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FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE GLOBALISING WORLD: ATTITUDES, MOTIVATION, LEARNER IDENTITY

Introduction

For many centuries, knowledge of foreign languages was largely elitist. It marked a high degree of education and, accordingly, high social status, thus could be regarded as a constituent of High Culture. Today, the possibility of fast travel and communication, opening frontiers and unifying economic markets have triggered increased social mobility, enabling contact between people of various origins and speakers of various languages. Foreign language acquisition is no longer restricted to the higher social spheres.

For many, operating within two or more languages on a daily basis is a natural phenomenon. Whether this is for professional purposes, such as trading, or for private use, e.g. in mixed marriages or in multilingual communities, bi- or multilingualism has become the norm for many, and not the characteristic of a select few. Also the necessity and/or willingness to use products of other cultures have boosted interest in learning foreign languages; thus its functional knowledge is an essential part of the popular culture.

The goal of this paper is to describe how attitudes to various languages and language learning have changed in the last two decades and what impact these social changes may have on language teaching pedagogy.

Attitudes to foreign language learning in Europe

As mentioned in the introduction the process of globalization has fostered the development of international and intercultural contacts, thus encouraging through necessity the acquisition of languages other than the mother tongue. This need is recognized both by individuals, educational institutions, and even governments, who may e.g. introduce obligatory foreign language(s) learning as an official educational policy.

The Council of Europe, an institution which offers cultural and educational support for the undertakings of the European Union, issued official recommendations for the educational policies of each member country, calling for the appreciation of the linguistic diversity of Union members. It is argued that plurilingualism of individual citizen should become a goal of language education, to be achieved by offering

two foreign languages for learning in the public education system. In addition the starting age of the second language should be lowered so as to prolong the overall length of received instruction and thus foster better foreign language learning results. Finally, linguistic minorities should have an opportunity to receive education and take state exams in their language. Learning of regional languages should be promoted (Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004–2006, Komorowska 2007). Following these guidelines, Wilczyńska (2008) suggests that Polish citizens living close to borders should learn languages of their neighbours, especially if they are linguistically related, e.g. Czech, Slovak, Russian.

While linguistic diversity and plurilingualism seem to be the official stance of European institutions, recent research on attitudes to foreign language learning reveals contrary opinions among individual learners. This concerns both the (un)willingness to learn foreign languages and choices of foreign languages taken for study.

The first large-scale longitudinal study on these issues was conducted in Hungary (Dórneyi et al. 2006). The study took place at three key historic moments: the collapse of communism in 1989, the building of a free market in the 1990s, and the accession to the EU in 2004. The goal was to investigate how these political changes influenced the attitudes of individual secondary school learners to foreign language communities and their languages.

The results showed that in 1989 and in the early 1990s the majority of schools continued to teach Russian – an obligatory school subject in Communist times – mainly due to the shortage of other language teachers. The following years brought about increased interest in western languages, and were subsequently offered in L2 instruction. These were, in a ranking order: English, German (traditionally very popular in the western regions of Hungary, for historical reasons), French and Italian (Dórneyi et al. 2006).

The results showed that a small and rather unvaried choice of languages taken for study may have been caused by a shortage of specialized teachers of other, less popular languages. This was especially true in the second batch of data collection in 1990s. However, in the last batch of the project (2004) all subjects showed an astonishing interest in learning mainly L2 English, leaving behind the traditionally popular German (Dórneyi et al. 2006).

Indeed, the same phenomena have been noticed in the international project reported by Wilczyńska (2008) and conducted partly in the area of Słubice and in Poznań: the availability of qualified language teachers influenced the language offered for instruction, particularly if that was L3. When it came to the choice of L2, most of the students (adolescents) chose English. German was the most popular L3, as this is the language of the neighbouring country. Learners expressed their willingness to study these languages by pointing out the practical usefulness of these languages in the future (instrumental motive). It may also be the case that public demand (parents, learners) restricts the choice of offered languages mainly to English as L2, and then German, French and Russian as L3. No other foreign languages have been taught, thus educational offer in this respect is relatively poor and contrary to the EU recommendations.

On the other hand, Polish adolescents are still willing to learn foreign languages and show interest and curiosity in other cultures, which is evident from their participation in after-school private language courses. Although English language courses are preferred, other languages as L3s are chosen as well (Wilczyńska 2008).

A different attitude to foreign language learning can be observed among youth in western European countries. Bartram (2006) investigated 411 adolescents, who came from England, Germany and the Netherlands, and their attitudes to learning L2 French, German and English.

The findings have shown the dependence between foreign language learning attitudes and ethnicity. Dutch and French adolescents studied a second language most willingly. It was also found that this positive attitude was influenced by parental support, namely those parents who had a good command of a foreign language acted as positive role models and therefore encouraged learners to learn the same foreign language. In most cases the preferred language was L2 English: parents often indicated advantages deriving from its knowledge.

In contrast, the English adolescents showed the least interest and eagerness to study foreign languages. English parents did not encourage their children to study a foreign language, nor did they know any L2 themselves. Lack of parental support in this respect must have been caused by the fact that English people already speak a language of international status and do not feel the need to learn other modern languages. All in all, it is evident from this study that both parents and adolescents treat language learning instrumentally, i.e. it is supposed to bring notable benefits in the future.

The status of English as a lingua franca: the present and future

The results of the above studies revealed that most learners are driven by an instrumental motive when they choose a language to study. They decide to learn the language that will turn out most useful in their future careers, help them use modern technologies, and help them communicate with other members of the global village. Not surprisingly then, they all choose to learn English as their first, and often only foreign language.

The choice of English is dictated by the special status this language has received in recent years: "lingua franca" or a global and international language (Crystal 2003, Jenkins 2007, Sharifian 2009).

The high status of that language is connected with political and economic dominance of AngloAmerican countries in the globalised world. Since its knowledge seems to be a must in international communication, it is the main foreign language learnt by many individuals, thus suppressing the popularity and need for learning other foreign languages. In fact, teaching and learning English worldwide is such a widespread phenomenon that the popularly used terms such as EFL or ESL have been often replaced by EIL – English as an International Language (Sharifian 2009). EIL is used in those contexts in which people who come from different cultural backgrounds have to communicate.

On the other hand, it is also possible that in the not so distant future the widespread popularity of English as a major foreign language studied may soon decline, as a Swedish study by Henry and Apelgren showed (2008). In the study

Henry and Apelgren (2008) investigated the adolescent attitudes to L3s before and a year after its introduction. It was found that learners showed a much greater interest and enthusiasm about those third languages than about learning their L2 English. This enthusiasm, although declined, was still greater after a year of the study. It was hypothesized from the results that what captivated learners' interest was engaging with the new linguistic code. Since English is so common in Sweden, and often used daily by adults, learners are exposed to it from early childhood, hence it does not hold much attractiveness originating from novelty. These findings are different from those in other educational contexts. Maybe they could be treated as predictive of future phenomena: once nearly every EU citizen possesses a working knowledge of English, other modern languages will gain popularity for studying purposes.

Also Chłopek (2008) who studied Polish students of philology found that those students, who were multilingual, i.e. tried to learn more than two foreign languages, showed more interest in other languages and cultures and were able to find more short-term motivators to foster their learning. It may be predicted that learners who have achieved satisfactory levels of L2 English may soon turn to learning other less popular languages, which will give them more satisfaction and perhaps also better job prospects.

Language learning motivation as a process:
from integrativeness to instrumentalism

Motivation is the most important construct conditioning success in second language learning. It makes the learner set goals to achieve, undertake appropriate means to study it, as well as assess his/her progress and even reward himself. It is often viewed as a stable feature characteristic of dichotomy, thus linguists and psychologists alike distinguish in a learner either integrative or instrumental motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, positive or negative.

The precursors of the study on foreign language learning motivation, Gardner and Lambert (1972), claimed that it is the integrative drive that leads most of the learners to successful achievement. They defined (1972: 132) it as "reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group." It is also characteristic of learners who learn a foreign language for its own sake. By contrast, instrumental motivation emphasizes some social or economic gains that learning a foreign language may bring.

Skehan (1989) claims, that since the integrative motivation is rooted in the personality of the learner, it sustains motivation more deeply, influences the learner over an extended period of time, and it is not so susceptible to external changes of learning conditions. Gardner and Lambert also agree that "[...] an instrumental motive is less effective because it is not rooted in the personality of the learner, and therefore, more dependent on fallible external pressures" (Skehan 1989: 53).

In some later studies Gardner and Lambert (1978 in Ellis 1994) found that integrative motivation bore more importance in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation. Also in some "second" as opposed to "foreign" language settings learners select instrumental reasons as self-motivators more frequently than integrative reasons for language learning. It could be concluded that instrumental

motivation can prove successful in a situation where the learner is provided with no opportunities to use the target language, and therefore has few opportunities to interact with members of the target group. Accordingly, the kind of motivation learners exhibit and the kind that is most important for language learning seem to be conditioned by social situation of the learners.

The aforementioned research findings show that although motivation in this classic dichotomic distinction has been regarded for quite some time as a stable attribute of a learner, it is not so. An overview of more recent research shows (Pawlak 2009) that it is not a stable feature; it fluctuates and is dependent on such factors as the teacher, the learning situation, the length of learning, the task type, etc. Foreign language learning usually takes a long time, therefore it is impossible to maintain the same levels of motivation over a few-years' time. In response to such research results Dórneyi (2001 in Pawlak 2009) has proposed a dynamic model of motivation where the process of learning motivation consists of 3 stages:

1. *The planning stage*, in which a learner sets the goals to achieve, makes task choices, decides on the actions to do; this is the stage when motivation to study is generated. This is sometimes called selection motivation.
2. *The action stage*, which goal is to maintain the motivation obtained before; it consists in specifying the smaller tasks, monitoring their progress, overcoming obstacles which might prevent the learner from doing the smaller steps. This is an active motivation.
3. *The post-activity stage*, in which the learner evaluates the results of his work; this in turn may have an effect on the further undertakings of the learner and the types of the tasks that will be chosen to do. This is a type of an introspective motivation.

In each of the stages different motives can be used; thus not one type but many drive the language learner to complete the learning task. The reason for this is that different factors play a role in each of the stages. For example, in the planning stage, elements such as availability of goals, potential learning benefits, self-esteem in reference to the learning task, attitude to the language, perceived barriers, etc. will be of vital importance. In the following stage of doing the learning task the generated levels of motivation can be maintained, increased or decreased. This may depend on the learner's autonomy and employed learning strategies, support given by teachers and parents, quality of the teaching/learning process, system of rewards, peer group dynamics, and/or self-regulation strategies (e.g. persistence in doing a task, etc.). Finally, in the last stage, the learners may vary in how they evaluate their success or failure as this may have positive/negative outcome on the successive tasks.

The dynamic nature of foreign language motivation is, for instance, visible among instructed primary school learners. Many researchers (e.g. Nikolov 1999, Tragant 2006) observed that while many young children seem to be driven by overall curiosity and enthusiasm to L2 learning, which could be ascribed to an integrative/intrinsic type of motivation, their motivation changes in the process of schooling, perhaps under the influence of teachers, teaching methods, assessment system, peer group etc. With age most of the learners seem to be driven mainly externally and instrumentally.

The instrumental motives seem to gain importance also among adolescents and adults. As the studies on language attitudes and language choice showed (e.g.

Dórneyi, Csizer and Nemeth 2006), learners choose to learn languages which may bring them the most practical benefits. On the other hand, Lamb (2004) observed that instrumental and integrative motives nowadays can hardly be distinguished, as a learner's goal may be a desire to integrate with a global community of English speakers. This, in turn, may bring them some measurable profits, such as well-paid jobs in an international market.

Identity of the L2 learner

As it was stated above, in the past the integrative motivation seemed to stimulate the learner to succeed in L2 learning. As Gardner and Lambert (1972: 135) put it, the L2 learner "must be willing to identify with members of another ethnolinguistic group and take on very subtle aspects of their behaviour." In other words, the keener one is on L2 culture, the more willing s/he is to adopt a lifestyle associated with it, and the more successful s/he is in L2 learning.

It is possible, however, that an ardent lover of L2 culture and language may adopt a somewhat cosmopolitan identity and, as a result, meet with some feelings of alienation. He may no longer totally associate himself with his home culture; what's more, his attempts to transfer some habits, ways of lifestyle, from L2 onto L1 ground can be met with resentment, criticism and misunderstanding. On the other hand, the goal of becoming indistinguishable from L2 speakers in language and behaviour is unattainable. Thus the successful L2 learner may have problems with recognizing his identity, i.e. his true Self.

More recent views on language learning motivation emphasise that the L2 learner may decide himself on the extent to which he can give up his L1 identity and adopt L2 identity. This is possible since in the era of linguistic globalization varieties of language (also non-native ones) are accepted and a native speaker of L2 is not the only acclaimed model to compare one's L2 competence to. The integrative motive seems to lose on importance in view of the lack of the specific target group to identify with. As it was shown above, most L2 learners choose and learn a language for instrumental purposes; they do not have to necessarily use it with native speakers of that language. Using the language merely instrumentally does not include such a strong identification with L2 speakers, and so does not require the learner to lose his L1 identity.

Since motivation towards learning L2 is a continuous process, the identity of the L2 learner may fluctuate as well. In this respect Dórneyi (2005) proposes the dynamic model of development of learner identity and language learning motivation, the L2 Motivational Self System. This model proposes that a learner is willing to undertake efforts to master L2 in order to reduce the gap between his actual state of the learner, i.e. L2-Self and the one he wants to achieve, i.e. the Ideal L2-Self, which stands for the representation of desirable attributes such as hopes, aspirations, wishes etc. The introduced concept of an ideal L2-self does not relate to any L2 group or culture, however, but to "international posture." If the integrative motive is still valid, it relates to this "international posture," i.e. to a non-specific global community of L2 users and not to any special L2 group. As Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000: 162) put it, "people are agents in charge of their own learning, and

most frequently they decide to learn their second language «to a certain extent», which allows them to be proficient, even fluent, but without the consequences of losing the old and adopting the new ways of being in the world."

In this vein, Lamb (2004) carried out a study among Indonesians aged 11–12 studying L2 English and noticed that the learners' integrative and instrumental motivations were nearly indistinguishable. Their integrative desire was connected not with the particular Anglophone culture but with the desire to belong to the global society, in which English is a means of communication. Thus speaking English has an instrumental value as it helps to achieve integrative goals. Lamb (2004) argues that these adolescent learners aspire to "bicultural identity", which involves their L1-speaking Self and an English-speaking globally involved version of themselves.

In consequence, foreign language learning can be seen nowadays as a site of struggle for the new, cosmopolitan, plurilingual identity. A learner has to oppose internal conflicts "between monolithic ideologies of language learning and the authors' day–to-day experiences of participation in new discursive practices." (Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000: 162). While struggling to acquire the second language, one may lose his L1 identity along with all its subjectivities, his frame of reference, the inner voice, and, in case of immigrants, even his mother tongue. Yet, the process is reversible, and one can regain his L1 by gradually moving through the stages of appropriation of others' voices, then emergence of one's own new voice, often in writing first, translation therapy: reconstruction of one's past, continuous growth into new positions and subjectivities (Pavlenko and Lantolf 2000). Thus, whatever discourse a learner engages in, whether in L1 or L2 he is at the same time either appropriating or departing from his L1 or L2 identity. In this sense the process of identity construction fluctuates and is subject to constant negotiations, both internal and with other speakers.

This identity negotiation, whether internal (within Self) or external, influenced by other people, linguistic practices etc. may be also regarded as a site of struggle for power. By imposing a particular linguistic practice, such as speaking ELF, those who can use it with mastery, exert power over those who do not possess this skill. As Jenkins (2007: 201) put it, "power is at present, likely to be a major influence in the way many ELF speakers both categorise/affiliate themselves and ascribe identities to each other." Those who lack the desired capacity, the linguistic resource, go to any length to acquire it or otherwise feel excluded from the community, in this case the global community. The desire to master L2 (ELF) may involve resigning from L1 identity, at least to some extent. Therefore, as Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 12–13) indicate "any analysis of language practices needs to examine how conventions of language choice and use are created, maintained, and changed, to see how language ideologies legitimize and validate particular practices, and to understand real-world consequences these practices have in people's lives."

According to Jenkins (2007) these power relationships can be shifted, and new identity options can emerge. For the last decade of the 20th century the linguistic power of ELF communication tended to favour native speakers of English. Yet, in the global communication few of them are involved. While many speakers may continue to identify themselves with native speakers of English, "they may at the same time feel more at home in English as part of their own linguacultural community or even

an international NNS community" (Jenkins 2007: 199). Therefore English rather than as lingua franca, could be recognized as an International Language (EIL), which bears important implications for foreign language pedagogy.

Globalisation and foreign language learning

Up to early 1980s the methods and the goals of foreign language teaching and learning were relatively clear. The prevalent methods, such as the Audiolingual or Communicative one aimed at preparing learners for communication with native speakers of that particular language. So as to avoid misunderstandings in communication with L2 speakers which derived from lack of knowledge about social, cultural and historical heritage of the L2 community, a huge emphasis was put on teaching the cultural content, i.e. information, facts, knowledge. The cultural component of teaching L2 meant informing the learners of the whereabouts of the L2 countries, as if assuming that every L2 learner will visit/live in the L2 community. Thus the knowledge of L2 culture was to serve an integrative motive of language learning. A learner was to learn only about L2 culture, disregarding his native one, and assuming that L2 would be used only with native speakers of L2, and not other non-native speakers.

However, as it was shown in the above discussion, the rapid process of globalization changed the views on foreign language learning: nowadays it is treated mainly instrumentally. A foreign language is not learnt with the view to achieve native-like perfection, as motives, desires and needs may vary from an individual to an individual.

The interest in foreign cultures has been shifted from that of the culture of the L2 country into general openness and tolerance towards other cultures. Thus the goal of reaching cultural competence has been replaced by the necessity to develop intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is a core of language proficiency in international communication. It is described as a construct consisting of 5 elements: attitudes of curiosity and openness, knowledge of products and practices in a learner's and a foreign interlocutor's countries, skills of interpreting and relating documents and facts from another culture to a native culture and the ability of their critical evaluation, skills of discovering new knowledge about a culture and an ability to utilize it in a situation at hand (Byram 1997).

The greatest benefit of an intercultural approach to foreign language learning is that the learner does not have to get rid of his/her cultural heritage, nor be deprived of his L1 identity. As it was shown above, it is the learner himself who decides on the degree of his identification with L2 culture, i.e. his Ideal-L2 Self.

Another benefit of such an approach is an increased appreciation of various cultures and languages. Functional use of languages and learning for instrumental purposes seem to have gained priority. Even though the English language has the highest status and is the most commonly taught second language, other languages become of interest to learners willing to be multilingual. It seems that the knowledge of English can act as a kind of mediator in getting to know other people and cultures and subsequently lead to learning their languages. Thus bilingualism slowly gives way to multilingualism. If that happens, the European ideals of integration and mutual understanding will be met.

Indeed, as Byram (2008) in his later book declared, a shift from foreign language education to education for Intercultural citizenship could be observed. Advocating for plurilingual development may in fact denote advocating for a new European identity, developing in addition to the national identity. Since language has always been a symbol of national identity, so should plurilingualism become a symbol of European one. However, as Beacco (2005: 20) notes "the transition from a closed identity to a relaxed and welcoming relationships with languages that allows us the innumerable pleasures of plurilingualism requires *an education*, in the strict sense of the term, that develops pluricultural and plurilingual capability."

Final conclusions

The global spread of English is undeniable and the necessity to know it/use it is enforced by the dominance of the Anglo-American world in many spheres of life in the global village. While English will probably become the second language for majority of world speakers, it does not necessarily have to deprive its users of their L1 identities nor prevent them from acquiring further languages. In the era of global communication, English will remain an important channel of communication, but may also constitute a bridge to learning other (third, fourth, etc.) languages and cultures, as indeed plurilingual competence and multilingual identity may characterize a future citizen of Europe and the global world.

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Nauka języka obcego w dobie światowej globalizacji: postawy, motywacja, tożsamość ucznia

Streszczenie

Jedną z konsekwencji globalizacji jest uzyskanie przez język angielski statusu języka międzynarodowego. Fakt ten pociąga za sobą wiele konsekwencji dotyczących wyboru i motywacji do nauki tego, jak i innych języków obcych (przewaga motywacji instrumentalnej nad integracyjną, zmienny poziom motywacji, por. Dórnyei 2005). Ponadto motywacja ta jest powiązana z wizją własnej tożsamości uczącego się we współczesnym świecie oraz jego stosunkiem do kultury i użytkowników danego języka. Wydaje się, że wielojęzyczność, a co za tym idzie wielokulturowa tożsamość, jest w pewnym sensie koniecznością i wymaganiem współczesności.

Artykuł prezentuje powyższe tezy w oparciu o wyniki badań polskich (Wilczyńska 2008, Chłopek 2008) i zagranicznych (Lamb 2004; Bartram 2006; Henry and Apelgren 2006; Dórnyei, Csizer, Nemeth 2006) uczonych. W części końcowej przedstawiono konsekwencje tych zmian dla dydaktyki języków obcych, takie jak porzucenie nauczania według jednej metody, konieczność nauczania nie tylko form językowych, ale i kształcenia kompetencji interkulturowej.