressed the same or a very similar idea in the thesis but they formulated it in a different way. Other students expressed a completely new idea in the thesis. Some texts demonstrated students' effort to express their thoughts in a more original way and they considered the audience.

For example:

...Children and even adults like to read *because it's an exercise for your brain, you gain lots of historical knowledge...*

(No. 81, b., w., "Why do children like reading in their spare time?")

A new thesis (similar thought is expressed with a new sentence)

Computer is bad *because it damages your eyes. So, I would recommend books to children, so they would make less spelling mistakes and would learn nicer words.*

(No. 79, b., o., "Why are books better than computers?")

New thesis (new thought)

I'd say they're equally good *because you find new things both in books and in computers. For*

example, I like reading articles on Wikipedia more, for example, those about the Royal Family. I read about the whole house. So, it's a tie. And both things damage eyes, so that's a tie too.

(No. 72, g., o.)

(...) sometimes maybe both computers and books are good (...)

(No. 93, b., o.)

(...) maybe sometimes it's okay both to spend some time on the computer, and to read books (...)

(No. 94, g., o.)

(...) Personally, I read books and spend time on the computer.

(No. 107, g., s.)

Because computers showed up and changed books, everyone used to love reading. But with new technologies, computers, TVs, mobile phones and so on, they began to read less because they started playing computer games and playing on their phones. Now only 50 percent out of 100 read (in my opinion). Some people (like me) love reading, but others just hate it! Computers have taken over their minds. That's how kids start hating their parents.

(No.73, g., w.)

(...) So, if you compare having so much fun with reading a book, reading turns out to be really boring.

(No. 106, g., w.)

When you read lots of books, you can probably write better essays. I think this way you use nicer words. Probably books are cheaper than computers. I think that computer is a good thing, but books are much better.

(No. 48, b., o., "Why are books better than computers?")

New thesis (Both topics are connected, student is looking for a compromise)

Thesis is formulated with the original sentence (a new idea is expressed by the original sentence; stylistic decisions are visible)

4. Conclusions

1. The research showed that many fourth-grade students do not express their opinion with a thesis in argumentative texts, i.e., they just skip it. This was observed in 36 % of oral and in 37 % of written texts.

2. The analysis of students' texts demonstrate that fourth-grade students state their opinion (thesis) in argumentative texts in such manner:
 - a. The given topic sentence is repeated in the thesis
 - b. Part of the given topic sentence is repeated in the thesis
 - c. Thesis is worded originally.
3. The research shows that fourth-grade students express the thesis in oral and written argumentative texts in a very similar manner: the majority of students do not express thesis at all, and the smallest group of students express the thesis originally. It was noticed that in written arguments, students tend to word the thesis in an original way more often, rather than using the exact words from the given topic sentence.
4. The research suggests that formulating the thesis in argumentative texts causes some difficulties for fourth-grade students. Only in 19 % of oral and 24 % of written texts did students state their theses by distancing the formulation from the given topic sentence. Only a very small group of study participants worded the thesis in their own words or used the thesis to give arguments for a new idea. Students rarely applied stylistic decisions in the presentation of the thesis.

5. Discussion

Although the research sample does not allow making conclusions on the national level, it confirmed the researchers' position to analyse argumentation abilities and their development together, without distinguishing between oral and written texts. The research also revealed that primary school students are already able to state their opinion with a sentence (thesis) in oral or written argumentative texts, and they are able to apply stylistic decisions. Even though such skills were demonstrated by a small group of students, it confirms the hypothesis of P. Deane and Y. Song (2015) that these skills should be developed in primary school classes. It is necessary to take into consideration that students who participated in the research were not taught how to create argumentations. It is likely that if argumentation skills were developed from the first grade, students would not be afraid to distance themselves from the given topic sentence, and more students would dare to express their ideas independently.

While analysing the results of the research, it is important to take the limitations of the research methodology into consideration. It is likely that

it had an impact on the study results: during individual conversations students did not feel the need to repeat their opinion with a thesis since the interviewer (i.e., the researcher) already knew it. Nevertheless, the results of the research demonstrated that participants hardly thought about the presentation of their position/idea, i.e., the text. Their focus was mostly on conveying the information (*pretext* phase). We believe that further research on students of this age group and their abilities to express a position with a thesis is necessary for analysis. It would also be relevant to compare the abilities of students from different age groups, and to analyse the possibilities of developing these abilities.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SPEAKING AND LISTENING ABILITIES: THE BASIS OF INTEGRATED DIDACTICS

DAIVA JAKAVONYTĖ-STAŠKUVIENĖ

Keywords: speaking, listening, abilities, integrated language didactics.

1. Integrated Language Didactics: Strategies and Methods

The aim of the research is to define speaking and listening abilities as the basis for integrated language didactics.

Research objectives:

1. Define teaching strategies and methods ensuring integrated development of speaking and listening abilities.
2. Discuss the organisation and assessment of integrated language activities within the educational process.
3. On the basis of the empirical research, identify the possibilities to develop speaking and listening abilities through learning other subjects.

An integrated approach to learning firstly calls for an analysis of strategies (according to Bronckart 1997; Erard and Schneuwly 2005; Pantet 2007; Pantet and Grobet 2011). In educational practices the content may be non-integrated, i.e., the focus is placed entirely on the linguistic activity, or fully integrated, i.e., the focus is on studying a certain object and the language is just a tool. The strategies chosen may be classified by linguistic and non-linguistic objects and also pertain to learning categories ranging from meta-linguistics (the meaning of a word (concept) or differences between morphological meaning and sense) to individual perception/production of meaning (reproduction, concept explanation, example giving, or referring). Language skills may be developed through all subjects. Speaking and listening abilities play a fundamental role not

only in grasping the content of other subjects but also in developing linguistic competences. For an efficient, purposeful and smooth implementation of integrated teaching, the teacher should reflect on the choice of the content and teaching approach. One of the most acceptable strategies is listening to texts on social life and analysing them. Contemporary education is based on social life, a practical application of skills; therefore, listening tasks should also meet this criterion. Children should be exposed to listening to and analysing relevant topics in order to expand their vocabulary.

The organisation of work should clearly include the most effective strategies and their derivatives. Students must have a certain vocabulary so they can understand the audio texts they listen to. Therefore, applying the integrated language learning approach calls for enriching the lexicon, explaining subject-specific concepts and using them. The didactics of speaking requires a database and certain teaching aids with illustrations, recommendations, diagrams or guidelines for students to follow during the discussion of the topic analysed. The aids should be based on different resources, with an indication of difficulties students might face and a number of speaking and listening exercises and tasks. In listening activities, students should focus on a certain relative and familiar subject (adequate for their age). Listening activities should teach students not only to understand the meaning of words but also the meaning of gestures, facial expressions and pauses. They should also learn how to paraphrase (express the same idea in different words).

The most efficient way of developing listening abilities is through active participation in both speaking and listening. This process is encouraged by the oral production of texts, which is a diverse speaking activity stimulating the use of the language and enriching the vocabulary. The content should be selected in accordance to the subject of instruction whereas strategies and methods should be chosen to stimulate active oral production. Possible speech production activities include simulation of interview questions; encouraging raising questions; expressing arguments and reasoning; replying to a debate opponent; communicating a plan of action and explaining every part in detail; and expressive intonation, correct pronunciation and accentuation.

Oral performances can be recorded using audio and video devices, which allows for the objective analysis, evaluation and control of one's learning process. Through this method speaking becomes an observable object and voluntary mechanism of self-control. Additionally, this method enables recording the draft of produced speech as well as the final version after introducing certain improvements. The playback of their performance

from the plan to the result enables students to identify the benefits and difficulties and areas for improvement. Such exercises help to identify and efficiently control the manner of speaking and guarantee unbiased assessment; especially in cases where teacher's and student's assessment differ, it is possible to listen and discuss again. Moreover, the records can be saved. After a while, through comparing older and more recent recordings it is possible to better account for the student's progress. Considering the modern reality, each student should have a portfolio of their speech production recordings.

The most progressive and adequate methods for integrated language teaching are such that encourage active participation when the meaning is created by the student. Let us discuss several of these methods in detail.

2. Mind Mapping

One of the best techniques for integrated language training is producing mind maps (according to Kirckhoff 1992; Krekeler 1997; Brohy (ed.) 2002). They can be open, semi-open or closed and produced in a single language or multiple languages and different shapes (tree, sun and hedgehog). Maps can be used in different learning moments: they encourage critical thinking, concentrate the experience and find links between contacts and words.

3. Language Games

Didactic games are suitable for students of all ages, depending on the psychological particularities of each age group. They teach not only language(s) but also social roles. Known games that children are familiar with as well as new ones may be used for teaching purposes. Simulation and role-play games are highly recommended as they are particularly useful in applying communication and cooperation strategies. The topic of the game is selected according to the situation. For example, children could debate for/against the preservation of the forest where supposedly oil has been found. Board games represent another option for integrated language learning. Question/answer cards can be printed out in several languages and the content of the questions may reflect the subject dealt with in class.

Other activities include riddles asked in one language and answered in a different one and vice versa; word games such as *Going to the forest I will take in my backpack...* where every student before naming what he or she will bring must first recite what the previous students are taking. The

things can be recited in two languages or the game can be played twice: each time in a different language. Such games help to develop memory, concentration and attention and language skills.

4. The Expert Method

The game is designed for students who have good teamwork skills. After choosing a topic, students are divided into groups with four experts of different areas who discuss the project idea (Stage 1). Then the experts of each field gather together to discuss highly complex issues (Stage 2). Finally, the experts return to their original groups to discuss how the ideas might be implemented (Stage 3) (see figure 1).

Working as a team is a more dynamic activity and encourages students to take responsibility for the work they are in charge of, listen attentively and hear what others have to say.

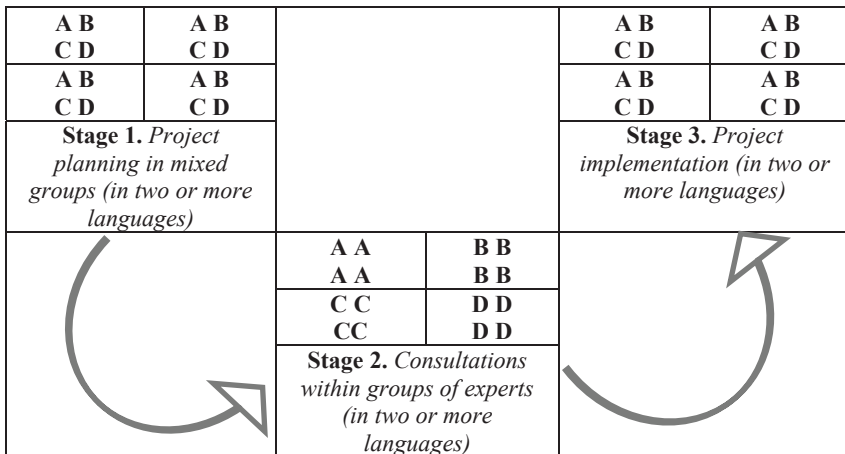


Figure 1: Diagram of the expert method structure in integrated linguistic development

5. Reading and Analysing Different Sources of Information

There are many informational leaflets and instructions written in different languages so analysing them allows children to expand their vocabulary in several languages. Another option is comparing newspapers in different

languages. They can be analysed in multiple aspects: subtopics, the number and length of articles, layout, photos, images, font, and linguistic particularities, for example, use of comparisons. Similarly, students can analyse radio or television news, shows, websites, etc.

6. Application of Information and Communication Technologies

Widespread in education, information and communication technologies are especially great for interdisciplinary projects. Through certain key words students can look up the information on the Internet and in different languages, developing their learning skills as well as language and subject skills. With the help of modern advanced technologies (mobile phones, online social networks, etc.) students can exchange information and come up with new ideas by consulting with each other. Let us discuss a couple of proposals. For a purposeful online search, a number of interesting activities might be proposed. For example, students can be offered a treasure hunt following a series of questions, the answers to which can be found on *Yahoo*, *Altavista* and *Google*, or solve a riddle through key words, which would help them find the name of an interesting website. It is fundamental that students are assisted in choosing ways to look for information; questions may be asked in one language and answers delivered in a different one and vice versa. The same rule should be applied to the information search: first it could be looked up on a Lithuanian website and then, for example, in an English, Polish or German site. Solving multilingual riddles is very beneficiary in terms of didactics as through them children learn concepts and their definitions, analyse non-fiction texts and link texts with images.

Another advantage of interactive technologies is the possibility for students to work with students in other countries on joint projects by communicating through e-mail and *Skype*, improving their first, second or third language skills. Obviously, class supervisors and other teachers should assist students in making the first contact. Another source of opportunities is the *Erasmus+* programme which, through various international projects, allows students to develop not only their language but also general skills. Such projects increase the need of integrated language learning through other subjects as students and teachers visit other countries and take part in the teaching process there. Communicating in a foreign language, they seek to learn about certain chosen aspects of the foreign environment, resources, culture, etc.

7. Projects

They play a major role in integrated language learning through other subjects. They can be interdisciplinary, interclass, inter-school, or between schools; their duration can range between a lesson or a day to a week or a couple of weeks or even a few years. They can focus on joint activities and trips, etc. It is recommended to start with organisationally simpler projects such as daily school projects. Such projects are structured in a way that all school children are involved, having selected their activity of interest and work together. This is not only important for the development of social skills but also for improving communication and language competences. Students should be encouraged to develop the project's content, propose activities, etc.

8. Organisation of Integrated Linguistic Activities in Education Processes

Speaking is assessed through certain criteria previously discussed with students. The key criteria include goals of oral text production and its output (results). It is also important to assess not only the content (what is being told) but also the form (how it is being told) and speech correctness. Students should learn to know the difference between public and private (individual) speaking (according to Erard and Schneuwly 2005). It is in school that this difference should be mastered. Fundamental skills are developed between the preschool age through learning how to speak politely to acquaintances and strangers, and casually with friends. Students should be able to introduce themselves in public, take part in debates, take interviews, and be interviewed. Adults giving a speech often prepare it in advance and note down the main ideas. Children should be taught how to do the same. Another option is to take part in TV debates or radio interviews on any subject.

Organising integrated language activities is a challenging task; therefore, prior to planning the process, Gabriela Steffen and Stéphane Borel recommend identifying the most complicated aspects of the target subjects (Steffen and Borel 2011). It is beneficial to look at the existing and investigated linguistic/bilingual/multilingual teaching models. Then it is necessary to come up with a solution to how to combine these models with other subjects such as natural sciences or mathematics. With regard to the implementation of the curriculum on the basis of bilingual education, Gerald Schlemminger proposes a number of didactic methods that combine teaching the subject and the language and conceptualise the

integrated didactics of bilingual education (Schlemminger 2008). Integrated didactics involves a series of necessary actions regardless of the process being monolingual or bilingual. The author points out three key aspects of integrated language didactics:

1. The first time the curriculum is implemented in one language L1 and then continues in a bilingual context L2.
2. The curriculum is developed in two languages simultaneously and equally.
3. All activities are produced in L2. If the teacher's assistance is needed, the main concepts can be analysed in L1.

Remodelling of the subject curriculum may occur on at least three levels:

- 1) Shifting the common language to the scientific discourse, i.e., common lexicon presented in a way to promote subject-specific vocabulary, e.g., in mathematics or natural sciences;
- 2) Expressing the written (what is written) in speaking, e.g., reading mathematical formulas in words;
- 3) Replacing passive learning techniques with speaking activities: putting subject-specific problems in words; selecting preferred communication and collaboration methods.

9. Assessment and Self-assessment of Integrated Language Activity Process and Results

Assessment and self-assessment in the area of integrated language teaching through other subjects remain the biggest challenge (according to Brohy (ed.) 2002; Delvolvé 2012). Some teachers refrain from establishing assessment criteria, believing this will result in the loss of quality as students will know they are under assessment and will be afraid of changing, experimenting, failing, and learning. Others argue that it is difficult to assess individual performance as students delivering a project work as a team. The following are some suggestions for an easier assessment of learning performance and achievements:

- when planning a project, identify the criteria for the assessment of its success;
- link project goals and assessment criteria;
- share the chosen criteria with students and ask for their feedback to improve them;

- in addition to the traditional assessment (formative and summative), develop assessment alternatives: group evaluation, inter or shared assessment, self-assessment, assessment games, magazines, portfolios (folders), etc.;
- in the process, encourage students, tell or write down the advantages of their work and suggest improvements;
- discuss with students what linguistic and subject competences the project aims to achieve.

Nicole Delvolvé (2012) believes that without analysing methods and materials, teachers frequently cannot explain why they have failed to achieve the goals they had set. It is necessary to assess the learning difficulties experienced by students and take measures to prevent them. All of this can be achieved only through activity reflection as assignments and tasks determine the competences to be developed and the knowledge that is received. The concept of activity includes all mental processes that determine the performance of an assignment. Therefore, to guarantee an efficient process the teacher has to consider not only the level of the students' knowledge before the activity but also their level of metacognitive competences. For example, listening activities include not only listening as such but also the ability to focus, concentrate and register the requirements of the assignment. It is with the help of an extensive reflection on students' metacognition that learning skills are developed. This means that the post-activity analysis of the above-listed agreements regarding the activity assessment is essential. Metacognition plays an important role in the learning process as it deals with the learner's perception and knowledge and how they can be used for further development. Metacognition is an integral part of self-knowledge and self-confidence. Any assistance and aid from the teacher on how to master certain things contribute to students' successful learning. Metacognitive abilities are essential for the self-assessment of actual knowledge and what else is necessary to know or do to develop this knowledge further. To realise what else you need to learn is only possible with well-developed self-management skills that include attentiveness, emotion control, application of previous experience, discovering the reason behind understanding, and learning. All of this constitutes the great ability to think. In the case of integrated didactics, activity reflection becomes more complex as it requires assessing more than one subject at a time.

10. Research Methodology and Organisation

The analysis of research literature and the empirical study were carried out in Switzerland from June to August 2014 during the author's internship at the University of Fribourg under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Aline Gohard-Rodenkovic.

The empirical research was based on a qualitative study: a semi-structured interview. For the interview to serve the purpose of the research, the author chose the method of a semi-structured interview and a list of guiding questions covering the main ideas of integrated language didactics. The study aims to determine the models of integrated language teaching used in practice, the organisation of integrated activities, reasoning behind the development of assessment criteria, factors ensuring the quality of education, and measuring student's performance and progress. Each interviewee had to answer the same questions:

- *What is your experience in the field of integrated language didactics?*
- *What are the main models of integrated language didactics?*
- *How is integrated language teaching incorporated in other subjects?*
- *What are the assessment criteria?*
- *How is the quality of teaching ensured?*
- *How can students' progress be accounted for?*

Kęstutis Kardelis (2005) argues that a semi-structured interview and free open questions guarantee a greater flexibility in the interview as the provided answer allows clarifying the question, investigating different aspects of the target object, analysing it further, etc. It is noted that despite it being a semi-structured interview, there are still guidelines to be followed depending on the research goal. Respondents are free to provide their definitions, concepts, meanings, and points of view on the subject. Therefore, the choice of the semi-structured interview as the method for the research was determined by its spontaneous and flexible nature and the possibility to collect data from a small group of interviewees, use open questions and project social reality from their point of view. Due to its limited length, the article only provides a summary of the interview replies, focusing on the key role the development of speaking and listening abilities plays in the context of integrated didactics, defining self-assessment criteria and measuring student progress (see table 1).

Table 1: Semi-structured interview questions for the qualitative research

Question	Question objectives	Question's connection to the research problem
<i>How is integrated language teaching incorporated in other subjects?</i>	To reveal the options of incorporating integrated language didactics into the process of teaching	Answers to this question serve as the basis to analyse the ways integrated language didactics is organized, their strengths and weaknesses; to detect which language learning areas (speaking or listening) respondents focus on
<i>What are the assessment criteria?</i>	To find out the ways different subject curricula are combined with regard to the learning process and result; determine how the criteria are set	Answers provide a background to assess the current situation with respect to the learning process and student progress where integrated language didactics is involved
<i>How can student progress be accounted for?</i>	To identify practical criteria for the assessment of student progress in the context of integrated language teaching	Answers provide a background to analyse student progress assessment criteria in the context of integrated language teaching; define the content of components that are to be included in the progress criteria

11. Research Ethics

The interview was conducted following the principles of confidentiality and voluntariness. Prior to the interview, participants were informed that it was anonymous; the data would not be published and would only be used for scientific purposes. The participation being voluntary, the interviewees were asked for their consent and permission to record. The main interviewing rule was observed: prior to the commencement, interviewees were informed of the research purpose, its importance and the organisation represented. The research is based on the interview with three integrated didactics specialists in Switzerland who have extensive theoretical and practical knowledge in the field. The selection of the experts was intentional and includes a researcher and education politician, a member of the canton administration with executive powers in the field of education, and a school representative. All interviews were recorded on tape and carried out in French. As the research is based on a non-probability

sampling, its results cannot be generalised; however, they are useful as they reveal certain trends in the field and help to define further recommendations (according to Žydzūnaitė 2011).

12. Analysis of Empirical Research Data

12.1. Organisation of Integrated Language Teaching

The school representative argues that first it is necessary to determine the need for such type of teaching and account for available human and financial resources.

In 2014 we wanted to find out how many students were interested in studying geography in French. Up to the age of 14 all children had geography only in English. An efficient bilingual instruction requires certain financial resources as two teachers are needed (one for French and one for English). There is also a need of two rooms and a certain number of students who are willing to study this way. In the beginning the option did not seem viable but there may be an alternative: for example, two teachers working in the same room providing a bilingual instruction at all times. It is very interesting to study geography in English and then immediately switch to French. The information is the same only when it is heard in English it must be repeated in French. [...] Any issues that arise can be solved by joining teacher efforts and resources. Teachers started changing as well. For example, the teacher who works in English sometimes resorts to teaching aids in French. But this is not an issue as there is no need to translate everything. Which is the point, as well as the students' ability to work with two teachers over the same content in two languages.

The representative also recognises that integrated language teaching has helped students to boost their self-confidence. She explains that prior to developing practical solutions, the teacher community familiarises with the latest research in the field of integrated language teaching, for example, studying such authors as Colin Baker,

who argues the second language is learnt on the basis of cognitive competences of the first one. Therefore instructing in the second language requires being familiar with the student's first language and continuing to develop these skills on the basis of fundamental cognitive competences that the student already has using his first language. If the person has mastered two or more languages, it is impossible to divide their reality; they must always follow the same cognitive thought and have only one unique

source: an integral mind. Canadian researcher Jim Cummins states that there is a single underlying competence, which makes us believe bilingual people use two systems or two separate mechanisms, however, in reality there is only one central cognitive system in control, the system that should be developed since childhood. School associates are also familiar with the works of Jan Michel Adam, Gerard Vigner, and the Swiss Joachim Dolz.

The interviewed school representative pointed out another important factor:

We have also discovered that learning a subject in a foreign language requires to have a clear teaching methodology. The main elements are the following: 1. The terminological aspect. All students in all age groups have key words written on the board which are part of the teaching material. These specific words must be clearly defined and explained to the students as they need to become their active vocabulary.

2. Content visualisation, visual representation. Everything that is taught should be linked to images, which must be highlighted and emphasised, and will help students understand the information correctly.

3. Students should at all times know their learning objectives: what I learn and what I will do with what I have learnt. For example, in geography class I will learn about glaciers so that I would be able to explain why glaciers melt. It is not enough for students to be able to say they have learnt about glaciers. Learning must be linked to science. Children should learn to analyse, compare, evaluate, and explain. If language teaching is integrated in the subject of geography, students find out about animal habitats (territories) and the task is to imagine you are an endangered animal and explain your situation. This is the point of learning that the student in the position of the animal would use the knowledge about animal habitats and populated areas. If I study animal habitats and take a test afterwards, it is a useless activity as there is no knowledge depth.

To summarise the ideas of the interviewed representative, it might be said that integrated language teaching in other subjects manifests itself through active usage of language to master the technical content of the subject. This can be achieved through speaking and listening, analysis and explanation, problem solving and evaluation. The process is efficient only when organised by all the teachers whose subjects are integrated. In order to facilitate the learning process for students, teachers must offer assistance and one of the ways is to provide visual aids accompanied by an explanation.

12.2. Integrated didactics assessment criteria

The interviewed expert in integrated didactics and politician recalls that

at the beginning of bilingual education in Switzerland twenty years ago the question of (self)-assessment was a major issue; there were constant concerns about where to begin, how to implement, plan, and organise it. It is necessary to assess not only the current situation in education but also students' progress and teachers' abilities. Then there is bilingual certification and attestation in Bern that stipulates the criteria: the number of years, disciplines, languages and teaching hours that must be dedicated to this form of teaching. Applying for a bilingual baccalaureate after high school, the accreditation of these programmes is mandatory. Such are the criteria set in Bern. In our country cantons are independent; all of them have their own assessment systems. There is also the support of national funds and Swiss Research Funds. If you are interested in conducting a research on the assessment of bilingual education, you can apply for a grant. The same rules apply to assessing student competences, languages, teaching material. It is also a form of assessment, only relying on financial resources.

Upon hearing the question on the assessment criteria, the member of the executive administration in a canton dominated by German and French bilingual education replied that it is a good question. He explains that

nowadays a student is admitted to a bilingual environment without testing his language competences. Knowing two languages is considered an asset with an added value. As students know they will have to take a French exam in the future they start studying in advance. But there is no set number of words, vocabulary definition, and no objective assessment. The purpose of such education is a linguistic step rather than language efficiency. It opens a window to another language but does not assess learning achievements in that language.

To sum up, the criteria for the assessment of integrated language teaching in Switzerland is each canton's responsibility. If such education has a long tradition, the criteria are established in certain certificates and diploma listing specific indicators: the scope of bilingual or multilingual education, subjects, number of hours, etc. The member reveals there are no specific agreements in terms of bilingual education assessment but such education is valuable as it promotes active usage of several languages even if their bilingual achievements have no strict evaluation.

12.3. Assessment of students' progress in the context of integrated language teaching

The school representative informs that schools

use the Common European Framework to assess the level of languages. This scale has the following levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. Four linguistic competences have been set in Paris: speaking, listening, reading and writing. There are often gaps between speaking and writing domains. A student may speak perfectly but have a poor knowledge in writing, it is a complicated situation.

According to the expert,

when assessing integrated education, it is valued as a whole, evaluating student competences in general rather than their opinion on the class activities; integrated teaching production, bilingualism, how to create a favourable environment in class, how students feel. It is not the same as bilingual education in general. It refers to class-specific and contextual issues, student interest, attention, and motivation.

To finish the analysis of the empirical research I would like to share a few important observations by the expert regarding integrated teaching. She points out that

prior to deciding which way to go, it is necessary to set the goals and the vision of the society we aim at and only then analyse the options of integrated learning: if only Lithuanian or other languages such as Russian, Russian and Spanish will be integrated in combination with Lithuanian, how many of them (one or two) will be main languages. When you know what you want, you can start fulfilling it and transfer the idea to the community. We must think about the goals we have set and what kind of society we will have in ten or twenty years. It is necessary to estimate the budget and costs. After these steps have been implemented, the ideas should be transferred to teacher training and only then to teaching practice. There are a great number of things to be learned before starting to apply them.

The administration representative adds that introducing bilingual education or integrated language teaching through other subjects is a challenge as

there is a lot of work with the education system, translation, adaptation of knowledge/assignments and some students are not easy to work with.

Being alone in the project is another challenge. There is more work implementing a bilingual project. Textbooks are not bilingual, they are German or French. It is a great effort to translate the curriculum, material, assignments and adapt them to students according to their level of language knowledge. This falls on the shoulders of the teacher; in the region we try to offer support to them as the workload is greater, especially in the first years. It is necessary to consider not only the translation but also customising the curriculum, for example, solving a mathematical equation and how to do it. If there are not enough teachers available to work together, I need to look for people specifically for these projects. If there are subjects requiring German teachers, I look for them in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. We need to convince them to come and stay, which is already quite difficult.

According to the school representative,

prior to implementing integrated teaching projects at any school, it is necessary to assess individual and teamwork capabilities. Of course, it requires money. Another question that should be answered is: what is the context? What are the students like, what is their background and identity? If there is a need of such education – what is the role to be played by the government and the school? The trial period should be followed by institutionalisation. At the kick-off of the project the idea might seem scary, it is only through taking responsibility in the team and decision making that the quality can be ensured, for example, who is to decide and be responsible for integrating language teaching in physical education training; how it will be achieved, which languages and in which subjects will be taught, with how many teachers, for which age groups if more than one, etc. Sharing the responsibility is a must as the project involves a lot of different opinions and people, and the focus must be on student achievements. It is also necessary to be familiar with practices of other countries, even if some of them cannot be applied to our situation. When the whole team works on the project, there is a need for constant evaluation: we must assess the results, feedback, resources, and plan again.

13. Conclusions

1. Speaking and listening abilities are the basis for integrated language teaching through other subjects. The integration is accomplished when the majority of assignments in the education process require active speaking and listening skills and the tasks are based on strategies encouraging active learning. The technical content is grasped by talking, narrating, reasoning, and explaining.

2. The process of integrated language teaching can be organised in different ways: in a single language, bilingually or even multilingually. It is fundamental, though, to discuss and agree upon the process and result assessment criteria prior to organising the activity and review the results individually afterwards; allow the student to describe and assess his or her performance, strengths and areas for improvement. This ensures not only the development of language skills but also the mind and personal qualities such as self-confidence and emotion management, which constitutes a necessary factor in successful learning.
3. Empirical research experts believe that education processes can be successfully organised in several languages. When learning the technical content (e.g., mathematics or natural sciences) through a language or several languages, activities such as speaking, explaining facts or other subject matters, oral analysis should prevail. The quality of integration depends on a clear pedagogical approach, transparent agreements, word meanings, and use of technical concepts. Teaching processes should be constructed with the help of more than one teacher, ideally with the help of teachers whose subject curriculum is integrated.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

EINSTELLUNG DER STUDIERENDEN ZUR ENTWICKLUNG IHRER METAKOGNITIVEN KOMPETENZ IM FREMDSPRACHUNTERRICHT

VIRGINIJA JÜRATĖ PUKEVIČIŪTĖ

Schlüsselwörter: Studenten/innen, metakognitive Kompetenz, Lernplanung, Lernkontrolle, Lernbewertung, Lernanalyse, Fremdsprachenlernen.

1. Einführung

In den letzten Jahrzehnten richten die Forscher zunehmend ihre Aufmerksamkeit auf die Bedeutung und den Wert der metakognitiven Elemente im Lernprozess. Es ist bekannt, dass die kognitiven Fähigkeiten der Lernenden eine effiziente Suche nach Wissen oder Informationen, ihre Verarbeitung und Aneignung, d. h., Erinnern und Wiedergabe, umfassen, aber im Gegensatz dazu verbindet man die Entwicklung der metakognitiven Kompetenzen mit den Fertigkeiten, diese kognitiven Strukturen effektiv zu beobachten, zu kontrollieren und zu bewerten. Vor allem werden diese Aspekte in den Studien betont, die die Probleme des autonomen, selbstorganisierten, selbstregulierten oder selbstbestimmten Lernens analysieren, und in denen man beweist (Pintrich 2000; Artel und Moschner 2005), dass die Metakognition ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Selbstregulation ist. Die Einwirkung dieser Tendenzen kann man auch auf den Fremdsprachenunterricht feststellen. Aufgrund der modernen Einstellung betrachtet man das Fremdsprachenlernen als einen die Gesamtheit der persönlichen, kognitiven, metakognitiven, soziokulturellen u. a. Aspekte des Individuums umfassenden Prozess, während im traditionellen Unterricht meistens nur die Entwicklung der bestimmten sprachlichen Fertigkeiten beachtet wird. Darum kann man in den gegenwärtigen Studien das zunehmende Interesse der Sprachdidaktiker an den Forschungen der Zusammenwirkung der oben erwähnten, auf das

Lernen einwirkenden Faktoren, feststellen und in diesem Artikel werden die metakognitiven Kompetenzen der Studierenden untersucht.

Die Bedeutung der metakognitiven Elemente wird von verschiedenen Wissenschaftlern betont und nachgewiesen. Einige Autoren analysieren Probleme der Metakognition im DaF-Unterricht (Chan 2000), bei der Förderung von Lernstrategien (Wild 2000; Martin und Nicolaisen (Hrsg.). 2015) sowie beim Lernen mit Hypermedien (Bannert 2007). Die anderen besprechen dieses Thema in den Studien über das Lernen des Lernens (Rohls-Borgward 2002; Pukevičiūtė 2009), über die Entwicklung der Fähigkeiten des Individuums zur Selbstregulation oder Selbststeuerung beim Lernen (Spörer und Brunstein 2005; Leutner und Leopold 2006). Laut Christoph Metzger sind die Lernenden imstande, Lernziele zu setzen und Strategien zur Erreichung dieser Ziele zu bestimmen, und sie machen es gern (Metzger 2000). Bei der Forschung der Besonderheiten der Verwendung von Lernstrategien im Fremdsprachenunterricht zeigt Nemira Mačianskienė Korrelationen zwischen den metakognitiven Strategien und der positiven Einstellung aufs Lernen (Mačianskienė 2004). Vaiva Zuzevičiūtė (2006) akzentuiert, dass die Studenten/innen die Bedeutung der Lernalyse verstehen, aber die Kenntnisse über die Lernstrategien meist von den Mitstudierenden bekommen. Darum kann man vermuten, dass diese Etappe des metakognitiven Prozesses für sie wichtig ist. Jelena Suchanova und Jolita Šliogerienė (2006) bestimmen den positiven Einfluss dieser Strategien auf die Leistung und Autonomie der Studierenden beim Fremdsprachenlernen. Man kann also ein großes Interesse der Wissenschaftler an den Untersuchungen der metakognitiven Lernelemente bemerken, darum ist anzunehmen, dass die weiteren Studien zu diesem Thema helfen, besser und tiefer die Lernprozesse zu verstehen, effektiver zu organisieren und zu steuern.

Beim Untersuchen der Einstellung der Lernenden zu den Faktoren der metakognitiven Kompetenz entstehen folgende Problemfragen: in welchem Maß ist die metakognitive Kompetenz bedeutend für die Versuchspersonen, wie korrelieren die Komponenten dieser Kompetenz und welche Faktoren bewirken überwiegend die Entwicklung der metakognitiven Kompetenz.

Als Forschungsobjekt wurde für diesen Artikel die metakognitive Kompetenz der Studierenden im Fremdsprachenunterricht gewählt, das Forschungsziel ist die Tendenzen der Einstellung der Studierenden des zweiten Semesters zur Entwicklung ihrer metakognitiven Kompetenz zu bestimmen. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, sollen folgende Forschungsaufgaben gelöst werden:

- 1) Analyse der Einstellung von Studierenden zu den Komponenten der metakognitiven Kompetenz im Fremdsprachenunterricht,
- 2) Ermittlung der Korrelationen der Komponenten von metakognitiven Kompetenz,
- 3) Erschließung der Faktoren, die die größte Wirkung auf die metakognitive Kompetenz der Studenten/innen haben.

Um diese Forschungsarbeit durchzuführen, wurden folgende Methoden angewandt.

1. Analyse der wissenschaftlichen Literatur, ihre Interpretation und Formulierung der Schlussfolgerungen.
2. Quantitative Forschungsmethoden: Befragung, d. h. geschlossener Fragebogen, der in Bezug auf das von der Autorin dieses Artikels erstellte theoretisch-empirische Modell ausgearbeitet wurde. Mit Hilfe dieses Modells wurde danach gestrebt, die Faktoren der Entwicklung der Lernkompetenz im Fremdsprachenunterricht zu analysieren und empirisch zu begründen. In diesem Artikel wird der Schwerpunkt auf die Erforschung der Einstellung der Studenten/innen zu ihren metakognitiven Kompetenzen gelegt.
3. Methoden der statistischen Analyse: Häufigkeiten (gültige Prozente) der deskriptiven Statistik; r -Koeffizient für die Bestimmung des Zusammenhangs zwischen den intervallskalierten Merkmalen; χ^2 Kriterium für Überprüfung der Unterschiede zwischen den Variablen; p -Wert (Signifikanzwert).

Während der Forschung wurden 356 Studenten des zweiten Semesters an fünf Universitäten Litauens befragt, und die Untersuchungsergebnisse der metakognitiven Kompetenz werden auf folgenden Ebenen diskutiert: (1) Lernplanung, (2) Lernkontrolle und -bewertung sowie (3) Lernanalyse.

2. Einstellung der Studierenden zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen erfolgreich zu planen

Die Lernplanung als die erste Stufe zur Entwicklung der metakognitiven Kompetenz und die Vorbereitung konkreter Lernphasen wird im Artikel durch folgende Fähigkeiten der Studierenden charakterisiert, (1) die Lernziele zu verstehen und selbstständig zu bestimmen sowie (2) die effektiven Strategien für Erreichung der Lernziele festzulegen, d. h., es ist wichtig zu klären, was, wie, wo und mit wem gelernt werden soll. Die Studien (Siegler und Jenkins 1998; Metzger 2000; Zuzevičiūtė 2006 u. a.) zeigen, dass die Lerner (schon die Kinder) in der Lage sind, sich fähigkeitsangemessene Ziele und Aufgaben auszuwählen und

zielorientierte Strategien zu benutzen. Im Gegensatz dazu (Winter und Hofer 2007) stoßen die Studierenden auf Schwierigkeiten bei der systematischen Lernplanung, besonders wenn die Lehrer ihnen dabei nicht helfen. Aufgrund einiger wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten (Schreiber 1998; Marzano 2005) fördern die Fähigkeiten der Lernenden, die Lernziele zu setzen, nicht nur ihre Kompetenz, eigenes Lernen zu steuern, sondern verstärken auch die Lernmotivation.

Die Forschungsdaten über die Einstellung der Versuchspersonen zu ihren Fähigkeiten, die Lernziele zu setzen und die nötigen Strategien zur Erreichung dieser Ziele zu wählen, werden in der Bild 1 dargestellt.

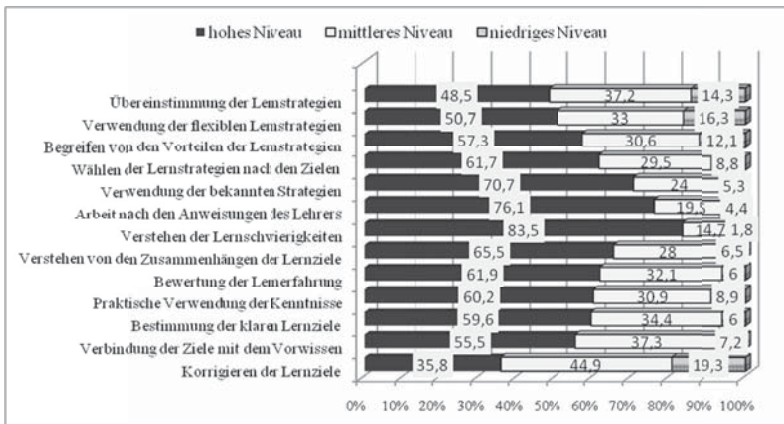


Bild 1: Einstellung der Studierenden zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen zu planen

Gemäß das Bild ist meist mehr als die Hälfte der Studenten/innen imstande, erfolgreich die Lernziele zu steuern, obwohl sie dazu neigen, die üblichen Strategien zur Erreichung der Lernziele zu wählen (70,7 %) und öfter nach den Anweisungen der Pädagogen zu arbeiten (76,1 %). Die Befragten (83,5 %) behaupten, dass sie fähig sind, ihre Lernschwierigkeiten zu erkennen und zu verstehen, was ihnen leicht oder schwer fällt. Inzwischen kann fast die Hälfte der Befragten (44,9 %) nur selten oder überhaupt nicht (19,3 %), nach Bedarf die Lernziele steuern, und etwa ein Drittel der Studierenden bezweifelt ihre Fähigkeit, Ziele zu setzen. Fast zwei Drittel (65,5 %) versteht die Bedeutung der Zusammenhänge von Lernzielen, und ungefähr so viele (61,9 %) sind in der Lage, ihre Erfahrungen beim Fremdsprachenlernen genau zu bewerten, während mehr als die Hälfte (60,2 %) die erworbenen Kenntnisse praktisch verwenden kann. Es muss anerkannt werden, dass mehr als die

Hälfte (61,7 %) fähig ist, flexible Lernstrategien für bestimmte Zwecke auszuwählen. Darüber hinaus verstehen fast ebenso viele (57,3 %) die Vorteile verschiedener Lernstrategien.

Weiterhin wurde nach den statistisch signifikanten Zusammenhängen zwischen den Komponenten der Lernplanung gesucht. Es stellte sich Folgendes heraus: die meisten Schnittstellen zeigten die Fähigkeiten der Studenten/innen, die Strategien zur Erreichung der Lernziele miteinander zu kombinieren. Die Befragten verbinden sie mit Fähigkeiten, die Vorteile der Lernstrategien zu begreifen ($r = .501, p = .000$), die Lernstrategien zu korrigieren ($r = .489, p = .000$) und die Strategien für einen bestimmten Zweck zu wählen ($r = .400, p = .000$). Aufgrund der Untersuchungsdaten zeigen die Fähigkeiten der Studenten, die Lernziele mit dem Vorwissen zu verbinden, starke Beziehungen und sie korrelieren mit der Neigung der Teilnehmer, klare Lernziele zu bestimmen ($r = .401, p = .000$). Mit anderen Worten kann das Individuum, das imstande ist, seine Stärken und Schwächen zu begreifen, auch häufiger sein Fremdsprachenlernen adäquat bewerten.

Laut der Studie bedenkt mehr als die Hälfte der Versuchspersonen vor dem Lernen die Lernziele, d. h., sie verstehen ihre Lernschwierigkeiten und die Bedeutung der Zusammenhänge der Lernziele. Es stellte sich heraus, dass die Befragten versuchen, die Möglichkeiten für die praktische Verwendung der neu erworbenen Kenntnissen vorauszusehen. Aber diese Fertigkeiten der Studierenden zeigen nicht die stärksten Korrelationen.

3. Einstellung der Studierenden zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen erfolgreich zu kontrollieren und zu bewerten

Die Lernkontrolle ist immer mit Bewertung verbunden und diese Prozesse werden meistens den Funktionen der Pädagogen zugeordnet. Aber mit der Verbreitung der Ideen von der Lernerautonomie erschienen Meinungen (Geist 1998; Schneider 1996), dass die Lerner im Bewertungsprozess der Lernleistungen immer öfter beteiligt werden sollen, weil sie fähig sind, ihr Wissen besser und objektiver als erwartet zu bewerten. Doch kann man auch bemerken (Pukevičiūtė 2004), dass die Lernenden nicht selten zu wenig Kenntnisse über verschiedene Arten und Möglichkeiten der Lernbewertung sowie Fertigkeiten, das Lernen objektiv und adäquat einzuschätzen und zu bewerten, haben. Somit akzentuiert man (Winter und Hofer 2007) die Schwierigkeit der Studierenden bei der Bewertung ihrer Lernfortschritte, besonders wenn sie von den Lehrern zu wenig unterstützt sind. Offensichtlich gibt es verschiedene Forschungsergebnisse, darum ist

nötig, die Resultate der diagnostischen Untersuchung zu diskutieren (Bild 2).

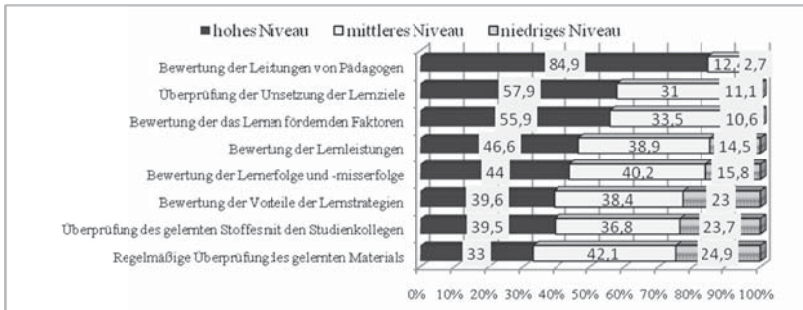


Bild 2: Einstellung der Studenten/innen zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen zu kontrollieren und zu bewerten

Aufgrund der Umfrage nimmt die Mehrheit der Individuen (84,9 %) am Bewertungsprozess der Leistungen nicht teil, weil vielleicht noch immer die tief verwurzelte Meinung existiert, dass es zur Funktion und Aufgabe der Lehrer gehört. Darüber hinaus behauptet nur ein Drittel der Befragten (33 %), dass sie regelmäßig das Erlernen des Lernmaterials überprüfen, und ein Viertel (24,9 %) hat dazu keine Zeit. Aber man kann positive Veränderungen bemerken, weil es für mehr als Hälfte (57,9 %) der Versuchspersonen interessant ist, die erwarteten Resultate mit den tatsächlichen Ergebnissen zu vergleichen. Fast ebenso viele Studenten/innen gaben an, dass sie in der Lage sind, die das Lernen fördernden Faktoren objektiv zu bestimmen und die Ursachen ihrer Lernschwierigkeiten zu identifizieren.

Die Ergebnisse der statistischen Korrelationsanalyse zeigen die Beziehungen zwischen der einzelnen Variablen der Lernkontrolle und –bewertung. Es ist offensichtlich, dass die Fähigkeiten der Studierenden, die Vorteile der Lernstrategien und Lernergebnisse zu bewerten, die meisten signifikanten Verbindungen haben. Aber dies sind nicht die empirischen Merkmale, die am meisten von den Untersuchungspersonen geschätzt werden. Die stärksten Schnittpunkte findet man zwischen den Fähigkeiten, die Vorteile der Lernstrategien objektiv zu beurteilen und die Umsetzung der Lernziele zu überprüfen ($r = .480, p = .000$), d. h., wenn die Studierenden imstande sind, die erwarteten Resultate mit den tatsächlichen Ergebnissen zu vergleichen, so können sie auch ihre Lernleistungen nach bestimmten Standards oder Anforderungen bewerten ($r = .428, p = .000$).

Verallgemeinernd kann man sagen, dass der Bewertungsprozess der Lernergebnisse oft mit der Tätigkeit und Funktion der Lehrer verbunden ist, aber dies fördert die Entwicklung der Fertigkeiten der Lernenden nicht, ihre eigenen Leistungen angemessen zu beurteilen, weil keine signifikante Verbindung mit den empirischen Merkmalen gefunden wurden. Gemäß der Studie versuchen die Studenten/innen, ihre Leistungen mit den erwarteten Ergebnissen zu vergleichen, ihre Lernfehler zu beachten und sie zu interpretieren. Diese Momente sind eng mit den positiven oder negativen Lernemotionen verbunden.

4. Einstellung der Studierenden zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen zu analysieren

Die Lernanalyse beeinflusst die Entscheidungen, die bei der Planung und Organisation von Weiterbildung nützlich sind. Ohne diese Phase wäre es kompliziert, sich ein bewusstes Lernen vorzustellen. Allerdings gibt es Studien (Zuzevičiūtė 2006; Winter und Hofer 2007), die zeigen, dass die Studenten/innen oft die Förderung der Lehrpersonen, die akademischen Leistung zu diskutieren, vermissen. Darum analysieren sie ihren Lernprozess öfter mit anderen Lerner als mit den Pädagogen. Somit ist es sinnvoll, die Meinungen der Umfragepersonen über die Bedeutung der Lernanalyse herauszufinden (Bild 3).

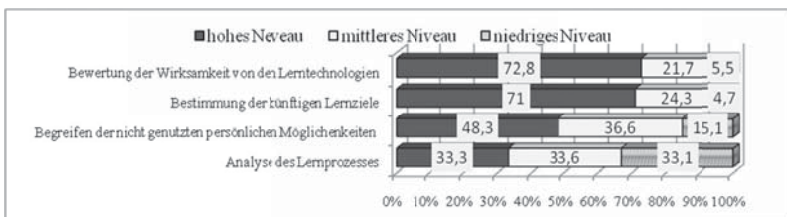


Bild 3: Einstellung der Studierenden zu Fähigkeiten, ihr Lernen zu analysieren

Die Forschungsdaten zeigen, dass die Untersuchungspersonen Interesse am Lernprozess haben. Fast drei Viertel (72,8 %) kann die Wirksamkeit der Lerntechnologien bewerten, d. h., verstehen, welche Lernmethoden ihnen im Wesentlichen am besten passen. Darüber hinaus behauptet etwa die gleiche Anzahl von Studenten/innen (71 %), dass sie die künftigen Ziele bedenken, deshalb planen sie ihre Lernmöglichkeiten. Laut den Resultaten schätzt ein Drittel (33,3 %) der Befragten die Selbstevaluation hoch ein, aber genauso viele legen keinen Wert darauf.

Das sind wichtige Informationen für die Lehrer, die einen modernen Bildungsprozess organisieren wollen.

Weiterhin wurde nach den statistisch signifikanten Zusammenhängen zwischen den Komponenten der Lernanalyse gesucht. Die Forschungsdaten zeigen signifikante Zusammenhänge zwischen allen Variablen. Gemäß dieser Ergebnisse sind die Fertigkeiten der Studierenden, die nicht genutzten persönlichen Möglichkeiten zu identifizieren, am wichtigsten bei der Lernanalyse, während die Befragten ihnen fast die niedrigste Bedeutung zuordnen. Es muss betont werden, dass die Studierenden, die zur Analyse ihres Lernens und der nicht genutzten persönlichen Möglichkeiten neigen, öfter die Lernperspektiven reflektieren ($r = .477, p = .000$) und den Lernprozess analysieren ($r = .421, p = .000$).

Die Metaanalyse schafft die Voraussetzungen für eine objektive, kritische Lernbewertung und Identifikation sowie Reflexion der Erfolge oder Misserfolge. Während des Reflexionsprozesses versteht man nicht nur, was beim Lernen gut oder schlecht gemacht ist und welche Lernziele erreicht oder nicht erreicht sind, sondern es werden auch Zukunftsperspektiven vorausgesehen und neue Lernschritte bestimmt.

5. Faktoren, die auf die Höhe der metakognitiven Kompetenz Auswirkung machen

Es ist bekannt, dass sich verschiedene Faktoren auf die Entwicklung der metakognitiven Kompetenz auswirken können: Geschlecht, Alter, Schultyp, Lernleistungen usw. Aufgrund der Studie wurden aber die meisten signifikanten Unterschiede in Bezug auf das Geschlecht der Befragten fixiert. Laut der Untersuchungsergebnisse wählen die Studentinnen öfter die wirksamen Strategien zur Erreichung der Lernziele, weil fast alle Variablen die signifikanten Unterschiede aufweisen. Es gelingt ihnen auch, die Lernstrategien gezielt und flexibel auszuwählen ($\chi^2 = 50.261, p = .000$), die Vorteile dieser Strategien zu bewerten ($\chi^2 = 35.061, p = .000$) und sie miteinander zu kombinieren ($\chi^2 = 30.163, p = .000$). Dennoch sollte beachtet werden, dass sie auch eher nach den Anweisungen der Lehrer arbeiten ($\chi^2 = 40.692, p = .000$) und mit Hilfe der üblichen Strategien lernen. So kann man schließen, dass die Frauen besser die Lernstrategien steuern, um bestimmte Ziele zu erreichen, aber zur gleichen Zeit arbeiten sie erfolgreicher unter der Leitung von den Lehrpersonen und machen die Aufgaben, die festgelegt sind.

Es wurden auch signifikante Unterschiede im Hinblick auf die Fähigkeit zur Lernbewertung und -analyse gefunden. Die Untersuchung

weist auch die besseren Fertigkeiten der Studentinnen auf, die Erfolge oder Misserfolge des Lernens zu begreifen ($\chi^2 = 23.065, p = .000$), die Lernergebnisse einzuschätzen ($\chi^2 = 33.716, p = .000$) und die Vorteile der Lernstrategien zu bewerten ($\chi^2 = 24.964, p = .000$). Darüber hinaus schenken die Frauen der Lernanalyse ein wenig mehr Aufmerksamkeit, weil sie eher ihr Lernen reflektieren ($\chi^2 = 17.162, p = .002$) und die Wirksamkeit der Lerntechnologien bedenken ($\chi^2 = 19.642, p = .001$). Aber man kann betonen, dass sowohl die Frauen als auch die Männer genauso gut die Gründe der Lernschwierigkeiten verstehen, sie objektiv bewerten und die Umsetzung der Ziele überprüfen können.

6. Schlussfolgerungen

1. Gemäß den wissenschaftlichen Studien spielt die metakognitive Kompetenz eine wichtige Rolle beim Lernen, ermöglicht die Entwicklung der Fähigkeiten der Lernenden zur effektiven Steuerung des Lernprozesses und schafft damit die Voraussetzungen für besseres und wirksames Lernen.
2. Es besteht kein Zweifel, dass die Lernplanung für das Begreifen der Lernperspektive und die Förderung der aktiven und bewussten Tätigkeit von großer Bedeutung ist, darum brauchen die Lernenden besonders die Techniken zur Lernplanung. Die Untersuchung zeigt die Fähigkeiten der Studierenden, die kognitiven Lernziele zu planen und die kognitiven Strategien zur Erreichung dieser Ziele zu wählen, aber auf dem metakognitiven Niveau stoßen die Befragten auf gewissen Schwierigkeiten.
3. Die Evaluation ist kein einfacher Prozess, und die Lerner haben nicht genug Kenntnisse und Fähigkeiten, um das erworbene Material zu testen, und dadurch ergeben sich bestimmte Probleme für Studierende: weniger als die Hälfte sind in der Lage, die Lernerfolge oder Misserfolge objektiv einzuschätzen, die Befragten haben wenig Möglichkeiten und nur selten den Wunsch, ihr Wissen zu bewerten, da sie gewöhnlich dazu nicht genug Zeit haben, nur ein Drittel kontrolliert ständig das Erlernen des Stoffes, aber meistens macht das die Lehrperson.
4. Es wurde eine positive Einstellung der Umfragepersonen zur Lernanalyse festgestellt, aber laut der Studie behauptet nur ein Drittel, ihr eigenes Lernen zu analysieren, während andere ihre Fähigkeit dazu bezweifeln oder kein Bedürfnis dazu verspüren. Gemäß der Ergebnisse ist wesentlich und entscheidend für die Entwicklung der Lernanalyse die Tendenz der Befragten, ihre

persönlichen, nicht genutzten Lernpotentiale und –möglichkeiten zu bedenken, obwohl die Studierenden nicht die höchste Bewertungen dafür aufweisen.

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Students' Approach to the Development of Their Metacognitive Competences in Foreign Language Classes

Keywords: students, metacognitive competence, planning of learning process, learning control, assessment and analysis; foreign language learning.

Summary

For a long time, foreign language researchers and teachers were focused on the cognitive phase of learning and the development of strategies that include an effective search for knowledge or information, their acquisition and processing, i.e., memorizing and reproducing learning materials. Based on the contemporary scientific studies, various factors affect the learning process, i.e., motivation, attitudes and the cognitive, social and communicative abilities of the learners. The present article analyses the components of metacognitive competence and their importance in foreign language learning because such studies are not sufficient and conducted not only in Lithuania. Therefore, it is important to investigate the role of metacognition in the learning process and to identify students' attitude towards ability and readiness to effectively organize and manage their learning.

In accordance with the students' approach to the factors of metacognitive competence, the following problematic issues arise: (1) to what extent the metacognitive abilities are important for the participants, (2) how the components of this competence correlate with each other and (3) what factors (gender, age, etc.) usually impact on the development of metacognitive competence.

In order to answer these questions, the aim of the research is to determine the trends of the first-year students' attitude towards their metacognitive competence. The above aim is achieved by fulfilling the following research objectives: (1) to reveal the students' approach to the components of metacognitive competence in the foreign languages classes; (2) to establish correlations between metacognitive competence components; (3) to analyse the factors that have the greatest influence on the participants' metacognitive competence.

In the research, 356 students of different universities in Lithuania were interviewed.

Research methods and processes: 1. Comparative analysis of scientific literature sources, their interpretation. 2. A questionnaire containing closed-ended questions. An original questionnaire compiled by the author was employed; it aimed at ascertaining the level of student's metacognitive learning abilities. The instrument of the research, the questionnaire, consists of three sections of diagnostic survey (25 closed-ended questions in total, compiled according to the five-level Likert scale). The questions of the first section in the diagnostic survey focus on the student's attitude in relation to their abilities to plan their learning, i.e., to set learning aims and choose strategies to achieve the aims set; the

questions of the second section reveal the student's attitude to their abilities to control and assess the process of learning. The questions of the third section disclose the student's attitude to the analysis of their learning abilities. 3. Statistical analysis: percentage frequencies of descriptive statistics; Pearson linear correlation between different variables *coefficient* (r) to define statistically significant correlations between them and their strength; *Chi-square criterion* (χ^2) for testing differences and interfaces between individual variables.

The results of metacognitive competence are discussed at the following levels: 1) respondents' abilities to plan, 2) to control and assess, and 3) to analyse their learning process.

According to the scientific studies, metacognitive competence plays an important role in learning; it enables the development of the learner's skills to effectively control the learning process and thus creates the prerequisites for better and effective learning.

There is no doubt that students' abilities to plan their learning are of great importance for the understanding of the learning perspective and the promotion of motivated and conscious activities, therefore especially the learners need the techniques for planning their learning. The research results reveal the students' abilities to plan learning objectives and to choose strategies for achieving these goals on a cognitive level but participants are confronted with some problems on a metacognitive level.

The evaluation is a complex process and the learners often do not have enough knowledge or skills to objectively assess the learned material because it is often associated with the teacher's functions. Furthermore, students are rarely included in the assessment process. This results in certain problems for students: fewer than half are able to assess the success or failure of their learning objectively, the respondents have few possibilities and rarely desire to evaluate their knowledge, since they usually do not have enough time to do it, and one-third constantly self-assess their foreign language learning.

In addition, the research participants exhibited a positive approach to the learning needs analysis. However, based on the study results, only one-third of them analyse their own learning while others question their ability to do it or do not feel like it. In the investigation of the factors influencing the students' development of metacognitive competence, it turned out that only "gender" showed statistically significant differences. It can be concluded that the respondents' skills and readiness to effectively organize and manage their learning process are still insufficient.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SPECIFICS OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO SENIORS

SINTIJA VALKA

Keywords: English language teaching, adult education, older adults, geragogy.

1. Introduction

Much research focuses on young learners acquiring foreign languages in classroom settings, whereas not as much research is concerned with older adults (seniors) as language learners learning later in life outside the classroom settings and context. Nowadays, seniors are active and for many reasons begin or renew foreign language learning. Teachers, therefore, need to pay more attention to the issue of teaching languages to seniors and the challenges such learners face.

Few studies have examined senior citizens' learning motivations and methodology of teaching, and they usually research one particular aspect, e.g., pronunciation or vocabulary learning.

The present study is a qualitative study with the aim to investigate the specifics of teaching methodology and the features of learning habits among elderly learners (or seniors, aged 67 to 82) of English in the framework of non-formal education outside classroom settings.

2. Foreign Language Geragogy: Characteristics of Older Adults

In methodological literature, language learning relating to older learners is termed educational gerontology and foreign language geragogy. The term "educational gerontology" refers to the integration of the institutions and processes of education concerned with the knowledge of human ageing and the needs of older people. Geragogy, on the other hand, refers to the

management of teaching and learning strategies where the target audience is older people (Formosa 2012, 38).

The main characteristics of the students under consideration include older adults' physiological, psychological, cognitive, and experiential features, which allow predicting an individual's potential challenges when learning a foreign language.

The older adult is considered an individual who has retired from the workforce (60–65 years old) and does not require full-time medical care (Ramírez Gómez 2016).

Physical Dimension: many older adults experience age-related physical changes. Among others, there can be observed brain cell loss which, in turn, can slow down the processing and manipulation of information, though intellectual performance remains relatively stable until around the age of 80. In terms of perception, vision and hearing capacity declines. Physical changes can influence foreign language learning to some extent, which means any class can include students with weaker eyesight or hearing or another physical impairment. Moreover, hearing impairment could obstruct pair/group work while visual impairment in the classroom may result in challenges when reading from textbooks or course materials, seeing the board or understanding visual materials. Thus, a text in a 12 pt font size may require a greater visual effort for older learners (Ramírez Gómez 2016; Formosa 2012),

Cognitive Dimension: cognitive decline in old age may be caused by extrinsic factors (illnesses) and intrinsic factors (level of adaptation to life changes). A few of the most common problems involve reduction in information processing speed and working memory performance, thus memorization of new material is one of the most relevant concerns for older learners in a foreign language classroom. They experience difficulties when attempting to memorize new words within the lesson and from lesson to lesson, although these difficulties are observed in production and not in comprehension (Ramírez Gómez 2016).

Processing speed decrease means older learners might need more time to finish tasks during the lessons, so they might experience difficulties in remembering new words, understanding the complex structures of sentences and retaining information that might be needed for task performance (Boulton-Lewis 2010).

Psychological Dimension: a primary concern of older adults is increasing their quality of life after retirement and dealing with the common age-related physical and cognitive changes which, in turn, might also influence foreign language learning, such as decreased motivation to participate, insecurity and emotional isolation. Older learners might have a

lower motivation as they think their cognitive abilities impede their learning process.

Content topics included in foreign language classes are often selected to satisfy the learners' interests and goals, thus motivating them to use the target language; therefore, it is important to explore learners' interests and objectives when making decisions on the matter of content.

Experiential Dimension: Life and foreign language learning experiences are varied; thus, it is difficult to establish experiential generalizations applicable to all older adults. Taking into consideration the development of the foreign language teaching methods, it can be said that a 70-year-old learner, in general, has learnt English through the grammar translation method, and probably has not received instruction through communicative methods at all (Ramírez Gómez 2016).

3. Reasons for Learning at Older Age

An elderly adult is a learner with their own view of life, life experience and previous learning experiences; thus, elderly people learn what interests them, what can be useful for everyday life, or could help them to communicate with others better which, in turn, means that learning in later life needs to be well recognized (Malec 2012).

Learning at an older age has been shown to have health benefits, thus has positive effects on social integration, well-being and the delay of cognitive decline (Wang, De Donder, Zhu, Li and Lombaerts 2014). Remaining physically, mentally and socially active, then, is partly dependent on continued participation in learning and education (Purdie and Boulton-Lewis 2010). In general, seniors have the willingness to participate in education after retirement but prior educational experience and quality of life influence their learning motivations and barriers. Rather often, the lack of confidence could be a major barrier to participation in education (Bunyan and Jordan 2005). This may stem from the lack of educational experience or negative memories associated with former education. Nola Purdie and Gillian Boulton-Lewis (2010) found that barriers associated with physical disabilities were reported the most; the least obstructive were education level, emotional barriers, and barriers associated with other people. It was observed that older adults show a positive mentality towards elderly learning: "Never too old to learn."

Learning at an older age has a very positive influence on individuals' lives – they develop personally, intellectually, learn to cooperate and communicate, and have the possibility to share experiences (Escuder-Mollon 2012; Bunyan and Jordan 2005).

4. How Older Adults Learn

Adults become less active and more reflective and observant in learning as they age (Bunyan and Jordan 2005). According to Alex Withnall (2003, 295),

learning in later life may consist of the kind of reflection and life review which take place in an unstructured and spasmodic way but which may lead to greater self-understanding and individual insight.

However, this may depend on the subject area. Also, the need for practical experience might become of more significance at a more advanced age (Bunyan and Jordan 2005). Teachers need to be aware of a number of issues in educational and learning programmes for older learners, e.g., their memory might not as effective as when they were younger; therefore, they prefer learning at a slower pace to absorb information. They also might require more time to reflect on new information than younger learners.

Karen Bunyan and Anne Jordan (2005) report that older adults might find skills such as note-taking complicated to master; the questioned tutors noted that older learners found multi-tasking difficult, for instance, taking notes while listening to the tutor. Additionally, older adults require more positive feedback than younger adults to achieve the same sense of achievement.

The literature on older adult learning tends to focus on ageing. Thus, it can cause teachers to generalise and make misleading assumptions about older people as language learners. Older people are involved in learning for a variety of reasons, and their motivations for engaging in learning are diverse. For instance, some are learning for pleasure or as a hobby or interest in retirement, some are learning to enhance or change their lifestyle and well-being, and some want to fulfil lifelong ambitions and seize the opportunities that they were denied earlier in life. In this research, the term “older learner” has been used solely as a means of identifying research participants.

In order to help older adults learn and gain benefits from learning, course developers and teachers should acknowledge several principles of adult learning (Spruck Wrigley, Powrie 2002), including older adult learning:

1. Adult learners are goal-driven.
2. Language learning is a social process that involves interaction with others.

3. Language learning requires risk taking.
4. Language is better acquired when the target language is slightly above the current level of proficiency of the user.
5. Language learning requires focus, engagement and practice.
6. Language learning is multi-dimensional and requires different kinds of interactions with different kinds of genres.
7. Language learning happens through interactions with tasks that require cognitive involvement.
8. Language acquisition is deeper if skills are connected to an overall topic or theme.

Furthermore, Malcolm Knowles' (1998) andragogic model for successful adult education includes such features as:

- 1) learners should be informed about the objectives of the course and tasks,
- 2) learners should be taught how to process the information,
- 3) topics must be related to the learner's experiences,
- 4) learners will not learn until they are ready and motivated to learn,
- 5) the teacher's task is to help the learners overcome preconceived beliefs about learning.

According to Robert M. Gagne's developed conditions of learning, ideally each lesson should follow these stages:

- 1) gaining attention (reception),
- 2) informing re objectives (expectancy),
- 3) recalling prior learning (retrieval),
- 4) presenting stimulus (selective perception),
- 5) providing guidance (semantic encoding),
- 6) eliciting performance (responding),
- 7) providing feedback (reinforcement),
- 8) assessing performance (retrieval),
- 9) enhancing retention and transfer (generalization) (quoted from Driscoll 2005).

5. Teacher's Role in Teaching Older Adults

Many elderly learners experience fear of failure more than other learners (Hale 2005; Schleppegrell 1987), thus the teacher's task is to provide such a learning environment that helps reduce stress and anxiety and overcome fear as learning at the older age is considered as risk-taking too. While building the learners' self-confidence, teachers should emphasize the progress the learners are making and provide opportunities to succeed.

One of the utmost significant factors for the elderly if they are to succeed in learning is the teacher (Escuder-Mollon, Esteller-Curto, Ochoa and Bardus 2014), who must have the social skills: communication, teaching methodology and learning content. Pillar Escuder-Mollon found that the way the teacher communicates and transmits their subject motivates elderly learners and encourages their improvement (Escuder-Mollon Esteller-Curto, Ochoa and Bardus 2014); hence, teachers should see themselves as educators, facilitators or just simply as helpers (Elliot 2015). A strictly controlling teacher as well as a too-casual classroom atmosphere might intimidate language learning; moreover, the entire elimination of regular classroom procedure may be more destructive than helpful because adults want to focus on learning; therefore, highly motivated adults might complain if the ritual of the classroom is too informal (Elliot 2015).

6. Classroom Practice

When teaching older adults, it is significant to build the lessons based on the principles of andragogy and geragogy. Seniors' life experiences should be integrated into classroom practices (Donaghy 2016; Ramírez Gómez, 2014) as well as their motivation to be socially active and their positive attitude towards language learning (Donaghy 2016).

In order to decrease the negative effects of hearing difficulties, various techniques that are recommended for teachers are:

- 1) speak clearly, ensuring that the students can see their face and lips,
- 2) adjusting the volume for recordings and videos,
- 3) ensuring that the classroom has little background noise.

To help learners with poorer vision, the teacher should:

- 4) use a larger letter size for printed texts,
- 5) write very clearly on the board,
- 6) ensure that classrooms have a lot of natural light. (Donaghy 2016)

Research indicates that cognitive development, recalling and problem solving may show a decline with age. In order to overcome this challenge, it is recommended that the teacher includes memorization strategies in the flow of the lesson. Memory training activities would increase strategy awareness, which would help learners select appropriate strategies for their own situation and habits of learning (Ramírez Gómez 2014). Therefore, it is suggested to (1) systematically repeat and recycle grammar, vocabulary

and expressions; (2) allow more time for students to produce language without being interrupted (Donaghy 2016).

Many older learners fear failure and are more anxious than younger learners, perhaps because they accept the stereotype of the older learner as a poor language learner or because of previous unsuccessful attempts to learn a foreign language. Older learners need to feel comfortable and trust the teacher and the other students before they participate fully in the language classroom. A key role of the teacher is to reduce anxiety and build trust and self-confidence in the senior learner.

Here are some of the things teachers can do to reduce stress and build self-confidence in older adult learners:

- Find out what our older learners' motivations are for learning a language and adjust our methodology accordingly.
- Use humanistic techniques to build empathy between the teacher and students, and among the students.
- Reduce the focus on error correction to build learners' self-confidence and to promote language production.
- Avoid timed tests, which may make senior learners anxious.
- Give senior students more time to complete activities.
- Promote a friendly and humane atmosphere that would support learning (Donaghy 2016).
- Work with printed materials should involve two resources at a time, be manageable with two hands and visible with one pair of glasses in order to not slow down the pace or cause anxiety or confusion in older learners (Tambaum 2012).

By creating a positive atmosphere and learning environment and taking into account the specifics of older adult learning, teachers could help increase the number of older adults attending language courses because of the practical value of learning an additional language, because knowledge of a foreign language may facilitate travelling and socializing and enhance the older adult's own reward and well-being.

7. Specifics of Teaching English to Seniors in Practice

A case study was conducted. The author, also the teacher of the course, designed an English language course for seniors based on the participants' needs, analysis of questionnaire data and principles of andragogy and geragogy. The English Language course for senior learners was introduced at the Foundation Diakonia Centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Day Centre "Mēs" in Riga from September 2016 to May 2017 by a volunteer English teacher, also the author of the article. There were nine

participants, aged 67–82, who participated in a two-semester extensive English language course in the framework of non-formal education, attending a 90-minute-long class once a week.

“Mēs” is a structural unit of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church, which was opened on October 7, 2014. The day centre follows the statutes of the Lutheran Church and cooperates with the Riga Social Service, police, schools, and hospitals as well as other local and state institutions, public and religious organizations, and individuals. The purpose of “Mēs” is to provide socio-psychological support as well as social and physical health services to adolescents without age restrictions (adult clients).

“Mēs” is for adults who can attend different social, cultural and non-formal educational events organized in the centre free of charge, which is a highly significant factor, especially for elderly people. There are organizations and institutions that offer adults different courses, including English, but in many cases, people have to pay for the course; the centre, on the other hand, provides all events and courses for free.

The data was gained through conducting a needs analysis questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with the course participants. The needs analysis questionnaire consisted of 12 questions asking the participants their general personal information, educational background, motivation and reasons for learning English, preferred learning styles, and strategies.

The interviews conducted with the participants consisted of three types of questions: (1) feedback on the teaching strategies and course teacher; (2) personal achievements and challenges; (3) suggestions for changes or course improvement needed. The author made notes during the interviews.

8. Participants and Their Profiles

Any language course usually starts with a learner’s placement test to identify the level of proficiency in order to help the teacher set the aim and objectives of the course. In the present case study, a placement test was not used as very often the results turn out to be unreliable because older people tend to underestimate their knowledge, and it could be frightening for the seniors to start the course with a test. It could also be time-consuming and tiring for elderly learners. Therefore, it was more important for the teacher to identify the seniors’ personal language needs rather than the language level. One more factor that was of utmost significance to learning was the seniors’ previous experience of learning English. Danya Ramírez Gómez (2016, 74) also admits that tests are not always an appropriate method for older adults as “tests are intended to reflect knowledge acquired through regular study habits”.

The needs analysis questionnaire conducted before the course showed that all nine course participants were retired; the level of English proficiency was A1.2–B1.1 (all the participants had learnt English at secondary schools or institutes/universities more than 30 or even 40 years ago); all nine participants had a degree (an accountant, two teachers, three engineers, a pharmacist, an economist, an agronomist). Russian was the mother tongue for seven participants, and Latvian for two.

The participants described their language needs as

- communication (especially with grandchildren living abroad – 4 participants),
- travelling abroad (different social situations),
- surfing the Internet,
- understanding news and TV programmes,
- being able to discuss different topics,
- giving personal information,
- talking to tourists visiting Latvia.

Among language needs, the participants also noted personal needs such as

- keeping brain/mind active,
- keeping one busy,
- finding new friends,
- entertaining oneself,
- spending free time meaningfully.

Concerning the participants' educational background and foreign language learning, experience was mostly positive: participants shared their memories from school and higher education institutions where mostly the grammar translation method had been used to teach English at that time. Five course participants admitted that there had been very limited opportunities to practise English in communication since school whereas others used English occasionally, either in communication or for reading articles on the Internet. All participants admitted that speaking, listening and reading skills would be the most desirable to develop.

Thus, a thorough diagnostic study helped not only to identify the language needs of participants and set the objectives but also to choose the most appropriate content and teaching methods, which would meet the age characteristics of older adult learners.

9. Choosing Course Content

The first step in the development of the English language course syllabus included meeting with the participants and discussing the possible course content, as geragogy can occur through negotiation between learners and teachers creating learning outcomes together (Formosa 2012).

The English language course for seniors had several goals:

- 1) to develop speaking and listening skills for communication purposes
- 2) to develop writing skills for basic correspondence
- 3) to encourage communication and relationship building

If it is chosen correctly, appropriate course content greatly facilitates the acquisition of a language. It was concluded that the vocabulary content would be selected based on the language needs of participants and could change in the flow of the course. It was agreed that there would be one topic for two weeks to study, with a reading text, different vocabulary supplemented with listening and speaking tasks. Topics chosen varied starting from Family, Travelling, Shopping, Cooking, The World and Local News, Lifestyles, Sports, Health, TV programmes, Books and Authors to many others, such as Celebrations, Special Events, Nature, History, Entertainment, Business, and others. Concerning grammatical content, it was decided that basic knowledge of grammar is enough to communicate successfully and the course syllabus included such items as

- 1) word order in different types of sentences,
- 2) verb tenses: present simple, past simple, future simple, present perfect,
- 3) special or *wh*-questions,
- 4) modal verbs: *can, have to, should* as far as a speaker is to describe their abilities when socializing,
- 5) construction *There is/There are* (positive, negative and interrogative),
- 6) use of prepositions.

Furthermore, the greatest attention was given to the use of the verbs in the variety of structures and functional language in order to communicate one's needs and opinion successfully.

On the one hand, the participants showed approval of using modern methods and especially the communicative approach as the traditional lexical and grammatical approach might be tiring for older adults to maintain their attention and interest, though, on the other hand, the participants questioned the purpose and usefulness of every new method, approach or technique proposed. Together with the participants, it was

decided to correct the mistakes immediately; moreover, the teacher needed to consider ways of correcting wrong pre-existing knowledge of English grammar for some learners. Additionally, it was necessary to keep in mind that some aspects of language learning become more complicated with age, especially memorizing; therefore, every class should start and end with a review of the material. As there are no teaching materials, textbooks, dictionaries or modern technologies available in the day centre, it was decided that reading material be given to the learners as homework to do at their own pace, to ensure that learners can keep up with each other, without causing unnecessary stress when faced with unknown words, not knowing how to pronounce and translate the word.

10. Assessment and Feedback

Since the implementation of the English language course for seniors happened in the framework of non-formal education, in a non-formal setting, there is no official assessment system other than personal achievement and satisfaction. The teacher collected the participants' feedback on personal achievements and challenges through semi-structured interviews.

The participants gave positive feedback on the course content and teaching strategies the teacher used, as well as the teacher herself, emphasizing the friendly and humane atmosphere created and the helping and supportive attitude of the teacher. The participants appreciated the materials of diverse nature, meaningful tasks and sensible use of class time. The participants admitted that the individual approach supported their learning, thus they could claim that their English knowledge has improved, they have built new friendships, spent good and meaningful time together, and improved their well-being.

As the main challenges, five participants reported on their weak cognitive abilities: it was difficult to learn and remember a variety of new vocabulary items and grammar structures; six participants claimed that they felt challenged by their physical abilities: it was complicated to move, walk, read and write due to age-related changes and ailments; three participants regretted missing many English classes due to longer periods of being ill or being influenced by other physical obstacles.

11. Conclusions

The implementation of the English language course for seniors and teaching seniors was a completely new experience for the author.

The case study indicated that almost all the general principles of andragogy and geragogy were observed while designing and implementing the English language course for seniors. The participants were a group of random people attending the day centre “Mēs”, expressing a wish to have English classes in order to learn to communicate in English with their grandchildren and be able to speak with a foreigner about simple everyday topics as well as keep their minds working and improve their well-being.

The participants in their late 60s, mid-70s and early 80s did well on the course and improved their English knowledge judging from the feedback given. Besides, they also built new friendships and gained a positive effect on overall well-being.

On the other hand, however, the case study highlighted specific features in relation to teaching older adults that should be considered when implementing the course repeatedly in planning and in classroom practice.

It was suggested by the participants that

- 1) it is better if each task is on a separate page so that there is no need to turn the page to complete the task;
- 2) use one resource for doing one task (too many pages or a textbook and a worksheet used simultaneously might cause confusion, anxiety and worsen the language learning);
- 3) reading material should be in large size; if typed, at least 14 pt Times New Roman, with enough spaces between lines and on margins for notes;
- 4) tasks should not be very long as it causes tiredness; also, a great variety of techniques and approaches used during one class could cause confusion, though the task types should vary in order to escape monotonous work as it does not support remembering and thus learning.

Several more conclusions were made by the teacher, the course developer.

An older adult learner’s class is likely to include a great diversity of foreign language educational backgrounds (learning experience and knowledge levels), thus, new approaches might not be comprehended by the learners so quickly or at all as elderly people might wish to learn in the ways they were used to at school as they found rather effective and useful. Exposure to various approaches seemed beneficial by the teacher, whereas learners considered them “not so effective”; thus it is recommended to consider how effectively these approaches and methods are used and how appropriate they are for the learners’ own learning abilities.

The older adult learners differ cognitively among themselves (there are no two equal individuals) and within themselves, too (not all their

cognitive abilities decline at the same time and level). This cognitive variability may complicate the course planning and development; moreover, absences are a frequent problem in foreign language classes with older adult learners as they have a higher tendency to suffer from ailments. For instance, hot or, on the contrary, very cold weather, icy and slippery streets in winter, and illnesses greatly increase absences which, in turn, influence the planning of the course and lessons. There could be a need for extra classes or self-study material design for those learners who did not participate in two or more classes. Apart from these issues, the teacher should acknowledge that older adults might feel lonely, thus, sometimes they simply need communication with others, and for that reason some class time should be spent on sharing experiences, although, the teacher should follow the flow of the conversations as everybody must be heard. Such situations could take almost the whole class but it should be admitted that it is the reason why seniors attend classes: more for socializing than learning. Additionally, it was observed by the teacher that seniors acquired a very significant skill: collaborating and helping each other during different tasks. It is not a new thing to mention how different people are in their characters, opinions and abilities, therefore, in the given situation, the participants needed to learn to cooperate with unfamiliar people, each having their own features.

It is typical that older adults become tired more easily than younger learners; therefore, it was more beneficial for the classes to be held in the morning or the first part of the day until one o'clock in the afternoon, as later the attention span and concentration levels tended to decline and cause sometimes childlike behaviours.

Regarding classroom practices, the teacher observed that the older learners needed and liked to receive feedback on their assignments more than younger learners. Besides, the learners had difficulties remembering what they had learned, and the participants also reminded the teacher that they needed constant revision of the material to memorise it. Therefore, the teacher found that it took longer for older adults to remember information and their classes needed to be slower to allow understanding of the material. Moreover, the overall pace of the class was observed to be slower, the teacher needed to speak slower as well as move through material slowly. This was a new experience for the teacher but it is a significant issue to consider to any teacher who would work with older adults. Meanwhile, the learners appreciated active strategies, though not very many of them, as the learners cannot move much nor can they process much information at one go; hence, the material had to be broken down into very small chunks. It is advisable for the teacher to concentrate

on one issue at a time. Finally, the instructions should be very simple and easy to comprehend for seniors as they tend to have diminished memory capacity, thus, a long list of instructions to perform could be daunting.

Concerning the choice of topics, it was rather difficult to use available printed textbooks as there is an absence of textbooks targeted specifically at this age group. The available foreign language adult textbooks are appropriate for adults in their 40s and 50s but rarely for older adults since the provided universal content does not justify expectations as they contain numerous topics associated with young adulthood, the labour market and workforce, or university life. The textbooks also contain only a few (if any) images associated with older age. Thus, the materials had to be designed by the teacher by finding appropriate text on the Internet or adapting the tasks after the reading material so that they suit the participants, which was a time-consuming task. It can be concluded that by using materials from different sources, there could be observed a lack of natural progression of grammar structures (as it is usually provided in textbooks) and information gaps are likely to emerge.

Thus, older adults (seniors), aged 60 and more, can actively participate in learning, thus obtaining a new language, new knowledge, new skills for personal development, and well-being. Teaching English to senior learners has its own specifics – psychological, age-related and methodology-related. The achievements and pleasure the participants gained justified the time-consuming task of developing an English language course for seniors, although the teacher had some doubts prior to the course starting. The teacher used all kinds of means to help older adults succeed. Moreover, the older adults reported the beneficial effects of learning as now they feel more confident when socializing, can communicate when travelling and, furthermore, the participants feel better as they participate actively in community life, have built new friendships, have acquired skills of collaboration with unfamiliar people in the group, and increased their well-being through spending time together.

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PART V:
LANGUAGE TEACHERS' COMPETENCE

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE TEACHERS' CRITICAL THINKING AS A PRECODITION FOR MAKING MORAL JUDGEMENTS

ROMA KRIAUCIENĖ

Keywords: moral judgement competence, critical thinking, values, precondition, moral judgement making, criteria of behaviour evaluation, foreign language teachers

1. Introduction

Strategic regulations of the Republic of Lithuania on education for the period 2003–2012 state that all educational processes should be based on developing students' value attitudes and great attention should be given to their moral development. Lithuanian and foreign scientists in education (Smith and Montgomery 1997; Stančikaitė 2002; Vasiliauskas 2005, etc.) confirm that students' moral development is not restricted to just one study discipline but raises the requirements to all teachers throughout the whole educational process. It has also been acknowledged that moral education is far more complicated than teaching any subject (Lukšienė 2000) and that the teacher's personality is of paramount importance as well as the ability to reflect on and evaluate their teaching practice and to make judgements based on moral values. Dublin Descriptors, which set qualification standards for university graduates, also point out the necessity to develop

the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements. (Joint Quality Initiative informal group 2004)

It goes without saying that in the education process teachers should be able to make judgements in any complicated situation, presenting clear and sound arguments in accordance with moral principles and norms (Bailey 1997; Farrel 1998; Hurtado, Mayhew and Enberg 2003; Jovaiša 2007; Lange 1990; Mergler 2008). Therefore, they need to have developed critical thinking skills, to be able to interpret and evaluate the situation and to foresee the possible actions as well as personal and social consequences of their decisions in compliance with the requirements of moral principles and norms. It has been claimed that teachers, who reflect on their experience and make a critical evaluation of it, tend to be more professional and their relationships with their students are more humanistic (Richards 2008). The empirical research has also proved (Lind 2001; Reiman and Oja 2006) that the better the teachers' ability to make judgements, the better they are committed to professional responsibilities and renewal.

Recent studies in foreign countries into students' moral judgement competence pay a lot of attention to defining the influence of micro- and macro environments on the development of the ability to make moral judgements. Foreign scientists are interested in what types of educational institutions, universities among them, encourage the development of students' moral judgement competence and what factors in the teaching/learning process have the greatest impact upon its development. Foreign researchers (Johnston 2003; Kohn 1997; Megler 2008) maintain that teacher training institutions should provide the possibility for future teachers to analyse and reflect upon their values more explicitly so that they are able to model their values in the classroom and foster the values of their students. As Alan Reiman and Lisa Johnston (2002) put it, the diverse nature of students' backgrounds, religions and points of view require teachers with advanced moral reasoning as they are more likely to model appropriate, caring and meaningful interactions with their students.

There has recently been more research in Lithuania focused on the analysis of different facets of teachers' personality, pedagogical calling, the phenomenon of teaching mastery, teacher self-development, teacher competencies (Bulajeva 2000; Kavaliauskienė 2001; Laužackas 2008 etc.), teachers' value attitudes (Martišauskienė 2007), and schoolchildren's and students' critical thinking (Duoblienė 2006; Duoblienė 2007; Rimienė 2006). However, insufficient attention has been paid to the possibilities of developing future foreign language teachers' moral judgements.

Consequently, the object of the research has been chosen – future foreign language teachers' moral judgements and possibilities for their development at universities. The aim of the research is to reveal the possibilities of the development of students' critical thinking in

accustoming them to make moral judgements in the process of foreign language teaching/learning.

The objectives of this article are:

- 1) to overview the development of the ability to make moral judgements,
- 2) to reveal the development of critical thinking skills as a necessary precondition of making moral judgements,
- 3) to assess the peculiarities of the respondents' ability to make evaluations as a necessary precondition of moral judgements.

2. Research Methodology

The research is based on:

1. Insights of *constructivism theory* claiming that each individual constructs and transforms his/her own personal reality, foresees and performs his/her social roles on the basis of own experience, integrating new knowledge and being in relation with others.
2. Concepts of *humanistic psychology and pedagogy*, according to which the essence of a human being is revealed through and is the result of the interdependent relationship of human efforts, personal features, education, and the environment.
3. Ideas of *cognitive psychology* about the parallelism of the development of cognitive structures and the moral development of a personality, the importance of cognitive processes in solving moral dilemmas, cognitive powers determining features of logical reasoning, and the impact of constructive imagination, on the basis of which arguments are constructed and the causes of one's behaviour are understood.
4. The views of *neocognitive theory* on moral judgement being evaluative, in the process of which the assessment of real and potential possibilities takes place, that in the process of evaluation a person expresses his/her attitudes.

Methods of the research:

1. *Theoretical*: analysis, comparison, evaluation, interpretation of scientific, psychological and educational literature.
2. *Empirical*: Situation evaluation method, which is aimed at defining the respondents' ability in free-choice situations to project their behavioural strategy. The use of the situation method allows for predicting a person's behaviour by the respondents' evaluation of actions and behaviour. By the use of the situation method, it was attempted to determine if the respondents' predicted behaviour is in accordance with the requirements of moral values, if the personal and social consequences of projected behaviour are taken into consideration, acknowledging or rejecting the requirements of moral

values and what the underlying motives of such projected behaviour are.

3. *Statistical*: percentage frequencies of descriptive statistics, Chi square criterion to measure the differences of variables. The research data was processed using the 12th version of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

The research sample consisted of 526 students of English, German and French in the 1st–4th year of their studies at Vilnius Pedagogical University and the Institute of Foreign Languages at Vilnius University.

3. Development of the Abilities to Make Moral Judgements

Moral judgement expresses a person's moral attitudes, reveals if the person in the process of moral judgement making is able to apply the requirements of moral values, if they project the possible personal and social consequences of their actions, and if they model their behaviour in accordance with moral values. The *Dictionary of Psychology* (Psichologijos žodynas 1993) defines judgement as the performance of cognitive operations that minimize the initial obscurity of problem situation. It is considered to consist of three definite stages: searching for a decision, making a decision and the realisation of a decision. Making a judgement is defined as the consistent formation of actions in a free-choice situation, which is based on the transformation of information and directed at a certain goal. Leonas Jovaiša (2007) points out that judgement is always based on certain criteria, which might be need, usefulness, the level of one's aspiration, or moral norms and values.

Therefore, in order to develop future teachers' abilities to make judgements, first of all, a knowledge of moral values is necessary, as only by having acquired and reached a certain cognitive level of value internalization is it possible to make moral judgements (Lind 1985; Naylor 1998). However, only knowledge of moral values is not sufficient as it is important to be able to apply moral values in the process of moral decision making and only then can one expect moral behaviour from students. Such ability can be developed only when people reflect on their experience and make a critical evaluation of their relationships, values, abilities, successes, and failures. Therefore, teacher training institutions should pay more attention to accustoming future teachers to reflect and search for the final option of decision making and at the same time focus on values as the main criteria of moral judgements (Bailey 1997; Farrel 1998; Lange 1990; Mergler 2008).

However, the ability to make moral judgements is determined not only by moral knowledge but critical thinking skills, the ability to evaluate the environment as well as by the creative powers of a personality (Huitt 2004). Therefore, accustoming students to make moral judgements in the teaching/learning process means stimulating their critical thinking skills and moral imagination and encouraging them to think about how their judgements could affect interested parties, and what consequences they might have for other people.

Critical thinking, as Sylvia Hurtado, Matthew Mayhew and Mark Enberg (2003) point out, enables a person to have insight into the essence of moral problems. The ability to think critically is a necessary condition for the formation of a mature, thinking, independent personality in modern society (Duoblienè 2006; Rimienè 2006). This kind of reasoning is considered to be well-grounded, reflexive thinking, making decisions about what to believe in, what to reject (Ennis 2000); a purposeful self-directed judgement-making process that manifests in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, making conclusions, supporting one's decision by arguments, with reference to universal values of justice, fairness and respect (Elder 2007; Facione 1990). Such thinking requires the necessary skills (problem identification, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, making conclusions, clarification, self-direction, prediction of possible consequences, making value judgements) and the disposition – permanent self-motivation to solve problems by applying critical thinking skills. Robert Ennis defines the main three dispositions of critical thinking: the pursuit of truth, fairness and a clear layout of your position, with high esteem for the values of dignity and respect and care for other people's welfare; whereas other scientists (Facione 1990) list the pursuit of truth, impartiality, the ability to analyse and systematize, self-confidence, curiosity, maturity. It is considered that people thinking in this way not only have all the necessary critical thinking skills but also have a permanent self-motivation to use them. Such critical thinking skills and dispositions should be developed not only in separate courses on critical thinking but also integrated into the programs of all study disciplines (Callahan (ed.) 1988; Ennis 2000), as critical thinking is applied in all areas for the solution of different problems and is closely linked with other modes of reasoning: scientific, historical, mathematical, economic, anthropological, philosophical, and moral. Critical thinking is a disciplinary and self-regulatory process aiming at the highest quality and equity. People thinking critically try to think reasonably, present consistent arguments and be emphatic, fair and honest. It is also highlighted that the development of critical thinking skills and dispositions is a long-lasting individual process (Elder 2007).

In order to facilitate students to think critically and make moral judgements, which should be satisfying for both personal and social needs, and to be able to do it with full consideration, intellectually, responsibly and emphatically, long-term and intensive studies as well as the application of suitable teaching/learning methods are necessary (Narvaez 2001). The main appropriate teaching/learning methods for this reason are considered to be active ones, such as debates, role plays, case studies, and moral dilemma discussions exploiting the teaching content of particular subjects. It should be mentioned that such teaching/learning methods are also suitable for the development of communicative foreign language skills. The best way to develop adults' foreign language skills is thought to be the search for solutions to authentic, true-to-life problematic situations. In this way, alongside the development of foreign language skills, students' self-motivation is stimulated, critical thinking skills are developed and emotions are triggered.

The suitability of the moral dilemma discussion method for learners of all age groups has been proved by psychological research (Lind 2005). Philosophers (McConnell 2006) distinguish real (ontological) and unreal (epistemic) moral dilemmas. The main feature of real dilemmas is the agent of the dilemma has to choose between two (or more) alternatives, but not both alternatives at once. Thus, rejection of one alternative provides the conditions for the choice of the other alternative; however, each alternative is on the one hand obligatory, but on the other – impossible. Therefore, it appears that the dilemma agent is unavoidably doomed to failure; whatever they choose they will not fulfil their obligations. In case of unrealistic moral dilemmas, one of the conflicting alternatives outweighs the other.

Another division of dilemmas is based on the origin of the dilemma: by inappropriate behaviour a person might have created a conflicting situation or such a situation might have been caused by others, i.e., due to the force of circumstances. Philosophers also distinguish obligatory alternatives, when the choice of one or more than one alternative is possible, and prohibitive alternatives, when all the alternatives become impossible. The above-mentioned philosophers also pay attention to the number of agents that the dilemma is related with: one, two or more. Such dilemmas are called interpersonal moral conflicts. However, whatever the origin of the dilemma is, some scientists (Ross 2005) remind us that in the process of a dilemma decision, paying attention to the consequences that the dilemma decision might have on other people is always required.

From the point of view of the proponents of the cognitive strategy of moral personality development (Berkowitz 1997; Huit 2004), students can

achieve a higher level of moral reasoning while solving moral dilemmas. According to this strategy, there is an orientation towards universal moral principles (integrity, justice, dignity). It is also acknowledged that values may be relative, conditioned by a certain situation context but applied by an individual depending on the cognitive level of their development. By this strategy students are also encouraged to provide arguments for their value choice and achieve a higher level of moral reasoning.

It should also be pointed out that moral dilemma strategies have clear criteria: empathy (to understand that one's actions have an influence on other people); cause-effect (to strengthen moral motivation); and giving priority to moral instead of personal values (Benninga 2003). These criteria are believed to help students get accustomed to dilemma solutions with a focus on other people's interests, consequences, value conflicts, and obligations (Bebeau, Pimple, Muskavich, Borden, and Smith 1995).

4. Peculiarities of the Respondents' Ability to Make Evaluations

The diagnostic research was aimed at finding out how the respondents are able to evaluate behaviour in different situations. Neocognitivist Georg Spielthener (2005) maintains the view that moral judgement is evaluative, which allows the attitude to be evaluative, which is identical to evaluation. The representative of cognitivism, Garret Cullity (1998), while interpreting moral judgement as evaluative action, distinguishes it to have four aspects:

- 1) evaluation process during which it is determined if the evaluative object has a particular moral attribute, either general (e.g., rightness, wrongness) or specific (insensitivity, integrity);
- 2) the state of evaluation – acknowledgement that the object has moral attributes;
- 3) the content of evaluation – what is judged to be done, i.e., what is the decision towards the object of evaluation;
- 4) final evaluation – the recommended moral wisdom.

In order to understand moral judgement it is necessary to clear out the peculiarities of a person's evaluation, considering this process to be the feature as well as precondition of moral judgement making. Therefore, the method of free choice was implemented, which, according to Bronislavas Bitinas (2004), helps to assess the level of respondents' social consciousness and even allows for the prediction of their real behaviour in different situations. The respondents were provided with a free-choice

situation where they had to solve a moral problem – a dilemma, i.e., to evaluate the dilemma agents' behaviour and project their further actions with reference to moral values. The free-choice situation was about the moral behaviour of two teachers working at the same school (*during the annual teachers' assessment, when teachers are encouraged to present their new pedagogical undertakings, one of the two teachers plagiarises the other's idea about the preparation of a special practice book and in this way wins herself a very good rating*). The respondents had to evaluate the behaviour of the teacher who plagiarized the other teacher's idea as well as predict the behaviour of the aggrieved party.

The criterion of evaluation was the respondents' ability in this situation to appropriately evaluate the behaviour of both teachers with an orientation towards moral values. If the respondents in the presented situation evaluated the agent's behaviour with reference to the fact, which requirements of moral values were violated and how they can be restored and what the personal and social consequences of the projected behaviour might be and what these consequences are based on, then such evaluation was considered to be very appropriate. If the attention was paid to what requirements of moral values were violated and it was pointed out how they can be restored but with a clearer reference to personal rather than social consequences without presenting sufficient arguments – then such evaluation of behaviour was considered to be appropriate. If attention was paid to what requirements of moral values were violated and it was pointed out how they can be restored but without considering and motivating the consequences of such behaviour, then such evaluation was considered not very appropriate.

Comparative research data analysis revealed the respondents' ability to evaluate behaviour appropriately with a clear reference to the requirements of moral values and the personal and social consequences of their restoration (table 1).

Table 1: Future foreign language teachers' ability to evaluate behaviour

The respondents' ability to evaluate behaviour appropriately					
Very appropriate	Appropriate	Not very appropriate	Inappropriate	Statistical data significance	
				χ^2	$p <$
44	159	266	36	55.604	0.000
8.4	30.2	50.6	6.8		

It turned out that only the minority (8.4 %) of future foreign language teachers could evaluate the dilemma of the agent's behaviour appropriately with reference to the fact – which requirements of moral values were violated and how they could be restored and what the personal and social consequences of the projected behaviour might be. Foreign authors (Johnston 2003) highlight that foreign-language teachers should be able to make not only professional judgements but should constantly reflect, evaluate and project their behaviour so that they are able to solve different, usually unpredictable problems, taking into account not only their but their students' welfare as well.

The research revealed that only one-third of all the respondents could evaluate behaviour appropriately and project actions, albeit with a greater focus on personal rather than social consequences. Although half of the research participants pointed out the moral values, the requirements of which were violated, and indicated the ways they should be restored, they did not mention the consequences of such behaviour at all, therefore their projected behaviour was considered to be not very appropriate. Consequently, it could be suggested that the future foreign language training process should allocate more time and attention to and provide more frequent possibilities for students' reflection on moral issues, choosing appropriate true-to-life contemporary situations that would encourage students to project possible behaviour and reflect on the personal and social consequences of such behaviour. It should be mentioned that the practical usefulness of moral reflection has been highlighted by many authors (Boyl 1992; Kunzman 2005; Mergler 2008 etc.), who especially stress the necessity to avoid indoctrination and an unfounded inculcation of values in the educational process.

The research revealed that there were respondents who could be considered unable to evaluate behaviour appropriately as they only pointed out the moral values that the dilemma agents should have followed, but they did not mention the ways to restore them and did not show any concern about the consequences. A similar trend has been revealed by other scientists as well (Derryberry, Snyder, Wilson and Barger 2006), who compared the differences of the ability to make moral judgements of future teachers and liberal arts students. They reached the conclusion that future teachers' ability to project behaviour with reference to moral values is lower than that of other students who took part in the survey. Such empirical evidence proves the researchers' concern about the possibility of future teachers' unethical behaviour and professional malpractice to be quite well-founded.

5. Conclusions

Thus the research data make it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. In the process of behaviour evaluation, future foreign language teachers are not likely to apply moral values and are unable to provide consistent arguments for the possible consequences if the requirements of values are not met. This leads to the view that the respondents are not accustomed to considering values to be the criteria of behavioural evaluation. This might also be explained by the fact that the respondents insufficiently perceive the notion of values. Therefore, in the foreign language teaching process, more attention should be paid not only to behavioural evaluation in different true-to-life situations but also to the acknowledgement of the importance of moral values as the essential criteria of evaluation.
2. In order to develop students' abilities to make moral judgements, it is important to develop their critical thinking skills as the necessary precondition of making moral judgements. In getting accustomed to moral decision making, it is necessary to deepen students' notion of moral values as the criteria of evaluation. It is also of paramount significance to make students aware of other people's needs and interests as well as of the possible personal and social consequences of their judgements.
3. In the attempt to integrate foreign language learning aims with those of the development of moral judgement making, it is advisable to use active teaching/learning methods providing the possibility for meaningful interaction in academic groups. It is advisable to present students with true-to-life, real situations that would stimulate their empathy and moral imagination as well as develop not only their linguistic skills but also their critical thinking abilities, the necessary precondition of moral judgement making, providing possibilities for students to analyse and evaluate moral dilemmas and present consistent arguments in accordance with the requirements of moral values.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE AS A TOOL FOR MASTERING AND IMPROVING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

SOLVITA POŠEIKO

Keywords: linguistic landscape, authentic texts, pragmatic competence, language acquisition, language education policy in Latvia

1. Introduction

The circulation and communication of information in the modern world has been increasingly characterized by a fast and versatile text flow. However, at the same time, this flow is fragmentary, and created with a minimal use of linguistic tools. As examples, one could consider websites, snippets of news appearing on internet portals, text or WhatsApp messages on mobile phones, or blog and social media comments. The minimum lexica necessary for maximum effectiveness are also used in the many language signs – or the linguistic landscape – of the public sphere. Jaseno Cenoz and Durk Gorter (2008, 264) remark,

the linguistic landscape includes utterances which are sometimes full sentences but in many other cases they are just single words or groups of words that have a meaning as related to the context in which they are written.

Though these texts have not been written for pedagogic processes, they are both authentic and familiar to students; thus, their incorporation in the learning process is nonetheless useful (Wallace 1992; Hadley 1993; Genhard 1996). Using real public texts allows educators to (1) show real language use, (2) develop the competence to define and interpret the ideas and purposes of authentic texts, (3) improve the ability to evaluate the

usefulness of texts and apply them according to their tastes and needs, and (4) bring specific speech acts to real conversations in sociolinguistic situations (see Cenoz and Gorter 2008; Lazdiņa, Marten and Pošeiko 2008; Lazdiņa and Marten 2009). This is especially useful for students for whom the language of the text is not their native language, or for those who have difficulties perceiving texts due to various psychological or physiological conditions.

Assuming that language signs in the public space of the city are initiators of certain linguistic behaviour and communication, the aim of the article is to characterize the role of the linguistic landscape in the development of pragmatic competence. The main research question is how language signs and the linguistic landscape as a whole can promote the determination of language and sign functions and their use, according to certain communication situations in a specific context, in order to achieve desired goals and satisfy needs.

In order to answer this rather complicated question, it is first planned to discuss two theoretical and methodological issues:

1. How can the terms pragmatic competence and linguistic landscape be defined in the context of language acquisition?
2. What is the policy regarding language acquisition in Latvia (especially regarding Latvian as L1) and how does it promote or hinder the development of pragmatic competence in Latvian schools?

Practical methods will be explored by which authentic urban texts can be used in the learning process, enabling students to discuss the functionality of these signs and hone their abilities to use these texts for pragmatic purposes. The article will address: (1) the comments of some respondents of interviews and an associative experiment on the perception of linguistic landscape texts, (2) some examples of unsuccessful attempts to interpret language signs in various Latvian cities, and (3) Mark Haddon's literary work *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003) and the perception and use of language signs described therein. These three sets of cases will be discussed in the context of language learning and will be illustrated with specific tasks that can be given to students in the classroom.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. *Initial terms and definitions*

Pragmatic competence is the knowledge that enables a speaker to express their meanings and intentions via speech acts (e.g., requests, invitations, disagreements) appropriately within a particular social and cultural context of communication. This knowledge involves both having the linguistic means for expressing speech acts and understanding the socio-cultural constraints on the use of these means (Canale 1983). In other words, pragmatic competence is the functional use of language tools by developing detailed “scenarios” of their interaction in a particular communication situation (Brown 2007; Richards and Schmidt 2010). Pragmatic competence matters both in language acquisition and in language use. The functional aspect of pragmatic competence is critical, as without it it is not possible to unify the notion of language as a system and its use in practice. As already mentioned in the introduction, authentic texts play an important role in the development of this competence. Hadley even states that one of the most important principles of communicative language knowledge is using authentic material (Hadley 1993).

Thus, pragmatic competence is an important element of communicative competence that reflects the ability of the language user to perceive, evaluate and use the context of the specific speech act and the means of language tools with which to engage in communication when necessary (Bachman 1990; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell 1995; O’Grady 2003; Cenoz and Gorter 2008; Kalnbērziņa 2009). There is no unequivocal view of the relationship of pragmatic competence with other elements of communicative competence, which are equally important in language acquisition and language use. Some researchers believe that pragmatic competence is perceived equally with other components of communicative competence: language competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (e.g., Cenoz and Gorter 2008). Others are convinced that pragmatic competence is an element of language competence, and that it is shaped by functional competence and sociolinguistic competence (e.g., Archibald and O’Grady 2003). A third group is convinced that pragmatic competence is equivalent to linguistic competence and sociolinguistic competence, and is a combination of discourse competence and functional competence (e.g., Kalnbērziņa 2008, 20–21). However, no one denies that pragmatic competence is characterized by the ability to form and perceive organized, structured and arranged text and the ability to use communicative functions.

Concerning the importance of pragmatic competence in language acquisition, it should be noted that this competence can contribute to the development of pragma-linguistic competences and sociopragmatic (or cultural) competences. The former competence concerns the use of linguistic elements from various languages in the implementation of a speech act while the latter is concerned with the selection and use of linguistic tools according to context and the ability to perceive social habits and conditions (Thomas 1988; Baker 1996; Cenoz 2007; Cenoz and Gorter 2008).

The public space is a social environment in which people's linguistic habits (the frequency of use of individual languages and registers, language contacts) can be heard in different situations. Additionally, this space is where written texts can be read that are designed with specific linguistic tools for specific purposes: to communicate, inform, alert, direct traffic, etc. The ability to read and understand these texts gives the reader the ability to make a number of decisions: to ignore or react to the sign, to engage in conversation, to listen to a warning or take a risk, to follow directions or take a different route.

The term *linguistic landscape* (LL) has been mentioned repeatedly to refer in a narrower sense to the collection of written signs (e.g., advertisements, company names, posters, graffiti, etc.) that exist in the manmade information space: in a city, county or municipal centre, school, museum, etc. However, the term also refers to a paradigm of data acquisition methodology, analysis and interpretation that enables the description of the situation and geographical distribution of written language in relation to discourses in the public space, socio-political and culturally historical processes, traditions of language application and future perspectives in a specific territory (Landry and Bourhis 1997; Gorter 2006; Shohamy and Gorter 2009; Gorter, Marten and Van Mensel (eds.) 2012; Lazdiņa, Pošeiko and Marten 2013; Pošeiko 2015).

Both uses of the term are applicable to the learning process. Language signs are authentic samples that can be used for learning a text genre and thematic vocabulary or to answer a spelling question, and also encourage students to formulate, photograph, group, and interpret language selection criteria (see Cenoz and Gorter 2008; Lazdiņa, Marten and Pošeiko 2008; Lazdiņa and Marten 2009; Sayer 2010).

The visible language signs form the basis of the creation of various text types (e.g., announcements, posters) and the use of linguistic tools therein, the conditions of language use and language functions in a particular sociolinguistic environment. For example, in Narva (Estonia) – a city in which there are many language signs (532 of 1,478) exclusively in Russian

or with Russian as one of multiple languages – Russian text is especially visible in simple signs created by business owners or employees themselves. Examples include signs providing details on working hours, entry and sale signs. This allows us to conclude that there are sufficient Russian-speaking inhabitants in the city for the use of Russian to be acceptable in the public space, and those visitors to the city must expect its potential use in both oral and written communication.

In its broader sense, the LL is all textual information (TV, radio, media, literature, postcards, the internet, etc.) that is publicly available in a territory. The LL demonstrates language use in various texts in both a geographically defined environment and in an open virtual environment in which spatial boundaries are not relevant (Shohamy and Waksman 2009; Ivković and Lotherington 2009; Ivković 2012; Pošeiko 2017).

In this article, the LL is considered in the narrow sense, emphasizing the direct function of language signs to communicate or stimulate linguistic behaviour. Jeļena Gridina (2006, 146) metaphorically compares signs to road signs:

Initially, the reaction and response are not deliberate, but reflexive. This does not necessarily have to be related to language. Both road signs and language signs are signals primarily to the subconscious of a person; only later is a concrete meaning assigned. A sign must first be recognized before interpretation is possible [...]. The sign first acts on us as a signal, moments later calling up a series of associations.

By combining the two terms it should be emphasized that the use of language signs and LL in language acquisition involves reading authentic texts and gaining authentic experience. To date, there has not been a study in Latvia on the content analysis of Latvian language teaching materials in order to find out how many authentic texts are presented to students and how many speech acts are represented in them. The sporadic observations of the author suggest that only a few textbooks and test papers contain texts from the public space. One electronic learning tool¹ for Latvian currently in the process of being implemented in the ninth form constitutes one such example. This interactive learning tool contains authentic language signs, allowing students to explore texts and text genres. The

¹ The creation and approbation of electronic learning tools for classes 7–9 is the activity of the ESF project “Support for the Acquisition of the State Language and Bilingual Education” implemented by the Latvian Language Agency (2010–2011). The author of the present article is one of the authors of one of the electronic learning tools for the ninth form.

artificially created linguistic signs included in most tasks and tests to date reflect a prescriptive view of the language and visual tools, text forms and abstract language functions used in public texts.

2.2. Language Education Policy in Latvia and the Project “School 2030”

During the 2015/2016 academic year, Latvian as a first language (L1) was taught in 707 educational institutions. Latvian as a second (state) language (L2) was taught in 189 primary and secondary schools in which students also study minority languages in parallel (mainly Russian, but also Polish, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian, and Belarusian).² In schools that implement the minority education program, other subjects are taught either in minority languages or bilingually. At present, there is wide public debate concerning a proposed switch by 2020 to all subjects being taught only in Latvian as the language of instruction in high schools.³ The foreign languages most commonly taught in Latvia are English, Russian, German, and French.⁴

In Latvia, all subject curricula and programs for the entire secondary educational process are being developed, piloted and improved by experts, teachers and methodologists (including the paper’s author) as part of the ambitious reform project “School2030” organized by National Centre for Education of the Republic of Latvia. The challenges of language education in the near future are related to a number of significant changes in teaching approaches and in the paradigm of conceptual ideas.

First of all, in all subjects – including Latvian, minority languages and foreign languages – four competences of importance to the process of personality development have been identified: thinking and creativity, self-evaluation and self-regulation, cooperation and participation, and digital competence. The active practice of these competences improves students’ abilities to organize their own learning processes by collaborating with each other and purposefully using appropriate learning strategies, diverse learning resources and digital tools. They are able to inductively build knowledge and develop a deep understanding of the

² *Mazākumtautību izglītība: statistika un tendences*. Available: <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/arpolitika/sabiedribas-integracija-latvija/mazakumtautibu-izglitiba-latvija/mazakumtautibu-izglitiba-statistika-un-tendences>

³ Example: *Vidusskola tikai latviešu valodā*, 2017. Available: <http://ltv.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/11.10.2017-tiesa-runa-vidusskola-tikai-latviesu-valoda.id108285/>

⁴ *Valsts pārbaudes darbi 2016./2017. gadā*. Available: <http://visc.gov.lv/vispizglitiba/eksameni/statistika/2017/>

subject to be learned while also being able to reflect on this knowledge, the path to its acquisition, and its relation to the subject as a whole. In the case of language learning, it is important that students develop the skills to discuss individual language issues, language itself and the language learning process. Which aspects of language are easy to learn, and which are difficult? How can difficulties in learning be overcome?

Secondly, in developing subject standards, special attention has been paid to the improvement of textual literacy (i.e., the ability to read, write and use texts) while also taking into consideration students' linguistic biographies and repertoires (e.g., Mills 2016; Lazdiņa 2017). This means developing multilingual competences and practices in teaching practice. In order to facilitate wider and deeper understanding of educational topics, the programs provide for the learning of terms, definitions and texts not only in Latvian, the state language, but also in other languages familiar to students and used in various sociolinguistic domains in Latvia (Latvian, Russian, English, German, etc.).

Thirdly, there is a turning point in Latvian as L1 program's methodology and curricula, offering thematic principles which highlight the communicative (functional and interactive) approach and around which the learning process can be organized. Themes are age-appropriate – e.g., the third-form language curriculum is based around the theme “I am a Language Detective”, while the seventh-form theme is “Social Media and Networking” – and give students the chance to work with varied texts such as literary works, film clips, encyclopaedia entries, posters, advertisements and classified ads in the city and on social media, blog entries, Facebook posts, etc. Until now, students learned Latvian through grammatical themes (e.g., word creation, verbs, sentences, texts, etc.) using texts that were not always related to one another. This methodological practice has not yielded the desired results: student interest in the subject, as well as average exam ratings, are low.⁵

This approach is nothing new in learning Latvian as L2 and foreign languages in Latvia but is completely unprecedented in teaching Latvian as a first language. The examples in the programs attempt to demonstrate with contemporary and student-focused topics that learning a mother tongue can be interesting, and that students need to learn to understand and systematically organize their existing language skills and abilities. No less important is the need to understand the functionality of language units. As an example: Why are tools of artistic expression used in the text? Do they

⁵ *Standardized exam results, 2016–2017*. Available: http://visc.gov.lv/vispizglitiba/eksameni/statistika/2017/dokumenti/2017_09_Latviesu_2.png

exist merely to be pointed out in the text and explained by the teacher, or do they function to enrich the expression of speech and demonstrate the style of the individual language user, making the text more “alive” and attracting attention (e.g., in advertisements, posters, invitations)? Many teachers are still worried about whether the thematic approach will lead to language deficits and inadequate learning.⁶ A partial answer to this question is to be found in the meaning of the concept of language as defined by language policy makers, school leaders and teachers. For example, Colin Baker (2002, 239–240) acknowledges that

some teachers believe that the language is lexica, proper grammar and correct sentence structure. For others, language is a functional communication tool. Still others are convinced that language is intended primarily for the exchange of information. There is also the opinion that language is a way of maintaining relationships with people, thus language should be taught as a social communication tool.

The learner’s interpretation of the term also indirectly affects their own perceptions of language, language learning and their interest in the learning process.

In assessing the changes incorporated into the new language education documents, it appears that the examples of the programs of Latvian as an L1 have clearly and sufficiently demonstrated the need to: (1) raise awareness about the function of the language units, (2) use authentic texts, (3) involve students’ linguistic repertoires, and (4) foster multi-competence personalities.

3. Practical Section: Perception and Investigation of Linguistic Landscape

3.1. Perception of Linguistic Landscape According to Respondents

In 2014, ten young people (five girls and five boys aged 18 to 21 years) were interviewed in Rēzekne (Latvia) to assess whether young people are paying attention to language signs and the languages used in them, as well as to find out the influence of the lack of knowledge of the lexical meaning

⁶ The team of the project “School2030” has been actively organizing seminars and courses for teachers since September 2017, listening to their comments and suggestions for the development of new documents such as educational programs and standards.

of individual words on the perception of the language sign or its type (e.g., announcement, poster, prohibition sign), function and purpose.

All ten young people admitted that they generally pay attention to language signs, especially when languages uncommon to the local environment (e.g., Chinese or French in Rēzekne) or interesting linguistic tools – such as original metaphors or wordplay with letters, words, and phrases – are used. No respondent indicated that not knowing the lexical meaning of a particular word or combination of words would hinder understanding the text (language sign) as a whole. In their opinion, this lack of knowledge neither hinders the perception of the function of the language or language sign, the type of text, nor its use or purpose according to specific needs, interests and goals. Only one girl mentioned a phrase she had learned from a shop name in the LL, *Dolce vita* ('sweet life' in Italian). Out of curiosity – and because she found the words attractive – she looked up the lexical meaning of the phrase in an online dictionary.

An associative experiment was carried out at the Rēzekne Technology Academy in the 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 academic years with 38 local and foreign exchange students. Participants were shown 30 different name signs or ergonyms, 10 signs from each of the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia). Ergonyms were randomly selected and presented to students in a *PowerPoint* presentation. Questionnaires asked participants to describe the content of each ergonym (if it was possible to read and understand what was written and in which language, the first associations coming to mind from the name or the entire sign), the possible location (i.e., country) and type of business (e.g., shop, cafe, sewing workshop, etc.)

The results of this experiment demonstrated that the type of business and its location could be discerned on average by about one-third of the participants. According to the students, the location was most often determined by the use of official language (language as a sign of recognition), unless they were words without clear phonetic differentiation (e.g., "Galerija" 'Gallery' and "MŪZA" 'Muse' in Latvian and Lithuanian). The use of a foreign language made recognition more difficult unless participants identified a local specificity. Analysis of the student surveys supports the following conclusions.

1. Ergonyms with personal names mainly refer to hair salons, clothing stores or beauty parlours, but ergonyms with flower names refer to flower shops and in two cases – hair salons. For example, the English-language ergonym of the women's clothing store "Design by Inna" was

- believed to be a clothing store (in 8 cases), beauty salon (7), hairdresser (4), tailor (3), or a design studio (2).
2. The whole ergonym or individual parts of it are likened to the Latvian language lexicon by phonetic and semantic resemblance, thus the name interpretation is based on onomatopoeic association, that is, search and discovery of phonetic resemblance; less frequently, students had tried to base their judgements on interpretation of etymologizing semantics, attempting to explain etymology of the respective words. For example, the cafe name “SKYDRIS” ‘Flying’ in Alytus was associated with the Latvian word *skroderis* ‘tailor’ and the associated business.
 3. The ergonym is most often perceived in its direct meaning. For example, the name of a bar in Valmiera, “Tinte” ‘ink’, is most commonly guessed to be a stationery shop or bookstore, also a drycleaner (as in ink stain). In these cases, language association is dominant, using literal translations for lexemes featured in company names and attributing them to the company type.
 4. Personal experience is taken into account in interpretation of the name, illustrating the demonstration of ontological association; previously acquired knowledge and life experience are primary in the explanation of names. An example is the Daugavpils pizzeria “DIĀNA”, the signboard for which was associated with a confectionery because of its use of purple and yellow.
 5. The language used in the name sign is mostly recognized, though the lexical meaning of the word or word combination is not always understood. There were only a few errors in language identification observed, for example, the misattribution of the wine bar name “SENFORTIS” (a contraction of the Lithuanian words *senasis* ‘the ancient’ and *fortas* ‘fort’) to English.

The results of the associative experiment illustrate that symbolic names do not provide sufficient information by themselves to accurately characterize their sociopragmatic functionality; the information essential to do so is instead obtainable from additional information and non-verbal tools: various artefacts (e.g., the shape of the signboard, the shape of the building), colours, symbols and images (e.g., pictures of flowers – flower shop, a man or woman in profile with a highlighted, voluminous hairdo – hairdresser).

Of course, the sample size limits the generalizability of conclusions drawn from the opinions of the respondents to the LL or the language learning process as a whole. However, a trend is still clearly observed in the perception of language and language signs.

A similar associative experiment could also be offered to primary school students, especially those for whom Latvian is a second language. This is one way to discuss the use of cliché words, which many

understand, but which do not in themselves say anything about local linguistic uniqueness (e.g., the nomenclature names *hotel*, *restaurant*, *club*). It is also a way by which students can master the direct lexical meanings of individual words and word combinations, the metaphorical meanings of phraseological expressions (e.g., *tinte* ‘ink’, meaning ‘thick, dark liquid’ vs. *būt tintē* ‘to be in ink’ – 1. to be in a complicated situation; 2. be under the influence of alcohol), and the conditions of their use in various sociolinguistic situations.

3.2. Examples of Unsuccessful Interpretations of Language Signs and Remedial Plans

One example of unsuccessful linguistic interpretation frequently cited online occurred in 2011. In late December of that year, international tourists flocked to Riga to celebrate the New Year. Walking around the city at the end of December, they encountered the text “Skonto būve!” on the barriers surrounding the city’s Christmas trees on Elizabetes and Brīvības streets. Tourists mistakenly assumed this phrase to mean “Happy New Year!” and committed it to memory for later use. Hotel employees and locals were bewildered to find tourists and hotel guests “greeting” them with the phrase, which translates to Skonto Construction! The company Skonto provides decorated Christmas trees in the city of Riga every year; they are displayed in prominent locations and, of course, includes an advertising text – the name of the company – in the displays. Therefore, this misunderstanding arises from tourists’ attempts to substitute pragmatic competence for a lack of language competence, relying on a logical link between a text, a symbol (the Christmas tree) and a communication situation (holiday) in order to show courtesy and a positive linguistic attitude, and make a good impression.

The fact that text is sometimes perceived literally without contextual knowledge is evidenced by a conversation between two women at a bus stop in Rēzekne, overheard in the spring of 2014. One woman asked the other where she was going to lunch. The answer, *Iešu laikam “Pie Marijas”* ‘I’m probably going “to Maria’s”’ was followed by another question *Pie Marijas?* ‘To Maria’s?’ The course of the subsequent conversation indicated that the first woman was referring to the Rēzekne cafe “Marijas kafija” ‘Maria’s Coffee’, while the second woman interpreted her answer to mean that she would eat lunch at the home of a woman named Maria. The evolution of the conversation indicated the second woman was not familiar with this cafe, therefore hearing the phrase “at Maria’s” did not elicit any association with a cafe.

Before or after examining such misconceptions during a language lesson, students may be asked whether they have heard of or experienced similar cases – instances in which they or people they know had mistaken the meaning of a language sign. Teachers can discuss why this happens and how it can be avoided.

Practically, photos can be displayed to students with language signs in a language unknown to them. They may be invited to make assumptions about the content and purpose of the text. What helps or hinders the interpretation of language signs and the goals used in them? Does the language sign's placement, visual objects or other visual images provide a more precise indication as to the content and functionality of the text? What can be “read” but still remains unclear? For example, in figure 1, the language signs from Viljandi (Estonia) are mainly in Estonian but some fragments are also in Russian. Students with minimal or no knowledge of Estonian and Russian may be asked to describe the location of the language signs (in which country they are located, to which company they belong), the informational content (that which can be gathered from objects and images appearing in the picture) and functionality (why these texts are placed the way they are, what they are informing readers about, what they allow/prohibit, etc.) At the end of the lesson, an action plan should be agreed on by which one could use the information in the language signs in practice (in this case, to inflate the tires and wash the windows of a car).



Figure 1: Language signs at a petrol station in Viljandi (Pošeiko 2014)

3.3. *Mark Haddon's Literary Work Analysed in the Context of Linguistic Landscape*

Mark Haddon's (2002) literary work *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is not only an enjoyable text with an original storyline and textual features that can be described and analysed in literary lessons but also interesting material for language lessons. The work demonstrates the ability to use perception of language and language signs to gather information about places both familiar and unknown to the main character, encouraging thinking about the language at the metalevel (metalinguistic) and the assessment of the LL in the students' own environments.

The book features a 15-year-old teenager with Asperger's syndrome, global perception, feelings and emotions, relationships with peers, natural mathematical talent, and the role of language signs in social life (behaviour and activities). Familiar language signs in the city give the boy a sense of security and help him to navigate, organize the public space, and promote positive feelings and self-confidence. Unlike most of his peers, he notices and thoroughly examines any new language sign he encounters. For example, he notices the graffiti "Crow" on the first day of its emergence, which initially causes him temporary discomfort (Haddon 2002, 166).

On the other hand, signs in unfamiliar places (for example, at a train station in a city he had not previously been, in the London Underground) are used by the boy as a means of orientation to create a structured spatial plan.

However, after some time, the number and diversity of language signs begin to cause linguistic confusion, combining different language codes and symbols (e.g., *MANdzu! BUM*) and leading to the coining of new words or phrases (e.g., ✓ *Nite, Hot station*). Confusion is further compounded by the inability to detect and filter multimodal information.

This literary text could be used in a language lesson as a source of encouragement for talking about students' experiences in foreign cities and countries, as well as the role of the LL in getting to know the city. How much attention do students focus on public texts? It can also be discussed which strategies can be used in instances in which the text is not understandable due to insufficient linguistic competence.

As part of an interdisciplinary study of literature and language, students can be asked to find city texts seen by the main character of the book and formulate the functions that would be important to him. Examples include:

- “Railway station”, “METRO”, “BAKERLOO LINE”, “CIRCLE LINE”, “EXIT, “TOILETS”, “Platform 4...9” “MOVE FORWARD” – help locate an object or destination;
- “PLEASE ENTER THE AMOUNT”, “PRESS: TICKET TYPE”, “TAKE THE TICKET AND THE CHANGE” – help to take the necessary steps to achieve a goal, in this case to buy a ticket;
- “*De Luxe* Hot Chocolate”, “GREAT TEA” – advertise opportunities goods and services;
- “WARNING: SLIPPERY!” – warn about a potential hazard;
- “NO WALKING ON THE GRASS”, “NO SMOKING” – show what is or is not permitted;
- “GREY MONK SHOPPING CENTER” – provide culturohistorical information.

It should be noted that texts “NO WALKING ON THE GRASS” and “NO SMOKING” are not linguistically precise in the main character’s opinion since they do not provide context (where and when this is not allowed). Thus, linguistic knowledge alone is not sufficient to understand the meaning of a sign in a particular situation. For example, in the directive sign “NO WALKING ON THE GRASS”, the directive refers to the place where the language sign is located, i.e., in that particular park. It is not intended to refer to *all* grass.

In the last example (“GREY MONK SHOPPING CENTER”), the motivation behind the name of the mall is not clear without prior culturohistorical knowledge or a wider understanding of the context. The boy knows that before the mall there had been a monastery here, therefore he does not wonder whether *only grey monks are allowed to shop here* or if the store *sells only grey monks*. However, without this information a reader could misinterpret the motivation and meaning of the sign.

As the next task, students can be directed to find examples of each sign function from their own environment. It is possible to add other functions to this list (e.g., to express feelings in the case of romantic graffiti, or to organize cultural life in the city through theatrical, concert and movie posters, etc.) A slightly provocative question would be whether language sign functions are also related to some language functions. Are the language functions mentioned (informative, in the directive) the only ones?

By discussing various examples, students become more aware of the functionality of language signs. Students also come to understand that the ability to determine the function of a language sign can help one use it in furtherance of their own needs or goals in a given situation. It is important that pupils deduce themselves that language signs are useful for pragmatic purposes, helping to create a map that assists with navigation in the city,

finding desired destinations, carrying out intended activities (shopping, attending an event, studying cultural history, etc.), and generally feeling more comfortable.

Students should also pay attention to the multimodal character of language signs. Some inscriptions, emblems, symbols, images, and especially new technology services appearing in the LL are designed in such a way that a person can achieve desired goals as quickly and easily as possible, without direct communication or speaking – the productive skill of language (see comments on figure 1). For example, ATMs, ticket machines and vending machines allow one to withdraw money, buy a ticket or purchase snacks or drinks without communicating with another person at all. It is possible to get from one place to another at the right time relying entirely on pre-existing knowledge of certain situations and sign functionalities. For example, train stations generally make use of internationally recognized texts, symbols (directional arrows), numbers (for example, Platform 1), and information stands (station layouts and train schedules). In this case, deficits in language competence can be offset by functional competence (an understanding of the functions of language and language signs), a component of the previously mentioned pragmatic competence.

4. Conclusion and Key Findings

LL is used to plan and implement social life. Pragmatic competence – i.e., the ability to structurally and functionally use language tools in a particular situation (situational context) given various other conditions (political, economic or cultural) – plays a crucial role in this domain.

The article has provided insight into the individual perceptions and interpretations of the LL, demonstrating the development of pragmatic competence and language learning. The use of LL in the learning process enables students to gain authentic experience and develop functional literacy, i.e., the ability to linguistically and semiotically read and use verbal and visual information for specific purposes.

LL certainly does not help language learning any better than TV, radio or other authentic teaching materials. However, it does encourage the reader to engage in particular activities, including communication, through publicly displayed language signs written in a particular language, with definite language functions and purpose. As the examples show, in some cases insufficiency or lack of linguistic competence can be supplemented by sufficient knowledge of language sign functionalities, creation, purpose and placement in a particular social context, as well as an understanding of

language as a symbol. It is also a strategy by which public texts may be used for pragmatic purposes.

Finally, a model for the perception, interpretation and use of language signs may be offered. Any reader (user)

- 1) visually perceives a language sign based on their experience, perception of the world, linguistic competence, knowledge of culture, sociolinguistic environment and historical context;
- 2) deliberately or unconsciously assesses the characteristics of the language sign (form, language, content, function and context), beginning by discerning between familiar and unfamiliar elements then attempting to link the unfamiliar to familiar, predictable or similar elements in their own language or culture;
- 3) attempts to understand the language sign and interpret it (successfully or erroneously);
- 4) selects a strategy for language and/or language sign use; and finally
- 5) attempts to try the speech repertoire for himself/ herself (egocentric speech) and participate in a communication situation (social speech) if necessary.

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