



**Language, Literature and Culture
in Education 2019**

Conference Proceedings



Language, Literature and Culture in Education 2019

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Introduction

The main intention of the series of annually-organised interational conferences entitled ***Language, Literature and Culture in Education (LLCE)*** is to create a working platform for academics, researchers, scholars, teacher trainers and teachers to discuss, exchange and share their research results, projects, experiences, and new ideas about all aspects of studies in language, literature, culture and related areas in an effective international atmosphere. The series itself follows and enriches the tradition of the conferences *Foreign Languages and Cultures at School (2002-2013)*. The international dimension of the conference is every year ensured by personal or virtual engagement of participants from various schools and institutions from all continents.

The conference *LLCE2019*, held on 5 – 7 December 2019 in Rome, Italy, was organised as part of two projects funded by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic:

- KEGA 001TTU-4/2019: University education of non-native teachers of foreign languages in national and international contexts
- VEGA 1/0799/18: National Literatures in the Age of Globalisation (Origin and Development of American-Slovak Literary and Cultural Identity).

The *LLCE2019* Proceedings consists of nine research studies which cover basic areas of contemporary philology: language education, applied linguistics, and literary studies.

In his study *“Understanding the concept of effective English as a foreign language teaching”*, the Slovak lecturer Rastislav Metruck discusses possible benefits of a learner-centred approach to teaching foreign languages (employing pair-work and group-work activities, respecting learners’ needs and feelings, generating learners’ interests, creating foreign-language-friendly environment in the classroom).

The Polish academic Karolina Dityrych contributed with her paper *“Teaching receptive skills and the elements of culture through online sources to primary school learners of English”* in which she concentrates on the importance of developing foreign language receptive skills of primary learners and the invaluable role of culture in this process.

The area of literary education is discussed by the Croatian academics Jakov Sabljčić & Lorena Đurčević in their paper *“Teaching systems in the teaching of literature”*. They introduce the overview of fundamental literature-teaching systems with their basic characteristics, followed by analysis of practical observations in school classrooms.

The Glasgow University graduate Louise Kocianová introduces an active approach which dominates when teaching of Shakespeare in UK schools. In her paper *“Active*

Shakespeare in the EFL classroom“, she presents her latest findings as a result of pedagogical practice with Slovak secondary school students who studied and performed scenes from the Shakespeare play *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Applied linguistics is represented by two papers from two Polish academics: Anna Stachurska and Rafał Gołębek. The paper “On usage specifications in dictionaries for learners of English: *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* and *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* in focus” by Anna Stachurska studies English idioms and focuses on the question of how usage of English idioms is marked within two most representative idioms dictionaries, namely *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* and *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary*.

Rafał Gołębek’s paper titled “Kashubian as an Ausbau language: a sociolinguistic perspective” addresses the status of Kashubian, a lect spoken in northern Poland and concludes that it seems plausible to postulate that Kashubian has attained the status of an Ausbau language.

The literary session of the LLCE2020 conference generated several interesting interpretative papers. The Slovak literary scholar Jana Waldnerova presented the paper “Naïve narrator – an effective means in humour creating” in which she focused on literary humour and a specific method of its creating, which is by incorporation of the naïve narrator. The mechanism of irony was explained in the paper, as well.

In their study “Andrić’s (Magic) Realism in the Novel *The Bridge on the Drina*“, the Croatian colleagues from Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek Marijana Bošnjak and Tina Varga Oswald observe the elements of magical realism, the tendency of aestheticizing narration and stylistic diversity that contribute to the complexity of the structure in Ivo Andrić’s novel *The Bridge on the Drina* (1945).

Agata Buda, the Polish literary scholar, presented the paper named “Transtextual references and their role in *Middlemarch* by George Eliot” in which she analyzed the novel *Middlemarch* as the example of a traditional, nineteenth-century English novel with its third-person narration and popular subjects (gender roles, realism of a Victorian world etc.). Moreover, the paper aims at presenting transtextual ideas which appear not only to enrich the language of the novel, but also, and above all, to both praise and criticise the world depicted from a perspective of previous epochs.

The closing paper named “Slovak American literature: Imagological reading of Thomas Bell’s *Out of This Furnace*“ by Anton Pokrivcak discusses the concept of literature written by Slovak Americans and introduces an original interpretation of the novel *Out of This Furnace* by Thomas Bell from the perspective of imagology.

On behalf of LLCE2019 organisers, as well as participants who presented their paper in pre-Christmas Rome, I hope the readers will find the publication as an inspirational contribution to the existing level of philological knowledge.

Editor

Understanding the concept of effective English as a foreign language teaching

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Abstract: The matter of effective EFL teaching has been examined by numerous researchers in the past decades as it is one of the key factors which directly influences the process of teaching and learning English. This paper discusses and analyses the recent studies which aimed at examining effective language instruction. Although the results of some studies support the notion that the traditional language teaching ought to be prioritized as regards effective language instruction, the article concludes that it is the learner-centred approach that seems to yield more promising results, which is supported by most of the studies. In the foreground are features such as employing pair-work and group-work activities, taking learners' needs and feelings into consideration, generating their interest in learning a target language, creating environments in which learning L2 takes place, or allowing them to take responsibility for their own learning. It is vital that researchers and instructors pursue further research in this area as acquiring more data by undertaking research in terms of effective teaching may cast more light on this complex matter and help improve the process of teaching and learning languages.

Keywords: EFL teaching and learning, effective EFL teaching, teacher and learner

Introduction

Although the Communicative Language Teaching suggests that it is the learner-centered approach which is at the centre of attention, educators play an important part in the process of teaching and learning foreign languages. Examining the qualities of an effective language teacher is of considerable importance as, according to Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, Al-Siyabi and Al-Maamari (2015), possessing knowledge of these 7 characteristics aids in improving the pedagogical practices of EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers by allowing them to improve their good and most-valued characteristics. Moreover, they can find solutions to overcome the qualities which are of lower value or regarded as inappropriate. Therefore, examining and understanding the construct of effective language teaching can be a potentially fruitful area within EFL teaching and learning. Brosh (1996) maintains that the more we know about the qualities of EFL teachers, the more we are likely to develop language teacher

preparation models which include the aspects of relevant language instruction. Thus, this area of foreign language research merits constant exploration by researchers and educators due to the fact that such research findings may be beneficial to both teachers and learners.

Effective EFL teacher

The construct of effective EFL teachers has been approached from various angles by a number of researchers and educators. Vadillio (1999), for instance, explains that effective language teachers are those who do not only have a high level of competence in L2 (second language), but also personal features such as sensitivity, warmth, and tolerance. In the study conducted by Brosh (1996), both Israeli students and teachers identified various characteristics associated with English language teaching such as teachers' command of L2, their abilities to organize, explain, and clarify, and their abilities to generate and pursue interest as well as motivation. Zhang & Watkins (2007) adds to the discussion by claiming that for some, qualities of effective teachers are represented by the command subject area, proper teaching methods, and various skills that are related to teaching. On the other hand, others point out personality features which are at the centre of attention, such as teachers' charisma, compassion, honesty, humour, and innovation.

According to Sotto (2011), good teachers are the ones who encourage their learners to become more confident and thoughtful, which can be possibly achieved by learners' engagement in frequent experiences that help develop the two qualities. Bell (2005) builds up on these features by maintaining that effective teachers usually employ communicative approaches, allow their learners to work in small groups for discussions, and pursue effective strategies within their instruction.

The study performed by Barnes and Lock (2010), which also attempted to explore the characteristics of effective EFL instruction, reveals that foreign language learners identified the following attributes of effective EFL practitioners. Firstly, the "students feel that lecturer to student rapport is essential to build atmospheres of respect and understanding in EFL classes" (p. 148). Such respect can be created by using students' names, making overt effort to help learners, listening to them, and by checking students' comprehension. Secondly, teachers' degree of enthusiasm and preparation are of considerable importance to the learners as they influence the classroom atmosphere and motivation (motivation being also affected by instructors' variation of instructional modes and methods and making sure that the learners understand the classes). "Third, diverse views about the type and level of error correction will be a source of conflict unless lecturers make the effort to align student expectations with their own, and be sensitive to student self esteem" (p. 148). It should be noted that sensitivity to the self-esteem of students is always necessary when correcting errors. Finally, EFL teachers ought to know that their learners appreciate instructors' efforts

to adapt a participatory approach, where all the students are involved in the teaching and learning process.

The research carried out by Wichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012) aimed at comparing the characteristics of effective EFL teachers on the basis of four categories: English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, organization and communication skills, and socio-affective skills. The results indicate that the research participants rated the concept of an effective language teachers in the following order of importance: organization and communication skills, socio-affective skills, pedagogical knowledge, and English proficiency.

Brown's study (2009) revealed that the students seemed to have favoured the grammar-based approach to a greater degree when compared to their teachers, who preferred more communicative classroom environments. This was evidenced by substantial differences in areas such as target language use, correcting errors, and group work. On the other hand, the study by Alimorad and Tajgozari (2016) yielded different results – while the teachers tended to favour the traditional approach more, their learners had a greater tendency to prefer communicative approach.

Kourieos and Evripidou (2013) attempted to identify the characteristics and behaviours that are attributed to effective university EFL teachers as perceived by Cypriot students. The research findings show that effective language teaching appears to be associated with a more learner-centered approach to EFL teaching and learning, which assumes a more assisting and mediating role language teachers ought to occupy. Effective language instructor does not have a directive and authoritarian role within the learning process, but rather takes into account their learners' individual differences, anxiety, abilities, and interests. Moreover, such a teacher designs and arranges learning environments accordingly.

The study by Çakmak and Gündüz (2018), which explored the qualities of effective language teachers from pre-service EFL teachers' perspective, suggests that effective teacher is someone who is objective, competent, and consistent. The qualitative data emphasized the importance of positive learning environment, student motivation, learner-centred learning, and integrating technology into teaching. Further, the data indicate that being authoritative is considered to be the least expected feature of effective teacher.

Discussion

The literature review suggests that the qualities of an effective language teacher may differ from one study to another. While it is the high level of L2 competence which is often in the foreground, it is sometimes assigned lower priority than other features as confirmed by Wichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012), according to whom the category of English proficiency was assigned lower priority than the categories of organization and communication skills, socio-affective skills, and pedagogical

knowledge. Other characteristics such as abilities to organize and explain, generate interest, or pursue motivation as well as teachers' personality features (e.g. charisma, humour, or compassion) also occupy an important role in the process of teaching and learning English and are often highly valued by students.

It is, therefore, no surprise that many of the mentioned characteristics are related to the concept of the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). Following the fundamental principles of the CLT, the teachers perform the role of a facilitator, which means that they make their learners more active within their learning process, take their individual needs and personalities into account, and allow them to take responsibility for their learning. Further, they encourage their confidence and thoughtfulness, are sensitive to correcting errors, and employ group work and pair work activities, in which their students can practice L2 in relatively safe environments, with a high degree of engagement and equal treatment. This concept is in line with studies conducted by Barnes and Lock (2010), Sotto (2011), and Bell (2005). The shift from teacher-centeredness to the learner-centred teaching as well as the shift from authoritative type of teacher to the teacher who act as a facilitator is often regarded as one of the key qualities of effective language instruction as confirmed by Çakmak and Gündüz (2018).

However, some teachers and learners still seem to favour traditional teaching approaches to a greater extent in comparison to the CLT, such as the teacher participant group in Alimorad and Tajgozari (2016) or the student participants in the study carried out by Brown (2009). This supports the notion that the traditional teaching methods such as grammar-translation method may still be prevalent in a number of countries around the world (Metruk, 2018). These approaches often differ considerably from the fundamental principles of CLT – for example, teacher-centred approach prevails, no pair-work or group-work activities, learners are rather passive recipients of what teacher says, students' needs and feelings are not considered, etc. Therefore, the efficacy of the grammar-translation method (and other similar ways of teaching languages) is disputable. The findings of studies performed by Kourieos and Evripidou (2013) and Çakmak and Gündüz (2018) support this notion as their research results suggest that it is the learner-centred teaching (teachers take learners differences, anxiety, abilities, and interests into consideration, they arouse students' interest in learning – motivate them, and create positive learning environments, etc.), which forms the basis of effective language instruction. Such approaches could possibly enhance the process of teaching and learning English.

Conclusion

Learning a language can be regarded as a complex and challenging process in which one has to master language systems and skills. Instructors are a vital part of this

process despite the fact that it is the learner-centred approach which ought to be employed in the EFL classroom.

Numerous studies have attempted to examine the qualities of foreign language instruction, with varying results. It can be, however, concluded that apart from the L2 competence, there exist other key characteristics, which aid effective language teaching, such as employing pair-work and group-work activities, taking their feelings and personalities into account, tolerating their errors within learning, motivating them, communicating with them with respect, making them active, allowing them to take responsibility for their own learning, and the like.

It should be emphasized that further research and other studies need to be performed in this area as constant exploration in this field may bring about information and knowledge which may aid in developing and enhancing effective language teaching practices.

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Teaching receptive skills and the elements of culture through online sources to primary school learners of English

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Abstract: The article begins with a brief description of the characteristic features of primary school learners, who are divided into a group of lower primary learners (1st-3rd grade) and a group of upper primary learners (4th-6th grade), and their developmental needs, which must be taken into consideration before preparing any language course. The author emphasises the importance of developing receptive abilities in these two age groups, which come a long time before the development of productive skills. Then, the invaluable role of culture in child's development is described in relation to the learning environment. In the final part the author concentrates on introducing different ways of developing receptive skills and the elements of culture based on existing online sources. Some educational reading platforms and public libraries accessible on the Internet are introduced to support teachers' knowledge in this field. The author's role is to present unpopular, in contemporary times, 'reading' as a pleasurable experience both for the students and the teachers.

Key words: lower primary learners, upper primary learners, receptive skills, storytelling, online platforms

Introduction

This article describes characteristic features and developmental needs of lower and upper primary learners which determine teachers' work and influence the whole educational process of second language acquisition. Only the most significant aspects are taken into consideration and they are later described in the article. In connection with information included in the first chapter the author develops the idea of teaching a foreign language to primary school learners and concentrates on emphasising the priority role of receptive skills in this process. Exposure to listening is introduced as the most natural way of teaching languages as well as a remarkably effective one due to children's high sensitivity to rhythm and sounds from the closest surrounding. Some attention is devoted to teaching techniques such as using songs, chants, and stories to support the development of listening comprehension. More insight to Storytelling appears when reading skills are described. The author makes an attempt to highlight

positive aspects of Storytelling which have a beneficial impact on the reinforcement of receptive skills, pronunciation, language accuracy and a life-lasting love for literature. The next part of the article concentrates on introducing some advantages of making the students familiar with the elements of different cultures. The final part is devoted to the presentation of the online platforms which promote listening, reading or writing in an attractive way. They encourage students to develop receptive and productive skills through the means of video recordings, interactive exercises, interesting worksheets and supplementary materials created to enhance particular language parts. They activate students senses in the cognitive process and simulate different modalities. They offer professional help for parents and tips for teachers to be more effective in teaching new skills to children.

1 Primary school learners

In 2017, after the reformation of the Polish educational system, middle schools which took care of students aged 13-15 years old were lapsed and primary schools became 1st to 8th grade schools, where both very young children started their education and teenage students continued gaining their knowledge. Due to these changes primary schools which could be generally divided into two age categories, that is: lower primary learners - students who attend 1st to 3rd grade and upper primary learners who attend 4th to 6th grade, potted two more levels – 7th and 8th grade. This article focuses on the group of lower primary learners and when considering the group of upper primary learners the author would like to concentrate on the students up to the 6th grade. According to the authors knowledge and work experience, these age groups are similar in many aspects related to the second language acquisition, while older students from the 7th or 8th grade, require different approaches and methods in effective teaching.

Lower primary learners are generally regarded as auditory learners. Sounds are the first stimuli that human brain registers still being in the mother's womb. It is crucial to use this innate potential, while teaching a foreign language, as children are naturally predisposed to listen, they stay overly sensitive to different kinds of sounds from their surroundings. Supporting typical vocabulary items with the sounds that they make, appeals to subconscious mind and as a result makes the whole process of second language acquisition easier for the learners. Music can stimulate various feelings, as Szpotonowicz and Szulc-Kurpaska (2012, p. 187) notice, it has the potential to change the emotions and moods of the listeners, evoke different states of mind, elicit positive attitude towards the language learning process and make the whole experience extremely enjoyable. Teaching young learners through singing songs, saying chants and poems is a natural way to achieve positive results of second language acquisition in a short period of time. A similar effect can be obtained when young students are exposed to listening to stories through the Storytelling Approach. Fairy tales, legends

and stories create perfect background to teach universal values to young children and an ideal context for the lesson to introduce new language. Being exposed to positive experiences leads young learners to very successful achievements in learning and what is more, it creates a perfect combination together with innate, very high motivation which this age group possesses. Very young learners stay extremely enthusiastic about learning new things and they are deeply involved in everything they do. They need multisensory input during the classes and a lot of opportunities to express themselves through art and craft activities. Activating various senses to teach new material using tasks which require colouring, cutting out, gluing, designing or painting will bring a number of benefits to children's mental and motor development. With young learners teachers are limited with the choice of activities due to the fact that lower primary learners do not have the ability to read or write, they require the sequence of short duration activities which create the opportunity to have fun and burn energy. This can be achieved by introducing movement games which activate students kinaesthetically and help to learn through having fun. Lower primary learner's possess very short attention span, this means that they cannot concentrate on one activity for a long time and they need a variety of exciting activities for one session. It is energy consuming for the teacher but learners true engagement and pure appreciation can make up all the effort involved in preparing the classes.

Upper primary learners are another group of passionate and enthusiastic students who appreciate teachers' ideas and their eagerness to try new challenging teaching methods. These students want to be involved in all kinds of tasks introduced in or beyond the classroom. They are similar, in terms of educational needs, to the group of lower primary learners however they are undoubtedly more mature in terms of social behaviour and they have already developed fluent skills in reading and writing. This opens the spectrum of possibilities to prepare varied exercises with no limitation related to students lack abilities. This age group can develop receptive and productive skills simultaneously however the majority of tasks designed for such students still concentrates on practising reading and listening. Upper primary learners, not like their younger schoolmates, possess the ability of abstract thinking which enables the teacher to introduce grammatical issues and more abstract ideas like for example different adjectives describing feelings and emotions. This group of learners stays sensitive about being treated equally and they require individualization of tasks during the lesson.

2 Developing receptive skills

Both groups of students described in the previous chapter are receptive learners who begin learning a foreign language from being surrounded by words in a few realistic situations. They start second language acquisition with being exposed to different tasks reinforcing mainly listening skills, the same process accompanies their

first language acquisition. On the basis of listening reinforcement young students develop their speaking abilities and in their future life reading and writing skills. One definition explains that: *the receptive skills are listening and reading, because learners do not need to produce language to do these, they receive and understand it. These skills are sometimes known as passive skills. They can be contrasted with the productive or active skills of speaking and writing.* (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>)

Using the language in effective communication which is the final product of the language acquisition and at the same time very desirable one, especially in teaching foreign languages in the spirit of the Communicative Approach, appears as a result of some broader and more holistic attitude to learning. There are two basic conditions which must appear in the successful communication: the sender must be able to encode information (productive skills) and the receiver must be able to decode information (receptive skills) (Dequette, 1995, p. 24). The importance of receptive skills should not be underestimated in the whole process due to the fact that students need to be able to use them efficiently to achieve mastery of any language.

2.1 Listening skills

The ability to listen and understand is a useful skill from the early childhood. It seems natural that the first stimuli newborn babies are exposed to are sounds related to their caretaker speech. Toddlers also communicate their needs and feelings by producing more or less conscious sounds. Generally speaking sounds are the inseparable part of life which people associate with different situations and certain objects. This sound-sensitive nature of human brain determines the way children regard the reality, react to various circumstances or learn new things. Teachers' work is pre-determined by this aspect too. Up to 6th grade of primary school almost every lesson from the typical coursebook contains listening tasks. Every session, children are exposed to exercises based on using audio tracks, DVDs or ready-made video materials. Online platforms like You Tube or Lyrics Training are gaining more and more popularity among student and creative teachers as well. As it can be assumed there are a few reasons for teaching listening skills to young learners, for example:

- developing awareness of the sounds in a foreign language.
- enhancing the skill of guessing the meaning from the context.
- stimulating the development of speaking.
- reinforcing the conceptual development of a child.
- encouraging children to interact with other learners and the teacher.
- preparing the learners for developing reading and writing (Szpotonowicz & Szulc-Kurpaska, 2012, p.125).

In the view of Harmer (2007) there are a number of benefits which students can gain on the basis of well-developed listening skills. The author claims: "*Listening is*

good for our students' pronunciation, too, in that the more they hear and understand English being spoken, the more they absorb pitch and intonation, stress and sounds of both individual words and those which blend together in connected speech. Listening tasks are good pronunciation models, in other words, and the more students listen, the better they get, not only at understanding speech, but also at speaking themselves. Indeed, it is worth remembering that successful spoken communication depends not just on our ability to speak, but also on the effectiveness of the way we listen" (Harmer, 2007, p. 133).

During the second language acquisition children are exposed to a number of different listening tasks whose aims may vary. According to Harmer (2007, p. 135) *in the first place, students need to be able to recognise paralinguistic clues such as intonation in order to understand mood and meaning.* The same author emphasises two listening styles which are: *listening for specific information* (opening hours, number of platform, amount of money) and *listening for general understanding* (ibidem, p. 135). With younger students it is preferable to listen to more overall information like: the theme of the story, the place of the action, the most important event or character.

With young students listening comprehension can be practised by the classroom routine, when students are exposed to the same commands and instructions repeated in the similar context during the classes. Above all, stories and fairy tales create great opportunities to reinforce listening skills. Children are accustomed to listening to them at home when they feel relaxed and ready to go to bed. Stories naturally move children to the world of fantasy and imagination which is interesting for them. Listening to stories creates an obvious context to introduce new vocabulary and phrases, teach pronunciation, develop reading skills in an attractive way.

What is more songs, chants and rhythmic poems seem to be ideal in practising listening skills with young learners. They create strategies to remember new material by strengthening the context of the second language acquisition. They help to memorize the whole language chunks, not only separate words, by associating them with the melody and certain tunes. Language patterns become easier to learn when accompanied by music. In addition, songs give opportunities to activate students physically by using the TPR method. With such auditory and kinaesthetic reinforcement students acquire them subconsciously through having fun. Such 'ear catching' tasks lead to greater accuracy in producing foreign language utterances and the holistic development of the student who has to coordinate all the speech muscles and the breathing system to achieve successful oral results.

Both using stories and songs can be extremely stimulating for young students to develop receptive skills. The prior ability developed based on them is listening because activating the auditory channel is the most natural way to begin the first and second language acquisition. Furthermore, stories themselves ensure friendly environment to

reinforce not only listening but also reading skills by exposing students to the mysterious world of fabulous characters and adventures.

2.2 Reading and listening through Storytelling

Reading is a skill which is developed as soon as the students get familiar with the letters of the alphabet. This process has the beginning in the 1st grade of primary school however taking into consideration the fact that oral and written words in English differ it will not be a perfect moment to expose children to independent reading. From the scientific point of view reading is useful for the second language acquisition in a variety of ways. As Harmer (2007, p. 99) indicates *reading texts also provide good models for English writing. At different times we can encourage students to focus on vocabulary, grammar or pronunciation. We can also use reading materials to demonstrate the way to construct sentences, (...) introduce interesting topics, (...) excite imaginative responses (...)*. Reading tasks create ideal opportunities to use authentic materials like: stories, fairy tales, short poems with younger learners or magazine articles, fragments of books, blogs with older ones.

Stories themselves create a perfect background to improve receptive skills because they help to practise listening and reinforce the encouragement to reading by developing curiosity about literature. Although it is not possible to introduce reading tasks to lower primary learners due to the fact that they still practise recognizing the letters of the alphabet in their mother tongue, it is extremely crucial to sensitize young children to stories and fairy tales while teaching foreign languages. With upper primary learners' things look a little bit easier because on one hand they are still interested in stories and on the other they are quite fluent in reading and mature enough to develop reading skills beyond the classroom. The level of proficiency of tasks introduced to different age groups must be suitable for their developmental needs. A challenging set of tasks introduced to different age groups may contain:

- lower primary learners
 - listen and do
 - listen and colour
 - listen and point
 - listen and repeat
 - put the pictures from the story in the correct order
 - craft activity: make a puppet (character from a story)
 - what can you see in the picture - enumerate
- upper primary learners
 - put the events in the correct order
 - circle true or false next to the events
 - draw the poster advertising this story
 - design the front cover for the story

- write your own ending for the story
- answer the questions
- retell the story
- prepare a picture dictionary from a story
- classify character from a story: good vs. bad
- write a short chant/poem on the basis of a story
- fill in the gaps with missing words.

As it can be assumed activities based on stories give great opportunities to do creative tasks which develop imaginative thinking. Storytelling is a method of teaching English to students which works best with children who stay in the world of fantasy and for whom clear division between the realistic and imaginary world is still blurred. As Szpotonowicz and Szulc-Kurpaska (2012, p. 222) claim *storytelling is a powerful and universal means of introducing and practising language in the classroom*. Stories create a perfect context to practise the language, they build the atmosphere in which children acquire the language subconsciously. When the students feel relaxed, participate in a pleasant situation, are involved in an interesting task they are more likely to become successful in learning the second language. Listening to stories is exciting to children and while being involved in this process, they acquire vocabulary, grammatical constructions or fixed expressions almost effortlessly. Furthermore, lower primary learners acquire fluency in listening and upper primary learners in reading and listening through being exposed to stories. Young children of 7 to 10 usually go through the period of intensive intellectual development in their native language and this is a perfect time to accustom children to literature and the world of literacy fiction. Positive experiences from the childhood determine students' future choices and only children who were exposed to reading will have the habit of choosing books as their past time activity.

3 The importance of teaching the elements of culture

“Culture appears as the effect of education at school and beyond it, as the reality created by people, and simultaneously the one which creates a person. Its aim is to unite people under the common values, as the most humanistic heritage, prevent conflicts, teach respect and tolerance, but foster individual development at the same time, guard national uniqueness, the language, traditions, art and customs” (Gajda, 2010, p. 17). Nowadays culture belongs to two simultaneously existing civilization systems: humanistic and technological. The first one is related to values characteristic for a particular country, history beyond it and unique traditions. It appeals to cultural heritage and patriotic values. The second one is more universal and cosmopolitan. It promotes more consumerist lifestyle. Although technology and trends promoted through the Internet dominate in the contemporary world, it does not indicate only

negative phenomena. When regarding this issue in a more positive light, some beneficial influence of online resources on cultural education can be observed. Virtual space offers fast and free access to a lot of, worth interest, materials which foster children's intellectual development. They support the cognitive process in a number of aspects and give an opportunity to interfere with different works of art from the world of literature, art or music, regardless to economic status or localization. This unique exposure to high culture builds child's personality and future creativity. It not only gives awareness of national roots and foreign cultures but also the spirit to discover, invent and design. Although the definition of children's literature may "*vary a little bit from culture to culture, critic to critic, and reader to reader*" (Huck's, 2014, p. 3), it can be regarded as *the imaginative shaping of life and thought(...)* (ibid.) Literature, among which stories and books can be distinguished, is the means to introduce the elements of culture, universal values and sensitivity to all living creatures.

One of the most significant advantages of using stories and songs is related to the fact that by the means of them teachers are able to reinforce children's national roots, teach them about their customs and traditions or introduce some aspects related to other cultures. This strengthens children's national beliefs but at the same time teaches tolerance towards other cultures and nationalities. In the context of different stories young students can learn about the diversity around the world, tolerance and acceptance of different people as well as some strong universal values which are always right. On the basis of stories they learn about good and bad characters, positive and negative qualities of character and ways of behaviour. Stories introduce the problem of racism, religious intolerance, poverty and other life misfortunes to signal some contemporary problems of the XXI century. They teach children respect to other people, animals and nature around them. An easy access to different books and stories is provided by existing in the virtual world platforms which support children's cultural development.

4 Online educational platforms

Online Educational Platforms are an integrated set of interactive online services. They submit attractive, educational materials to the teachers, learners, parents and others involved in education. Educational Online Platforms provide information, tools and resources to support and reinforce educational processes and management. They are extremely attractive to learners because they foster the multisensory input and due to this fact they grasp students' attention immediately. They help to activate all the senses by providing sound and visual stimuli. Here are the examples of quality online platforms for young students which enhance reading and listening skills:

- **<https://www.storynory.com>**

This educational platform offers a set of original and educational stories, fairytales, myths, poems and music to entertain and teach children. The division on different school grades helps teachers select the most suitable level of proficiency for each group of learners. The Storynory platform contains videos, story plots to download and some worksheets to reinforce language skills. It is a podcast and a website with audio streaming free of charge and available for all kinds of educators, caretakers and parents. What is more, the designers of Storynory platform go further in accustoming children to reading because they start to produce more factual content including history and interviews. *The aim of this factual programming is to stimulate a curiosity about the world, and the ability to think critically* (<https://www.storynory.com/about-storynory/>).

- **<https://freekidsbooks.org>**

It is a big online library, with resources for different age groups, which contains unique books, literature and textbooks. These materials can be downloaded in the pdf format or read online. In the pdf format teachers can find not only the plot of the presented story but also pictures and some tips for while- and post- reading exercises. *The aim of Freekidsbooks platform is to provide easy access to great free children's books and educational resources, for the enjoyment of reading and writing, and to promote improved literacy and education, and thus improved lives.* (<https://freekidsbooks.org/about/>).

On this platform books are separated into categories for toddlers, children, and young adults what simplifies the process of selecting them because, according to the web designers, reading levels may vary significantly between countries, especially where English is not a national language. Furthermore, the platform offers materials for different levels of advancement, list of international authors and their works, translation of all educational resources into several foreign languages and a variety of subjects which contain all the stories related to the particular topic. Freekidsbooks platform gives an easy access to interesting material which help to develop skills like listening, reading and writing simultaneously. Like other online platforms, this one, offers universal topics to discuss like: friendship, racism or bullying.

- **<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk>**

Oxford Owl is an online platform developed by Oxford University Press to submit free materials for effective teaching and learning. It also offers assessment resources, expert support as well as a range of paid-for subscriptions for primary schools. This platform creates an ideal environment to access unlimited range of eBooks, storytelling videos, printable activity sheets and teaching notes. Furthermore, it contains professional development videos in which teachers from all around the world

share good practices and present directions for school improvement pathways. This platform gives a holistic support to its visitors, especially teachers, who can use interesting materials like: interactive lessons prepared for the IWB, to reinforce students' skills in a foreign language and at the same time educate themselves about innovative ways of supporting learners' development.

- **<https://www.storylineonline.net>**

Storyline Online, streams videos featuring well-known celebrities who read stories to children. Readers include Viola Davis, Chris Pine, Lily Tomlin, Kevin Costner, Annette Bening, James Earl Jones, Betty White and many other famous people. The books are not only read but also visualised by animations. What is more, the subtitles appear under the illustrations what may simplify following the plot of the story and enhance better understanding of it. *Reading aloud to children has been shown to improve reading, writing and communication skills, logical thinking and concentration, and general academic aptitude, as well as inspire a lifelong love of reading* (<http://www.storylineonline.net/about-us/>). The main advantage of Storyline Online is related to the fact that it is available 24 hours a day for students, parents, teachers and educators worldwide. Each book is enriched with supplemental materials which contain tips aiming at strengthening comprehension as well as verbal and written skills for English-language learners.

- **<https://www.mrsp.com>**

MrsP.com is completely free website which offers a variety of educational materials for teachers. The platform mainly contains stories which are read by Mrs. P sitting in her armchair next to the fireplace, they are accompanied by animations to make the whole experience even more attractive for young students. Besides the story time videos the site also contains sets of exercises like: colouring worksheets to download, tips for the teachers and activity guides. Mrs. P has created study questions to accompany the playlists, to let students put their reading into action. Every story also offers *read along options* so children can see the words, which is helpful to those students who begin their adventure with reading. Most of Mrs. P's titles are available on a video sharing platform YouTube, but there are also 14 titles that are streamed from the Professor Garfield site. Mrs. P has also prepared online learning sets devoted to vocabulary or poetry with videos and worksheets to select. Without going out or any costly preparations children are taken on a journey to the most wonderful and interesting places imaginable through these online lessons. While having a great time Mrs. P helps kids learn simultaneously how to activate their imagination as well as build effective listening and writing skills (<http://www.mrsp.com/Teachers.aspx>).

- <https://www.storyplace.org>

Storyplace is a Children's Digital learning Library, the platform which enhances reading habits and love for books together with some online activities to teach young learners effectively. Children may enjoy attending storytimes where they can check out materials and participate in a variety of educational programs at the various Charlotte Mecklenburg Library locations. StoryPlace came about to provide children with the virtual experience of going to the Library and participating in the same types of activities the Library offers at its physical locations. First launched in 2000, StoryPlace has been newly redesigned to present favourite stories and activities in a format compatible with desktop and mobile devices. Visitors can borrow e-books to read or audiobooks to listen to from the Charlotte Mecklenburg library. The Pre-school Activity Library is full of interesting themes which the teacher can choose. Each topic set contains an online story, an online activity, a video and a reading list with similar topics to follow. Online stories are colourful animated films with sound effects and subtitles. Their biggest advantage is that the stories stop automatically after each verse, this gives a teacher full control over the pace, number of repetitions or pronunciation practice. The teacher can adjust the whole process to the needs of a particular group of students. Online activities which supplement each story are interactive and extremely interesting, they develop creative thinking and motor skills. They require clicking, moving the cursor around the screen, matching the objects or placing them in the appropriate position. (<https://www.storyplace.org/about-storyplace>).

Conclusions

Online resources are undoubtedly one of the best options to use in the classroom. They create friendly environment for lower and upper primary learners to study a foreign language. All the platforms described in the article aim at developing receptive skills via new technologies. Materials in the form of stories or fairy tales require reinforcing reading and listening skills naturally. They create opportunities to gain knowledge and practise skills in challenging and very stimulating surrounding. They use visual and auditory stimuli to activate children's senses during the lesson. Their attractiveness for the viewers grasps immediate attention and can be extremely helpful to keep this interest beyond the classroom. Online platforms can be used at home to retell the story, revise vocabulary or play favourite games with parents once again. Online platforms are compatible with mobile devices, tablets and other technological gadgets, they offer apps to download through which children can practise English for example during the journey in a car or plane, while waiting in the queue to the doctor's office, in other words any time in any place. Online educational platforms are very convenient for their users because they require minimum effort in

the preparatory process. Teachers need to get familiar with the scope of possibilities on offer and select the best exercises which suit their students needs.

Another important advantage of using online platforms is related to the development of cultural awareness. In the virtual world teachers and students have an easy access to the books from various countries describing foreign cultures and historical events from all over the world. Presented stories touch many universal problems of friendship, respect, tolerance, sensitivity but also poverty, homelessness or bullying. They promote awareness of national customs and traditions as well as introduce important values in countries around the globe. It is an important issue especially since people travel to many parts of our planet freely. Travelling changes people's behaviours and approaches to life that is why education has a huge power of sensitizing young people the diversity around them before stereotypes are formed.

Last but not least, stories have a very smooth texture, they are friendly to children, they describe different problems in a delicate way. This is extremely important to expose the youngest to a variety of important subjects to discuss but in a skilful way. The language of literature is carefully picked, adjusted to students age, maturity and sensitivity.

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Assessing spoken proficiency: holistic and analytic ways of scoring

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Abstract

Carrying out a proper and objective evaluation of spoken proficiency of foreign language learners is a rather challenging task. This paper is concerned with the two ways of assessment which are commonly applied when evaluating the skill of speaking, namely holistic and analytic approach. First, the two approaches are introduced and described. Next, their advantages and disadvantages are discussed. Finally, the article elaborates on several aspects that need to be considered when the analytic approach is applied, such as identification of the selected criteria, their amount, their weight in connection to other categories, and the like. The paper concludes that both types of scoring have their advantages and downsides and ideally, it is the combination of both approaches that most often yields in objective and reliable assessment of a candidate's speaking ability.

Keywords: assessing speaking, holistic ways of scoring, analytic ways of scoring, assessment criteria

Introduction

Developing the skill of speaking is of cardinal importance in the process of teaching and learning foreign languages (Djigunovic and Krajnovic, 2009; Khamkhien, 2010). Plethora of foreign language learners and teachers consider their speaking ability as a measure of language knowledge (Pokrivčáková, 2010; Richards, 2015). In connection with this, Ur (2012, p. 117) maintains that “of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing”.

However, it should be emphasized that it is the skill of speaking which is often regarded as the most difficult of the four skills (Cahyono, 2016). One of the reasons behind this statement is that language needs to be produced quickly – without planning and this requires plenty of practice (Anderson, 2015). Moreover, speakers need to think about a number of aspects within their oral production, such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation (loudness, pitch, tempo, intonation, rhythm, stress, etc.), level of politeness and formality, discourse, and many others. Thus, it

should be noted that in order to master speaking, one has to dedicate a great deal of time, effort, and practice to achieve a high level of spoken proficiency.

Assessment as such represents a challenging and complex process, which requires time, training, experience, expertise, and dedication. Testing of speaking skills appears to be one of the most difficult due to the occurrence of numerous internal and external factors that affect assessors (Chuang, 2009; Luoma, 2004). O'Sullivan (2012, p. 234) adds to the discussion that "it is commonly believed that tests of spoken language ability are the most difficult to develop and administer". Assessing the spoken proficiency often takes place in real time, which means that examiners might be under time pressure. Thornbury (2012) also explains that assessors may have different views on what accounts for speaking proficiency (e.g. is fluency more valued than accuracy?). Thus, performing assessment that is appropriate, valid, and reliable is a matter that gives rise to difficulties for most educators.

Approaches to assessing speaking

Generally, there exist two approaches to the assessment of speaking skills: holistic and analytic ways of scoring (Al-Amri, 2010; Xi, 2007). The holistic scoring refers to providing an overall score by an assessor, taking one's oral performance as a whole into consideration (Baryla, Shelley & Trainor, 2012; Schunn, Godley & DeMartino 2016). On the other hand, the analytic type of scoring does not take a candidate's spoken production as a whole, but rather breaks down the final product into several pieces (criteria), while each selected part is assigned its own score. Subsequently, the scores are counted, and the final grade is created. A number of different criteria can be employed within the analytical type of scoring (Babik et al., 2016), depending on various factors.

There are several differences between the two types of scoring. The holistic approach appears to be less time-consuming and less complex when compared to its analytical counterpart which, on the other hand, may provide assessor with more information on the spoken ability of a candidate. Further, Luoma (2004) explains that the rating accuracy can be increased as raters' attention is directed to the chosen criteria. It should be, however, noted that despite obvious differences, the two types of scoring invariably overlap to a certain degree (Taylor & Galaczi, 2011).

Holistic approach

Within the holistic way of scoring, a single score is offered based on the speaking samples, arising out of overall impressionistic evaluation of an examinee's spoken production as a whole (Richards, 2015). It can be useful to create a band or a level with descriptors in order to recognize what the speaker can do at particular bands. The assessor can match the candidate's performance to the descriptor that is closest to the language which is produced by the candidate (O'Sullivan, 2012).

This type of scoring offers certain benefits to educators. First, it is less time-consuming than its analytic counterpart. Second, it is relatively easy to train assessors for this type of scoring. Third, this approach seems to be less complicated and easier to conduct.

On the other hand, the holistic approach has some disadvantages, which ought to be taken into consideration when applied. Fulcher (2003) indicates that this approach does not take the constructs that account for speaking into consideration. Further, examiners may have a tendency to rely on the first impression of a candidate. Another downside is that holistic approach often represents merely crude measure of a student’s speaking ability (O’Sullivan 2012), which means, that particular aspects of spoken production are not considered separately.

Analytic approach

When this type of scoring is employed, various characteristics of spoken production of a candidate are examined. As with the holistic scoring, this approach too has its benefits and downsides.

First, analytic approach offers a clearer insight into the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses Tuan (2012). Moreover, the analytic scoring seems to be more consistent than the holistic approach, and the overall assessment objectivity and reliability is increased. When it comes to disadvantages, it should be mentioned that this type of scoring is more time-consuming (Aleksandrak, 2011). Further, assessors need to undergo training so that they are able to reliably discriminate between various components of spoken proficiency in relation to how they are described in the rubrics (Vafae & Yaghmaeyan, 2015). Another disadvantage is that assessors need to focus heavily on the selected criteria, often in real time, which is rather challenging. Finally, Llach (2011) asserts that providing clear-cut and unambiguous definitions for every descriptor is also not an easy task.

Nonetheless, Metruk (2018) concludes that “despite the fact that analytical scoring has some disadvantages, its benefits seem to outweigh the drawbacks, and adopting this way of scoring within the evaluation of oral performance can be considered fairly appropriate”.

Holistic scoring	Analytic scoring
Straightforward and intuitive	More time consuming for raters
Reflects a natural tendency to make holistic judgements of learners’ language abilities	Not clear that raters are really able to differentiate between several different criteria: four or five may be the maximum manageable number

Raters may interpret the scale selectively, focusing only on features that they value or that they find easy to understand	Helpful as a training tool to encourage raters to focus on the variety of features highlighted by the scale developers – these represent the intended test construct
Not clear how the overall score is arrived at – if the assessee is strong on one criterion, but weak on another, this is no revealed by the score	Differential performance across criteria can be captured in a score profile
Less reliable as only one score is awarded	More reliable as multiple observations are collected
Less informative – fails to identify strengths and weaknesses	More informative – potential for useful feedback to teaching and learning

Table 1 Comparison of the holistic and analytic ways of scoring (Green, 2014, p. 150)

Analytic scoring criteria

What makes analytic scoring a more reliable and consistent way of testing is the employment of assessment criteria. Their choice and implementation depend on a number of factors as well as type of examination. For instance, teacher may regard one criterion to be more important than the others. If this is the case, the mark for such criterion may be doubled. However, it is important to mention that the total number of employed criteria is limited, so the assessors have to chose them carefully and appropriately, taking the purpose of examination into consideration. Scholars and researchers generally tend to agree that the maximum number of employed criteria is four or five (Green, 2014; Razali & Istra, 2016) or five to six (Luoma, 2014). Assessors can choose the following criteria within their evaluation of spoken proficiency: content, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, appropriateness, interaction, fluency, coherence, or mechanics (Gondová, 2014; Tuan, 2012).

Discussion

Both types of scoring have their advantages and disadvantages and although the analytic approach seems to yield more reliable and consistent scoring, it is more challenging due to its complexity. First, the assessors ought to undergo training for this way of assessment. Second, the choice of criteria is critical to the assessment – examiners must carefully choose the appropriate criteria to fulfil the purpose of evaluation and to make the assessment as valid and reliable as possible. The problem is that assessors must choose from a wide range of categories, and it is sometimes difficult to select the appropriate ones. It is often the case that educators focus heavily of grammar or vocabulary, but fail to incorporate into their rubrics categories such as

content, fluency, or coherence, which are also of considerable importance. The choice is entirely up to them so the categories must be selected cautiously.

Another issue is concerned with the total amount of criteria – the examiners need to be able to select the appropriate number so that they are able to concentrate, objectively evaluate, and score on all aspects of evaluation. For some, four or five may be the greatest amount, for others it is six. But most of the researchers and examiners would probably agree that employing more than six categories does not represent a feasible number and assessors are probably not capable of providing consistent, reliable, and fair assessment.

The complexity of analytic scoring arises also out of the fact that some criteria may be weighed differently than the others as certain categories can be attached greater importance. For instance, if an examiner chooses the categories of content, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (the examinees can achieve the maximum of 5 points for each) and wishes to attach greater importance to the criterion of vocabulary, the total amount of points will be doubled for this criterion so that the candidates can achieved as many as 10 points for the category of vocabulary. It is reasonable to expect that the assessor who decides to double the points of a certain criterion has a sound reason for this. The choice of criteria their number, and weight depends on numerous factors and they always ought to be based on the purpose of evaluation.

Conclusion

Speaking, being a skill of major importance but at the same time the skill which is extremely challenging to teach and master, merits attention of educator and researchers, both from the standpoint of teaching as well as assessment.

The holistic approach takes a candidate's production as a whole into consideration, offering an overall score of a speaker's ability. On the other hand, the more complex analytic way of scoring breaks down the oral performance into several categories, each of them having their own mark, which is then totaled to produce the overall grade.

Although there are obvious differences between the analytic and holistic scoring, these two types of scoring invariably overlap. If an assessor decides to employ the holistic approach, they need to remember that although this approach is somewhat simpler from its analytic counterpart, there is a lack of insight into their learners' strengths and weaknesses. This can be, on the other hand, achieved by incorporating the analytic approach, which is, however, more complex and challenging to perform. The purpose of assessment, selection of criteria, amount of criteria, their weight, candidates' background, their level of L2, and other factors need to be considered. Ideally, employing both ways of scoring within the evaluation process seems to be the most satisfactory solution to perform objective, reliable, valid, and fair assessment of candidates' spoken proficiency.

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Teaching systems in the teaching of literature

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Abstract: This paper shows a theoretical review of all teaching systems with its characteristics in the teaching process. Firstly, the teaching systems are conceptually determined together with the criteria that need to be taken into consideration when choosing a specific teaching system. It is also explored how methodological literature gives an insight into teaching systems and whose application is mostly recommended in the contemporary methodological articles published in different methodological magazines. Secondly, it is examined how many and which magazines are really present in practical work by observing classes in primary and high schools. Based on the analysis of both theoretical and practical observation, specific improvements and suggestions are made, and all the advantages and disadvantages of observed teaching systems are analyzed.

Key words: teaching systems, methodological literature, contemporary methodological articles, practical work

1 Introduction

This paper covers a complete analysis of various teaching systems in the teaching of literature in theory and practice. First, teaching systems are defined conceptually and criteria explained that need to be taken into account for the application of a specific teaching system in class, and then each teaching system and its features are presented theoretically. After that, the position of teaching systems in contemporary methodological articles, published in two journals *Metodički obzori* and *Život i škola* is analyzed. Then, in order for the analysis to be complete, which teaching systems used in the work of Croatian schools are examined and how they are used in a particular teaching unit. Observed classes in particular teaching systems are in primary and secondary schools, after which feedback and suggestions for possible improvements are provided in order to take advantage of the benefits of teaching systems they provide and theoretical settings they are based on. The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed presentation and analysis of teaching systems in theory and practice and examine the way in which teaching systems are applied in practice in terms of checking whether the phases of specific teaching systems are in line with those in the

theoretical description. Also, a detailed review of each class is given, as well as the emphasis on positive and negative sides when applying a particular teaching system.

2 Teaching systems in theory: Definition and division of teaching systems

The concept of methodological systems of teaching literature was introduced and elaborated by Dragutin Rosandić in the theory of methodology. In teaching the Croatian language there are many methodological systems and the application of a certain system depends on what educational goal the teacher wants to achieve. Thus, the methodology of teaching literature is defined as: "the idea of conducting teaching process (class) that is determined by the interrelationship and role of the factors of this process during teaching, namely: literary text (teaching content, pupil, teacher, organizational forms and teaching methods and means)" (Bežen, 2008, p. 302).

There are several criteria to be met when applying a methodological system in teaching. The first criterion is the basic theoretical starting point of each system. Depending on the theoretical basis of each system and the content of teaching, a particular teaching system will be selected corresponding to educational objectives for the particular content of teaching. Another criterion is the position and role of pupils in the teaching process and depends on whether the teacher wants the pupil to be a passive recipient or active participant in various forms of communication in the classroom. This results in the third criterion, which is the position of the teacher in the teaching process. The teacher can be a tutor or organizer and guide of pupils' activities whereby pupils would have the opportunity to independently manage teaching process, with the guidance of the teacher.

Different teaching systems have been established in teaching of literature. According to Rosandić, methodological systems of literature teaching are defined according to basic orientation and organization, and are divided into: dogmatic-reproductive, reproductive-explicative, interpretative-analytic, problem-creative, correlative-integrative, communicative, open, multimedia, and team methodological system.

There is also a division of methodological systems brought by Ante Bežen, which somewhat differs from the above mentioned. He divides methodological systems of literature teaching into: reproductive, explicative, interpretative, problematic, correlative-integrative, communicative, open, multimedia, team-like and adds a project methodological system. All systems and their features will be shown in the next chapters of this paper.

3 Methodological systems of teaching literature and their characteristics

Methodological systems of teaching literature are divided according to their basic orientation and organization, and each system has its basic theoretical characteristics. The first and oldest methodological system is called a dogmatic-reproductive teaching

system whose main purpose is to memorize data and facts about the text. In this system the pupil is a passive listener who needs to receive and reproduce facts, and knowledge is assessed by the amount of learned facts. The teacher does not practice discussion and independent work of the pupil, and work form is the frontal method. Since the work form is purely frontal, communication between pupils and teachers is one-way, which is also one of the biggest drawbacks of this system. Pupils are expected to learn by heart, which, according to Slavić, poses a great danger: "there's lot of talking, but much less understanding. Thus, behind respect of the authority of the teacher there is pupil ignorance" (2011, p. 11).

Somewhat more advanced than the first system is a reproductive-explicative teaching system whose main advantage is to emphasize pupil's words used in literary content, meaning affirmation of pupils' autonomy is something that is strived for. The teacher is still the one who speaks and has a crucial role: he/she is a lecturer and interpreter of literary phenomena. The work form is still frontal and the methods are presenting with wider explanation of concepts and methods of working on the text, whereby the pupil concludes and speaks *in his/her own words*.

After that, a methodological system in which there is a change in the understanding of teaching literature as the literary work now becomes the central part of class: "In the interpretative-analytical system of literary teaching the literary work becomes the fundamental content of the teaching process and interpretation of works is the most important form of teaching" (Rosandić, 2005, p. 204). The interpretative-analytical system is one in which the teacher begins with the impression of a literary work after interpretation, reading and pause, and then he/she interprets it with pupils – he/she relies on theory of interpretation and this kind of teaching provides great opportunities in terms of developing pupil literary culture but also in terms of building their own attitude and critical thinking.

The system in which the teacher links the scientific and artistic content is called analytically-explicative in which pupils can, within any teaching form, analyze literary-historical/theoretical texts or literary texts from the historical/theoretical position and explain their solutions to the problems formed on the basis of these texts.

In the contemporary method of teaching literature there is a system in which a problem poses for a pupil and encourages him/her to self-study in order to come to a solution to the problem. Such a methodological system in the teaching of literature is called problem-creative. The pupil is no longer a passive participant in the teaching process but on the contrary, the pupil becomes an active and equal participant in the teaching process. Setting up the problem situation and working on solving it is the highest degree of independence in the work on a literary text, and the role of the teacher who now has new tasks and responsibilities in the organization of teaching process is also important.

Furthermore, the teaching system in which related courses are linked is called the correlation-integration teaching system. There are two types of linking the teaching content, within the course, and among other courses. Pupils' position in this system is not conditioned, which means that a pupil can be a stand-alone or passive participant in the teaching process.

Since teaching is like a chain of communication processes, the next communication teaching system in which pupils work in groups and break down content units involved in communication situations with various forms and methods of work is also based on this. This system is suitable in combination with the other mentioned teaching systems.

The teaching system, which also often comes in combination with another one, is called the multimedia teaching system, and involves the inclusion of various media transmitting literary-scientific and artistic messages. Furthermore, the system that Dragutin Rosandic defines as the one "establishing the didactic communication based on the content and methods offer for independent learning, research and creation" (2005, p. 207) is called the open system. In such a system, pupils select content for individual work, group work, or work in pairs, and the teacher helps in finding texts, books and multimedia records. The emphasis in this system is on *how to learn*.

The next system involving dual or multiple correlations is called the team teaching system, and such a system can include people outside school such as writers, actors, composers and others.

Also, for the elaboration of certain literary works, a meditation-creative teaching system is suitable in which pupils are prepared for a meditative meeting with a text with appropriate motivation that can be based on meditative imagination accompanied by music and work in groups where everyone has their own specific role is optional.

4 Teaching systems in contemporary methodological articles

For the purpose of this paper three modern methodological articles have been analyzed: *The advantages of the correlation-integrative system in approaching the literary work* by Irena Krumes Šimunović and Ivana Blekić, then *Teaching using modern technology in education* by Petra Pejić Papak and Hana Grubišić Krmpotić, and *Some views on the role of teacher and position of pupils* in solving problematic tasks by Sandra Kadum-Bošnjak. The articles are published in methodological magazines *Život i škola* and *Metodički obzori*.

What is common in the presentation of teaching systems in contemporary methodological articles is advocating the total abandonment of traditional forms of teaching: the dogmatic-reproductive and reproductive-explicative system, and interdisciplinarity and integration of the thematic approach is advocated: "According to the principle of interdisciplinarity and integration of science, the traditional

closeness of a particular teaching course is abandoned. Integrating the thematic approach through curricula enables intercurricular themes“ (Krumes Šimunović & Blekić, 2013, p. 169).

Another common feature noted in the articles is the importance of applying information technology in teaching. It is emphasized that this kind of teaching not only *keeps up with the times* but also approaches the pupil whose needs and interests are a priority. In addition, the importance of knowing to use technology is emphasized so Pejić Papak and Grubišić Krmpotić notes forms of learning possible in the multimedia teaching system with regard to the application of information and communication technology, which are *teaching process supported by ICT* where *PowerPoint* presentations, multimedia CD - ROM, test programs such as quizzes for self-examination and knowledge checking, email and mailing lists, forums and an advanced form of teaching called hybrid or mixed teaching in which video conferencing and learning management systems are used, and includes a combination of classroom teaching and teaching with the help of technology.

From a few examined articles in two magazines *Život i škola* and *Metodički obzori*, it can be concluded that change in teaching is something that is strived for. The use of teaching systems such as problem-creative, correlative-integrative, team, multimedia and open teaching system is suggested or even required, and the emphasis is placed on the modification of teaching systems, methods and forms of work that need to be suitable for the pupil and pupils should be put in the center of teaching process whereby students' competences need to be developed.

5 Examples of methodological teaching systems in practice

5.1 Elementary school

Two classes were analyzed in the fifth grade of an elementary school in Osijek. The purpose of observation of these classes was to check which teaching systems were applied, apart from the most common interpretative-analytical teaching system, and what phases of the classes were and whether the goal of the class was achieved.

The first such analyzed class is an excellent overview of the application of the correlation-integrative system in teaching, which establishes a relationship between two seemingly incompatible school courses: the Croatian language and Mathematics. The teaching units between which the correlation was made were *Proverbs and riddles and Fractions*. The class consists of six phases and begins with experience-cognitive motivation in which a Croatian language teacher reads a short story saturated with wise opinions, followed by the exchange of impressions through a brief conversation with stimulating questions. The pupils are divided into groups and in the repetition phase they define concepts such as riddles, proverbs and folklore. In the next stage called Correlation with Mathematics, the math teacher explains how to solve the fraction task with the basis in the proverb. The pupils thus receive the proverb and

eventually verbally give their own interpretations of the proverb, which makes the next phase of the term Solving Mathematical Tasks and Interpreting Proverbs. In the end is the Synthesis phase in which the pupils repeat the concept of riddles and solve riddles given to them on a lecture sheet. In the observed class the teachers adapted these teaching stages to the teaching units and it was done extremely well, suitable for the age of the pupils, and each stage had a sense of accomplishing the main goal of the class which is correlating the teaching topics of figurative meaning in the riddles and proverbs with fractions. The example of this class is representative of the asynchronous correlation that, according to Rosandic, has two types: perspective and retrospective. In this case, the class went through a perspective correlation because each of the teachers had their part of the lesson in which they explained and interpreted the teaching content.

The second observed and analyzed class was the interpreting of Ivan Cankara's *Embarrassed by his mother*. The class was covered in the interpretative-analytical teaching system with the characteristics of the multimedia teaching system. Already at the beginning of the class in the first stage of experience-cognitive motivation, a computer, a focused approach and a dialogue speech method are used when the pupils explain their responses. The middle part of the class is the one that most reveals the feature of the multimedia teaching system, and that is, the literary text is displayed through the visual tool or table with the preview shown in a PowerPoint presentation.

Teaching stages are typical of the interpretative-analytical teaching system in which different methods, forms of work, and methodical procedures take their turns whereby the dynamics of class is achieved. The multimedia teaching system here is applied in the right way, for the purpose of visualizing the literary text and Venn's diagram which the teacher shows on the computer in the stage of interpretation. The pupil was thus an aesthetic subject and, together with the teacher, participated in the interpretation of a literary work broken down into parts. Although the pupils successfully filled out a table of predictions and wrote sentences summarizing each passage, it is proposed that after completing the assignment the pupils listen to the full text without pause, and possibly in the interpretation of actor Ivan Horvat, available [online](#). This proposal is given due to the fact that the pupils did not fully understand the text, but while reading it, they were focused on finding the important sentence, so it is considered they read the text once again and listen to it in its entirety for a better understanding and interpretation whereby another advantage of the multimedia teaching system would be used where the literary text is presented through another medium, in this case a sound recording.

5.2 Secondary school

For the purpose of this paper, classes were observed in the third and fourth grades in a secondary school. According to the conversation with teachers the most common

teaching system they apply is the interpretative-analytical with all the relevant phases. Consequently, an intensive reading class was observed for the third grade of secondary school in two different grammar schools, and a comparison and analysis of the manner of processing and application of a certain teaching system for drama *Without the Third* by Milan Begović is given. The other observed and analyzed class is in the field of Language Expression, teaching unit - *Public Speaking*.

The difference in the interpretation of drama *Without the Third* is reflected in the fact that the teacher planned one class while the other teacher planned two classes. During the interpretation in one class, the dogmatic-reproductive and reproductive-explicative teaching system was used, and in the second case the interpretative-analytical. This comparison has only confirmed what has been emphasized in modern methodological articles – one should completely distance themselves from the old forms of teaching systems in which the position of the teacher is the one who teaches and used the frontal method of work with the method of presenting with wider explanation. In this way, the drama is shown in only one class because all the information in the one-way communication from the teacher to the pupil was conveyed, which "ensured" that the same quantity of material is shown and told to everyone, but much greater is the negative side - lack of class dynamics, possible misunderstanding of the drama itself because the pupils do not come to conclusions about the characterization of the characters or features of the drama by themselves. In the second case in which the drama was dealt with in the interpretative-analytical teaching system, different teaching methods were applied, such as the method of listening to the passage, dialogue speech method, heuristic talk, referral method, method of filling out the table, method of comparison and method of observation and conclusion. The T method and Tunnel methods were also applied with a change of the forms of work such as individual, frontal, and work in pairs, thus achieving class dynamics and pupil's self-interest in making conclusions about the characterization of the characters and features of the drama. Thus, this class was successful and a representative example for the interpretative-analytical teaching system.

Course area Language Expression often remains "in the shadow" of literary interpretation and teachers here tend to choose the dogmatic-reproductive and reproductive-explicative teaching system. In the third grade of secondary school, according to the grammar school curriculum, the *Public Speaking* unit was observed in the communication-creative teaching system. In the first part of class, the motivational skill of listening to examples of a famous speech is encouraged, as well as the method of brainstorming. After that, a round table is introduced in the classroom, where the pupils have to give arguments as to why this speech was persuasive with pre-prepared questions, while others should say the opposite. Thus, the pupils break down all the components of the speech, starting with gestures, parts of the speech, preparedness, and present their views. In the next part of the class, elements of the multimedia

teaching system are present, as the teacher shows the materials on a video clip showcasing the pupils of Ivo Škarić School of Speech and provides a suitable methodological task before watching and listening. After that, examples of well-known Croatian politicians are mentioned and in the T-table they point out positive and negative sides of them. As a synthesis of the class, the pupils in four groups need to devise a public speech by applying everything they have learned and make reminders notes of key speech concepts.

Given all the difficulties involved in teaching Language Expression, such as lack of classes in the curriculum, lack of textbooks and manuals, this class is a positive example of how, with the help of accessible video speech recordings on the Internet and a group form of work, pupils can be introduced to the *Public Speaking* unit, its features and importance of developing their own communication skills.

6 Conclusion

This was an attempt to highlight the importance of methodological systems of teaching literature that determine the relationship between pupils, teachers and literary work, therefore, it is necessary to choose the appropriate teaching system to be applied when working on a particular teaching unit. In the history of literature, a dozen teaching systems have been developed, each of which is determined by the content of teaching of literature, and this paper shows those systems both in theory and practice.

Contemporary methodological articles in magazines such as *Život i škola* and *Metodički obzori* have been explored to provide an analysis of teaching systems. It has been concluded that *old school* systems are obsolete and that all analyzed articles require the use of modern teaching systems such as problem-creative, correlative-integrative, team, multimedia and open teaching system. The emphasis is on the importance of dynamics while working on teaching units, which brings about changes of teaching systems, methods, forms of work that need to be beneficial to pupils and place pupils at the center of teaching.

According to the observed classes, it has been concluded that in the teaching practice the teacher shapes class in such a way that it combines the features of two, perhaps more, systems which has proved to be more effective because in that way what is most appropriate for a complete teaching unit is taken from each system. Although conversations with teachers confirmed that the most common teaching system applied was the interpretative-analytical, classes were shown in a number of different systems that, with suggestions for possible improvements, are representative examples of good teaching system implementation.

The choice of methodological systems of teaching literature is an important factor in the teaching process, so it should be carefully selected with regard to the teaching unit being dealt with and lessons' objectives to be realized, but it should be

emphasized that it is necessary to know each teaching system with all its features and theoretical settings on which it relies in order to fulfill the basic purpose of literary education in schools - which is to educate future readers and improve literary culture in schools.

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Active Shakespeare in the EFL classroom

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Abstract: An active approach in the classroom dominates the teaching of Shakespeare in UK schools and its benefits are widely acknowledged for bringing together thought and action in symbiotic relation (Gibson, 2000). In the EFL classroom however, the use of classic literature can seem daunting to many students and teachers for reasons including a lack of teacher expertise and poor language skills and acting abilities in students. This paper presents findings as a result of pedagogical practice with Slovak secondary school students who studied and performed scenes from the Shakespeare play *The Taming of the Shrew*, alongside engaging with issues of gender politics and controversy in the play as a stimulus for debate and discussion. The research focuses on the impact of the pedagogical style on the engagement and attainment of students and the extent to which their speaking and performance skills, vocabulary and pronunciation were improved by the project – both in the opinions of the students themselves and in terms of summative grades received by students.

Key words: performance pedagogy, active approaches, Shakespeare, literature, gender

Introduction: Teaching Shakespeare

My perspective is that of a British teacher who has come to live and work in Slovakia. In the UK it is a compulsory part of the curriculum to include Shakespeare in English lessons at least once a year; but, even in the UK, students sometimes feel overwhelmed and anxious about studying Shakespeare. Students have negative preconceptions about incomprehensible language, outdated themes and ideas, and lengthy, boring scenes which must be studied in great depth and written about critically in essays.

It's my belief that teachers of English have a great opportunity to dispel these myths about Shakespeare and use his plays as a vehicle for drawing out the naturally playful and humorous nature of young people as they increase their confidence in speaking English in a way that engages not only their vocabulary, but also necessitates the use of tone and pitch variations, emphasis, facial expressions and body movements – just as a native speaker would play with their own language as a child.

Ten years ago, whilst working as an English teacher in Scotland and England, I was inspired by Rex Gibson's book, *Teaching Shakespeare*¹, which is full of practical pedagogical strategies for the use of active, dramatic techniques in the classroom. Gibson heavily criticises the common teaching approach of using Shakespeare as a literary text to be studied passively, rather than as a script to be performed actively.

The Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford have produced numerous, practical 'study packs' for British schools where priority is given to speaking activities that turn the English classroom into a drama studio (no chairs!) and students play with Shakespeare's language creatively. The most popular and widely used activity I've seen used in British schools is to give students a list of Shakespearean insults and get them to shout these insults at one another as they move around the room as a way to warm up their dramatic abilities and to laugh together.

My Research - To employ active Shakespeare techniques in the teaching of *The Taming of the Shrew* in a Slovak state secondary school

- **Students' ages:** 14 – 16
- **Number of students:** 2 classes; a second year class containing 20 students and a third year class containing 18 students. Both classes are part of a bilingual stream at a state secondary grammar school.
- **Ability range:** Students generally at B1 level, although some are definitely at B2. Students in these classes generally score between 60% and 100% in assessments for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening in English classes.
- **Additional Support Needs:** None
- **Behaviour:** Generally well behaved classes, but many of the boys are not naturally motivated by literature and struggle to respond to texts in the traditional way, by writing analytical and critical essays. This difficulty can lead to off-task behaviour and low level disruption of learning in the classroom.

In terms of the context of this research, these students were not new to me. I taught all of them English last year too, so there has been time to build up a rapport and some trust. I also employed some drama activities last year in the form of reading a play aloud – on our feet (it was the play *DNA* by Dennis Kelly which is written in modern colloquial English and the characters are a gang of teenagers who generally speak in short, impactful utterances, so reading that play aloud / role playing some short scenes was not so intimidating for the students) – and responding to it with hot-seating activities and some improvised scenes created by students in small groups.

I would recommend that any teacher wishing to explore active Shakespeare techniques with their class waits until the class has become used to a more cooperative and active style of teaching where they are often working in pairs and groups and

¹ Gibson, R. (1998). *Teaching Shakespeare*. Cambridge University Press.

acting out role play scenarios. Good behaviour management is a must, as you will need to trust your students to work independently and productively without your strict supervision or control.

Introducing Shakespeare to EFL students and gauging prior knowledge

I spent a lesson on historical context, focused on the position of women in society in Shakespeare's 16th Century England (essential basic knowledge for students). Students were encouraged to be active from the start by responding physically (on the walls of the classroom were posters saying 'agree', 'disagree', 'don't know' etc. and students had to move around and stand next to the poster that represented their opinion) to controversial statements about marriage and women's role in society on the board.

Students held group discussions / debates about the importance of marriage for women in the past - *and* in present day society (with specific emphasis on Slovakia, where the gender pay gap is one of the worst in Europe² and women have limited opportunities). We focused on key vocabulary for discussing gender roles, gender equality, and the status of women in 16th Century society (with emphasis on related vocabulary students would later encounter in the play, e.g. 'wooing', 'dowry', 'shrew' etc.)

Students also watched and discussed the 1999 American movie *10 Things I Hate About You* (a modern adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew*) and a short animated video of the play which gave them a clear overview of the plot and key characters.

Students were then given printed and electronic copies of the full script of Act II, Scene I. I made a decision to differentiate the difficulty of the scripts I used to the ability of individual students. More able students were placed in pairs or small groups with other students of a similar level and they were given scripts containing the original Shakespearean English. Less able students with lower ability in English were given scripts which had been 'translated' into more modern English, replacing, for example, Shakespearean pronouns such as 'thine' with the modern 'your' etc. and updating some idioms that don't make sense without a good understanding of the context.

Students had a week to study their scripts and ensure they understood the language used and to practice pronunciation (with teacher support and using online resources, for example speaking dictionaries, and using YouTube to observe actors performing the scene in various adaptations of the play).

At this point, I asked students to fill in a questionnaire. Question 1 was "Have you ever studied Shakespeare before?" 44% of students responded by saying they had

² Eurostat Gender Equality Index for 2019 ranks Slovakia with 54.1 points out of 100 (the EU average is 67.4 points), 26th place in the EU, with gender inequality worsening in comparison to previous years' data.

never studied Shakespeare before; 32% said they had studied Shakespeare once before; and 24% said they had studied Shakespeare more than once before.

Those students who had studied Shakespeare before specified that they had experienced his plays in the following ways: reading in class - 74%; watching a film – 25%; watching a play – 1%. The plays students had encountered were *Romeo and Juliet* and / or *Hamlet*. No other plays were mentioned. One student summarised her experience in this way: “It usually works like writing short notes about what the play is about and then reading a part of the play in a book, Usually 2 or 3 pages.”

Of the students surveyed, 54% said they had positive feelings about studying Shakespeare this term, stating reasons such as “*it’s something different*”, “*exciting*” or “*unusual*”, with some students expressing pleasure that we would be studying one of his less well known plays and not one of the ‘blockbusters’ that everyone studies. On the other hand, 46% reported negative feelings about studying Shakespeare, citing a high level of difficulty, anxiety about Shakespeare’s use of a different form of English and the considerable length of his plays as the reasons for negative feelings. One student simply wrote, “*Boring*”.

[I think it’s worth stating that I feel these results would have been more heavily weighted towards negative preconceptions if these students had not already become familiar with me and my, usually communicative and interactive, teaching methods. Also, students took a vote on exactly which Shakespeare play we would study and a majority chose *The Taming of the Shrew*, so they had the opportunity to exercise some choice, which was important for some of them.]

Practicing Active Shakespeare

After a week of familiarising themselves with the text, students were asked, in mixed groups of girls and boys of different abilities, to negotiate between themselves who would play which character and to choose a segment of the lengthy Act II, Scene I to concentrate on. They had free choice (with teacher guidance if needed) about whether they wanted to focus on the relationship between the two sisters and their father (Katherine, Bianca and Baptista Minola), the negotiation between the sisters’ gentlemen suitors and their father, or the dynamic interaction between Katherine the ‘shrew’ and Petruchio, the man who intends to ‘tame’ her. Student choice has been clearly identified as a motivating factor for higher levels of engagement and attainment in the classroom and as a general tool to help increase intrinsic motivation (Anderson, 2016) so I attempted at every opportunity to integrate it into the students’ experience with the play.

In order to motivate my students to be more confident in active drama activities I began the lessons by using group ice-breaker activities. I identified the students who usually try to remain passive in their group and I allowed them to take less challenging roles, but insisted that they do these roles to the best of their ability and I offered them regular feedback and encouragement on their progress. I offered the more challenging

roles (for example, the parts of Katherine and Petruchio) to those students who displayed a natural ability in drama and English speaking.

I also encouraged students to bring into the classroom realia in the form of costumes and props and to be as creative as possible with these items, using them to add humour and joy to their performance. For example, by making a class decision to dress up the boys as girls and vice versa, the students were reminded that, in Shakespearean times, women were not allowed on the stage so all female roles would originally have been performed by male actors in drag. Additionally, some students decided to make props that added an element of slapstick / physical comedy to the scene, therefore further motivating both the students and their future audiences to become more engaged with the play and entertained by it. For example, some of my students wanted to use pink, fluffy handcuffs for Katherine to ‘tie up’ Bianca at the beginning of the scene. Other students made a lute from cardboard and paper which Katherine then broke over the head of her music teacher, Lithio, and they painted Lithio’s forehead with fake blood. Perhaps some teachers might be tempted to censor such aggressive or sexual interpretations of the play, however it is worth pointing out that Shakespeare’s humour was in fact rather bawdy and vulgar at times and 16th Century Elizabethan era audiences certainly would have laughed hard; both at the farcical violence and the innuendo that regularly feature in this particular play.

A word to non-native teachers of English

Students will look to you for guidance with pronunciation, intonation and diction. A thorough knowledge of the scene, supported by several viewings of high quality dramatic productions should give you a clear idea about the correct delivery of most lines. Using an adapted version of the original text, with language you are more familiar with, could be really helpful. I don’t see any harm in this when you are still being true to the original themes, ideas and events of the text. Work particularly on your own pronunciation of voiced and unvoiced “th” sounds and the pronunciation of the letter W, as both appear constantly in key words and phrases throughout the text. It is important, in my opinion, to avoid – at all costs – sharing with students translations of the play / scene into their own native language. Using visual resources, wherever possible, to help students understand their lines is preferable to giving them written explanations.

Establish a total immersion style of English teaching in these classes. Encourage students to use English at all times when discussing their group work and performance. Students will have the opportunity, when working independently as part of homework tasks, to discuss their work with classmates in their mother tongue if they wish. In the classroom they should be discussing the play in English only and you should be giving them basic directions (louder, quieter, with more passion, in an angry tone, face the audience etc.) in English only, using gestures to support understanding.

There is no need to be an expert on Shakespeare. The most important skills here are having the confidence to do something different and to be able to step back and trust your students to be more active and independent participants in the learning process without strict control and direction.

Observations on students' performances

As students settled into the process of rehearsing informally, they generally lost their self-consciousness and started to have fun in their roles. Because they had ample time to learn their lines at home, they were more free to focus on body language, movement, facial expression, tone and emphasis etc.; something I encouraged them to focus on constantly – as a priority of equal importance to the actual content of their speech.

Because much of their rehearsing was done outside of the classroom (in empty classrooms nearby, in 'chill-out areas', in their own free time or in after school groups) their performances were a surprise to classmates from other groups, who were delighted and entertained by the performances and were happy to participate in criteria based peer assessment and giving constructive feedback to their classmates.

Students received a strongly weighted speaking grade for performing their scene in class, which was, in almost all cases, a grade above what they would normally achieve for more traditional types of English assessment (mainly reading and writing based tasks). Some of the less academically motivated boys, who had thrown themselves into their role and had fun, achieved speaking grades significantly higher than their average performance in all school subjects (on average two grades higher).

Opportunities to extend and develop learning with real life outcomes

A nearby grammar school was hosting a competition for groups of students from neighbouring schools to perform part of a Shakespeare play which would be judged by a panel of teachers and performed in a local theatre to a large audience of secondary school students. Real outcomes for students' work can be hugely motivating in encouraging students to see the value of learning in the real world and I wanted to coordinate my Shakespeare teaching (integrated curriculum opportunities are of great interest to me) with this competition in order to offer students a genuine goal of acting and performing on stage, rather than simply obtaining a grade. Research shows that situated and contextualised learning bridges the gap between theory and knowledge and putting these into practice in the real world. Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that participation in a culture of practice can, in the first instance, be observation from the boundary or 'legitimate peripheral participation'. As learning and involvement in the culture increase, the participant moves from the role of observer to fully functioning agent (as cited in Herrington & Oliver, 2000).

The best five performers from the two classes combined would have the opportunity to participate in this competition, should they wish to do so. The chosen

five students were from two different year groups and were not used to communicating and working together. They had to find time, outside of English lessons, to prepare their performance of the entirety of Act II, Scene I together. A small amount of self-education on the teacher's side, and research from students, was needed here. The students needed some basic guidance from the teacher and from external sources on voice projection, how best to use the stage area (positioning themselves at all times so that they faced the audience and using movement to support the audience's understanding of the plot and relationship between characters) and consideration of technology and whether they wanted to use it (for example to use a projector to create a scenic background and whether to use stage lighting and / or sound effects to enhance the performance).

Here you can find video clips from the students' final on stage performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act II Scene I, in a local Slovak school's drama competition in November 2019, held in the Dom kultúry (house of culture), Vrbové, near Piešťany. There was an audience of around 300 people.

Katherine bullying her sister Bianca:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xASlePaUymfQ2pkYfNVGt2dgU2PSZFnl>

Poor Lithio, the abused music teacher:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1RG38NZAX2eX2xO7_sqdz3lzCPZoevS_B

Petruchio meets his shrew for the first time:

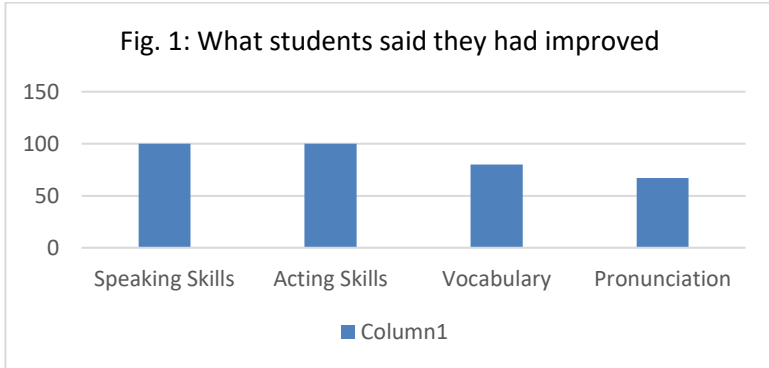
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1lEhNP_kXRtfn1SBrP1xkcdiVZoDuxXC

All of these 5 students were performing on a stage for the first time ever. They had no prior experience of acting. Some of them were still learning their lines in the taxi on the way to the competition, but their performances were truly excellent. Four out of five of them are only in their second year at the bilingual high school in Hlohovec where I teach. Sadly, it was only possible to take 5 students to the competition, but their classmates helped with rehearsals, props, costumes etc. and were delighted to watch the videos afterwards.

Results of the research

Students were given questionnaires at the beginning and the end of the unit of work. In the final questionnaire, 80% of students said they had improved their English skills. 16% didn't say whether they had improved or not, and 4% felt they had not improved. Of the 80% who said they had improved, they identified progress in the following skills (see Fig. 1).

Of all students surveyed, 68% specifically wrote on their questionnaire paper that the lessons were a great experience, with several students saying they wanted more of them and one girl writing: *"I love everything about these lessons. I wish we had more of them. We laugh, we learn. And that's how it's supposed to be."*



One student particularly praised the discussion of gender politics in modern society, saying *“it makes you think”*. Another student identified an improvement in cooperative learning skills. Another specifically mentioned a better understanding of grammar and an improvement in their memory.

The two students who did not feel they improved had recorded absences for several lessons.

When asked to suggest what they would improve about the Active Shakespeare lessons, my students suggested, in equal number, *“More time to study”* and *“Less time studying”*. Two students said they didn’t like acting in general, and one student suggested it would have been better to perform a modern adaptation of the play, set in *“Today’s world”*.

Impact on students’ academic achievement

In terms of summative assessment results, Students were assessed twice, once for an early first rehearsal performance of the play where students were allowed to use a script (after approximately 8 lessons of teaching the play), and a second time for a final performance, without script, with props and costumes etc. (after approximately 14 lessons).

- The class average of grade received after the first assessment was B (87.5%)
- The class average of grade received after the second assessment was A (94.75%)

The grades were awarded using speaking assessment criteria adapted from British GCSE (General Certificate in Secondary Education) specifications.

- When compared with other assessment data, students’ grades were, on average, between 10% and 40% higher than grades they would usually receive in other types of English assessments both this academic year and last.

Possible implications for teaching drama in the EFL classroom

Clearly, students benefit greatly from active and communicative approaches. Not only do such activities foster better development of speaking skills; they are also fun and pleasurable for students, leading ultimately to stronger relationships between teachers and students and between the students themselves.

Grading students for meaningful speaking activities using clear criteria can improve overall academic achievement and give confidence to those students who are weaker in reading and writing. The speaking component of the Slovak school leavers' *Maturita* exam is important, and yet speaking and / or drama activities and weighted assessment of speaking is often not heavily emphasised in English curriculums in the years preceding *Maturita*.

Real outcomes (for example, participation in a competition) can help motivate students to go beyond their usual levels of performance.

Studying Shakespeare can be a vehicle for provoking thought and discussion on important modern day social themes in a more light-hearted and humorous way.

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On usage specifications in dictionaries for learners of English: *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary* and *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* in focus

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Abstract: It is beyond any doubt that the information provided by dictionary definitions should indicate that language use depends on the pragmatic situation of discourse as well as the social relation between the speaker and the hearer. In order to achieve this goal, dictionaries frequently employ special conventions. But at the same time, it seems particularly important, from the perspective of a language learner, that the manner of adopting different conventions should not be too complicated. The knowledge of the difference between semantics and pragmatic meaning, especially when the dictionary user comes from different culture seems to be also of prime importance. When consulting dictionaries, the advanced foreign learner needs clear instruction in formal language use as well as the usage that is not informal in order to avoid the wrong style – choice consequences (here understood as miscommunication and misunderstanding). The present paper focuses on the question of how usage is marked within two most representative idioms dictionaries, namely *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* and *Cambridge Idioms Dictionary*. Additionally, it provides a number of reasons why this area may be problematic for students of English.

Key words: usage labels, lexicography, idioms dictionaries, user needs, dictionary research, user perspective, idiom.

1 Introduction

At a very outset, let us point to the fact that usage specification seems to be a very important issue in lexicography. The term usage label, as explained by Béjoint (2010, p. 12) “is a noun or adjective indicating the kind of context in which the word is normally used: slang, literary, American, Medicine, etc. [...] there are different kinds, corresponding to different varieties of language. In turn, *DoL* (Hartmann, 1989, p. 80) explains that: “label is a specialised symbol or abbreviated term used in reference works to mark a word or phrase as being associated with a particular usage or language variety. Dictionaries differ widely in the way they do this. As the information necessary to support a particular decision is not always available and boundary lines between different usage features are fluid, consistency is rarely achieved”.

As indicated, this kind of information is usually given within the front or back matter as a list of one word labels or abbreviations used. Although every dictionary has its own policy on labelling, their aim is to give their users information on the sociocultural and linguistic context of the usage of particular lexical item. At the same time, usage specifications in lexicography³ deal with one's attitude to the world and/or the interlocutor that is encoded in linguistic sign (cf. Apresyan, 1988).

As is well known, learning the difference between semantic and pragmatic meaning helps English language learners avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding. As essential from the perspective of a language learner, considering situational contexts seems important when communicating with other people (particularly when avoiding miscommunications).

Obviously, when we face the problem of usage specifications in dictionaries one feels obliged to delve much further into the past. Note that practicing lexicographers have faced multitude of difficulties related to shape and scope of labelling systems (Ptaszyński, 2010, pp. 411-412). Ptaszyński (2010, p. 412) goes even further claiming that "lexicographers have been searching in vain for an exhaustive and precise answer to the questions of which words to label in what kind of dictionaries and how to do it". Labels aim at indicating restrictions on the way lexical items are to be used, the contexts they are to occur and their relations to other words. In the words of Landau (1989, p. 217) labelling systems guide the readers how to use a given language correctly, but also provide relevant information on the limitations of use. Naturally, usage labels are useful when students are uncertain how to use the word appropriately.⁴

2 Towards user- friendly lexicography: the current state

To start with, let us stress that until 1960s the dictionaries had been compiled with the main aim of standardizing the language. In other words, quite understandably there was little, if any, interest either in the users or in the needs of those who use lexicographic publications. Yet, the user-oriented research that started and developed in the last few decades has advanced substantially. During the last fifty years or so lexicologists and lexicographers have become more aware and more convinced that dictionaries have to be designed for special user groups in response to well-specified and well-defined needs.⁵ And hence, both dictionary use and dictionary requirements have been investigated in a number of different ways and from different points of view. Hartmann (1987) identifies four major

³ The issue of usage labelling in general monolingual dictionaries was raised in Stachurska (2011, 2012, 2015, 2018).

⁴ Landau (1989) indicates that language learners react negatively to the lack of this kind of lexicographic information.

⁵ see, for example, Bogaards, 2003, p. 26.

categories of academic investigation in this area, namely, research into the information categories provided in dictionaries,

- research into specific dictionary user groups,
- research into the contexts of dictionary use,
- research into dictionary look-up strategies.

The proposal made by Hartmann (1987) was followed by other signposts, and one of the most recent examples is that of Béjoint (2010, p. 453) who provides us with a number

of dictionary investigation paths, such as:

- wide-ranging considerations concerning diverse categories of linguistic activity (reception, production, translation), as well as main types of dictionary that are used in performing the respective activities,
- the reference needs of the users,
- the reference skills.

Naturally, there are a number of methods of obtaining information about the dictionary users, such as user profiling, as well as user research (Atkins & Rundell, 2008, p. 28). One gets an impression that there are two main criteria that are involved here, that is 1) the understanding of the target group (adults, teenagers, children, native or foreign learners, general users or specialists), as well as 2) the usage purpose (educational, domestic or professional purpose). At the same time, the parameter of type of use should be by all means taken into account, too. As indicated by Atkins and Rundell (2008, p. 29), the dictionaries may be used for the following purposes:

- general reference purposes (understanding words),
- checking spelling and pronunciation,
- studying,
- learning a language,
- translating,
- writing essays,
- preparing for exams.

As to the users of lexicographic reference materials, Varantola (2002, p. 33) divides the quantum of dictionary users into language learners, non-professional users and professional users, while dictionary use itself is classified as either being receptive (helping with decoding tasks) or productive (helping with text encoding tasks). Fair enough, while monolingual dictionaries focus on meeting the receptive needs of native speakers, *EFL* dictionaries are aimed at language production⁶. As pointed out by

⁶ on this issue see, among others, Marelllo, 1987; Hartmann, 1999; Stark, 1999.

Bogaards (2003, p. 26), one can say with a certain degree of approximation that dictionaries are most frequently used for reading skills, mostly in order to find out about meanings of unknown words, less for writing skills, where the checking of spelling becomes important, and – least of all – dictionaries are used for orally performed tasks.

Let us delve more deeply into the subject, and to this end quote some specific views on the subject, formulated in one of the early publications Tomaszczyk (1979) who found out that students use dictionaries mainly while translating from *L2* to *L1*, while two decades later Battenburg (1991) collected enough evidence to formulate the opinion that at the lower levels of language mastery learners of English tend to use dictionaries mostly while reading, whereas advanced students of English resort to dictionaries most frequently while performing writing tasks. In a nutshell, one may conclude that the diverse functions of dictionaries match different choices that the dictionary compiler makes in the process of compilation. Much earlier, taking into consideration various parameters of dictionary making, Zgusta (1971, p. 216) maintained that: “The decision concerning the purpose or the combination of purposes of a planned dictionary is one of the most important ones. A good part of both the scientific and the commercial success of the dictionary will be the result of how reasonably this decision was made and how adroitly it was carried out”.

Back in the 1970s, McDavid (1979, p. 19-20) drew a list of four potential functions the dictionary is aimed to fulfill:

- the record of the language, whether diachronic or synchronic,
- the familiarising a user with a language/variety of it,
- the supply of supplementary information (linguistic or otherwise) for the casual user,
- the guide of what one should or should not.

Linguistic causes and conditions aside, when one assumes a strictly sociological perspective, user research certainly necessitates the inclusion of the following aspects of dictionary function:

- attitudes and habits of particular groups regarding dictionary use,
- the way dictionary users are distributed among social, educational, occupational, age and sex groups,
- the role dictionary plays (at home and work),
- the profile of buyers and dictionary owners,
- the parameter of dictionary lifespan,
- the influence of the price on the potential buyers’ purchase decision,
- the way electronic dictionaries influence the perception and usage of dictionaries (see Svensén, 2009).

One must say that the issues highlighted above are discussed rather sporadically today, whereas the main interest tends to be focused on those inquiries that are related to reference needs of dictionary users with certain aspects more frequently discussed than others; here checking words for meaning and spelling seem to be at the fore.

As a matter of fact, one does not need much specialist literature to realize that explanation of the word meaning (or meanings) may be assumed to be the major dictionary user requirement. Béjoint (2010, p. 243) stresses that – although results related to dictionary users and dictionary use are not easy to relate – assumptions are intuitively clear and justified: The main conclusions may be grasped in the following set of points:

- Monolingual dictionaries are used mostly for meaning, particularly of rare words, and secondly for spelling.
- Monolingual dictionaries are often used in families for word games.
- The entries for frequent words, especially function words, are hardly ever consulted, even by foreign students,
- Information on expression in monolingual dictionaries is not used much, particularly when it is in coded form. Foreign students, who need it most, prefer using their bilingual dictionaries for that purpose.
- The front matter on how to use the dictionary is rarely consulted.
- The subjects are not clear about what other types of information they would like their dictionaries to carry.

We observe that there are a number of specialised studies that deal specifically with the issue of the relationship between types of words that are checked by dictionary users and their influence on look-up behaviour. Let us quote another voice in the discussion, that is that of Bogaards (1998) who seems to be claiming nothing new when he says that infrequent words are checked more often than those lexical items that look familiar to dictionary users. In any case, it is fairly obvious that any look-up procedure starts with the decision to open a dictionary and determine the word that causes the problem. Yet, whatever the lexical entry to be looked up is, one may certainly speak of certain definite users' skills. In their recent study Atkins and Rundell (2008, p. 29) put emphasis on two skills expected on the part of dictionary users, namely their linguistic knowledge and their familiarity with dictionary conventions.

To round up, one may say that the dictionary is most frequently used as a tool for quick and easy reference. Research into dictionary use is intended to help users consult dictionaries successfully, and the results obtained inform teachers, as well as dictionary compilers about potential dictionary skills. Unfortunately, they by no means guarantee the right choices made by commercial dictionary publishers.

3 Techniques of pragmatic labelling in idioms dictionaries

At this point it seems logical to start our discussion by taking a closer look at each of the idioms dictionaries separately. To start with Cambridge Idioms Dictionary (2006) (henceforth: *CID*), its usage information is provided in the section titled “How to use this dictionary”. Here, the editor’s introduction is devoted to “other things you need to know about idioms” (*CID*, 2006, p. xiii). Among others, we find the following passage:

Idioms with different forms in British, American or Australian are shown on separate lines. [...]

If an idiom is formal, informal, old-fashioned, etc. this is shown with a label. (*CID*, 2006, p. xiii).

Additionally, relevant usage labels are explained as follows:

Regional labels	
BRITISH	this idiom is only used in British English
AMERICAN	this idiom is only used in American English
AUSTRALIAN	this idiom is only used in Australian English
MAINLY BRITISH	this idiom is mainly used in British English
MAINLY AMERICAN	this idiom is mainly used in American English

Register labels	
INFORMAL	idioms which are used with friends and family or people you know in relaxed situations
FORMAL	idioms which are used in a serious or polite way, for example in business documents, serious newspapers and books, lecturers, new broadcasts, etc.
VERY INFORMAL	idioms which are used in a very informal or not very polite way, often between members of a particular social group
OLD- FASHIONED	idioms which are still used but sound old-fashioned
TABOO	idioms which are likely to offend people and are not used in formal situations
HUMOROUS	idioms which are intended to make people laugh
LITERARY	idioms which are mainly used in literature

When we move on to the relevant features of *Oxford Idioms Dictionary* (2018; henceforth: *OID*), we see that its treatment of usage is merely restricted to the inside front cover within the “labels used in the dictionary” section. Here we read as follows:

“Many idioms have one or more labels to explain how they are used” (*OID*, 2018).

In particular, one may observe the following explanations of label categories used within the body of the dictionary:

- (1) idioms that are used as a different types of language (*formal, informal, slang, offensive, spoken, written, literary, old-fashioned, old-use, figurative*)
- (2) idiom labelled *saying* is a fixed phrase or a proverb that is used to make a comment, give advice, etc.
- (3) some labels show the attitude of the speaker:
 - approving – the speaker is showing the positive attitude to a person, a situation, etc., for example: the happy/golden mean
 - disapproving – the speaker is showing a negative attitude to a person, a situation, etc., for example: a snake in the grass
 - humorous – the speaker intends to be funny, not serious, for example: get your beauty sleep
 - ironic – the speaker really means the opposite: What bright spark (=stupid person) left the front door open all night?
- (4) Other labels show you the context in which the idiom is usually used: *business, law, politics, sport, technical*.

As stressed in the foregoing, usage labels are aimed to guide students with restrictions on the use of lexical items. However, the main problem here is that we find different labels in different idioms dictionaries. *OID* and *CID* seem to offer various labelling conventions. In case of *OID* we find three categories: *formality* (the category consists of 10 labels: *formal, informal, slang, offensive, spoken, written, literary, old-fashioned, old-use, figurative*). The second is *attitude* category including: *approving, disapproving, humorous, ironic*. The last category involves context. The array of labels there include: *business, law, politics, sport, technical*.

Unfortunately, the editors do not provide even a short explanation of some labels they introduce (1), (4). For example, one does not find a word explaining *formal, informal, etc*. Likewise, one has the impression that it may not be entirely clear to every dictionary user what the difference between *old-fashioned* and *old use* is. Another critical remark that may be formulated is the lack of explicitness in case of register labelling.

What is more, one notices immediately that – as in the case of *OID*– the explanation given on the inside cover indicates that one can expect merely the stylistic labels set out there.

Generally speaking, one feels justified in saying that for the foreign learner, the account of stylistic values proposed seems to be rather inconsistent. Given all the

usage labels definitions mixed, learners may not be made aware of linguistic blunders. Besides, the inclusion of such stylistic labels as *spoken or written* may in fact sound somewhat ambiguous for the category of *EFL* learners.

In turn, the editors of *CID* decided on two main label categories, namely: *regional labels*, where we have the following: *British, American, Australian, mainly British, mainly American*. In case of the second category – *register labels*, we find the following marking units: *informal, formal, very informal, old-fashioned, taboo, humorous, literary*.

A general observation is that the range of usage here is rather narrow, as in fact is limited to region (here British, American and Australian) as well as seven register categories. In case of them, one easily notices that all the labels mentioned here are in fact different style markers, rather than register ones. Secondly, one may find the category *very informal* quite useless as the category *informal* seems to be sufficient and in case of words that are very informal the category *offensive* may be employed.

Also, one is led to believe that in order to become more user - friendly, it seems to be reasonable for lexicographers to employ a unified labelling scheme.

Particularly problematic, as it may seem, for the *EFL* students is the fluctuating number of labels employed in various lexicographic works. Obviously enough, for the sake of showing that language use depends not only on the context of discourse but also the social relations between interlocutors, students need thorough instruction in formal language use, or alternatively the usage that is not informal.

Let us point to the fact that so far we raised some doubts as to idioms dictionaries' reliability as a tool in recognizing usage value of particular lexical items. The issue of prime importance to our discussion now is the microstructure of the *OID* and *CID* and the manner of lexicographic description of usage.

In order to investigate and illustrate the way the usage parameter is handled within the representative sample of *OID* and *CID*, an overview of sample entries will be attempted in what follows. To be more precise, our analysis will be based on the overview of 12 sample idioms as found within *CID* and *OID* macrostructure.

4 The way idioms are presented on the dictionary canvas

Let us start our inquiry with the relevant *OID* and *CID* entries. While considering usage value of the idioms analysed, the following labels are given:

idiom	<i>OID</i>	<i>CID</i>
what's his/her face	Spoken	informal
get the jitters	Informal	informal
(as) keen as mustard	BrE, informal	British & Australian old-fashioned

kick against the pricks	-----	British & Australian literary
make a meal (out) of sth	Informal	British & Australian
a one-horse town	Informal	American & Australian
get your own back	Informal	-----
sign/take the pledge	old- fashioned	humorous
get your own back	Informal	-----
use your loaf	Informal	British and American old-fashioned
wise guy	informal disapproving, especially AmE	American & Australian disapproving
don't take any wooden nickles	AmE	American informal

Tab. 1: Usage labels as used within the body of *OID* and *CID*

The purpose of the table above is to show how the idioms under consideration are labeled according to the parameter of usage. All in all, one is justified in saying that when analyzing idioms from the microstructural perspective we find relevant labels provided before the referential definition of the meaning of the idiom.

The name of the labeling is to show the user the type of social context in which a given idiom may most typically be expected to be used. Also, the dialectical regions where particular idioms may be found are specified. All in all, the general pattern is that the entries start with the headword (idiom) followed by label and then the information regarding meaning.

A close study of the usage labels provided in both dictionaries under scrutiny reveals differences. Yet, it should be kept in mind that idioms dictionaries are worked on either by native speakers and it is not always easy for them to decide what is simple (as opposed to difficult) for foreign learners. Obviously, for foreign learners the weighting of degrees of formality is most welcome and profitable, so as to indicate the language use depends mostly on the pragmatic situation on the discourse.⁷ Since informality is not always appropriate, the learners need thorough instruction in formal language use as well as the use that is not informal. Moreover, what seems essential for dictionary users is the fact that sometimes there is a striking contrast between the value encoded in the used labels proposed.

For the sake of comparison let us take a closer look at the usage labels attributed to idioms shown within Table 1. One may easily imagine the effect this state of affairs would cause in a group of learners trying to determine whether the idiom may be used

⁷ For this reason all the labels should be taken into consideration by learners of English.

informally or rather old-fashioned. It is worth noticing that the differences in labelling in no way help to grasp the right choice of pragmatic value of idioms.

Conclusion

Unquestionably, a proper understanding of users' needs is essential if the lexicographer attempts to promote his work to the public. Assuming that usefulness of information conventions that have been devised should always be in forefront of lexicographers' minds, the question that was raised at a very outset was if the concept of usage is lexicographically handled in *OID* (2018) and *CID* (2006).

Although usage labels should be omnipresent in dictionaries, in their present form they seem not to be as useful as they may be hoped and expected to be. Firstly, we feel that they should be of somewhat universal nature, but also they deserve their right place within the dictionary macrostructure. We have pointed out that ideally they are to be employed in different types of works of reference, though the main focus of the analysis carried in this work was placed on idioms dictionaries.

While analyzing the language data that has been selected we resorted to lexicographic works that account almost exclusively for the standard variety of English, but – at the same time – attempt was made to handle dialect differences, which is by no means a strong point of the majority of the MLDs, though there are grounds to maintain that dialectal peculiarities are essential in any specialized fully-fledged analysis of any segment of the lexical system.

However, it is our belief that a unified system may be both successfully employed in language analysis and prove to be welcome in lexicographic theory and practice.

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Kashubian as an ausbau language: a sociolinguistic perspective

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Abstract: The article addresses a long-standing issue with regard to the status of Kashubian, a lect spoken in northern Poland. Should it be treated as a language, or a 'mere' dialect of Polish? To answer the question, one may turn to the concepts of *abstand* and *ausbau* languages postulated by Kloss (1967). An *abstand* language is one that is distinctly separate from any other languages. In turn, an *ausbau* language is a standard variety which often develops from a part of a dialect continuum. Hence, Kloss's framework addresses situations in which varieties belonging to a dialect continuum have been standardized and elaborated upon to be considered separate languages although are (partially) mutually intelligible. As to Kashubian, one may claim that it was an *abstand* language in the past to be subsequently relegated to a dialect-like status in the process of near-dialectalization. In the recent decades, there have been attempts to standardize Kashubian and expand its scope of use to the areas previously occupied by Polish. Kashubian has an extensive body of publications such as grammars, dictionaries and literature. Furthermore, the lect has made advances into numerous new areas. It is used, inter alia, in the media, in the church, or as the language of schooling and education. All things considered, it seems plausible to postulate that Kashubian has attained the status of an *ausbau* language.

Keywords: sociolinguistics, *abstand* and *ausbau* languages, Kashubian, standardization

1 Introduction

Linguists have been divided with regard to the status of Kashubian, a lect spoken in the north of Poland. While some linguists, especially recently, have treated Kashubian as one of the Slavic languages, others still treat it as a 'mere' dialect of Polish. Although, it may appear that the issue will not be resolved soon, in the present paper we are going to shed some light and present our own stance on the problem.

According to Heinz Kloss (1967)⁸, an *abstand* language is one that is distinctly separate from any other languages. In turn, an *ausbau* language is a standard variety which often develops from a part of a dialect continuum. Hence, it may be useful to adopt the concepts of *abstand* and *ausbau* languages originally proposed by Kloss as the framework used for our considerations. The framework addresses situations in which varieties belonging to a dialect continuum have been standardized and elaborated upon to be considered separate languages although they are (partially)

⁸ Kloss, H. (1967). 'Abstand Languages' and 'Ausbau Languages'. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 9(7), 29-41.

mutually intelligible. If we accept Kloss's ideas to be a valid framework for our investigations, one might claim that Kashubian had once been an *abstand* language, but it was subsequently relegated to a dialect-like status in the process of near-dialectalization, becoming a dialect or near-dialect of Polish.

Recently, there have been attempts to standardize Kashubian and expand its scope of use to the areas previously occupied by Polish. As Kloss says, languages are reshaped, by means of non-narrative prose and not necessarily by means of poetry and fiction. Bearing the above in mind, let us point out that Kashubian has both types of writing. There exists an extensive body of publications such as grammars, dictionaries and literature in Kashubian, but there are also other publications such as newspapers or magazines as well as popular websites that are available in Kashubian. What is more, the lect has made advances into numerous new areas, such as, *inter alia*, the media, the church and education of the primary, secondary and even university level. If we agree with Kloss that Kashubian, once being an *abstand* language, attained subsequently a dialect-like status, we could postulate, taking into consideration the facts with regard to the standardization of Kashubian that Kashubian is approaching, or has already attained, the status of an *ausbau* language.

2 *Abstand* and *ausbau* languages: basic considerations

2.1 What are *abstand* and *ausbau* languages?

At a very outset, as mentioned above, it may prove useful to adopt the concepts of *abstand* and *ausbau* languages, originally proposed by Heinz Kloss in 1967, as the framework used for our scrutiny, that is, trying to classify Kashubian as a language or a dialect. Before we present our observations, which may be functional with regard to the assessment of Kashubian, let us summarize Heinz's most important postulates with reference to *abstand* and *ausbau* languages.

Let us start with the nomenclature offered by Kloss, which we will avail ourselves of. As Kloss⁹ says "the term *Abstandsprache* is paraphrased best as 'language by distance', the reference being of course not to geographical but to intrinsic distance. The term *Ausbausprache* may be defined as 'language by development'". The linguist adds that *ausbau* languages are "recognized as such because of having been shaped or reshaped, molded or remolded - as the case may be - in order to become a standardized tool of literary expression"¹⁰.

According to Kloss, an *ausbau* language is considered a language by virtue of the fact that it has been reshaped, remolded and elaborated on through the process of deliberate language planning. What is important is that this process cannot be "slow, almost imperceptible and quite uncontrolled (...) which we are wont to call natural"¹¹.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ *ibid.*

This observation is of primary importance to our analysis, since, as we will see, it will prove useful to formulate our conclusions with regard to the status of Kashubian. On the other hand, “an abstand language is a linguistic unit which a linguist would have to call a language even if not a single word had ever been written in it”¹². What plays a crucial role here is that an abstand language significantly differs from other languages, to the extent that observers usually have no problem classifying it as a language, and not a dialect. In turn, the concept of ausbau language is chiefly a sociological one. As already mentioned, in the framework offered by Kloss, the term refers to languages which have been intentionally reshaped as to serve as a means of literary expression.

What is important is that some languages “among them English, French, and German, are both abstand and ausbau languages, i.e., they are called languages both because of having been made over and because of their intrinsic distance from all other languages”¹³. Kloss adds that numerous languages are treated as languages and not dialects, merely due to the fact of being ausbau languages. In this respect, Kloss says that “if one asked whether a given language would be accorded that designation if its speakers had adopted a closely related standard language as their chief medium of literary expression, one would probably be surprised at how many would have to be classified as mere dialects (or clusters of dialects)”¹⁴. For example, if the Czech language had been adopted by all the speakers of the Slovak dialects, and the Portuguese language had been adopted by all the Galician speakers, under such circumstances, we would probably not claim that the Galician dialects and the Slovak dialects constitute the dialects of the Galician language and the Slovak language, but rather the dialects of Portuguese and Czech, respectively.

Following the principles of Kloss’s framework, let us expand on the concept of ausbau language. First of all, an ausbau language must be differentiated with the so-called polycentric standard language. We deal with the polycentric standard language if there are two variants of the same standard, based on the same or very similar dialect. A classical example of such a language was Serbo-Croatian, one of the languages of Yugoslavia. As Kloss advocates, although polycentric standard languages have two variants, we do not treat those variants as two different languages since there is “no intrinsic distance”¹⁵ between them. We often find polycentric standards if a language has a dominant position in two or more places which are separated geographically (cf. British and American English, Portuguese used in Portugal and Brazilian Portuguese).

Furthermore, we may find situations where we deal with two ausbau languages which are not based on abstand languages. Here, we deal with dialects whose speakers

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

would probably be classified by experts as users of one linguistic community if those speakers were still at a preliterate stage¹⁶. Kloss adds that such ausbau languages usually have created two literary standards, which are based on different dialects. Those standards would, naturally, have some differences which often do not exclude mutual intelligibility. This observation is also important for our considerations with regard to Kashubian. Among such ausbau languages, one can mention Czech and Slovak, Danish and Swedish, or Bulgarian and Macedonian¹⁷. Finally, we can mention situations where two written standards are based on different groups of dialects and they are considered to be two separate (abstand) languages because of their intrinsic distance. Dutch and German are examples of such languages.

2.2 Abstand and ausbau languages and language planning

As Kloss informs, efforts to reshape a language usually concentrate on its written form. Spoken language is transformed through its literary standard. This reflection is also of special importance in our consideration concerning the status of Kashubian. In the same vein, the scholar claims that “it is not so much by means of poetry and fiction that a language is reshaped (and perhaps salvaged) but by means of non-narrative prose. It need not be - certainly not from the outset - scholarly literature of a high caliber, but at the very least popular prose (suitable for unsophisticated magazines and educational textbooks) seems indispensable”¹⁸. According to the scholar, there are three levels of non-narrative prose: popular non-narrative prose (e.g. primers, devotional and/or political booklets, etc.), sophisticated non-narrative prose (e.g. literary criticism, summaries of essential findings of science, etc.), and learned non-narrative prose (e.g. original research work, procedures, intricate presentations of research problems, etc.)¹⁹. As will be seen in the next part of the article, Kashubian has produced a large volume of non-narrative prose belonging to all three levels mentioned above.

According to Kloss, there are two kinds of language planning. By Kloss, they are referred to as conservative language planning and innovational language planning. Conservative language planners pay particular attention to “correctness, purism, elegance; they select what to them seems best from among the existing forms of speech and if change is unavoidable, they at least try to slow it down”. In turn,

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ In this place let us quote Kloss (1967, p. 31) who says that H. G. Lunt writes about the relation between Macedonian and Bulgarian in the following way: “That Macedonians should accept standard Bulgarian for their own use would demand far fewer concessions on their part than have been made by Bavarians and Hamburgers, by Neapolitans and Piedmontese, and even within Yugoslavia by natives of Nil in the Southeast and Senj in the Northwest”.

¹⁸ Kloss, H. (1967), *op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

innovational language planners “are bent on change and their long-range goals (sometimes even their methods) are often revolutionary”. As the scholar holds, the aforementioned distinction is significant, as *ausbau* languages by definition are not the result of conservative language planning, but of innovational language planning. Also this observation has important implications for our consideration with regard to the status of Kashubian.

3 Dialectization and near-dialectization

It happens often that the relationship between two related languages may be even less obvious if the languages are used by literate populations. In such a case, we may deal with a situation that Kloss dubs “the near-dialectization of a sister language - brought about, of course, by its sister”²⁰. In numerous cases, *abstand* languages have been relegated to the dialect-like status. The speakers of such languages very often find their variety to be a dialect of the more prestigious literary language. This is very much true about the speakers of Kashubian. Especially, before the political changes that took place in Poland and other central and eastern European countries in the 90s of the 20th century, the official stance on Kashubian, promoted and acknowledged by the Polish authorities, was that Kashubian was a mere dialect of Polish. A vast number of Kashubian speakers would accept such treatment of their variety. The situation started to change only in the 90s of the 20th century when the speakers of Kashubian began speaking more readily of their lect as a language independent of Polish. Attempts to subjugate a language to a role of a dialect are not isolated cases in human history. For instance, Catalan during the reign of Franco was restricted to the role of a dialect. Yet, this status of Catalan was never accepted by its speakers who still treated their lect as a language. Kloss provides some examples of languages which have been near-dialectized. For instance, Low German has become a near-dialect of Standard German, Sardinian may be treated as a near dialect of Italian, whereas, what is of great importance to us, Kashubian may be treated as a near-dialect of Polish. In this place, we would like to stress the fact that even the most fervent opponents of the language ‘independence’ of Kashubian would normally acknowledge Kashubian as ‘the most diverse of all the Polish dialects’.

Evolution of Kashubian into an *ausbau* language

3.1 Kashubian: the past and the present

Kashubian is a variety belonging to the Lekhitic subgroup of the West Slavic group of languages. It is spoken on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea in the Polish region of Pomerania, in the proximity to the city of Gdańsk. According to the national census of 2011, over 108 thousand individuals declared Kashubian to be their primary means

²⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

of communication in the home²¹. Kashubian has officially enjoyed the status of a *regional language* in Poland since 2005. As mentioned at the very outset, the status of Kashubian remains controversial, although there is a growing tendency among linguists and Kashubians themselves to treat Kashubian as a language rather than a dialect of Polish.

The beginnings of Kashubian can be traced back to the Pomeranian varieties spoken in the Middle Ages on the southern Baltic shore, in the area stretching west of the lower Vistula. In turn, standard Polish originated from the ‘inland’ Polish dialects, especially those of Greater Poland and Lesser Poland (cf. Klemensiewicz 2002 and Treder 2013). In the words of Topolińska²², the Kashubian dialects “are the only remnants of the previously vast area of the Lekhitic *Pomeranian dialects* spoken *once on the Baltic shore* from the Vistula to the right side of the Elbe”. The last fact appears to rather interesting, since, as we can see, Kashubian and Polish have different roots.

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned facts concerning the distinction between abstand and ausbau languages, it may be postulated that Kashubian was once an abstand language which subsequently underwent the process of near-dialectalization. This is also what Kloss claims with reference to Kashubian²³ and is also in line with what the Czech linguist Vít Dovalil advocates. Dovalil says that some abstand languages “may, for ideological or psychological reasons, be considered dialects of other elaborated languages (eg. Kashubian in relation to Polish (...))”²⁴. We agree with the aforesaid authors that Kashubian was once an abstand language that became a near-dialect of Polish. This is not surprising, bearing in mind that, apart from a short period in the Middle Ages when there existed a ‘Kashubian’ dukedom, there has not been a Kashubian state. During its history, Kashubia was an area of rivalry between various Polish and German states and has been interchangeably either a part of Poland or a part of different German states. In such circumstances, it is not surprising that Kashubian was not established as an official language, which definitely promoted the near-dialectalization.

²¹ According to Zrzeszenie Kaszubsko-Pomorskie, www.kaszubi.pl (accessed on 12.09.2018).

²² Topolińska, A. (1974). *Historical Phonology of the Kashubian Dialects of Polish*, Walter de Gruyter, p. 13.

²³ Kloss, H. (1967). Op. cit., p. 35.

²⁴ Dovalil, V. (2017). JAZYK TYPU AUSBAU – JAZYK TYPU ABSTAND. In Karlík, P., Nekula, M., & Pleskalová, J. (Eds.), *CzechEncy - Nový encyklopedický slovník češtiny*. Available at: <https://www.czechency.org/slovník/JAZYK TYPU AUSBAU – JAZYK TYPU ABSTAND> (accessed on 4.12.2019). The original Czech version: “(...) mohou být z ideologických či psychologických důvodů považovány za dialekty jiných elaborovaných jazyků (např. kašubština ve vztahu k polštině (...))” (translation mine).

3.2 Kashubian: towards an ausbau language

Let us now have a closer look at the current, sociolinguistic status quo of Kashubian. As Kloss claims, “the relation between the polycentric standard language (as typified by Serbo-Croatian) and the ausbau language (as typified by Slovak in its relation to Czech) is not a static but a dynamic one”. Bearing in mind the aforementioned statement and the findings presented above, we postulate that Kashubian is an ausbau language. Kashubian should then be put in one group, along with other ausbau, West Slavic languages, such as Polish, Czech, or Slovak. If we treat Czech and Slovak, two very similar lects, as two languages, why should we not consider Polish and Kashubian also as independent languages? Let us quote Trudgill who holds that “Polish, Slovak and Czech are Ausbau languages which together form the West Slavic dialect continuum. They are mutually intelligible, especially Polish and Slovak, and Slovak and Czech, but they form three separate languages because there are three separate standardised norms with their own agreed and accepted orthographies, shared histories, traditional literatures, widely used dictionaries and grammar books – and their own nation states”²⁵. Trudgill stresses the existence of, among other, separate standardized norms along with accepted orthographies, literatures, widely used dictionaries and grammar books as a prerequisite for existence of an ausbau language. It seems plausible to claim that in case of Kashubian, the above mentioned formal conditions for establishing an ausbau language have been met. As Kloss says, “we might keep in mind, then, that the *abstand* (distance) language concept is derived from the spoken language, while the ausbau concept is derived from the written standard”²⁶.

3.2.1 Standardization of Kashubian

As Treder²⁷ says, we may notice a steady progress in establishing the standard Kashubian language. With regard to the standard of Kashubian, Popowska-Taborska and Dołowy-Rybińska claim that the language material used in the process of the establishment of the Kashubian standard comes mostly from the most archaic, northern and north-western Kashubian dialects. This material is continuously adjusted, in opposition to the Polish literary language, to the functions it is going to perform in the standard. Hence, it is not surprising that Slavic archaisms which are

²⁵ Trudgill, P. (2004). Glocalisation and the Ausbau sociolinguistics of modern Europe. In Duszak, A. & Okulska, U. (Eds.) (2004), *Speaking from the margin: global English from a European perspective*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004, p. 3.

²⁶ Kloss, H. (1967), op. cit., p. 33.

²⁷ Treder, J. (2013). Kaszubszczyzna – od dialektu do języka. In Dunin-Dudkowska, A. & Małycki, A. (Eds.), *70 lat współczesnej polszczyzny. Zjawiska – Procesy – Tendencje. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Janowi Mazurowi* (pp. 421-438). Wydawnictwo UMCS.

non-existent in Polish, borrowings from Low German as well as neologisms are abundant in the new, Kashubian language²⁸.

While writing about standardization of languages, one should mention the role of the official bodies regulating languages, such as *Académie française* ('the French Academy') or *Rat für deutsche Rechtschreibung* ('Council for German Orthography') for German. A similar body has also been established for Kashubian. In 2006 *Radzëzna Kaszëbsczégò Jãzëka* ('The Council of the Kashubian Language') was established. The Council is the authority which disseminates and promotes the knowledge about Kashubian and is competent for the matters connected with conducting exams in Kashubian as well as granting language certificates to teachers of Kashubian. According to Wardhaugh, standardization is connected with language codification. This includes the development of grammars, spelling books, dictionaries and literature (cf. Treder²⁹ and Gołąbek 2018³⁰). Below we present some facts in connection with the Kashubian literature³¹.

Language-related publications

Kashubian has an extensive body of publications such as grammars, spelling books, dictionaries and literature. Several Kashubian grammars have been published. Let us mention but three representative titles. A German historian and Slavist, Friedrich Lorentz published his *Gramatyka pomorska*³² ('A Pomeranian Grammar') in the 30s of the 20th century. The grammar is a thorough three-volume work and it provides a detailed description of Kashubian spoken at the beginning of the 20th century. Another interesting publication is *Gramatyka kaszubska: Zarys popularny* ('The Kashubian Grammar: a Popular Sketch') by Edward Breza and Jerzy Treder³³. It is a descriptive compendium of the grammar of Kashubian. The last publication is Hana Makùròt's contemporary, prescriptive grammar of Kashubian, *Gramatika*

²⁸ Popowska-Taborska, H. & Dołowy-Rybińska, N. (2015). Czy współcześnie powstający kaszubski język literacki oraz obecnie tworzony język neobretoński mogą stanowić przedmiot dociekań badaczy językowego obrazu świata? *Studia z Filologii Polskiej i Słowiańskiej*, 50, 271-279.

²⁹ Treder, J. (2013), op. cit.

³⁰ Wardhaugh, R. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 33.

³¹ Gołąbek, R. (2018). Standardization as a Criterion Used in Distinguishing a Language From a Dialect: a Sociolinguistic Perspective on Kashubian. *Radomskie Studia Filologiczne*, 1/7/2018, 68-78.

³² Lorentz, F. *Gramatyka pomorska*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Zachodniosłowiańskiego, 1927-37. All the translations from Polish and Kashubian into English are mine.

³³ Breza, E. & Treder, J. (1981). *Gramatyka kaszubska: Zarys popularny*. Zrzeszenie Kaszubsko-Pomorskie.

kaszëbsczëgò jãzëka ('A Grammar of the Kashubian Language') from 2016³⁴. The last source may be well used by the students studying Kashubian and those who need a reference book of standard Kashubian. In this place, we may add that there is a growing number of individuals who speak standard Kashubian. They may be those who learned one of the Kashubian dialects at home, but have also a certain command of standard Kashubian as well as those who learned standard Kashubian as a second language.

There are also several Kashubian spelling books and dictionaries that are available. An early Kashubian dictionary, *Słownik języka pomorskiego czyli kaszubskiego*³⁵ ('A Dictionary of the Pomeranian, that is, the Kashubian Language') by Stefan Ramułt was first published in 1893 and it was re-published in a revised version in 2003. The dictionary is bilingual, Kashubian-Polish, and it contains about 20 thousand Kashubian words. A comprehensive Kashubian dictionary is that written by Bernard Sychta who was a catholic priest, Kashubian activist and linguist. His dictionary *Słownik gwar kaszubskich na tle kultury ludowej*³⁶ ('A Dictionary of the Kashubian Subdialects against the Backdrop of the Folk Culture') is a monumental, seven-volume work of profound significance for the Kashubian language. Last, but not least, let us mention Eùgeniusz Gòłąbk's contemporary prescriptive dictionary *Kaszëbsczi słowòrz normatiwny*³⁷ ('A Kashubian Normative Dictionary'), published in 2005. The work is a monolingual dictionary written in Kashubian, which provides definitions of lexical items as well as prescribes the grammatical patterns of use, where appropriate. In 1997, the same author produced a spelling book entitled *Wskòzë kaszëbsczëgò pisënkù*³⁸ ('The Kashubian Spelling Rules'). Before we go on to present some of the literary works in Kashubian, let us mention Jerzi Tréder's book entitled *Spòdlowò wiedzà ò kaszëbiznie*³⁹ ('Some Basic Facts about Kashubian'). The book contains abundant information in connection with Kashubian, such as the summary of the research on Kashubian, Kashubian spelling rules, internal variation of Kashubian, the standardization facts pertaining to Kashubian and Kashubian language maps.

³⁴ Makùròt, H. (2016). *Gramatika kaszëbsczëgò jãzëka*, Wëdòwizna Kaszëbskò-Pòmòrszczëgò Zrzeszeniò. The names of the authors publishing in Kashubian are quoted in Kashubian if they appear as such in a given publication.

³⁵ Ramułt, S. (1983). *Słownik języka pomorskiego czyli kaszubskiego*, Akademia Umiejętności.

³⁶ Sychta, B. (1967). *Słownik gwar kaszubskich na tle kultury ludowej*, Ossolineum, 1967–76.

³⁷ Gòłąbk, E. (2005). *Kaszëbsczi słowòrz normatiwny*, Oficyna Czac.

³⁸ Gòłąbk, E. (1997). *Wskòzë kaszëbsczëgò pisënkù*. Oficyna Czac.

³⁹ Tréder, J. (2014). *Spòdlowò wiedzà ò kaszëbiznie*, Wëdòwizna Kaszëbskò-Pòmòrszczëgò Zrzeszeniò.

Literature

Now, let us turn to the literature written in Kashubian. A detail description of the Kashubian literature is far beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to mention that Kashubian literature has existed for many years and is well represented by different literary genres. As Kalinowski and Kuik-Kalinowska⁴⁰ hold, in the 15th century the period of the Proto-Kashubian literature begins. One of the earliest pieces of Kashubian writings is *Duchowne piesnie D. Marciná Lutherá y ynŕbich naboznich męzow* ('Spiritual Songs of Doctor Martin Luther')⁴¹. As far as the 19th century writings are concerned, Kalinowski and Kuik-Kalinowska⁴² mention Florian Ceynowa, as an example of a Kashubian Romantic writer. Ceynowa is often referred to as the father of the Kashubian literature⁴³. In turn, Heronim Derdowski is known for writing his satirical epic *O Panu Czorlińscim co do Pucka po sece jachoł*⁴⁴ ('Mr. Czorlinszczi Goes to Puck to Buy Fishing Nets'). The poem was published in 1880 and is often regarded as the earliest example of the Kashubian poetry. *Żęcé i przigodě Remusa - Zvjercadło kaszubskji*⁴⁵ ('Life and Adventures of Remus - the Kashubian Mirror'), by Aleksander Majkowski is considered not only his master work, but also the greatest masterpiece of the Kashubian literature.

According to Kalinowski and Kuik-Kalinowska⁴⁶, there was a great expansion of literature in Kashubian in the second half of the 20th century. Again, due to the abundance of creations, it is impossible to mention all the writers and poets creating in Kashubian after the Second World War. Among the most prominent literates, one can enumerate Jan Piepka, Alojzy Nagel and Jan Drzeżdżon. Another wave of Kashubian literary creators include, inter alia, Stanislaw Pestka, Marian Majkowski, Eugeniusz Pryczkowski and Stanisław Janke. The youngest generation of authors writing in Kashubian may be represented, among others, by Roman Drzeżdżon, Tomasz Fopke and Ida Czaja.

⁴⁰ Kalinowski, D., & Kuik-Kalinowska, A. (2017). *Vademecum Kaszubskie - Literatura Kaszubska. Rekonesans*. Wydawnictwo Zrzeszenia Kaszubsko – Pomorskiego, p. 14.

⁴¹ In this place we should mention that some authors claim that the work was written in Polish and only contains regional, Kashubian elements. For details see ⁴¹ Treder, J. and Obracht-Prondzyński, C. Kashubian Literature: The Phenomenon, its History and its Social Dimension. In Obracht-Prondzyński, C. & Wicherkiewicz, T. (Eds.) (2011). *The Kashubs: Past and Present*, Peter Lang, pp. 109-140.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ op. cit., p. 54.

⁴⁴ Derdowski, H. (1934). *O panu Czorlińscim, co do Pucka po sece jachoł*, Drukarnia i księgarnia w Pelplinie.

⁴⁵ Majkowski, A. (1938). *Żęcé i przigodě Remusa. Zvjercadło kaszubskji*, Stanica.

⁴⁶ Kalinowski, D., & Kuik-Kalinowska, A. (2017). *Vademecum Kaszubskie - Literatura Kaszubska. Rekonesans*, Wydawnictwo Zrzeszenia Kaszubsko – Pomorskiego, p. 18.

3.2.2 Kashubian in education and other domains

It is possible to learn Kashubian in schools in the region of Kashubia. According to Treder⁴⁷, in 2005 Kashubian was taught in 10% of the schools in the region, but only 1.0% of the school students attended Kashubian lessons. Learning Kashubian at schools is voluntary. As of 2015 around 18 thousand students attended Kashubian lessons in the region of Pomerania in northern Poland⁴⁸. According to Treder, in 2005 there were about 400 teachers who were qualified to teach the language. There are some Kashubian coursebooks available which are used in the process of teaching Kashubian. For several years, it has been also possible to take the *Matura* secondary school exit exam in Kashubian. It is also possible to study Kashubian at the university level. The University of Gdańsk offers a B.A. course in Kashubian ethnophilology as well as postgraduate studies in the Kashubian language and culture.

Furthermore, as far as the use of Kashubian in the media is concerned, one may mention that several newspapers and periodicals in Kashubian were published in the past or still come out. However, as Treder⁴⁹ says the number of press titles in Kashubian is still low. There is also a popular radio station *Radio Kaszëbë* that broadcasts partially in Kashubian in the Pomerania region of Poland. The station boasts having around 900 thousand listeners⁵⁰. Additionally, some radio programs appear on the Polish public Radio Gdańsk, while the local public TV station, TV Gdańsk, broadcasts some programmes in Kashubian on a regular basis. Yet, the number of broadcasts in Kashubian remains unsatisfactory. Kashubian is present on the Internet. There are numerous websites in Kashubian and promoting Kashubian. Also, there exists a Kashubian version of Wikipedia.

Finally, let us address the position of Kashubian in the Catholic Church of the region. According to Treder⁵¹, in 2013, in about 20 parishes masses were said in Kashubian, whereas in some other churches selected parts of the service are said in Kashubian. While talking about Kashubian used in the religious domain, we should also mention that certain parts of the Bible, including some books of the Old Testament and the Gospels of John, Mark, Matthew and Luke, have been translated into Kashubian, whereas some other fragments are being currently translated. There is also other religious literature in Kashubian.

⁴⁷ Treder, J. (2013), op. cit.

⁴⁸ According to Onet.pl, <https://trojmiasto.onet.pl/men-jezyka-kaszubskiego-uczy-sie-okolo-18-tysiecy-uczniow/vx2rdj> (accessed on 04.12.2019).

⁴⁹ Treder, J. (2013), op. cit.

⁵⁰ According to Radio Kaszëbë, www.radiokaszebe.pl (accessed on 12.09.2018).

⁵¹ Treder, J. (2013), op. cit.

Conclusions

Among linguists there is disagreement with regard to the status of Kashubian. Some scholars treat it as a language, while to others it is a mere dialect of Polish. The framework of *abstand* and *ausbau* languages originally proposed by Kloss may be a useful tool in deciding on the status of certain lects, including Kashubian. An *abstand* language is one that is distinctly separate from any other languages. In turn, an *ausbau* language is a standard variety which often develops from a part of a dialect continuum in the process of reshaping and elaboration, a part of which is standardization. As to Kashubian, one may claim that it used to be an *abstand* language in the past, but it was subsequently relegated to a dialect-like status in the process of near-dialectalization. In the recent decades, however, there have been attempts to standardize Kashubian and expand its scope of use to the areas previously occupied by German or Polish. Kashubian has an extensive body of publications such as grammars, dictionaries and literature. Furthermore, the lect has made advances into numerous new areas. It is used, *inter alia*, in the media, in the church, or as the language of education. All things considered, especially taking into account the elaboration, reshaping and standardization facts, it seems plausible to believe that Kashubian is an *ausbau* language.

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Naïve narrator – an effective means in humour creating

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Abstract: The paper focuses on literary humour and one method of its creating, which is by incorporation of the naïve narrator. The impact of such strategy is crucial as the narration can be easily shifted from a serious to light, even comical mood. In the beginning, the text introduces humour and the notion of the narrator with some contemporary theories of humour and historical approaches to the narrator, which leads to the definition of the naïve narrator. The aforementioned kind of narrator is represented by examples from the selected works of P. G. Wodehouse (Sam the Sudden, Leave it to Jeeves) and Winston Groom (Forrest Gump). The examples show two different kinds of the naïve narrator and their ironical and satirical effects on the text. The mechanism of irony is explained as well.

Key words: naïve narrator, irony, humour

Consumption of humour has increased with the development of modern media and this development is also represented by the need to analyse this phenomenon in theoretical, social and artistic spheres. In various social situations and communications, human wittiness appears much more appreciated than ever before, and often even overestimated, which is also a significant marker of the societies' evolution towards individualism. Nowadays we know several philosophical and cultural theories describing conditions of humour creation, the theories of superiority, relaxation and incongruity (Borecky, 2000) among the first well-known. Along with them, there are other contemporary linguistic theories that analyse the joke and its construction, like those by Attardo and Raskin (1991, pp. 297-348). They analyze and summarize factors that change otherwise neutral, negative or sad to jolly, cheerful, funny and laughable for those involved anyhow and there are other definitions and theories based on observation of common life's situations like the one created by Mell Brooks who defined humour as some disaster that happens to somebody, or the one by W. Allen, included in his film Crimes and Misdemeanors. There, his character says: "Comedy is tragedy plus time". Both these witty definitions contain two basic elements that create space for humour: a combination of a negative element with an element of distance, which can be either personal or temporal. Although their authors are not recognised as theorists, their definitions appear as very fitting. However, here is one

even more important element that has an impact on the mode of narration, the narrator and his approach to the story.

With his *History of Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, Henry Fielding (1707-1754) appears as the first writer who recognized importance and potentialities of the narrator. There he exposed dynamic relation between the text and its reader, which is created via its narrator who is given the main responsibility for the narrative situation. It balances between serious and comical. Such attitude caused a real embarrassment among contemporary readers who were utterly unprepared for such reading (Conway & Stephen, 1992). In case of the novel, Fielding provided a shining example for many other writers.

By producing several concepts of his literary voice Fielding exposed the importance of narrator to the literary theorists, for example, Genette (1983) and Stanzel (1988) (both Genette and Stanzel dealt with the option of narrator in their works), who distinguished three types of narrative voices. The first type is a character of the narration (e.g. homodiegetic narrator), the second type is not included in the story but knows the story quite well, with many details (heterodiegetic narrator), and the third type is both a homodiegetic narrator as well as a protagonist of the story (autodiegetic narrator).

Stanzel uses his own terminology when he speaks about the narrative situation in the first person and about the authorial narrative situation. (1988) Here are other well-known types of narrators, for example, implicit or explicit, camera eye, omniscient narrator, limited or unreliable, overt and covert. The naïve narrator cannot be found among them, although this type can be found in several novels written in the 20th century.

Borecky (2000, p. 34) regards naïveté as a favourable condition that allows the occurrence of humour. Naïveté represents unawareness of the comical when a subject seems comical due to his/her words or deeds without ever noticing it, and thus s/he becomes an object of laughter for the others, who observe the situation from a different, aware point of view.

The naïve narrator

This category is based on two important elements that determine the effect on the mode of discourse. Dictionaries (for example Webster's Third New International Dictionary, p. 1500) explain naïveté as innocence, simplicity, absence of the experience of social rules or behaviour that is a consequence of someone's low age or one is young or gullible. The word originally comes from Latin, where nasci means to be born or the beginning of existence and naïveté is still quite logically associated with children, who lack experience and therefore believe almost everything they hear from the respected authorities, from adults. If a child commenting the world of adults becomes the narrator, then the situation quite often, but not always, creates natural conditions for

humour, which can make an adult observer laugh due to his/her knowledge of the adult world and its connectedness. An adult naïve narrator frequently means a vehicle by which the writer smuggles elements of irony to each sentence of the narration. This kind of narrator is employed in the classic novels of British writer P. G. Wodehouse (1891-1975). Wodehouse's narrator tells his stories about rich young graduates from elite schools with the Socratic naïveté that allows him to play with his readers and their imagination, because every good intention of these young men with lack of practical thinking leads to bitter consequences for anyone involved with him. Readers can sense this humorous threat immediately from the words of an uninvolved, naïve narrator. Such is the narrator of Wodehouse's novel *Sam the Sudden* (1925), where the main protagonist Sam Shotter organizes a sporting event to entertain himself, instead of exemplary hard work in his uncle's company:

"The mason for the activity prevailing on the tenth floor of the Wilmot was that a sporting event of the first magnitude was being pulled of there – Spike Murphy, of the John B. Pynsent Export and Import Company, being in the act of contesting the final of the Office Boys' High Kicking Championship against a willowy youth from the Consolidated Eyebrow Tweezer and Nail File Corporation.

The affair was taking place on the premises of the former firm, before a small but select audience consisting of a few stenographers, chewing gum; some male wage slaves in shirt sleeves; and Mr John B. Pynsent's nephew, Samuel Shotter, a young man of agreeable features, who was acting as referee.

In addition to being a referee, Sam Shotter was also the patron and promoter of the tourney; the man but for whose vision and enterprise a wealth of young talent would have lain undeveloped, thereby jeopardizing America's chances should an event of this kind ever be added to the programme of the Olympic Games" (Wodehouse, 2011, p. 11-12).

The heterodiegetic narrator of the novel introduces the main protagonist, Sam Shotter, with a seemingly high appreciation of his abilities, which, however, betrays different reality. This young man is neither bright nor talented but lazy and immature. Employed in his uncle's company, he feels constantly bored due to his inability or lack of will to work, so he decides to entertain himself and other employees during his uncle's business trip. The use of expressions like "event of first magnitude" that, in this particular case, means entertaining instead of working, or the narrator's estimation of Sam for his "vision and enterprise or a wealth of young talent", instead of speaking about his laziness and lack of practical thinking suggest that, although Sam Shotter is not the narrator of this extract, the narrator presents the whole situation from his point of view. Entertainment with employees instead of work during working hours can appear like an event of the first magnitude only to this kind of immature protagonist and if expressed by anyone else, such statement usually signals a certain level of irony as for anyone else, including Sam's uncle, the situation represents

another demonstration of the protagonist's absolute incompetence. If Sam Shotter were the narrator of the story, then he would be an example of a naïve narrator who speaks with candour and simple logic about various situations that happened to him, or which he unintentionally caused. However, Wodehouse employs the third person heterodiegetic narrator with characteristic (pretended) simple thinking and perspective to create the undercurrent of irony in the narration that changes disasters to humour along with a very simple but effective way that is the overestimation. The narrator overtly overestimates Sam's character and the importance of his deeds and by this act, he also underestimates his own position. It is obviously pretended underestimation, which is also important for matters of irony. The narrator -ironist creates an impression of his/her own degradation while complimenting and appraising the character, who obviously does not deserve any of it. In fact, such a character becomes the ironist's victim. In the case of Sam Shotter, there are expressions like – "the patron and promoter", which describe the man who is obviously not able to take care of himself.

It is not always easy to identify irony, as its occurrence and existence are not defined by any fixed signs. Here is only the act of identification or interpretation based on one's feeling that certain words and sentences have different than literal meaning, that their message is opposite to what they seem to communicate. In case of oral discourse, its intonation can often immediately betray elements of irony but with the written text it is up to its reader to reveal when the intended meaning is in opposition with its actual verbal representation. An act of identification is, let's say, vital for the existence of irony (more on irony Booth, 1974). Irony must be identified by at least one of the receivers involved in the act of communication because unrecognized irony does not exist. According to Chambers, there is a tripartite relationship among the ironist, his victim and the audience (1989). The word victim does not go together with Wodehouse's amiable tone of narration and therefore it seems almost impossible to speak about a victim of an irony. Yet, the narration is ironical because, in this tripartite relation, the narrator is the ironist, the audience are readers and the victim is Sam Shotter, the main protagonist, who is the main target of the narrator's mockery. The author who is both the narrator and the ironist expects that the reader will be perceptive enough to identify his true intentions and the meaning of the text. As the character of Sam Shotter is fictitious, because such is the natural status of literary characters, then there is also a fictitious victim of the author's benevolent mockery that serves to his readers' entertainment and laughter. They can laugh at his problems that come from his lack of practical thinking, loose approach to life and genuine idleness. The narrator never mentions them but rather pretends to praise Sam's childish deeds instead.

Sam Shotter highly resembles Bertie Wooster, better - known character of Wodehouse's. This protagonist functions also as an autodiegetic and naïve narrator of

several novels that deal with his crazy and cheerful stories with his cunning but highly competent valet Jeeves (Jeeves is used as a synonym of a highly competent butler in T. Pratchett's Discworld fantasy novels or another loyal Jeeves in G. Sinyor's film *Stiff Upper Lips* from 1998). Unlikely to the previous example, this narrator understands that he is not very clever and therefore leaves important decisions to the competent one, which is his valet Jeeves. Both characters, Shotter and Wooster, graduates from prestigious British schools, represent the whole social group of spoilt, young members of British high society at the beginning of the 20th century, who, despite their supposedly good education, are not able to take responsibility for their own life. Their immature behaviour and deeds do not have fatal consequences only because there is always some clever servant to rescue them as this extract about horseracing from *Leave it to Jeeves* shows:

"I do not recommend it, sir. The animal is not intended to win. Second place is what the stable is after."

"Perfect piffle, I thought, of course. How the deuce could Jeeves know anything about it? Still, you know what happened. Wonderchild led till he was breathing on the wire, and then Banana Fritter came along and nosed him out. I went straight home and rang for Jeeves.

"After this," I said, "not another step for me without your advice. From now on consider yourself the brains of the establishment."

"Very good, sir. I shall endeavour to give satisfaction."

And he has, by Jove! I'm a bit short on brain myself; the old bean would appear to have been constructed more for ornament than for use, don't you know; but give me five minutes to talk the thing over with Jeeves, and I'm game to advise any one about anything. And that's why, when Bruce Corcoran came to me with his troubles, my first act was to ring the bell and put it up to the lad with the bulging forehead.

"Leave it to Jeeves," I said (Wodehouse, 2011, p. 5).

Wodehouse's stories and novels have quite simple structure, there either bachelor Bertie or some of his friends, realize that due to some silly decision their comfortable life can be destroyed, which means a real catastrophe for them. At that moment Bertie's bright servant comes with some solution and his fast acting rescues the situation. (cunning Jeeves often acts secretly and usually against explicit desires of his gentleman to reach his own goals).

Bertie's character as well as the style of narration create an impression that the narrator really does not understand anything and is not able to predict fatal consequences of his decisions and deeds, while the reader identifies some kind of small, personal catastrophe that is lurking in the future almost immediately, while reading Bertie Wooster's words. Wodehouse's humour is an outcome of basic binary oppositions of capable (Jeeves) – incapable (Wooster), cunning (Jeeves) – naïve

(Wooster) or formal (Jeeves) – informal (Wooster) that create conditions for humour that comes as an outcome of the light irony present in the words of the narrator who ostensibly overestimates importance of his silly, childish acting.

In Great Britain, Wodehouse's novels become popular almost immediately after their publishing for their humour and style and even in the 21st century, their popularity is undying (Fellowes, 2015; Jordison, 2014; Leithouser, 2014). It seems that certain of Wodehouse's characters continue their fictional lives in works of other writers and in other media. For example, Jeeves moved from the original texts, which were also adapted for the television and radio, to works of other authors and even to the virtual world in the form of a virtual page Ask Jeeves.uk. Wodehouse's narrative style made impression on other contemporary writers, especially on Evelyn Waugh, who explicitly expressed its appreciation (Evelyn Wough was well known for his respect to Wodehouse and his light irony, which he also tried to achieve in his writing (Byrne, 2010; Green, 1978), however, he was not able to reach such lightness and humour that made Wodehouse's characters so loved and well-known.

Groom's narrator

Popularity of Wodehouse's characters can be compared to protagonists from Winston Groom's novels about Forrest Gump. When Winston Groom published his humorous novel in 1986, nobody would expect that its protagonist might become so internationally famous in a few years (NPR: Why it Took Forrest Gump' Author Nearly 20 Years to Write a New Novel). However, in 1994, with the eponymous film based on the novel, the story about the slow-witted but kind protagonist Forrest Gump, who, despite his handicap, could succeed in many life-situations, brought more attention to his creator and the book.

Compared to Wodehouse's Bertie and his light mental inefficiency that makes him dependent on his servant and money, Groom's autodiegetic narrator who is immediately degraded and presented as an idiot can lead an independent life and is able to cope with most of the life situations in his own way. Groom adorns Forrest Gump with two disabilities – physical and mental. While the protagonist can grow out from his physical problem, his mental capacity won't change. However, this admitted mental handicap appears mostly as his inability to understand human hypocrisy as well as his undying trust to people and inability to pretend.

Forrest Gump is both an idiot and also the narrator of his story in the Groom's novel, which is quite a peculiar situation in literature. The literature generally prefers lunatics to idiots in such important roles because madness is quite frequently connected to high IQ and creativity, which seems to prove that there is only a thin border between geniality and madness (Chuck Palahniuk's narrator is an example of discourse influenced by schizophrenia as in *Fight club*, 1996, or *Lullaby*, 2002, as well as Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoore*, 1985). Contrary to madness, idiocy represents lack

of a mental capacity, limitation, long history of shame, lack of creativity and no relation to geniality. Therefore, it is not any surprise that idiots only scarcely occur in literature and art. The most famous one will be probably Karel Hasek's Svejek in *Good Soldier Svejek*, although this obviously intelligent character is declared an idiot only due to the decision of stiff official state authorities, which starts his satirical mission.

Also, the literary mission of Groom's character is satirical. We can expect this kind of effect whenever the author inserts his protagonist (idiot) in the centre and makes him the narrator. But Groom's narrator is an extraordinary kind of idiot. Despite his mental handicap or expected limited understanding, he can make surprisingly clever conclusions, which he shows immediately after the start of the novel:

"LET ME SAY THIS: BEIN A IDIOT IS NO BOX OF CHOCOLATES. People laugh, lose patience, treat you shabby. Now they says folks sposed to be kind to the afflicted, but let me tell you— it ain't always that way. Even so, I got no complaints, cause I reckon I done live a pretty interestin life, so to speak" (Groom, 2012, p. 2).

Forrest's thinking and conclusions always surprise other characters from the book because they know about his mental limits and therefore they would not expect any logical thinking that he frequently shows, like in the case of Curtis, his teammate, when Forrest is able to solve a problem that Curtis himself cannot:

"Curtis stop cussin for a moment an look up at me an say," You supposed to be a idiot, how you figure that out? An I say, "Maybe I am a idiot, but at least I ain't stupid..." (Groom, 2012, p. 12).

Despite Forrest's initial degradation, the author is constantly confirming his protagonist's ability to think logically and make logical conclusions, which is highly incongruous with the declared idiocy:

"The other day, I'm walkin down the street an this man was out workin in his yard. He'd got hisself a bunch of shrubs to plant an he say to me, "Forrest, you wanna earn some money?" an I says, "Uh-huh," an so he sets me to movin dirt. Damn near ten or twelve wheelbarrows of dirt, in the heat of the day, truckin it all over creation. When I'm thru he reach in his pocket for a dollar. What I shoulda done was raised Cain about the low wages, but instead, I took the damn dollar an all I could say was "thanks" or somethin dumb-soundin like that, an I went on down the street, waddin an unwaddin that dollar in my hand, feelin like a idiot" (Groom, 2012, p. 2).

It seems that the protagonist's mental level is only expressed by his simple language containing many reoccurring spelling and grammar mistake as well as his inability to understand irony and hypocrisy of the others, of so-called normal people because, despite his low IQ (75), Forrest Gump leads a very intensive and interesting

life. He is a football university star, soldier, champion in table-tennis, rock musician, wrestler, businessman, etc. and meets the most influential people of his time, like Elvis Presley, Mao Ce-tung, Saddam Hussein, and even his film impersonator Tom Hanks. The list of Forrest's jobs and celebrities he meets is very long and each item included in it ends with some loss. In case of Forrest's meeting with the 20th-century celebrities, there is always some social faux pas that comes from his inability to distinguish between social pretending and reality. The juxtaposition of two concepts – normal – idiot- gives the writer a wide space to create comical situations where his mentally underdeveloped character comments contemporary social events and interactions he happens to be involved in. His remarks are surprisingly logical and this logic is in sharp opposition to clichés and hypocrisy that dominate contemporary society. The discourse is thus enriched with an evaluative element, which changes the simple narrative of this kind of naïve narrator to a criticism of contemporary society and life in the USA and its loss of traditional values. Particular situations in which he gets into interactions with the "world of intelligent people " Forrest comments in his simple way without any pretending, or knowledge about the contemporary popular culture or media, and thus he confronts other participants with their words and deeds. The example of such situation is his meeting with then famous film-star Raquel Welch (she becomes a transworld identity in this novel - more on transworld identities in J. Waldnerová: *Transworld Identities and Contemporary Literature*, p. 2-10.) on a film set. During their introduction, the actress expresses annoyance because she understands Forrest's "pleased to meet you" as some allusion to her famous bosom. Then they work together and Forrest accidentally tears her dress and takes her away from the film jungle to find some shop where the actress could buy a dress to cover herself:

" Raquel Welch took about eight or nine dresses into the back an tried them on. After a while she come out an say, "What do you think about this one?" It is a sort of brown-lookin dress with a bunch of belts an loops all over it an a low neckline.

"Oh, I'm not so sure, dear," say the salesman, "somehow it— it just isn't you." So she go back an try on another one an the salesman say, "Oh, wonderful! You look absolutely precious."

"I'll take it," say Raquel Welch, an the salesman say, "Fine— how would you like to pay for it?"

"What do you mean?" she axed.

"Well, cash, check, credit card?" he say.

"Look you bozo— can't you see I don't have anything like that with me? Where the hell do you think I'd put it?"

"Please, madam— don't let's be vulgar," the salesman say.

"I am Raquel Welch," she tell the man. "I will send somebody around here to pay you later."

"I am terribly sorry, lady," he say, "but we don't do business that way."

"But I'm Raquel Welch!" she shout. "Don't you recognize me?"

"Listen lady," the man say, "half the people that come in here say they are Raquel Welch or Farrah Fawcett or Sophia Loren or somebody. You got any ID?"

"ID!" she shout. "Where do you think I would keep ID?"

"No ID, no credit card, no money— no dress," say the salesman.

"I'll prove who the hell I am," Raquel Welch say, an all of a sudden she pull down the top of the dress. "Who else is got tits like these in this one-horse town!" she screech. Outside, the crowd all be beatin on the winders an hollerin an cheerin. But the salesman, he punched a little button an some big guy what was the security detective come over an he say, "Okay, your asses is all under arrest. Come along quietly an there won't be no trouble" (Groom, 2012, p. 96).

The extract shows Forrest' s simple record of the event in which he does not comment anything instead he reproduces the dialogue between the film star and shop assistant, which is enough to show the hypocrisy of the contemporary society. The humour that is developed this way is situational. It puts one character (R. Welch) into an unusual situation where she is exposed to a certain level of discomfort. The discomfort changes her usual behaviour and perceived image of a star. The transgression of cultural concept of a filmstar comes with the loss of clothes and absence of credit card, the two elements that degrade her status from a Hollywood celebrity to an ordinary woman. And the degradation goes further when she, in the attempt to gain her previous status and satisfy her current needs, reduces herself to her front part. Here the humour comes from the incongruity between the expected and realized, hence the shift in the acting, when expected nobility changes to the ordinary or vulgar. There are also two mental scripts (Attardo & Raskin, 1991) that collide – the one of a famous actress and the one of the shopassistant who treats everybody in Hollywood as a celebrity because he wants to sell. The two scripts collide and make a humorous effect like in a single joke structure. However, this is not only an example of humour but also an example of satire, which is so frequent in this book. As P. Simps writes, satirical texts (...) are inextricably bound up with context of situation, with participants in discourse and with frameworks of knowledge (Groom, 2012, p. 2).

The story might sound as a moral if not told by the simple narrator, the tool that the writer uses to show his critical approach towards the contemporary culture, society, media and celebrities.

While Wodehouse's naïve narrators imply a certain level of light irony that marks their stories and makes them humorous, Groom's character is naïve because he does not understand irony, hypocrisy, pretending. His language is not ironic instead he is constantly showing certain astonishment and surprise because the words and deeds of people around him differ so much. Thus, Grooms narrator reveals his critical,

satirical function that makes his narrative so different when compared to the effects of Wodehouse's narrator and his light irony. Although both writers incorporated the tool of the naïve narrator and the texts of aforementioned novels can be labelled as humorous, it is clear that the impact of their narrators on the presented stories is different – the difference is as high as the difference between irony and satire.

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Andrić's (Magic) Realism in the Novel *The Bridge on the Drina*

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Abstract: Magic realism is more a stylistic formation than a particular genre with a tendency to understand the paradox of connecting the opposites. In other words, the concept of magic realism represents the intertwining of what is real and unreal, what is true and imaginary, and what is historical and mythical in the accelerated rhythm of narration. Consequently, the notion of magic realism is suitable for denoting the reality that arises from mythical foundations and in which nobody is surprised by the constant presence of the supernatural. Toward the end of the 1920s and 1930s, Croatian literature featured a renewal of the realistic novel with a distinct social function. Nevertheless, in relation to the tradition, this paper presents the deviations of the realistic novel such as Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge on the Drina* (1945) and the tendency of aestheticizing narration and stylistic diversity that contribute to the complexity of the structure. Therefore, the opposition implied by magic realism manifests itself, on the one hand, in the construction of Andrić's novel as the discovery of the collective consciousness and destiny of the aesthetic being of a nation on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the tragic historical circumstances that took place with the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the departure of the Ottoman Empire (between East and West), as well as in the revelation of the myth's significance and demythologizing the past. On the other hand, it manifests itself in the construction of a critical work that, with the lucid consciousness of a European intellectual, perceives the entire development of the national being. In doing so, Andrić's novel justifies the vision of magic realism set by Latin American writers whose magic was not the product of a random or spontaneous, but a culturally determined choice.

Keywords: magic realism, Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina*, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy

I

Ivo Andrić (1892–1975), a poet, short story writer, novelist, essayist, writer, and diplomat from Bosnia and Herzegovina, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1961. The date and place of his birth are unknown, thus enabling the debate on his

affiliation to one of the national literatures of the former Yugoslavia – the Croatian, Bosnian, and Serbian. Andrić's literary work belongs to the period of modernism, characterized primarily by stylistic pluralism as well as new literary tendencies characteristic of the avant-garde, such as the negation of tradition, experimentalist aspirations, exploration of new narrative techniques, deconstruction of the novel, and so on.

The first confirmed data in Andrić's biography relate to the setting of his novel *The Bridge on the Drina* – the town of Višegrad – where Andrić went to elementary school, during which time he lived at his aunt's house due to his family's poor socioeconomic status. By means of a scholarship, he was educated in Sarajevo, where in 1910 he became the president of the anti-Austrian organization Croatian Advanced Youth. In 1914, he was sentenced to prison in Maribor for this activity. Following the establishment of a new state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes as well as the initiative of the minister Tugomir Alaupović, Andrić was appointed a secretary in the Ministry of Religion and later a consul in New York, Rome, Madrid, Paris, Bucharest, and other European capitals and cultural centres where he became acquainted with contemporary literary tendencies. For the purpose of retaining the civil service, he obtained a doctoral degree in 1924 on the following topic: *Development of the Spiritual Life in Bosnia under the Influence of Turkish Rule*, which influenced his literary works (Nemec, 2016, p. 9 - 40). Andrić's diplomatic service also influenced the changes in his work, divided according to the dominant idiolect. Namely, Andrić wrote in Croatian until 1920, when he embraced the Serbian language, i.e. the Ekavian dialect. Yet, it is important to note that Andrić asked "his descendants not to break his opus into national components" (Prosperov Novak, 2003, p. 340), which can be explained through his acceptance of the Yugoslav unitarism as an ideology. Andrić's request simultaneously implies that the conflict on the affiliation of his work to specific national literatures is entirely unjustified since his works belong to all literary traditions, that is, states that were at that time an integral part of SFRY, which is truly understandable in the given historical context.

Miroslav Šicel, the Croatian literary historian, divides Andrić's literary work into two stages, separated by the year 1920. The first stage is "subjective and lyrical," and ends with the publication of the lyric volume *Nemiri [Unrest]* in 1920, while the second stage begins the same year with the short story *Put Alije Đerzeleza [The Journey of Alija Đerzelez]*, characterized by the epic narrative technique "with an inspiration firmly set toward reality" (Šicel, 1981, p. 129, 135–136). As for Andrić's novels, the Croatian literary historian Krešimir Nemec describes them as part of neo-realism, the period of renewal of the realistic novel. The thematic backbone of the era were "different forms of social life: relationships in families, the community, at work, among classes or political groups," emphasizing the social function of the work. Additionally, this belonging to neo-realism is characterized by "broad-ranging branching and

modification of the notion of realism,” such as a more complex structure of text through which certain writers often express their “aspiration towards the aestheticization of the narrative and stylistic diversity.” This complexity is manifested in Andrić’s prose works, defined in genre as chronicles: explicitly in *Travnička kronika* [*The Travnik Chronicle*], and implicitly in *The Bridge of the Drina* as the Višegrad chronicle, and *Omar Pasha Latas* as the Sarajevo chronicle. Other novels are not the novels of time, therefore *Prokleta avlija* [*The Damned Yard*] has a ring-like composition, and *Gospođica* [*The Young Lady*] presents the Figurenroman (Nemec, 1998, p. 104, 193). The complexity of Andrić’s chronicle-novel structure is also realized by the absence of the protagonist, allowing for the elimination of the development of the work. The period that Nemec defines as neo-realism in Croatian literature is analogous to world’s late modernism, a period in which avant-garde ideas and literary practices were still present, but attempts were also being made to restore realistic literature. Accordingly, Andrić’s novels fit in the corpus of European novelists such as Romain Rolland, Thomas Mann, Georges Duhamel, Gil Romano, John Galsworthy, and Mikhail Sholokhov. Namely, this is the historical course of the twentieth century European novel, which follows Tolstoy’s tradition of analysing collective consciousness and observing individual destinies in a wider context.

Nevertheless, in relation to tradition, this paper presents the deviations of the realistic novel such as Ivo Andrić’s *The Bridge on the Drina* (1945) and the tendency of aestheticizing narration and stylistic diversity that contribute to the complexity of the structure. Therefore, the opposition implied by magic realism manifests itself, on the one hand, in the construction of Andrić’s novel as the discovery of the collective consciousness and destiny of the aesthetic being of a nation on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the tragic historical circumstances that took place with the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the departure of the Ottoman Empire (between the East and the West), as well as in the revelation of the myth’s significance and demythologizing of the past. On the other hand, it manifests itself in the construction of a critical work that, with the lucid consciousness of a European intellectual, perceives the entire development of the national being. In doing so, Andrić’s novel justifies the vision of magic realism set by Latin American writers whose magic was not the product of a random or spontaneous, but a culturally determined choice. Also, the analysis is based on the opposition implied by magic realism, that is, the intertwining of the natural and supernatural, real and imaginary, and historical and mythological in the accelerated rhythm of narration.

II

Andrić’s novel *The Bridge on the Drina* is compared by many literary historians to the genre of chronicle, which was largely influenced by Andrić’s knowledge of the poetics of Bosnian Franciscan chroniclers such as Fr. Nikola Lašvanin and Bono Benić

(Nemec, 1998, p. 194), with which he became acquainted while writing his doctoral dissertation. The Višegrad chronicle gives an overview of a long-lasting historical period crucial for the area. It starts with the events of 1516, when a boy of an unknown name was taken from the Podrinje region and became the famous vizier – Mehmed Pasha Sokolli, according to whose initiative the bridge was built in 1571. The chronicle ends with 1914, the year that would completely change the European and world history of the twentieth century, and thereby the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In giving an overview of the three hundred and eighty years in the Višegrad region, Andrić's narrator highlights the crucial moments of local history, such as the construction of the Višegrad bridge on the Drina River, and historical moments that were important for the entire Europe, but which inevitably reflected on the local history. Namely, those are the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813), the Serbian-Ottoman War and the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1878), Franz Joseph I's proclamation on the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908), the Balkan wars (1912–1913), the Sarajevo Assassination (28 June 1914), and the beginning of the First World War. In fact, the novel distinguishes two periods of Bosnia and Herzegovina: the Ottoman rule and the period under the Austrian administration.

The era of the Ottoman Empire's rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina officially lasted from the fall of the Bosnian Kingdom in 1463 to 1878, when the decisions of the Congress of Berlin granted the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the right to occupy and modernize the area (Dukovski, 2005: 193). At the time of the Ottoman period of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Andrić's narrator focuses on the position of the people, i.e. the population that had tax obligations. The people represented a diverse layer of non-Muslim and Muslim non-military population (Inalcik, 2005, p. 191). Although in the novel there are two distinct layers of the people, emphasized by the attribute "Christian" – as illustrated here, "it affected the Christian *rayah*" (Andrić, 1945, p. 32), thereby implying the existence of another "*rayah*" to be represented by an opposite adjective – the description of the dire life conditions in the novel is focused on the Christian population, whose example shows the functioning of one of the obligations, forced labour: "Everywhere Abidaga's guards and horsemen seized the *rayah* from the villages and even the towns and drove them away to work on the bridge. (...) All were muddy and wet through, exhausted and careworn. They resented this unpaid and pointless forced labour while up there in the villages their fields awaited the autumn ploughing in vain" (Andrić, 1945, p. 30, 33).

The Christian population's position is further illustrated by the Devshirme, periodic recruitment of "unmarried male children whom the Empire took away from the Christian peasants" (Inalcik, 2005, p. 251), and the only prospect of progress on the social scale for the Christian population, which implied conversion to Islam. The shortcomings of such a process can be seen in the novel, since "many parents had

hidden their children in the forests, taught them how to appear half-witted, clothed them in rags and let them get filthy, to avoid the aga's choice. Some went so far as to maim their own children, cutting off one of their fingers with an axe" (Andrić, 1945, p. 24). In addition, the novel elaborates on an execution scene in the traditional Turkish manner, that is, the impaling of the character of Radisav. The Croatian historian Roksandić explains the context of the punishment by claiming that the Turks used the Vlachs as the auxiliary military squad and those who refused were punished by being impaled (Roksandić, 2008, p. 16). Although the novel does not provide such a context, the refusal to follow the orders takes place, more specifically the forced labour, which is consequently punished in the most brutal way.

In another light, the novel depicts solidarity and cooperation between the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian populations, such as during the great flood: "...all three faiths. All were wet, pale, with clenched jaws, but outwardly calm; they sat and smoked and talked of what had been done to save the people and of what still remained to be done" (Andrić, 1945, p. 77). The underpinnings of cultural pluralism in Višegrad kasaba (town), the part of the Bosnian Pashaluk and the Ottoman Empire, are manifested in the system of millets, religious communities with a certain autonomy. They were in charge of "education, social security, religious ceremonies, marriage, dowry, alimony and inheritance," and the heads of the millets were community leaders (Ihsanoglu, 2005, p. 281). This system is best represented during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina when the Mulazim calls "Mula Ibrahim, Husseinaga the school master, Pop Nikola, and the rabbi David Levi and informed them that as 'recognized notables' they must await the Austrian commandant next day at noon on the *kapia*" (Andrić, 1945, p. 124). The very labelling of the leaders of religious communities as lawmakers bears witness to the status of millets. Since the Islamic millet had a special position in the Empire, despite the new administration, the religious tolerance was retained, but not the special position of the Islamic religious community, thus terminating the millet system.

The Austro-Hungarian administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina began in 1878. Although the Bosnian Pashaluk was still a formal part of the Ottoman Empire until the annexation of 1908, after 1878, within the Monarchy, the occupied areas did not belong to Cisleithania nor Transleithania, but had a special status of the Crown Land. All in all, the year 1878 marked a new era due to the important changes that occurred at the time. The Ottoman currency was withdrawn from the market, and a military service was introduced, according to which all Bosnians were required to serve in the Austro-Hungarian army, and the railway construction increased as well as forestry development (Dukovski, 2005, p. 224-226). These changes are likewise present in the novel, but the narrator usually shows them gradually, so he says that the "kasablije" (townspeople) "reckoned in florins and kreutzers but also in grosh and para" (Andrić, 1945, p. 136). When Andrić's narrator mentions the introduction of the military service

for the Muslim population, he also refers to the hopeless situation of people who had to agree to wearing the European uniforms, against which they rebelled “Fifty years before, when the Sultan had introduced the nizam (the first Turkish regular army)” (Andrić, 1945, p. 154). The most sudden change that occurred was the construction of the east railroad and it had a major negative overall impact kasaba (town), since the Drina Bridge lost its function and caused Višegrad to cease to be the traffic hub.

Apart from the changes mentioned in the scientific and professional literature, Andrić’s narrator also refers to the positive ones with the aim of advancing and developing in a civilized sense, such as water supply and infrastructure, numbering of homes, population census, and many others. This coincides with the purpose of occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the Berlin Treaty, which primarily concerned the modernization of the occupied region. When it was duly implemented, it benefited the local population and brought about positive changes, but when the Monarchy sought personal gain, such as the increase of military force, economic gain through the exploitation of forests, and achieving monopoly over the traffic routes that enabled the implementation of the penetrating policy towards the East (*Drang nach Osten*), the changes were inevitably negative.

A special section of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy’s politics is also the colonization of foreign immigrants from the Monarchy, mostly the Slavs, as “civil servants or businessmen” who provided for the complete administration apparatus, and soldiers, because “soldiers from Austria-Hungary served in Bosnia” (Dukovski 2005, p. 226). The novel says that after the occupation: “officials began to arrive, civil servants with their families and, after them, artisans and craftsmen for all those trades which up till then had not existed in the town. Among them were Czechs, Poles, Croats, Hungarians and Austrians. (...)The newcomers were never at peace; and they all owed no one else to live in peace. It seemed that they were resolved with their impalpable yet ever more noticeable web of laws, regulations and orders to embrace all forms of life, men, beasts and things, and to change and alter everything, both the outward appearance of the town and the customs and habits of men from the cradle to the grave. All this they did quietly without many words, without force or provocation, so that a man had nothing to protest about” (Andrić, 1945, p. 135). Therefore, Andrić describes the relationship between the colonizer and indigenous people, whereby the former are changing the state of affairs in order to transform the lands according to familiar patterns to become their own. However, the danger does not lie in the intentional influences, but in accidental ones, because “the local people, especially the Christians and Jews, began to look more and more like the newcomers in dress and behaviour” (Andrić, 1945, p. 174).

In regard to colonialism, or the colonization of people “by external forces, that is, usually, an economically richer and more powerful country,” the British literary critic Wisker differentiates the notion of imperialism as a state “in which distant territories

are governed by the practices, theory, and attitudes of the dominant metropolitan centre,” in this case Istanbul or Vienna (Wisker, 2010, p. 73).

III

Within the topics of imperialism and colonialism, the signs of postcolonial discourse are recognized, identified by Wisker as a “radical critique in the colonial period” or “a critique emerging after the end of imperial and colonial administration” (Wisker, 2010, p. 23). Taking into account the fact that *The Bridge on the Drina* was published in 1945, i.e. thirty years after the beginning of World War I, which resulted in the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as the “regained voice” of those who were silenced, invisible, and marginalized, it is justified to illuminate it in this context.

The literary theorist Bowers argues that postcolonial writing may reflect a way of re-examining the identity of a nation or race, and the representation of a colonized subject after a military-political liberation, or as a “means of expressing opposition (...) to impose a homogenous, authoritative historical and cultural identity” on a colonized entity (Bowers, 2004, p. 91). Following the demands of the period before the beginning of World War I, in his doctoral dissertation *Development of the Spiritual Life in Bosnia under the Influence of Turkish Rule* (which also makes an important part of the novel’s theme and structure) Andrić tries to partially define the notion of national-historical destiny and its tragedy, as well as the psychology of that tragedy. In addition, he defines crucial elements that influenced the tragedy of the nation and destiny of its spiritual reality, and describes the spiritual life in Bosnia, showing how the country’s subdued position reflected on the psychology of all its captive peoples. (...) In addition, Andrić speaks about Bosnia as a complex whose development was violently halted and thus damaged more severely than any other part of the Balkans (Vučković, 1974, p. 284–285). In the novel, this process is best seen in Andrić’s choice of the setting: “Višegrad, which has become a permanent ‘border town,’ in which, in the wider Bosnian complex, the ‘black line’ that has cut in half the body of a nation was best depicted. This black line is symbolically portrayed by the author as the river that runs through the city” (Vučković, 1974, p. 285).

By showing the collective historical totality with individual destinies within the chronicle-novel, *The Bridge on the Drina* constructs imposed historical discourses that invade “private spaces in a world where already there are no differences between the private and public spheres” (Petković, 2003, p. 47). In other words, history comes to the townspeople of Višegrad, and they cannot avoid the intrusion since every change of authority brings new provisions, and “With each regulation men saw their individual liberties curtailed or their obligations increased,” (Andrić, 1945, p. 136). Since the “concept of history as a mission” brought the colonial subjects in a hopeless and helpless position, they must find some form of escapism and pursue it during the evil

times (Petković, 2003, p. 97). Precisely due to its transgressive and subversive qualities, magic realism is often seen as a literary means of expression among “postcolonial, feminist and cross-cultural writers” (Bowers, 2004, p. 63). In other words, magic realism as a postcolonial discourse basically erases the boundaries between history and fiction, pointing out in both cases the verbal constructions based on equal discursive strategies: “Drawing on the special effects of magic realism, postcolonial writers in English able to express their view of a world fissured, distorted, and made incredible by cultural displacement” (Boehmer qtd. in Bowers, 2004, p. 92), and connect the supernatural to the spatial and cultural imagery of postcolonial spaces for the purpose of representing a society whose stability is constantly being disrupted by “invasion, occupation, and political corruption” (ibid.).

In this context, Andrić’s ability to juxtapose myth and reality is directed at demythologizing the legendary truth, revealing the truth of human drama in general, and the national destiny as not only psychological phenomena but also a certain historical reality. Therefore, at the very beginning of the novel, together with the description of the bridge and its surroundings, there is the extraordinary rendition of the legendary splendour of the stories concerning the bridge and of what happened in connection to it.

IV

The hybrid character of Andrić’s novel *The Bridge on the Drina* is revealed not only through the “hidden world” (Wilson, 2005, p. 225) of Bosnia and Herzegovina “behind the surface of reality” (Bowers, 2004, p. 2), but also through the interplay of worlds, confirming the presence of magic realism in the Balkans and Wilson’s thesis that magic realism is a “term describing a fictional world created by the double inscription of alternative geometries” (Wilson, 2005, p. 225).

This procedure is revealed in the legends told in the first chapter, such as the story of two children walled up by the bridge builders, the surrender of great heroes such as Princ Marko and Djerzelez Alija, or the story of Radisav and his grave, which disappear in the second chapter, abandoning fiction in favour of more recent, true events that took place around the bridge. Also, time as a structural element of magic realism is fragmented in the novel, whereby “the storyteller behind whose mask stands a novel that narrates itself, (...) losing its function of presenting the past as soon as the fictitious subjects take over the plot” (Vučković, 1974, p. 290). The omniscient narrator soon warns: “Now we must go back to the time when there was not even a thought of a bridge at that spot, let a lone such a bridge as this” (Andrić, 1945, p. 22). The plot continues in a way that instead of the legend of a mother whose children were walled up during the construction, mad Ilinka, a “mute and slow-witted girl” who gave birth to “twins, both stillborn,” (Andrić, 1945, p. 36) appears. In other words, the more the narrator approaches the present, his role as the chronicler strengthens.

Consequently, the events that took place after 1878 are marked by realistic storytelling and strongly express Andrić's spiritual attitude, i.e. its reversal after World War II. Individual tragedy is abandoned, and no personal drama seems drastically tragic, but surpassed and diffused by something larger. Individual suffering is related to historical times, which turn into and are equalized with the absolute within the novel (Vučković, 1974, p. 288).

Moreover, Andrić uses this narrative technique to build an antonymic and subversive nature of the story with the aim to illustrate not only Višegrad's fragmentary psychological state, but also the identity of a culture, Bosnian people in general, and the entire world. Namely, after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, the concept of the Balkans was revitalized "as a substitute for the concept of European Turkey," whose boundaries are identified with the "reach of Turkish conquests in the nineteenth century" (Slukan Altić, 2011, p. 406). Following this interpretation, Bosnia and Herzegovina gained an identity that carries with it numerous stereotypes rooted in the Western-colonial perspective that often resorted to generalization. In other words, the breakdown of time, space, and national identity in Andrić's novel is directly related to the socio-political situation of the established cultural identity of the past and as such can take part in postcolonial literature.

The thematization of the Drava River is also not a coincidence because it reconceptualises the notion of borders, implying cultural identities. After the death of Emperor Theodosius I in 395, Drina represented the border between the Eastern and Western Roman Empire. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, the border on Drina lost its function and regained it as late as 1833, when its "lower watercourse" became the boundary "between the Ottoman Empire in the West and Serbia in the East," i.e. the border between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Serbia in 1878 (Goldstein, 2003, p. 109–110). In Andrić's novel, Bosnia and Herzegovina is marked as a country that at one point does not belong to neither the East nor the West: "The railway link with Sarajevo had, as we have seen, reduced its connection with the West and now, in a moment, its connection with the East also ceased. In fact the East, which had created it and which had up to the day before still been there, greatly shaken and weakened no doubt, but still as permanent and real as sky and land, had now vanished like an apparition. Now the bridge in reality no longer linked anything save the two parts of the town" (Andrić, 1945, p. 228). Moreover, the river resembles a "two-sided mirror" which, with its position "between all the world, life, and death" (Faris, 2005, p. 178), serves to increase this space and intertwine the two conflicting, coexisting codes in the text as the bearer of the cultural and historical burden.

Therefore, Andrić's narrative procedures aimed at presenting the truth of the national being and its historical and spiritual physiognomy can be extended beyond the interpretative framework of contemporarily understood realism. According to

Bowers, magic realism is not linked only to certain geographic areas. Namely, this is a narrative technique, or a manner of reflection in its broadest sense, and “those concepts cannot be ‘kept’ in a geographical location” (Bowers, 2004, p. 31). However, the fact is that the emergence and development of magic realism are often linked only to certain areas, such as Latin America. Yet, the postcolonial and intercultural context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, positioned between East and West, as described by Andrić in *The Bridge on the Drina*, opens up the space for adopting magic realism for the purpose of exploring its non-western and non-eastern mythological and cultural traditions, thus participating in the development of new variations of magic realism.

Hence, although at the time it was a part of the huge Western empire, due to its historical belonging to the Ottoman Empire, Bosnia and Herzegovina was labelled as the Other. It is precisely this discourse of Otherness that allows for a review of history and the re-evaluation of the pre-colonial worldview, which is in accordance with the interpretation of the literary theorist Faris, who claims that magic realism “re-examines homogeneous systems in the name of plurality” (Faris, 2005, p. 180), i.e. it has the role of cultural corrector. This justifies another feature of the realistic novel, namely the novel as a social critique, but which does not denote the simplicity and uniformity of chronicling events in that context, but the complexity of the modern structure of the novel as well as its synthetic character.

V

In literary theory, three terms are used as the signifiers of the concept of magic realism, deriving from the first theorists of this artistic movement. *Magischer Realismus*, magic realism, or magical realism, is a term introduced in the literary and art theory by the art critic Franz Roh. In addition to introducing the term, Roh’s contribution is significant due to the first definition of magic realism as a “mystery” that is hidden and that “pulsates” behind the world on display. This phrase reflects the coordinating relationship between the noun and its attribute, i.e. the coexistence of reality and magic, which is also the main characteristic of magic realism as a literary mode and an important difference in relation to the close term magical realism, which is very common in foreign theoretical literature and in which the attribute functions as the definition of the nature of the term realism, characterized by the marvellous (Muždeka, 2017, p. 22–23).

While the first term originated in 1930s in Europe, in the 1940s and Latin America, a Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier introduced the term *lo real maravilloso* or marvellous realism, which is perceived as a special Latin American form of magic realism, stemming from a particular perception of reality as manifested in different cultures in the area (Muždek, 2017, p. 29). Thus, the marvellous realism is presented as an “ontological state of Latin America’s mind.” This notion was opposed in the 1960s by the theorist Angel Flores, who understands the term *realismo magico* (magic realism)

as a “general literary phenomenon that also exists in European fiction” (Polak, 2008, p. 32–33). This is also closely related to the definition proposed by a prominent Croatian theorist Milivoj Solar, who perceives magic realism as a “general impression,” or a narrative in which the “reality encompassed by the story belongs to the everyday life as in realism, but this everyday life accepts its own mythic foundations and nobody is astonished by the constant presence of the supernatural” (Solar, 2003, p. 327). Since terminology as a scientific discipline does not tolerate the lexical-semantic relation of synonymy, in Croatian theoretical literature there is a relationship of dichotomy between the concepts of magic and magical realism, whereby the first is established in literature, while the second is reserved for a painting trend of the twentieth century as the century of stylistic pluralism.

Thus, the term magic realism had its starting point in Germany, originally in painting, while in literary theory, it was introduced by Massimo Bontempelli, editor of the Italian newspapers *900*. As Roh’s study *Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten europäischen Malerei* was translated into Spanish in 1927, and Bontempelli’s article was translated to French at a time when Latin American writers such as Miguel Angelo Asturias from Guatemala, Aleppo Carpentier from Cuba, and Arturo Uslar Pietri from Venezuela (Polak, 2008, p. 25-26) stayed in Paris, this enabled them to become acquainted with the European understanding of magic realism, to take over its expression and spread it to Latin America, often with pointing out the content-related differences in relation to the European concept of magic realism.

It is remarkable that, before its expansion to America, magic realism was present in European literature, namely in the work of the Flemish writer Johan Daisne, whose foreword to his novel *De trap van steen en wolven* (1944) describes the text as a work of magic realism, thereby comparing the combination of fantastic and realistic perspectives as the “mixing of two decks of cards.” Conversely, in his essay “Magic Realism: A Typology,” William Spindler lists Franz Kafka among the writers of magic realism, classifying *The Metamorphosis* into ontological, and *The Trial* and *The Castle* into metaphysical magic realism, and emphasizing the distinction between European and Latin American or anthropological magic realism (Muždeka, 2017, p. 29, 36). Although seminal works of magical realism originated in Latin America by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Julio Cortazar, and others, in the second half of the twentieth century magic realism became a “significant literary phenomenon” in North America with representatives such as Jack Hodgins, Robert Kroetsch and others; in Africa with Chinua Achebe and Amos Tutuola; in Europe with Italo Calvino, Milan Kundera, and Robert Pinget; in New Zealand with Janet Frame and Witi Ihiamera in Australia (Polak, 2008, p. 37–39).

It is apparent that Carpentier’s division of magic realism into European and Latin American complicates the notion, which is essentially affected by “postcolonial and

intercultural contexts,” causing writers to “adopt magical realism in order to express their non-Western mythological and cultural traditions” (Bowers, 2004, p. 61). Magic realism can therefore function as postcolonial discourse as well. In that case, according to Stephen Slemon, its main characteristics are structured and thematic illustrations of the world: of colonizers and the colonized, the depiction of incompleteness and tension caused by the colonization process or the consequences it has caused, and filling the gaps with records from the margin, wherein the margin is always presented by the colonized (Slemon, 2005, p. 411).

Magic realism as a narrative process is marked by distinctive characteristics, making it different from other similar procedures fundamental to the interpretation of other stylistic formations. Although Croatian literary theory has occasionally dealt with the phenomenon of magic realism, in her article “Magical Realism of Australian Aboriginal Authors: Invisibility of the Double ‘Canibalization’ of Eurocentric Realism,” Iva Polak distinguishes its essential characteristics. Namely, the presence of fantastic iconography, the existence of the natural and supernatural worlds that deny antinomy, and the technique of authorial silence (Polak, 2009, p. 55). Furthermore, in her article “Scheherazade’s Children: Magical Realism and Postmodern Fiction,” literary critic and theorist Wendy B. Faris lists fourteen narratological characteristics of works that fall under this category and which should be listed.

As the primary feature, Faris offers the unavoidable magic element, “realism in the description of magic details,” the tension between two opposing perceptions of an event, the closeness and/or convergence of the natural and supernatural, and the re-examination and disruption of the “accepted perceptions of time, space, and identity.” While primary attributes are characteristic of magic realism in general, Faris also lists secondary attributes such as spoken magic, “defamiliarisation” of supernatural events, “concept of the collectively unconscious,” Bakhtin’s carnival spirit, and the principles of repetition and metamorphisation. Among them are also those characteristic of postmodern discourse, such as metafiction and intertextuality, and the representation of ancient beliefs and local customs that often assume or announce postmodernist pastoralism, while the use of magic as a warning for the “danger of conformism” is generally close to the features of postcolonial discourse (Faris, 2005, p. 167–173, 175–183).

In order to expand the common analysis and interpretation of Andrić’s novel *The Bridge on the Drina*, it is necessary to prove the presence of the mentioned elements of magic realism with respect to the offered narrative characteristics according to the aforementioned theoreticians and to prove their correlation with postcolonialism with which it simultaneously appears.

VI

“Since the novel examines the relationship between reality and the legend, between history and its upgrade, and since the writer’s portrayal of events is based on the evocative revival of the national legend, and the narrator’s tone is adapted to the tonal vibration of the collective voice which speaks through the legend and thus reveals the truth about itself, it is best to perceive the first and fundamental difference between those parts of the novel that are developed either based on historical data or the legendary record that the writer has acquired through oral tradition” (Vučković 1974, p. 299–300). *The Bridge on the Drina* deals with the discourse of Otherness, and by combining fictitious and realistic, metaphorical and metonymic, transgressive and subversive, in this sense it forms a “vision of magic realism which comes through at the crossroads of two worlds, in the imaginary point within the dual mirror that reflects the vision in both directions” (Faris, 2005, p. 172). Furthermore, through the binary opposition of archetypal symbols of both colonial destructive power and the discourse of Otherness, Andrić’s novel examines, deconstructs, and defamiliarises the meaning of colonial symbols.

The archetypal symbol of Ottoman destructive power is the aforementioned bloodthirsty act of impaling the rebellious peasant Radisav. The novel describes in detail the preparation for the act, the very act of impaling, as well as the victim’s death throes. In this process of gradual transformation of body to spirit, the peasant Radisav’s character gains a magical character: he “marched strangely w with short steps, almost skipping on his mutilated feet with bleeding holes where the nails had been; on his shoulders he carried a long white sharpened stake; The body of the peasant, spreadeagled, writhed convulsively; at each blow of the mallet his spine twisted and bent, but the cords pulled at it and kept it straight (...) that stretched and twisted body emitted a sort of creaking and cracking like a fence that is breaking down or a tree that is being felled” (Andrić, 1945, p. 47, 49). In addition, “From a distance it could only be guessed that the stake to which his legs had been bound at the ankles passed right through his body. So that the people saw him as a statue, high up in the air on the very edge of the staging, high above the river” (Andrić, 1945, p. 50). Such an act can be interpreted as a literary art of poetizing or expressing gratitude to one’s homeland in the form of sacrifice. However, it is about the spiritual transformation: “becoming something that goes beyond him and makes him almost unreal in complete spiritualization” (Vučković, 1974, p. 302). This metamorphosis is a consequence of the “collision of two different worlds” (Faris, 2005, p. 178) and as such, it is characteristic of magic realism for spaces (temporal, geographical, mental), such as Bosnia and Herzegovina that represent “intersections, intercultural zones, connective tissue of communication” (Faris, 2008, p. 85), between the fast-approaching Austro-Hungarian culture, the vanishing Ottoman culture, and the existing Kasaba.

In contrast, the narrator attributes the symbols of destructive power to the other colonizer as well – the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but is more focused on collective destinies, such as the mobilization of young men and the general fate of the bridge, a symbol of the collective destiny of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian population that must obediently accept the decisions of Austro-Hungarian centres of power, often opposed to their personal aspirations, which the superiors are not interested in. The centres of power are changing the town without asking the townspeople of Višegrad, according to which “the town would have gone on looking as any other little oriental town. (...) ...no one would needlessly create work or make plans or interfere in the foundation of buildings (Andrić, 1945, p. 139). And after the annexation, the bridge is likewise altered, even though the townspeople regard it as “a thing as eternal and unalterable as the earth on which they trod or the skies above them” (Andrić, 1945, p. 204). This change is brought about in a disastrous manner – by placing explosives in the foundation of the bridge that “remained as if under sentence of death, but none the less still whole and untouched, between the two warring sides” (Andrić, 1945, p. 307). Thus, the fate of the bridge can be synechdocally equalized to the fate of the entire population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, toward whom the superiors behave like toward inanimate objects and whose opinion is not respected since it is considered to be non-existent. However, instead of the justified defensive purpose in the event of an attack by the Kingdom of Serbia following the annexation crisis, the explosive within the bridge, as the symbol of the power of the Monarchy, during World War I fulfilled its destructive function only, but this time with an introverted orientation. The bomb targeting another has become a bomb targeting oneself, which is a metonymy of war relations in which large investments bring about simultaneous gains but also great losses. Therefore, the description of the demolished bridge – “without one of its piers and a yawning gulf between two roughly broken arches” (Andrić, 1945, p. 312) – reminds of the hurt and crippled Bosnian-Herzegovinian heroic soldier in World War I. Through thusly depicted fate, with an explosive within the bridge, Andrić’s narrator challenges the significance of the symbol of power and the purpose of war itself in which the Slavic population of the Monarchy had to fight against the Slavic population in the Kingdom of Serbia, which is in accordance with the aspiration of magic realism as the postcolonial discourse to return “to the pre-colonial worldview” (Polak, 2009, p. 57).

The indispensable magic element is further manifested in the sudden disappearance of Satan who gambles with Milan Glasinčan. The characteristic of this feature is that the “readers cannot explain it in line with the laws of the world they know” (Faris, 2005, p. 167), i.e. “incorporation into the realistic context, rarely causing comments by the narrator or characters” (Polak, 2008, p. 80). Andrić’s narrator, like Glasinčan himself, does not question Satan’s disappearance, but continues with the narrative: “At the same time the scattered cards flew away as if carried off by a storm,

the money was scattered and the whole *kapia* rocked to its foundations. Milan closed his eyes in fear and thought that his last hour had come. When he opened them again he saw that he was alone. His opponent had vanished like a soap bubble and with him the cards and the money from the stone flags. (...) For two months he lay in fever and delirium” (Andrić, 1945, p. 150–151).

In continuation of the story, realism is present in the description of magical details whose supernatural character represents “a clear deviation from realism” (Faris, 2005, p. 170). The magic detail is the ducat, found by Bukus Gaos the next day at the gate where Satan and Glasinčan gambled, and who destroyed him because he became “a vagabound and a gambler” (Andrić, 1945, p. 153). Moreover, in the realization of the magical-realistic effect, the narrative procedure of realistic description permeated by the extensive use of details is more important than the description of the object itself, since the process creates an alternative world of magic realism. In other words, a magical-realistic atmosphere is created, and the detail is liberated from the “traditional mimetic role” (Faris, 2005, p. 169), particularly emphasized in the description of ducat. The ducat is not only a means of paying tribute; on the one hand, it embodies an object that provokes passion, excitement, and addiction, and on the other hand the weapon, the magic by which Andrić, within the context of the discourse of Otherness, undermines the symbols of colonization because they represent the evil that leads to bad life.

There is another narrative procedure of magic realism in the aforementioned stories of the execution of peasant Radisav and the strange breakdown of the gambler. The stories have a common final act: the bridge allowed for the final crystallization of their higher states and meanings. “Bridge allows for both of them to be transformed on the boundary between reality and imagination, historical reality and legend, and it, as a unique substance of synthesis of the aesthetic and metaphysical, appears in the role of a catalyst that enables these processes and transitions to the maximum possible intensity which hard matters and realistic relationships allow” (Vučković, 1974, p. 304). Namely, the bridge as the key element of Andrić’s novel is divided between understanding the bridge as a real, common architectural structure and a supernatural monument that allows the view “behind the surface of reality” (Bowers, 2004, p. 2), thereby causing the advancement of the aforementioned spiritual transformation of the two characters.

Apart from Radisav and Glasinčanin, the hostess Lotika, whose downward-spiralling life is portrayed, also presents a character whose tragic destiny corresponds with that of the bridge: Lotika, just like the bridge, was “plucked out of the earth with a terrific noise and thrown into space in which it was still flying” (Andrić, 1945, p. 309) Since Lotika’s failure in life is juxtaposed with the breakdown of the bridge, the end of the civil war that broke down after World War I, and the death of Alihodja, the hero with a sentimental link to the bridge and tradition, Andrić chooses the “presence of

ancient ways of believing” (Faris, 2005, p. 182), explicitly present in the conversations between characters, such as the cosmologic legend narrated by Alihodja, as part of the narration with the aim of illustrating faith with a subversive nature of magic realism: “At one time my late lamented father heard from Sheik Dedije and told me as a child how bridges first came to this world and how the first bridge was built. When Allah the Merciful and Compassionate first created this world, the earth was smooth and even as a finely engraved plate. That displeased the devil who envied man this gift of God. And while the earth was still just as it had come from God’s hands, damp and soft as unbaked clay, he stole up and scratched the face of God’s earth with his nails as much and as deeply as he could. Therefore, the story says, deep rivers and ravines were formed which divided one district from another and kept men apart, preventing them from travelling on that earth that God had given them as a garden for their food and their support (Andrić, 1945, p. 208). In other words, “the bridge is attributed, within the framework of such an eastern-Islamic understanding of life, the meaning of a humane unity that surpasses intercultural boundaries. Alihodja’s understanding embodies the fanaticism of this mode of belief” (Vučković, 1974, p. 315). Moreover, Andrić presents two opposing modes of belief in the novel: first, as something that destroys and sets apart, and second, as something that connects and refines. In this way, antonymy is established as the fundamental postulate of magic realism (according to Faris), namely the two contrasting perspectives that deny each other in the novel, thus asserting its autonomy and providing the basis for the subversive character of the discourse of magic realism.

Apart from this, the “presence of ancient ways of believing and local knowledge” (Faris, 2005, p. 182) can be seen in the building of the bridge, portrayed as a ritual of walling up of a Black Arab as the “building sacrifice in the central pier,” explained by literary theoretician Džadžić in the following sense. “Every major creation repeats the cosmologic act” of the creation of the world, whereby each man offers a sacrifice during building, just as God sacrificed the beast when creating the universe. In direct connection with the sacrifice is the mythical emblem of the oak tree as the site of sacrificing people and animals in the Slavic and Celtic mythology, on whose beam Alihodja’s ear was nailed, that is, on whose stake Radisav was impaled as a scape goat (Džadžić, 1983, p. 73, 98, 114). The very fact that a series of sacrifices take place at the site of the central pier testifies of the lack of reality, since the narrative process of repetition (Faris, 2005, p. 177) underlines their magical nature. The analogy of the black Arab and the dragon motif from Indo-European mythology, the symbol of chaos and the embodiment of the water beast, reveals the satanic character of the Arab as a demon captured in the central pier (Džadžić, 1983, p. 73, 87–92). In fact, the interpretation leads to another metamorphosis (Faris, 2005, p. 178) of the deceased into a water demon that preys on potential victims. Therefore, the pier hides something magical as the “unnatural, supernatural, mysterious, unexplained,

unexplainable,” unlike the real which is governed by the “laws of natural sciences” (Muždeka, 2017, p. 33), whereby the aforementioned coexistence of two worlds as an important characteristic of magic realism is highlighted (Polak, 2009, p. 55). Džadžić notices that there is a vertical differentiation of victims, i.e. the relation under-above ground, therefore the Arab represents a black victim and Radisav is a white victim; and his floating in the air makes him remembered as a hero (Džadžić, 1983, p. 120). Such a division into two worlds that are being offered a sacrifice is in accordance with the Slavic myth on Chernobog and Belobog as representatives of good and evil (Vukelić, 2004, p. 256). Also, the inscription of the myth in the novel’s structure (that also features legends on fairies) testifies to Andrić’s imagery of magic realism being established by relying on the pre-colonial Slavic worldview, which differs from the colonial and imposed beliefs of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian worlds.

The next mythical element is related to the death of the bridge keeper Alihodja Muteveliċ, who dies in the same moment when the bridge goes down. Similar analogies can be found in myths in which the life of certain creatures is linked to the existence of trees in the grove. In addition, the novel ends with the revelation of the former because the “explosion of the central pier is actually the activation of the captured demon that embodies the chaos” (Džadžić, 1983, p. 78, 95). This demon attains the functions of non-acoustic articulations: “In the chaos and disorder of scattered goods and damaged objects that lay in the centre of the shop was a heavy stone about the size of a man’s head. The *hodja* looked up (...), but the voices from the street summoned him even more loudly and peremptorily and would not let him think. (...) His gaze turned to the bridge. The *kapia* was there where it had always been, but just beyond the *kapia* the bridge stopped short. There was no longer any seventh pier” (Andrić, 1945, p. 311–312). Here, the realism can be seen in the description of magical details (Faris, 2005, p. 169) because the bridge is given the supernatural character – that of being able to communicate – although it is anthropomorphized in the entire text. Accordingly, the myth is present implicitly in the novel and it serves to depict the magical in the novel, which is an important element of magic realism.

In addition, Džadžić states that the choice of the building site is “a special expression of the mythical way of thinking,” as expressed in the unnatural schedule of building – from the choosing of the site, to the man to the act of building. During the process, the man has no ability to choose because the choice reserved for a greater power, therefore a “black pain” (Andrić, 1945: 26) urges Mehmed Sokolli’s choice of the building site. According to Džadžić, it symbolizes the feeling of separateness of Sokolli’s homeland that eventually turned to guilt “that he hasn’t done enough for his homeland” (Džadžić, 1983, p. 67–69). At the same time, it embodies the supernatural and magical that govern Pasha’s life. In the same way, the narrative principles of repetition “create the magic of changeable references” (Faris, 2005, p. 177). The repetition is best seen in the scenes where Muta, Ćorkan, and Nikola Pecikoza perform

the same dance on the bridge in different parts of the novel, which is understandable since Andrić's novel explicitly refers to history's cyclic nature: "Those were things which are not told, but forgotten. For were they not forgotten, how could they ever be repeated?" (Andrić, 1945, p. 265). With this sentence, Andrić's narrator gives hope to colonial subjects that will not be affected by repetition of fate as long as they remember their past troubles. The repetition in that context mirrors the colonial of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is also inscribed in the thematic structure of the novel, since it was conquered many times in history. In addition, through narrative repetition and comparison of historical legends of the bridge in the first chapters of the novel and the fictional world of the novel, Andrić forces on the reader the dilemma "between two opposing perceptions of the event" (Faris, 2005, p. 171).

The comparison of legends and the Romanesque event results in the demystification and distortion of "epic divinization," characteristic of the spirit of the collective story, whereby the archetypes become constitutive elements of creating new situations (Džadžić, 1983, p. 218). Thus, based on the example of the legend of fairy (*vila*) of the waters from the first chapter, in the third chapter the narrator retains that only the bridge demolition, but the bridge is not demolished by the villa but by Radisav, as well as the character of the depressing mother from the legends of the crazy Ilinka who is looking for lost children, but this time they are dead and not taken. However, the reader's struggle is not solved even after reading the entire novel and the question of true historical truth remains unattained. Legends are therefore interpolated into the novel as an oral intertext, which has the role of manifesting the desire for re-establishing history, and is associated with the concept of the collective unconscious that "illustrates the splendour of collective magic derived from recounting" (Faris, 2005, p. 183). This is explicitly addressed in the novel: "They knew all the bosses and concavities of the masons, as well as all the tales and legends associated with the existence and building of the bridge in which reality and imagination, waking and dream, were wonderfully and inextricably mingled. They had always known these things as if they had come into the world with them, even as they knew their prayers, but could not remember from whom they had learnt them nor when they had first heard them" (Andrić, 1945, p. 15). In addition, the novel features two occasions that thematise the figure of chronicler, in criticizing Hussein Effendi from Višegrad whose chronicle Andrić's narrator sees a failure because it lacks focus regarding the events in the town, and in the interpolation of the historical source into the work marked by cursive text and the author of the quote – *iguman* of the monastery near Priboj. Therefore, the intertext of the chronicle appears as the cultural correction the role of which is to present the world from the perspective of marginal groups, the colonized peoples represented by *iguman* of an Orthodox monastery.

Furthermore, the novel features spoken magic in the form of a curse with the meaning of blessing: "May God and Mustajbeg give you the name of young bride"

(Andrić, 1945, p. 106). That “bridging the gap between the word and world” (Faris, 2005, p. 176) is accomplished in a marvellous way is stated by the very narrator: “What happened there between Avdaga Osmanagić and Mustajbeg Hazić, how did Mustajbeg come to ask for the hand of Fata for his only son Nail, and why did the proud and upright Avdaga ‘give’ the girl? No one will ever know” (Andrić, 1945, p. 107). It is notable that Andrić uses the strategy of authorial silence redirecting the narrative when it is necessary to offer an explanation of supernatural elements.

Bakhtin’s carnival spirit (Faris, 2005, p. 183) likewise appears as a sign of magical realism in the novel. By displaying the “distorted, twisted faces” of the colonizers, the carnival “with its form of liberation from hierarchy and official truths” (Ristivojević, 2009, p. 205) creates a new worldview. This can be seen in the contradictory description of the colonel within and outside the parade: “The hussars, all young and fresh, with waxed moustaches, in red shakos and yellow frogged tunics (...) Behind them rode a group of six officers led by a colonel. All eyes were fixed on him. His horse was larger than the others, a flea-bitten grey with a very long and curved neck. (...) As soon as his foot touched the ground, the colonel seemed another man. He was a small, undistinguished, overtired, unpleasant and aggressive man” (Andrić, 1945, p. 130–131). The utopian potential of Bakhtin’s carnival spirit generally enables the elimination of norms and hierarchy, violation of prohibitions, avoidance of rules, but also the intense experience of collective identity and the resistance to the existing social hierarchy. Moreover, Andrić depicts an Austro-Hungarian soldier as a caricature – a carnival figure – representing the overall impression of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy based on the mimicry. Namely, the mimicry in which soldiers undermine the foundations of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is in fact the metonymy of the region itself, which allows for the concept of magic realism as postcolonial discourse, but also the re-invoking of subversive character, because in the context of the discourse of “Otherness” it undermines the symbols of colonization.

Therefore, magic realism in the novel *The Bridge on the Drina* again appears in connection with postcolonial discourse in the role of problematising the cognition of the historical truth, warning against the need to correct history with the aim of turning attention to the perspective of marginal groups and returning to the pre-colonial ancient Slavic identity due to western renunciation of the mixed, bordering identity of the East Western and cultural imposing of the Balkan identity.

Conclusion

Ivo Andrić is a modernist writer from former Yugoslavia who was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1961, thus confirming his important place in world literature. In the novel *The Bridge on the Drina*, Andrić maintains basic narrative strategies of realism, such as long digressions, detailed realistic descriptions, and focus on marginal groups, but the deviation from this stylistic formation is manifested by the

absence of the protagonist, directing the plot at the collective consciousness of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its historical duration and results in a complex text structure expressed in the genre of chronicle between 1571 and 1914. It is precisely this genre that enables the representation and criticism of historical relations as a colonial struggle between the East and West for the border area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the change of the previous (Eastern/Western) identity that colonizers burdened with numerous stereotypes. The presence of postcolonial discourse conditions the occurrence of magical realism, a narrative technique through which colonized societies express specific cultural traditions. This stylistic formation in the novel is manifested through the deconstruction of symbols of the colonizers' power, often in the Bakhtinian carnival spirit, a model of escapism for colonial subjects, as well as through spoken magic and numerous magic details.

Conscious of the fact that "history is written by winners," Andrić opposes popular legends as a result of the existence of the collective unconscious, with fictitious historical events contained in the novel, to show the difficulty of arriving at historical truths and distinguishing the notion of history as the past historical reality, from the notion of history as the description of the past, most often carried out by colonizers. For this reason, Andrić's novel, unlike similar reviews of history, does not dwell on the military nor political history, but depicts the dramatic destiny of individuals with a focus on social history and the destiny of a fictional bridge as a symbol of endurance in accepting and bridging the Otherness, i.e. imposed differences, which ceases to exist at the moment when the centres of power discontinue its specific, Slavic element. That is why the majority of magic elements occur in the moments of colonizers' imposing of changes, often accompanied by the technique of authorial silence, to highlight the Slavic element through numerous ancient myths and the Slavic fantasy imagery, and become the cultural correction of accepted historiography and to re-examine the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, historically and realistically divided between the East and the West.

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Transtextual references and their role in *Middlemarch* by George Eliot

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Abstract: Although the novel *Middlemarch* is the example of a traditional, nineteenth-century English novel with its third-person narration and popular subjects (gender roles, realism of a Victorian world etc.), one may find much wider context George Eliot used to present her idea of a society in nineteenth-century England. It is the context of widely understood transtextuality, which, according to Gérard Genette, takes different forms and roles in a primary text. The work by Eliot contains mainly a great number of intertextual references, among them numerous allusions to classical texts of English literature, as well as metatextual relations concerning comments on both Victorian and ancient culture. The paper aims at presenting those transtextual ideas which seem to be the most crucial for deeper understanding the world presented in *Middlemarch*. These ideas appear not only to enrich the language of the novel, but also, and above all, to both praise and criticise the world depicted from a perspective of previous epochs.

Key words: transtextuality, Victorian novel, antiquity, realism

Introduction

Middlemarch is undoubtedly one of the most popular and widely discussed novels by George Eliot, not only in terms of its deep insight in the culture and society of Victorian England, but also in terms of a wide context it offers in order to understand the presented world thoroughly. To perceive the characteristic features of the world in nineteenth-century England, it is crucial to recognize in the novel by Eliot these elements which coexist with a typical, third-person narration, and these, among others, are the elements of transtextuality. First of all, it is crucial to define the notion of transtextuality in the context of literary analysis. The idea of Gérard Genette appears to be the most accurate in terms of complexity. The academic claims that transtextuality means every reference that connects the main text with other texts of literature or culture in a clearly visible or hidden way (2014, p. 7). He also distinguishes several types of these interrelations: intertextuality (quotation, allusion, etc.), paratextuality (titles, introductions, prefaces, illustrations, etc.), metatextuality

(comment on a particular text, with or without quoting it, but often evaluating it), hypertextuality (relation between text B and text A, which becomes a model for text B, and without its existence text B cannot be fully understood) and architextuality (a typically taxonomic, silent reference, especially visible in titles: *Poems, Essay, Novel*, etc.) (Genette, 2014, pp. 7- 11). In *Middlemarch* one may find various transtextual references, mainly in the form of intertextuality, metatextuality and hypertextuality. The novel and its versatility has been frequently evaluated from numerous perspectives. Virginia Woolf, for instance, described it as “the magnificent book which for all its imperfections is one of the few English novels written for grown-up people” (Harvey, 1973, p. 7), while Henry James called the novel “a treasure house of detail” (Harvey, 1973, p. 9). In fact, *Middlemarch* is a novel with a unique design, as it contains a number of transtextual references which enrich its language and message conveyed.

References to British literature

Among different transtextual references in the novel by George Eliot references to British literature are the most frequent. George Eliot reaches mainly for the literary figures of the renaissance period, among them William Shakespeare or Ben Jonson. All the references enrich the presented situations with the deeper context, for instance, the moment Dorothea and Mr. Casaubon meet and talk to each other is supported by the quotation from John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. In chapter three of book one he thinks of her as a perfect material for a wife. The chapter starts with the intertextual reference to John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, later, developing the quotation into a discussion over the subject of writing a book on the meaning of myths:

*“Say, goddess, what ensued, when Raphaël,
The affable archangel...”*

Eve

*The story heard attentive, and was filled
With admiration, and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange”*

(B. vii in: Eliot, 1973, p. 46).

Dorothea listens to Mr. Casaubon’s speech, which covers the subject of myth and its perception. She feels the things he says reflect her own ideas and thoughts. Mr. Casaubon “had been as instructive as Milton’s ‘affable archangel’; and with something of the archangelic manner he told her how he had undertaken to show (...) that all the mythical systems or erratic mythical fragments in the world were corruptions of a tradition originally revealed” (Eliot, 1973, p. 46).

The allusion is quite clear: Dorothea, while listening to Mr. Casaubon’s academic speech, is similar to Eve listening with admiration to the archangel, who presents to both Adam and Eve the stories of heaven, hell and God. Anna K. Nardo emphasises the

role the quotation from *Paradise Lost* plays in Eliot's novel. Both Eve and Dorothea gain knowledge, but not a scholarly one. Dorothea acquires knowledge "that tastes like Eve's bitter fruit of experience" (Nardo, 2003, p. 89). Dorothea looks for wisdom and knowledge in Mr. Casaubon's speech, however, the only thing she finds is the reflection of her own acquired ideas. Nevertheless, she perceives herself as a perfect wife for the scholar.

Mr. Casaubon's words concerning the mythical systems are the representation of metatextual reference. The academic presents his own opinion on the condition of myths in general, which simultaneously becomes the comment on literature; one should have a vast knowledge to decode hidden and mutual relations between all the myths and legends. They of course undergo constant changes throughout centuries, and their perception, put in different contexts of culture and literature of particular countries and nations changes as well. This process of reception enriches and develops human experience.

Another representative of classics of British literature present in the novel by George Eliot is Ben Jonson. The passage from his *Every Man in His Humour* is used by the writer in the beginning of chapter eleven, book one:

*But deeds and language such as men do use,
And persons such as comedy would choose,
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes*

(Eliot, 1973, p. 121).

It is the introduction to the thoughts of Mr. Lydgate. He is considering the character of Rosamond Vincy in the context of marrying her. He analyses his position as a man, his financial situation, as well as the ideal of a Victorian woman. All these thoughts are presented in an ironic way, which helps the reader to see "an image of the times" from a certain perspective. In Lydgate's opinion, a wife should be, among others, an adornment for a husband. She should always look from a female perspective; that is why, as Lydgate claims, Miss Brooke would not be a proper wife – life with her would mean constant work and no rest (Eliot, 1973, pp. 121- 122).

In the above context, the intertextual reference to Milton's work is based on the reflection of reality. Milton claims the author of a particular literary work should depict reality: genuine human language and characters, as well as actual human follies. This enables the reader to perceive the image of a presented world with little or no distortion. In the case of Mr. Lydgate it is true: he clearly presents a typical Victorian male point of view on the role of men and women. And again, this quotation from the work by Jonson serves as a comment on writing literature in general, so it is of a metatextual character as well.

Among the classical texts of British literature used by George Eliot in her novel, one can find Sonnet XXXIV by William Shakespeare. The part of it constitutes the beginning of chapter twenty-four, book three:

*The offender's sorrow brings but small relief
To him who wears the strong offence's cross*

(Eliot, 1973, p. 273).

This is the introduction to the situation of Fred Vincy who fell into debt and failed to find money to pay it off. Fred is devastated having created such a situation, and he is forced to admit that he is in a bad financial condition. This also influences his relationship with Mary – a woman he loves (Eliot, 1973, p. 273). Shakespeare's sonnet is a direct analogy to Fred's situation. The whole sonnet by Shakespeare presents the sorrow of a woman who feels angry with a man; the only thing that can help to redeem the man's wrong deeds is his love towards a woman. The story of Fred and Mary constitutes a wider context for Shakespeare's words: they get along with each other and get married.

Various analogies to British literature frequently convey a meaning connected with a female role in Victorian England. When Dorothea married Mr. Casaubon, she desired to help him with his research concerning ancient mythology. However, during their honeymoon in Rome, her husband tried to make her aware that a female cannot interfere in a male work unless he asks her to do so. Mr. Casaubon's indignation caused a minor argument concerning Dorothea's role as a wife; nevertheless, she was trying to soothe the conflict. The quotation from Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (*The Physician's Tale*) constitutes a comment on Dorothea's character and behaviour:

*"Hire facounde eke full womanly and plain,
No contrefeted termes had she
To semen wise*

(Eliot, 1973, p. 236)⁵².

The above reference emphasizes a conciliatory character of Dorothea, and such was a woman's role in Victorian England: to be a pillar of marriage, a bastion of peace and quiet, not to evoke conflicts but rather be subjected to the male expectations. The excerpt from Chaucer's literary masterpiece plays in *Middlemarch* another crucial role as well. First of all, the comment on Dorothea's features of character hidden in it seems to be objective, as it does not originate from the narrator of the novel by Eliot, but

⁵² Compare with another version:

Hir **facound** eek ful wommanly and playn, (**fashioned**)
Noon **countrefeted termes** hadde sche (**pretended phrases**)
To seme wys (Chaucer, 2002, p. 455).

from the outside. And this is one of the major advantages of using transtextual references in literature: a reader is offered maximum objectivity thanks to multiple points of view and numerous perspectives. Moreover, it is Geoffrey Chaucer who is known from his interpretative freedom, which lets the addressees of his work to decide about the characters in stories themselves, not to rely only on one primary narrator, and George Eliot appears to make a good use of this convention. Another quotation confirming Dorothea's mild nature constitutes the beginning of chapter XXXVII. It is the passage from Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* (Sonnet LIX):

*Thrice happy she that is so well assured
Unto herself, and settled so in heart,
That neither will for better be allured
Ne fears to worse with any chance to start,
But like a steady ship doth strongly part
The raging waves, and keeps her course aright:
Ne aught for tempest doth from it depart,
Ne aught for fairer weather's false delight.
Such self-assurance need not fear the spight
Of grudging foes; ne favour seek of friends;
But in the stay of her own stedfast might
Neither to one herself nor other bends.
Most happy she that most assured doth rest,
But he most happy who such one loves best
(Eliot, 1973, p. 392).*

The above passage not only comments Dorothea's character in an objective way but, as the majority of intertextual references in *Middlemarch*, also plays the role of a Greek chorus in ancient drama. Its role is to present the independent view on the events presented in the main story, as well as give the readers/ audience the opportunity to shape their own opinion and reflection. The discussed passage has also got a symbolic meaning: it refers to the political situation described in chapter XXXVII of the novel, which discusses the forthcoming elections to the Parliament. The words describing a female who is "settled in heart" and "Neither to one herself nor other bends" may signify a perfect attitude towards the situation in the country: she has her own views and ideals, and no man can influence her and change her mind easily.

A similar, universal value is also carried by another poem entitled *The Character of a Happy Life* by Sir Henry Wotton, which constitutes the beginning of chapter LVI:

*How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will?
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his only skill?
This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall:
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all*

(Eliot, 1973, p. 596).

Apart from the universality of meaning, the passage also refers to the figure of Kaleb Garth, who is described in chapter LVI. He is a hard-working man who appreciates honesty and integrity and who perfectly knows his job. Kaleb becomes the one who is to persuade his workers that constructing railway can be beneficial. He is portrayed as a chosen enlightened man, whose opinion is important for others.

Ancient references

Apart from the references to British literature, one may notice a wide range of allusions to antiquity. The majority of these allusions differs in form from these to the British literary works. Ancient references are of a hypertextual character, which means that the story presented in *Middlemarch* could not be fully understood without the knowledge of a particular reference to antiquity. For instance, the description of Rosamond waiting for the meeting with Lydgate who has not visited her for several days, is compared to the Cretan princess:

“Rosamond became very unhappy. The uneasiness (...) grew and grew till at the end of ten days that she had not seen Lydgate, it grew into terror at the blank that might possibly come – into foreboding of that ready, fatal sponge which so cheaply wipes out the hopes of mortals. (...) She felt that she was beginning to know the pang of disappointed love (...). Poor Rosamond lost her appetite and felt as forlorn as Ariadne – as a charming stage Ariadne left behind with all her boxes full of costumes and no hope of a coach” (Eliot, 1973, pp. 333- 334).

This hypertextual reference to the myth of Ariadne presents the way Rosamond feels when abandoned by Lydgate. It resembles the moment sleeping Ariadne was left by Theseus on Naxos with no explanation. This causes the feeling of loss and frustration, which dominates in Rosamond's mind as well. The reference also shows the female position in a society. Taking into consideration the fact that Rosamond lives in nineteenth-century England, it seems that it is quite essential for a female to socialize with particular spheres and keep in touch with male representatives of Victorian society. That is why the lost contact with Lydgate may evoke the feeling of uncertainty in a woman.

Another example of references to antiquity which covers the theme of a female role in society can be found in the conversation between Dorothea and Mrs. Cadwallader. The protagonist, whose husband – Mr. Casaubon – died, claims that she will never remarry. Mrs. Cadwallader gives the example of Dido, who chose to kill herself and stay faithful to her first husband instead of remarrying (Eliot, 1973, p. 594). The echo of this legend in female conversations brings to the reader the idea of a female status in Victorian England; some men also share this opinion:

“Sir James was informed that same night that Dorothea was really quite set against marrying anybody at all (...). Sir James made no remark. To his secret feeling, there was something repulsive in a woman’s second marriage, and no match would prevent him from feeling in a sort of desecration for Dorothea” (Eliot, 1973, p. 595).

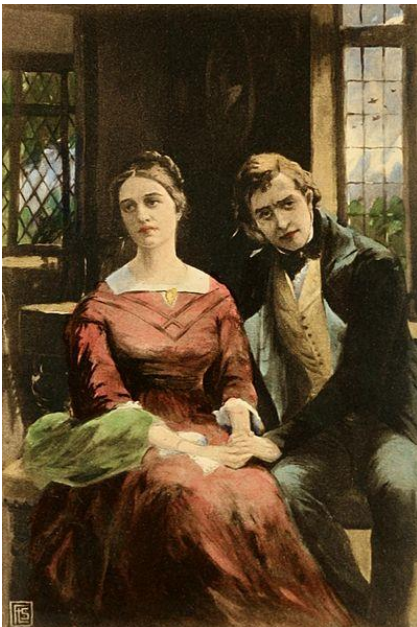
Other ancient references of a hypertextual character can be found in the descriptions of characters’ features. One of them is the presentation of Ladislav, who’s appearance is “a sort of Daphnis in coat and waistcoat” (Eliot, 1973, p. 538). These words uttered by Lydgate are the expression of praise, as Daphnis was perceived as one of the most beautiful young men in Greek mythology, next to Adonis and Narcissus. Daphnis, as the majority of ancient figures, was portrayed naked or almost with no clothes; here Lydgate’s words correspond with the idea of prefiguration, which, according to Stanisław Stabryła, relies on the analogies between the characters and worlds presented in a given novel and their ancient patterns (Stabryła, 1996, p. 9). Here, the analogy is based on the appearance, whilst the difference lies in the historical background: antiquity versus Victorianism. Lydgate’s admiration of Ladislav’s appearance attracts the readers’ attention in the context of gender; it is a man who praises another man’s look, which puts even more emphasis on the relations between antiquity and nineteenth century in George Eliot’s novel.

One of the most important references to antiquity in *Middlemarch* is the vast description of Dorothea and Mr. Casaubon’s travel to Rome. It is both physical and intellectual travel, it should be perceived as literal travel and sightseeing, as well as symbolic travel in time. Dorothea and her husband go there after getting married and their adventure in Rome is supported by various discussions of an aesthetic, moral and philosophical character. While visiting the Vatican, Dorothea is noticed by two men: Will Ladislav and Naumann. They admire the statues and various ancient sculptures, and they notice Dorothea (Ladislav’s cousin) standing next to the figure of ancient Ariadne. Here the two men compare these two women: Ariadne who “lies in the marble voluptuousness of her beauty” and Dorothea, “a breathing blooming girl, whose form, not shamed by the Ariadne, was clad in Quakerish grey drapery” (Eliot, 1973, pp. 219- 220). The two women are perceived as equal in terms of their appearance, the only thing that makes a difference is the fact that Ariadne is just the image of a perfect woman and Dorothea can be seen as the materialised image of Ariadne. Of course, Ariadne can be treated here as an archetype of a perfect female

and the figure of Dorothea can confirm the universality and timelessness of this archetype. Still, this comparison proves that irrespective of the times, there are universal values kept in the form of art, and that antiquity is the point of reference for the Victorians – a perspective which is worth recalling due to its aesthetic features.



Picture 1: Sleeping Ariadne⁵³



Picture 2: Dorothea Brooke and Will Ladislav⁵⁴

⁵³ <https://www.italianways.com/sleeping-ariadne-the-calm-before-the-storm/>, accessed on 17.7.2020

⁵⁴ <https://victorianlitlover.wordpress.com/2018/07/17/a-language-i-do-not-understand-dorothea-brooke-and-art-in-middlemarch/>, accessed on 17.7.2020

The discussion between Ladislav and Naumann over ancient art and the ideal of beauty turns into a philosophical dispute over the form and the content. While admiring both the figure of Ariadne and Dorothea, Naumann addresses Ladislav saying:

“If you were an artist, you would think of Mistress Second-Cousin as antique form animated by Christian sentiment – a sort of Christian Antigone – sensuous force controlled by spiritual passion” (Eliot, 1973, p.221).

This passage seems to bring to the readers’ attention several facts, among them the eternity and universality of art, as well as coexistence of various types of art. In this case literature is combined with sculpture, and this combination is characterized by the criticism of art. In this context the reference to antiquity is of a hypertextual, but also metatextual character. *Middlemarch* becomes here a novel about creating art. However, George Eliot also uses antiquity to comment on Victorian society. The historical background of ancient Rome becomes the point of reference to comment on England in the nineteenth century.

The above type of hypertextual references shows great interest of the Victorians in antiquity; while reading the novel one can notice how much ancient ideals are worshipped by the characters created by Eliot. Ancient world becomes here a point of reference in the context of ideal love, friendship, etc. At the same time this reference is a comment on the Victorian society and politics, some kind of criticism:

“To those who have looked at Rome (...) Rome may still be the spiritual centre and interpreter of the world. But let them conceive one more historical contrast: the gigantic broken revelations of that Imperial and Papal city thrust abruptly on the notions of a girl who had been brought up in English and Swiss Puritanism (...). Ruins and basilicas, palaces and colossi, set in the midst of a sordid present, where all that was living and warm-blooded seemed sunk in the deep degeneracy (...); the dimmer but yet eager Titanic life gazing and struggling on walls and ceilings (...): all this vast wreck of ambitious ideals, sensuous and spiritual, mixed confusedly with the signs of breathing forgetfulness and degradation, at first jarred her as with an electric shock” (Eliot, 1973, p. 225).

The above passage presents Dorothea’s observation while being in Rome. Several things may be noticed here. First of all, the narrator emphasises the past greatness of Roman Empire. Once powerful, now non-existent; the only remains of the empire seem to be the proof of its dramatic and spectacular collapse; “the wreck of ambitious ideals” seems to be the warning for the Victorians, especially in the context of British tendencies to colonize and conquer other countries and nations. Moreover, the narrator suggests the process of degeneration has already begun in England: “signs of breathing forgetfulness and degradation” are mixed with the remains of ancient power. All this constitutes a background for Dorothea, a woman of a particular, puritan

education. The crucial thing is that people should be capable of eliciting cause and effect relationships in history, which also echoes in the novel. During the conversation between Will Ladislav and Mr. Casaubon, Ladislav notices that Rome is miscellaneous, it makes a person's mind compare constantly. One cannot see the centuries and epochs as separate things with no connection one to another. For Mr. Casaubon, Rome offered him "a new sense of history as a whole" and it made him think creatively (Eliot, 1973, p. 244).

Numerous references to both British and ancient literary works and figures serve as a kind of mirror, in which human beings can find their reflections. Sir Thomas Browne very accurately summarizes people's tendency to look back in his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, whose excerpt is quoted by George Eliot in one of the novel's chapters:

"It is the humour of many heads to extol the days of their forefathers, and declaim against the wickedness of times present. Which notwithstanding they cannot handsomely do, without the borrowed help and satire of times past; condemning the vices of their own times, by the expressions of vices in times which they commend, which cannot but argue the community of vice in both. Horace, therefore, Juvenal, and Persius, were no prophets, although their lines did seem to indigitate and point at our times" (Eliot, 1973, p. 481).

The quotation not only indicates the universality of human existence irrespective of times, but it is also the voice of literary criticism. It shows the tendency to bring back the past events in order to criticise (but also praise) current situations presented in literature. This correlation of past with present reflects the relation between old and contemporary literary works. Older works are used to emphasize current problems and to evoke deeper reflection over a discussed novel. Moreover, George Eliot uses various references in her novel to: comment on the events and characters of the novel, to critically present other works of literature and culture and their process of creation and perception, and to comment on Victorian society by referring to the ancient ideals.

Conclusions

To sum up, the novel by George Eliot constitutes a rich source for reception studies. *Middlemarch* not only contains numerous references to British and ancient literature and culture, but it is constructed according to a particular pattern: every chapter begins with a quotation, either from well-known literary works or with an excerpt created by the writer herself. As far as this frame is concerned, the quotations starting the chapters constitute introductions to the content the particular chapter covers. The majority of references is of hypertextual character, which is based on the link between the primary source (British or ancient element) and the secondary story (portrayed in *Middlemarch*). This concern, among others: social subjects (female roles in society), politics (elections, imperialism). Metatextual references concern art in general (the ideal of beauty, the notion of writing literature, etc.). The role of quoted works is

versatile; it not only shows the longing of the Victorians for past values and greatness but at the same time it is to warn them against repeating past mistakes.

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Slovak American literature: Imagological reading of Thomas Bell's *Out of This Furnace*

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Abstract: With multicultural, postcolonial or decolonial approaches, the late 20th century saw increasing tendency to see literature as part of cultural and political identity struggles. While in Europe identity has traditionally been understood mostly in national terms, as a result of a long existence of individual nation states made up largely of ethnically homogeneous people living in one institutionally organised arrangement defined by common language, history and culture, in American literature it has meant the necessity for ethnically and culturally divergent parts of society to find ways how to exist in one political and cultural whole. The paper will discuss how this originally European concept evolved in American literary and cultural studies, with special regard to the work of some ethnic literatures, especially that of Slovak American literature.

Although Slovak Americans are considered the second largest Slavic minority in the USA, their literature and culture have not been given almost any critical attention, either in their "old" home, Slovakia, or in the country they adopted to be their new homeland, the USA. Even though in cultural, artistic, philosophical or scientific fields one can identify several significant Americans with Slovak roots (Andy Warhol, Michael Novak, etc.), in the field of literature proper it would be difficult to find a personality with a national appeal. However, one of the writers who should not be excluded from such larger, national context, is Thomas Bell, the author of "the novel of immigrant labor" *Out of This Furnace*, which tells a story of three generations of Slovak immigrants into the USA. The novel is interesting not only from the aspect of the characters' acquisition of the American identity but also because of its portrayals of national and ethnic stereotypes. These portrayals will be approached through the concept of *imagology*, i.e. a non-traditionalist and non-essentialist approach to identity studies that emerged and came to prominence in the late 20th century.

Keywords: imagology, comparative literature, national literatures, ethnic stereotypes, topos

With multicultural, postcolonial or decolonial approaches, the late 20th century saw increasing tendency to consider literature as part of cultural and political identity struggles. While in Europe the concept of identity has traditionally been understood

in national terms, as a result of a long existence of individual nation states of ethnically homogeneous people living in one institutionally organised arrangement defined by common language, history and culture, in America it has meant the necessity for ethnically and culturally divergent parts of society to find ways how to exist in one political and cultural whole. In what follows I would like to discuss how this originally European concept evolved in American literary and cultural studies, with special regard to ethnic literatures, especially the Slovak American literature.

Although Slovak Americans are considered the second largest Slavic minority in the USA, their literature and culture has not been given enough critical attention, either in their “old” home, Slovakia, or in the country they adopted to be their new homeland, the USA. It is true that in cultural, artistic, philosophical or scientific fields one can identify several significant Americans with Slovak roots (Andy Warhol, Michael Novak, etc.), in the field of literature proper it would be difficult to find a personality with a national appeal. However, one of the writers who should not be excluded from such larger, national context, is Thomas Bell, the author of “the novel of immigrant labor” *Out of This Furnace*, which tells a story of three generations of Slovak immigrants to the USA.

The novel is interesting not only from the aspect of the characters’ acquisition of their American identity, but also because of its portrayal of national and ethnic stereotypes. Identity and stereotypes have recently been subjected to many analyses using the critical apparatus of imagology – a literary critical conception which emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, as part of comparative literature, though its seeds can be found as early as the beginning of the 19th century. For example, one of the first attempts at what could qualify nowadays for imagological approach, was Madame de Staël’s famous depiction of the difference between the French and the Germans. She claimed that the two nations represent “the two extremes of the moral chain; since the former regard all ideas as moving from exterior objects; the latter, all impressions as proceeding from pre-conceived ideas” (23).

Imagology is a relatively recent approach to literary studies emerging, as mentioned above, from comparative literature and stressing slightly different set of values. While in traditional comparative literature texts have been studied as serious reflections of language, relationships, influences, place of contact, genetic or typological circumstances, and themes, imagology is concerned with these issues as only material productions of stereotypes which it then wants to subvert. It aspires to approach identity non-essentially, by pointing out that whatever image it is concerned with, is just an “image,” that is, “the mental silhouette of the other, who appears to be determined by the characteristics of family, group, tribe, people or race” (Beller, p. 4). It emphasises that these images are based on our perceptions of things, not on things themselves which, ontologically, cannot be accessed. “We do not know the real thing, but only its simulacrum in the form of mental images” (p. 4). Moreover, our

perception is selective, since what we see is a result of our preconceived notions, prejudice and stereotypes (p. 4) which, as Beller further claims, are, in turn, formed exactly from the fact that we do not see reality as a whole, but only its part (p. 5). Images are then incomplete mental representations, untruths, or, perhaps, just partial truths. What is problematic, however, is the fact that they are usually presented as complete truths. Imagology therefore “focuses on the complicated relationship between reality and imagination, between the image and its projection, and merges the spheres of perception and reality” (Laurušaitė, p. 8), however not with the aim to blur them, but rather to disclose their essentially contaminated nature. Whatever we claim about the other, be it a person, ethnic group, or a nation, has always already been contaminated by the subjectivity of our imagination. The novel *Out of This Furnace* is a good text for such an imagological analysis, since it contains several images and stereotypes about Slovaks. I will try to illustrate them at the background of one “grand” image, that of America.

What is the image of America then and how has it developed? Virtually every exploration in this area must start with America as a land of immigrants, who brought with them to the New World their individual national, cultural or ethnic characteristics, to reshape them in a new land and under new conditions. The first significant literary expression of this “reshaping” appeared in Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer* in which he asks a question on the nature of “Americanness”, the one which will be repeated under many other historical circumstances: “What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world” (Crèvecoeur).

From the literary point of view, this essence of the American and “Americanness” as embodiments of new and positive traits of humanity, a mixture of various ethnic, cultural or political influences formed a backdrop to virtually every literary work in the first stages of the formation of American national literature. One finds it in the work, among others, of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman. Emerson, for example, sees Americans as people close to nature, drawing from it the activity, simplicity, order, as opposed to the European historicism and sophistication. For Whitman, “[t]he Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem” (p. 5).

The efforts to identify the “Americanness” continued in modernism when writers sought “to understand what could define their literature as a national literature and not simply as a provincial footnote to English literature” (Morrison, p. 12). Naturally, no single quality or definition could be found. As Morrison further claims, the relation of [modernistic] art to national identity “metamorphosed a number of times” (p. 12), ranging from the opinions favouring the transfer of the European refinement to America, or the ones emphasising the “native American culture”, to those for whom what was American was reflected in the technological and scientific improvements, characteristic landscapes, lack of sophisticated culture, etc. Other stereotypes that developed about America throughout centuries include the place of extraordinary wealth, the land whose native population lives in the state of nature (the concept of noble savage popularised by James Fenimore Cooper as well as, paradoxically, the German writer, who never visited America, Karl May), D. H. Lawrence’s place of new great humanity, or, on the negative side, Baudelaire’s “great hunk of barbarism illuminated by gas” (see Firchow, p. 90).

Although immigration is considered the essential building block of American society, it has not always been associated only with positive traits. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a shift towards cultural and social divisions and the already “settled” Anglo-Saxon, or, for that matter, western European world, gradually formed superior attitude towards the immigrants coming to the USA from Central, Eastern or Southern Europe, as well as from other parts of the world. Nevertheless, these people were allowed to enter the USA because they were needed in its rapidly growing industry as cheap labour. The aim was to make them “Americans” in the “melting pot”, which was later substituted by the concept of “salad bowl” which, however, came to consider identity more as differentiation than unification and was rather associated with multiculturalism based on the theory of decolonisation and postcolonialism.

In the field of culture, a strong setting in of ethnic literatures led to the calls for radical changes in the canon, like Jay’s urging to “stop teaching ‘American’ literature” (264), and teach “Writing in the USA” instead. However, it also provoked worries of the collapse of common American values, as one can find in Ravitch’s distinction between pluralistic multiculturalism, which acknowledges the existence of the pluralistic “common [American] culture”, and the particularistic multiculturalism based on ethnocentrism. She claimed that “the particularistic version of multiculturalism is unabashedly filiopietistic and deterministic. It teaches children that their identity is determined by their ‘cultural genes.’ That something in their blood or their race memory or their cultural DNA defines who they are and what they may achieve. That the culture in which they live is not their own culture, even though they were born here” (341).

Such filiopietism, or the “the uncritical and often exaggerated pride in one’s ethnicity” (Bukowczyk), in fact lies in the heart of much contemporary ethnic struggle across the entire American cultural scene, conditioning or contextualising literary values with such extra-literary considerations as race, religion, nationality, social standing, and creating stereotypes of them. According to Bukowczyk, for example, Polish religious filiopietism draws on the portrayal of Poland as a Christian nation, protecting the West against Barbaric East.

Finding themselves in the midst of many different nations, ethnic groups and races, protagonists in Thomas Bell’s *Out of This Furnace* are, from the very beginning, faced with the necessity to struggle against many stereotypes destroying their modest way of life, often even the life itself. When an immigrant from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy arrives in the USA, he/she is immediately labelled as a “Hunky”, and “Hunkies were pretty dumb” (Bell, p. 164). Most commonly, they were so labelled by the Irish, since they came closest to them working in Pennsylvania’s steel mills. Naturally, the Slovaks were always ready to “repay” them equally, claiming that “the outstanding Irish characteristic was a dirty mouth” (Bell, p. 159), or they even followed the majority population’s racism, very strong in the early 20th century, as regarding African-Americans: “It’s too bad the niggers had to come. They never bother me, but some of my neighbors have moved, especially the ones with daughters. The men are always getting drunk and fighting, and you hear women screaming during the night. They all live together like so many animals. And so dirty!” (Bell, p. 330).

A largely negative attitude of the majority American population (of white Anglo-Saxon stock) toward Slovaks, as well as the Slovaks’ own racism, was not surprising, since it was fed by the fact that the majority of the immigrants coming to the USA at the turn of 19th and 20th century from Austria-Hungary were extremely poor, usually peasants without any significant education and no command of English language. It was only natural that they had to stick to themselves, try to preserve their own, largely conservative, way of life and cultural values, avoid all foreigners, or at least view them with suspicion. Most of them did not even try to learn English and penetrate into the American society, for they considered their stay in America only a temporary affair – trying to make enough money and return to the “old country”: “And there was always hope, the hope of saving enough money to go back in triumph to the old country, of buying a farm back in the hills, of going into business for one’s self” (Bell, p. 48).

Lisa A. Alzo in this respect maintains that this “generalized view of turn-of-the-century America that Slovaks were poor, downtrodden and living in misery” is responsible for “lack of Slovak identity” (p. 1) in American literature. And, as Patricia Ondek Laurence also claims “[p]rejudice, stereotypes, and “silence” about Slovaks persist even today because no writer of Slovak-American heritage has achieved sufficient stature in American literature to carry the voice and images of Slovaks into the mainstream” (p. 58). The situation is remarkably similar in Slovakia itself where the

image of the literature and culture of American Slovaks is only on the margin of critical attention. If literary scholars discuss the literary production of Slovak minorities living outside Slovakia, they are mostly restricted to neighbouring countries, such as Hungary, Serbia, or other parts of former Yugoslavia. The only significant exception was the above-mentioned novel *Out of This Furnace* which was published in the translation of Ján Trachta under the title *Dva svety* [Two Worlds], and was also broadcasted on Slovak television in 1976.

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