

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ELT SYLLABUS AND MATERIALS DESIGN

HANNA KOMOROWSKA

The aim of this article is to outline the present situation in curriculum construction, syllabus and materials design with a view to the development of intercultural competence.

In order to do so, the following aspects will be considered:

- notions of culture and identity and their implications for education,
- new directions in the European educational policy,
- intercultural competence in language curricula in and outside Europe,
- cultural content in language teaching materials,
- methods and techniques in the development of intercultural skills and

Implications for pre- and in-service teacher education will also be presented.

1. Culture and the language curriculum. Problems faced by decision makers in education

Language teaching has for a long time acknowledged relationships between language and culture. The grammar-translation method introduced both life style and high culture in the process of developing reading comprehension and writing skills. Early direct and situational methods turned to material culture in everyday contexts. The audiolingual method based its language drill on daily routines and situational contexts. The cognitive method as well as most of the personality oriented unconventional methods encouraged both language and cultural awareness (Neuner 1998).

Depending on the socio-political situation of particular nations, second/foreign language and its culture enters the curricula of various educational systems – to use Fairclough's dichotomy – either through coercion or through consent (Fairclough 1989).

In both cases the intensity and ways of teaching culture can vary quite considerably. The cultural content has always been strongly represented in the teaching of French, Spanish and Italian as foreign languages. It is slowly coming back to the teaching of Russian which had formerly been deprived of topics other than strongly politicized. Curricula and textbooks for the teaching of German as a foreign language have for a long time been offering elements of *Landeskunde*, i.e. knowledge of geography, history, political and economic institutions of a given country, *Realienkunde*, i.e. knowledge of material culture, *Kulturkunde*, i.e. knowledge of high culture and *Sozialkunde* i.e. knowledge of customs, traditions and life styles (Pfeiffer 2001).

After a long period of the domination of behavioural and cognitive approaches not particularly interested in the integration of language and culture, the Communicative Approach, now omnipresent in education, makes an attempt to introduce as many aspects of culture into language teaching as possible. The process is, however, by no means easy. Difficulties faced by educators and curriculum constructors can be categorized as those related to decision-making when it comes to the selection of:

- a methodological approach to culture,
- a relevant aspect, topic or category of culture,
- a way to avoid national stereotypes and
- an approach to the cultural identity of the learner and “the Other”.

1.1. How to define culture in ELT? Methodological approaches to culture

Although plenty of attention is nowadays given to the place of culture in FLT curricula and to the development of intercultural competence, syllabus design still suffers from the lack of precise definitions of those concepts. This is due to a large number of disciplines interested in issues related to culture – qualitative and quantitative research projects investigating culture variables can be found in the field of sociology, social and cultural anthropology, psychology, ethnography and ethnology, educational and political sciences and – last but not least – linguistics. A great variety of methodological approaches add to the complexity of the issue.

From a functional perspective culture is often defined as a set of attempts to meet social and physical needs of the society. In this approach it is seen as a barrier against efficient communication and as a source of differences and misunderstandings (Samovar, Porter and Jain 1981).

Culture is also viewed from a structuralist perspective as “a uniform set of socially constructed codes that govern the functioning of subjects and institutions” (Canagarajah 1999: 28). This implies an analysis of the system underlying social phenomena and social institutions as well as an analysis of behaviour through which this system is demonstrated.

Culture, viewed from a phenomenological tradition, is a concept which can be understood through the filter of the individual’s own culture in interaction with the culture of “the Other”. Barriers here divide not only communities but even individuals

as they have to make an effort to take the perspective of the communication partner. In consequence, a dialogical approach is postulated whereby “understanding the stranger’s filters” is necessary on both sides to make communication possible (Geertz 1975, Gudykunst and Kim 1984).

Poststructuralist approaches take this thinking much further looking at how individual interpretations determine what culture the other person belongs to (Collier and Thomas 1988).

Social constructionists look at interpreting cultures from the point of view of perception and self-perception. According to this view, each conversation participant, in the process of social and/or interactive positioning, consciously or subconsciously, “culturally locates” his/her partner as well as himself/herself (Davies and Harre 1990).

Due to the vast number of approaches outlined above, present day writings on the subject usually open with the author’s definition of culture. Most of these definitions tend to take a broad perspective on culture and stress the negotiation of meaning. Alastair Pennycook, for instance, states, “What I am referring to, then, is not the conservative view that identifies culture with a small range of aesthetic products, not the Marxist view that reduces culture to a reflection of socioeconomic relations, and not the liberal pluralistic view common in much English language teaching, which takes culture to be sets of stable beliefs, values and behaviour that can be taught as an adjunct to a language syllabus. Rather, I am referring to a sense of culture as the process by which people make sense of their lives, a process always involved in struggles over meaning and representation” (Pennycook 1995: 47). This strategy, although methodologically impeccable, does not offer educators much practical support.

1.2. Whose culture to teach? The complexity of cultural categories

Another difficulty is connected with the fact that the introduction of the cultural content into language education involves decisions related to the selection of topics, themes and perspectives. Which aspects of culture should be dealt with? Which type of culture should persons described in textbooks represent?

Decision-making problems are caused by the multitude of cultural categories and the so-called “layers of culture” within culture hierarchies, such as local cultures (e.g. a culture of a given city), regional cultures, national cultures and macro-cultures (e.g. European). Should coursebook characters in the teaching of Polish as a foreign language represent an educated Pole? A Pole from Cracow or Warsaw? A professionally mobile Polish-born European? Or perhaps attempt at a picture of a “generalized Pole”?

Within those layers decisions should also be taken as to which “co-incidences of culture” to present in the educational process. Individuals typically function within several cultural layers or categories simultaneously, sometimes managing to happily balance varying social roles, but sometimes facing role conflicts when norms and expectations of particular groups to which a given individual belongs drastically differ. Should a conflict-free picture of life in a foreign country be presented or should we introduce the learner to more gruesome aspects of L2 reality? To add complexity to the

issue, the situation is by no means stable – dynamic changes take place in each community and learners are likely to function in various communities as tourists, students or professionally mobile adult employees.

Even the teaching of relatively simple every day routines might prove misleading as, in the so-called “vertical cultural dimensions”, they are no more than symptoms of underlying norms, attitudes or beliefs (Kuada and Gullestrup 1998). Unless learners understand underlying meanings, they are likely to face communication problems.

That is why language educators tend to avoid this complexity and decide to take a much easier path. They usually offer informative texts presenting socio-cultural knowledge on aspects of geography, history and what is called “horizontal culture” dealing, according to Hans Gullestrup, with:

- technology demonstrating how nature is processed,
- economic institutions demonstrating how the output is distributed,
- social institutions showing how individuals live together,
- political institutions showing who controls them,
- language and communication showing how knowledge, ideas and values are disseminated,
- education and socialization manifesting how individuals are integrated,
- ideology demonstrating how common identity is preserved and / or
- religion and its institutions showing values and meanings of life (Gullestrup 2002).

General language education typically includes topics related to life and institutions of a given country, sometimes also to language with its varieties. Curricula for the teaching of a foreign language for occupational purposes usually concentrate on technology, economic and political institutions as well as on ideology.

In both cases, however, facts rather than their interpretations or meanings are presented, nuances are avoided and intercultural skills are not systematically developed.

1.3. How to avoid stereotyping? Teaching knowledge vs. developing skills

Irrespective of the decisions taken on the two issues presented above, i.e. the definition of culture and the selection of its aspects to be presented, educators face an additional difficulty – they have to address two completely different target groups: learners coming from professional business circles and pupils in mass education.

Awareness of the fact that many international business contracts fail due to communication problems created a need for the knowledge of tradition, customs, habits, daily routines and communication styles of business partners. Cross-cultural research initiated by Stuart Hall, developed by Deborah Tannen at Goergetown University and adapted for business communication purposes by numerous departments of business and management in Europe soon lead to the publication of teaching materials. Handbooks of intercultural communication for business purposes became popular, the best known of

which seems to be Richard Gesteland’s *Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour. Marketing, Negotiating and Managing Across Cultures* (Gesteland 1999). Their topics, approaches and even activities designed for the learners were soon transferred to foreign language teaching materials.

Considering the multitude, variety and frequency of business contacts, cross-cultural information in materials of this kind is usually presented in brief, simplified capsules. Emphasis is given to differences rather than to similarities, and sensitive areas of potential conflict or misunderstanding are clearly pointed out.

Although handbooks of intercultural communication usually bear a non-evaluative character and permit useful knowledge transfer, the unavoidable brevity of the cultural content presents serious dangers of stereotyping. Simplification goes hand in hand with the possibility of creating or consolidating stereotypes whose tempting beauty is based on their permanence and concise, non-complex nature. Individuals operating under stress or time pressure, which is the case in typical business decision-making, refrain from detailed, rational analysis and resort to stereotyping. No deep multifactor approaches are, however, realistic either in short corporate courses of intercultural communication or in longer courses where language skills are of primary importance.

A completely different approach to the teaching of culture is needed in the school system. International conflicts, anti-Semitism and xenophobia facing Europe in the present day create a shared aim of ministries of education and non-government organizations to work towards the development of understanding and tolerance. In line with the educational policy of the Council of Europe and the European Union (see section 2.1 below) a need is now voiced for a broader treatment of culture in the school systems of Europe. Brief, information oriented, business-like approach to socio-cultural knowledge is considered insufficient. In the European documents knowledge is seen as a *sine qua non* for a more important aim, i.e. the development of intercultural competence in the young people. This involves skills to observe, to suspend judgement, to reflect on one’s own culture, to compare behaviour and cooperate with representatives of another culture in spite of differences or even in spite of the lack of acceptance. Such a broad treatment is possible in mass education where educators are less pressed for time and a concerted effort of teachers of various subject-areas can be expected.

In teaching cross-cultural communication decision which road to take is relatively easy. In language education, where culture is one of many curricular components and intercultural skills are to be developed together with the linguistic ones, the situation is much less clear.

1.4. How to shape perception and self-perception? The concept of cultural identity

What adds to the complexity of the issue is the fact that even when educators decide to develop intercultural competence rather than to offer simple capsules of socio-cultural knowledge, the learning process still calls for the learner’s cultural awareness and self-analysis. As it has to be guided, teachers need to look at the concept of identity from a new perspective.

In the functional approach to culture, intercultural communication was linked to national culture, therefore identity was perceived in national terms. This led to the concept of national character soon abandoned and replaced by research on cultural identities defined as “aspects of our identities which arise from our belonging to distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious and, above all, national cultures” (Hall, McGrew 1992).

Globalization and localization processes created a need to distinguish:

- contradictory identities within the self, related to conflicting “co-incidences of culture” or role conflicts as in 1.2. above,
- different identities at different points in time, called “identity as a moveable feast” (Hall and McGrew 1992), related to an individual’s mobility and subsequent functioning in various cultural communities
- multiple identities, called “living in two worlds”, when this type of functioning is parallel in the life of the individual,
- imposed identities when in the “othering process” the majority constructs distance to other groups, e.g. ethnic minorities, labels them and “fixes the minority in the idea that they are different” basing on their own interpretations and cultural presuppositions (Collier and Thomas 1988, Jensen 1994).

Encouraging the learner to self-analyze and reflect on his / her identity is not only difficult considering nuances of the concept, but also dangerous as this process can also lead to stereotyping. Stereotypes – products of collectivistic “closed thinking” – offer security and group affiliation as they strengthen ties within a community, consolidate common frames of reference and represent group interests. At the same time, however, they facilitate inclusion and exclusion of “the other” and invite scapegoating (Berting, Villain-Gandossi 1995).

All the difficulties discussed above have to be considered by educational decision-makers responsible for curriculum construction and materials design. Two main European institutions, i.e. the Council of Europe and the European Union offer a useful political and educational framework which can serve as a considerable aid in this process..

2. Language and culture in the European educational policy

Language education in Europe is strongly influenced – if not straightforwardly shaped – by the Council of Europe and the European Union, institutions that function in full agreement and cooperation in the field of languages.

The Council of Europe’s Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) lists three of its main policy objectives as 1) the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy, 2) the promotion of an awareness of European identity and 3) the search for common responses to the greatest

challenges facing European society. Two basic principles guiding the policy of the Council of Europe are linked to the concepts of “linguistic diversity” and “democratic citizenship”. Promoting linguistic diversity covers not only first, but also ethnic minority languages, as well as second and foreign languages. It is based on the belief that language competence is not a privilege but a right and a necessity for all citizens as – in the situation of growing mobility – they need the ability to mediate between and relate to a number of social groups and their cultures (Document DECS/ EDU/LANG (99) 6). As Joe Shiels, Head of the Department of Language Policy at the Council of Europe, stated it at the Innsbruck conference on May 12, 1999 “diversified language learning builds up the individual citizen’s cultural capital – which is not to be understood solely in terms of economic benefits, but can and should have cultural dimensions” (Shiels 1999). The European Parliament confirmed this view of the Council of Europe deciding to promote “the intercultural dimension of education” (Decision No 253/2000/EC of 24 January 2000).

Education in general and language education in particular have, therefore, a significant part to play in promoting linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship – when and if they can integrate language and culture in the school curriculum. That is why the Council of Europe decided to devote most of its time and effort to this issue.

2.1. The concept of socio-cultural competence in the work of the Council of Europe

In the 1990s the Council of Europe in Strasbourg together with the European Centre for Modern Language in Graz introduced the notion of *socio-cultural competence*.

For immediate purposes of curriculum construction and syllabus design socio-cultural competence was defined as “awareness of the socio-cultural content in which the language concerned is used by native speakers and of ways in which this context affects the choice and the communicative effect of particular language forms” (Neuner 1998: 56). According to M. Byram and G. Zarate, the leading experts of the Council of Europe in the field of teaching language and culture, “A learner possessing socio-cultural competence will be able to interpret and bring different cultural systems into relation with one another, to interpret socially distinctive variations within a foreign cultural system, and to manage the dysfunctions and resistances peculiar to intercultural communication” (Byram, Zarate 1998: 13).

The seminal publication of the Council of Europe “*The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*”, available in draft form from 1996 and published by Cambridge University Press in 2001, lists – alongside with linguistic competences – four “general competences”, i.e. declarative knowledge (*savoir*), existential competence (*savoir-etre*), skills and know how (*savoir-faire*) and ability to learn (*savoir-apprendre*), each of which is in some way related to the socio-cultural competence of the learner.

Declarative knowledge (savoir) includes:

- socio-cultural knowledge, i.e. the knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken, e.g. everyday living (food, drink, public holidays, work hours, leisure activities), living conditions (living standards, housing conditions), interpersonal relations (class and family structure, gender roles, relations between generations), values, beliefs and attitudes (history, politics, arts, religion), body language, social conventions and ritual behaviour,
- intercultural awareness covering knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between both communities.

Skills and know how (savoir-faire) include:

- practical skills (social skills, living skills, vocational skills and leisure skills) as well as
- intercultural skills (the ability to bring L1 and L2 cultures into relation, cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures, the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations as well as the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships).

Existential competence (savoir-etre) includes:

- attitudes (openness towards and interest in new experiences and other persons, ideas, societies and cultures, willingness to relativise one's own cultural viewpoint and cultural value system, willingness and ability to distance oneself from conventional attitudes to cultural differences),
- motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality factors.

Ability to learn (savoir-apprendre) covers:

- language and communication awareness,
- general phonetic awareness,
- study skills and
- heuristic skills, e.g. the ability to come to terms with new experience, to find new information, to use information technology. (CEF 2001).

As aspects of knowledge, attitudes and skills are spread across a variety of categories in the *Common European Framework*, it is more than difficult to use the document in order to design a satisfactory FLT syllabus. Moreover, in line with the framework, course objectives have to be presented in the form of operationalized descriptors called "CAN DO statements". A new, skills-oriented approach was, therefore, needed.

2.2. The concept of intercultural competence in language education

Inspiration came from several disciplines – cultural anthropology with its ethnographic fieldwork, ethnography with its tendency to describe a culture from the inside, ethnology with its aim at analyzing and comparing cultures, sociology with its aim to understand modern society and – last but not least – cultural studies aiming to study present social and cultural conditions. Educators decided to build on a well-known Goodenough's definition from the 1960s stating that culture is "what one needs to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members" (Goodenough 1964), as it helped shape a skills-based approach to the teaching of language and culture.

Kramsch's earlier work on language and culture was also treated as a source of inspiration. Attention was drawn to two types of needs she pointed out in her book *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, i.e.:

- a need to establish the sphere of interculturality understood as something more than simple information transfer between two cultures as the learner is now supposed to bring the two cultures into relation, which also requires reflection on his/her own culture, and
- a need to teach culture as difference, which means abandoning the concept of national, monolithic culture and moving towards a variety of cultures related to age, gender, ethnicity, region, profession or social class (Kramsch 1993).

Kramsch's stance helped educators look at the way cultural categories can be selected. It also stressed the value of the learner's reflection on his / her own culture.

Yet new perspectives came from a clash between the so-called *pedagogy of the mainstream* and *critical pedagogy* in language teaching, strongly rooted in the distinction between Bourdieu's curriculum of social reproduction and Freire's or Giroux's curriculum of social change (Komorowska 2005). Tolerance to be developed in the school system demands that the curriculum should clearly place its educational perspective on a scale between the extreme of learning viewed as universal, value-free, pre-constructed and detached cognitive ability, and the extreme of learning viewed as cultural, situated, personal, negotiated and ideological (Canagarajah 1999). This helps shape the learner's self-perception and his / her perception of "the Other" with helps avoid stereotyping.

As a result, almost immediately after the publication of the first draft of the *Common European Framework*, a new concept of the so-called intercultural competence and the idea of the learner as an intercultural mediator equipped with a set of intercultural skills were introduced. The first set of objectives in developing intercultural competence was presented by Michael Byram and contained:

- "attitudes of curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own",

- “knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general process of societal and individual interaction”;
- “skills of interpreting and relating: ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own”;
- “skills of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction”;
- “critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (Byram 1997: 50-63).

This paved way to seeing intercultural competence as a combination of five elements: attitudes, knowledge, skills, learning to learn abilities as well as critical awareness. The new approach was in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe and the emphasis given to the role of foreign and second languages in supporting learners’ social, affective and cognitive development.

The aims of intercultural education, generally accepted nowadays, are the following:

- to provide the learner with socio-cultural knowledge of other cultures, i.e. norms, values, life and communication styles,
- to raise the learner’s awareness of the influence of his/her own culture on his/her perceptions of self and others,
- to raise the awareness of differences and of stereotypes,
- to develop skills to observe, interpret, sustain judgment and cooperate with others in spite of a possible lack of acceptance,
- to train strategies of behaviour and communication appropriate in a given context.

Aims, thus formulated, eliminate the tendency to perceive other cultures through similarities only and block early exposure to national stereotypes, thus removing two main barriers in the process of developing intercultural competence (Jandt 2001). In this educational paradigm learners acquire knowledge of another culture from an early age and are encouraged to reflect on both similarities and differences between the foreign culture and their own. Their native culture is not endangered as no acculturation is expected. As Michael Byram puts it, “When a language learner meets a different structuring of reality expressed in a foreign language (Wierzbicka 1992), the experience need not lead to the extreme of ‘alternation’ or ‘re-socialisation’. It can nonetheless challenge the conceptualisation of reality which learners take for granted and assume is a natural order” (Byram 1998: 141). What is more, “encounters with others make us more aware of contrasts and of what our social identities, especially our national identity, comprise. It is possible that foreign language learning reinforces national identity rather than threatening it” (ibid. 143-4). Knowledge and understanding of another culture do not have to go with acceptance as long as future cooperation with representatives of that culture is possible (McKay 2002).

If language education is to develop intercultural competence alongside linguistic and communication skills, foreign language teaching calls for:

- a heightened awareness of the learner’s identity as his/her perceptions of a foreign culture are influenced by his/ her own socio-cultural background,
- role distance with the recognition of the fact that one’s own perceptions might not be shared by other people,
- empathy as an attempt to understand “the others” in their own socio-cultural contexts and
- tolerance of ambiguity protecting the learner against culture shock (Neuner 1998).

2.3. Reception of intercultural competence as a teaching aim in and outside Europe

Nowadays all the member countries of the European Union and many of those that await accession have already included cultural awareness and/or intercultural competence in their curricula, either in the form of curricular objectives or in the presentation of approaches and methods recommended in the process of working towards them. The popular solution seems to be the integration of a cultural syllabus into the general syllabus for second and foreign language teaching (Artal et al 1997). In teaching the so-called general language courses in the school system such an integration contributes to learners’ personality growth, raises their critical awareness, encourages self-reflection and leads to more open and tolerant attitudes. In teaching foreign languages for specific, e.g. business purposes – it prepares students to operate in multicultural contexts and multinational environments.

The European concept of intercultural competence seems to be in line with the approach of the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Byram 1998). In the document entitled *The Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* published in 1996 the so-called *five Cs* have been accepted as the main goals of language education, i.e.:

- communication (learners are supposed to be able to communicate intercultural),
- cultures (learners are supposed to acquire knowledge and understanding of other cultures),
- connections (through L2 learners gain access to new information and viewpoints),
- comparisons (learners become aware of different ways of perceiving the world),
- communities (learners acquire skills to act according to the cultural norms of another community) (Bandura 2004).

It seems that in many school systems today the educational value of second and foreign language teaching is very strongly stressed and that the concepts of socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural competence are considered helpful. This is demonstrated in a great number of projects in this field, carried out within the frames of the Council of Europe at the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz.

As Robert O'Dowd points out (O'Dowd 2003), there are, however, educators voicing opposition as, for instance Edmondson and House (1988) who do not believe intercultural language learning can contribute anything to foreign language education and stress the role of linguistic goals rather than long-distance affective ones. So far, voices of this kind are not at all numerous and have not influenced developments in foreign language teaching in any significant way. There are also teachers who feel awkward in the role of educators and prefer tasks very pragmatically connected with teaching language elements and developing linguistic skills. Research on teachers' attitudes to intercultural competence demonstrates that teachers consider teaching the language as their primary goal and believe it should be given priority over culture when there is not enough time for English in the curriculum. Those teachers usually understand the value of intercultural learning, but feel overburdened with work and see no possibilities to set aside lesson time for extra goals and extra tasks in the classroom. Inhibitions can also be seen when it comes to using L1 to discuss more complex issues of culture and identity in the L2 classroom, when students do not have enough foreign language to use L2 for the purpose (Bandura 2002). These are, however, either symptoms of organisational difficulties to be solved within schools or attitudinal problems, usually successfully dealt with in the course of pre- and in-service teacher training.

3. Intercultural competence in the educational practice

3.1. Intercultural competence in the curriculum

Owing to the impact of the *Common European Framework* and of the curricula developed by the Council of Europe such as the *Threshold Level*, most of the European school systems – in both old and new member countries – introduced broad educational aims related to the socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural competence. Poland serves as a good example here. Curricular guidelines introduced in the educational reform of 1999, for instance, demand that schools should provide learners with the knowledge of the culture of the country where a foreign language is used, including aspects of European integration, and – to facilitate mobility – should also get students acquainted with native-speakers' socio-cultural norms. Schools are formally required to provide access to authentic FL materials, ensure maximum contact with a foreign language through school international exchanges or through participation in international programmes, provide pupils with the possibility to use FL skills in interdisciplinary project work, and support their attitudes of openness and tolerance.

As the *New Matural Syllabus* states, secondary school leavers should be able to demonstrate receptive skills in reference to cultural texts from a given area where the language is used, i.e. recognize references to civilization and cultural context, recognize metaphoric meanings and cultural symbols, and interpret works of art or their aspects showing the understanding of genre conventions and within conventions of artistic trends of a given epoch. Similar statements can be found in most of the European curriculum documents.

As the intercultural competence covers not only knowledge and skills, but also critical awareness, motivation and attitudes, it cannot be expected to develop in a linear way. Educators seem to share Hasselgreen's opinion that "Intercultural competence does not seem to be acquired in any predictable, universal order, but rather accumulates as through the individual learner's or group's direct or indirect contact with a culture" (Hasselgreen 2003: 45). Its development is, therefore, considered to be a process calling for appropriate curricula, approaches and methods.

Procedural curricula with the so-called evolving objectives rather than product oriented syllabus types are needed, although lists of topics and expectations related to the degree of achievement should also be included. Learner-centred approaches are more useful here as they encourage learners' self-evaluation on pre-prepared checklists. A good example of such a checklist is an instrument with four categories: *I think..., I know..., I can tell..., I can do...* used in the Bergen project of the Council of Europe (Hasselgreen 2003). This approach may sound difficult for those teachers who tend to view the cultural component in behavioural and functional terms, concentrating on the *Landeskunde* type of factual knowledge as well as on observable, linguistic skills. That is why, in the last decade new methods and techniques have been promoted, such as group projects, satellite TV based discussions and debates, e-mail correspondence, video conferencing, e-learning or international school exchanges. In initial education teacher trainees use them as learners, later it is easier for them employ those methods in their own teaching (Zarate 2004).

Difficulty lies in the fact that procedural curricula with learner-centred approaches do not lend themselves easily to objective evaluation of exit competences. Moreover, a controversy arises over the feasibility of testing intercultural competence in the course of objective evaluation. It is often pointed out that assessment, naturally looking at behaviour, takes us back to traditional approaches to culture. Objective testing is based on knowledge-oriented achievement tests and/or language oriented skills tests. Intercultural skills are, therefore, ignored. Critical awareness and attitudinal profiles are extremely hard to test otherwise than through verbal declarations and these are neither objective nor reliable. Teachers and learners are also concerned about ethical issues which are bound to arise in any attempt to evaluate learner's attitudes and opinions.

In consequence, intercultural competence does not form part of language tests or high-stake examinations. As the impact of examinations on teaching and learning is very strong, due to the notorious "washback effect" of the testing process, intercultural competence is not given enough attention in the implementation of the language curriculum. The amount of attention it receives depends on the degree of the teacher's personal involvement as well as on the mission and vision of a particular educational institution. That is why, the development of intercultural competence in mass education depends to a large extent on the quality of the teaching materials.

3.2. The cultural content of language teaching materials

Ways of dealing with language and culture in the foreign language coursebooks are selected on the basis of a needs analysis of particular groups of learners. That is why it seems useful to distinguish a group of materials designed for general purposes, mainly for the use of younger learners in the school system and a group of materials designed for adult professionals learning a foreign language for specific purposes. Let us look at materials for the teaching of English as a foreign language to illustrate the issue.

Coursebooks of the so-called General English demonstrate conspicuous prevalence of topics related to what Tomalin and Stempleski call "culture with a small 'c'", i.e. every day life, life styles, human behaviour, food, clothing, leisure, and media (Tomalin and Stempleski 1996) as well as to information from the fields of geography and history. Topics related to technological advancement are sometimes included, but attitudes, norms and values, multicultural issues, social or even family conflicts tend to be avoided, alongside with religion and politics. This might be due to the intentional or unintentional "hidden curriculum" which consists here in presenting the culture of L2 in an undisputably favourable light (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich 2003). Yet, topics related to the so-called culture with a capital "C", to use Tomalin and Stempleski's dichotomy, i.e. intellectual and artistic achievement of a given community are rare, or completely absent from ELT materials (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich 2003, Frankowska 2004). If some information about masterpieces of literature, art or music appears in coursebooks, it seems to have been selected for its motivational rather than intellectual potential, so the final choice – in spite of its attractiveness – is of little educational value. Facts presented are, therefore, neither representative nor systematic and the textbook content is often fragmented, trivial and pragmatic (Nizęgorodcew 1998)

Let us, now, turn to the way intercultural skills are treated in general English coursebooks.

Proportions of receptive and productive language skills activities where the cultural content can be found prove very informative. Approximately two-thirds of the culture oriented content is presented in the form of texts designed to develop listening and reading comprehension, i.e. are dealt with while developing receptive skills. Most of the texts used for the purpose can be classified as the so-called closed texts stating facts with very few open texts inviting interpretation and discussion (Fenner 2000), which does not encourage transfer to productive skills. Therefore, on the average no more than 10%-15% of culture references can be found in speaking activities and only an insignificant percentage in writing tasks (Frankowska 2004). This means that most of the coursebooks create a context in which cultural information can be read or listened to, but not much time is devoted to activities inviting discussions, debates, analyses of L1 and L2 cultures, predictions, comparisons or interpretations. Therefore, even culture sensitive methodologies do not guarantee intercultural skills development, but remain at the level of facts about culture. Intercultural competence is often left untouched. There is, however, a considerable difference between local and international coursebooks. The local ones tend to introduce more culturally oriented tasks, encourage more active

information search and offer more project work aiming at a better understanding of the learner's own culture. This, most probably, results from the fact that more specific needs analysis, carried out in the local context, enables a comparison of cultures, impossible to achieve in international materials designed for wide, and thus, less predictable audiences.

The situation in the field of materials for the teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is significantly different. More attention has always been given here to prevent cross-cultural misunderstandings and conflicts. Emphasis of this kind was caused by the multitude and frequency of business contacts as well as by growing needs connected with cross-cultural management, i.e.:

- management of organizations based in countries with cultures different from one's own,
- management of organizations employing people from different cultures and
- management of large, international organizations (Gullestrup 2002: 3).

That is why in business coursebooks a bigger and a more systematic load of socio-cultural knowledge has always been provided. Business textbooks tend to present differences rather than similarities and point to cross-culturally sensitive areas (Frankowska 2004). Categories presented in textbooks were initially based on main groups of cultural differences found by Martin Hofstede in his extensive empirical research, i.e. those connected with dimensions of:

- power distance,
- uncertainty avoidance,
- masculinity and femininity and
- individualism and collectivism (Hofstede 1991).

Soon other categories were also added, i.e. those springing from the research carried out by Fons Trompenaars, such as relations with people, attitudes to time and to environment (Trompenaars and Humpden-Turner 1997). Both sets of categories, however valid in terms of cross-cultural studies and useful in information brochures, did not lend themselves easily to coherent and motivating textbook presentation in language teaching and skills development.

As adult language learners expected textbooks content to be both attractive and functional in their future activities undertaken as business people and international negotiators, immediately useful approaches were sought. What immediately proved successful, was the Copenhagen proposal set forth by Richard Gestelund. Although initially it was not meant as a language teaching approach, it could easily be adapted to L2 teaching contexts and exemplified in sets of communicative texts and tasks. Typical situations and possible misunderstandings can be presented as related to:

- low context vs. high context cultures, depending on the degree of directness or indirectness in formulating messages,

- ceremonial vs. non-ceremonial cultures, depending on the degree of formality or informality in interpersonal contacts,
- monochronic vs. polichronic cultures, depending on the degree of precision in time management,
- pro-person vs. pro-transaction cultures, depending on the degree of their concentration on negotiation partners vs. concentration on tasks and
- expressive vs. restrained cultures depending on the degree of their openness and spontaneity in communicating emotions (Gestlund 1999).

Socio-cultural information based on those categories proved not only far more motivating, but also more convincing in the presentation of national and corporate cultures of various nationalities. At the same time, it opened vast possibilities of designing attractive, interactive, skills-based activities for the language classroom. All in all, adult professionals have always formed a more demanding group of learners and designing materials for them was more of a challenge for textbook authors. That is why, they reacted quickly and flexibly to new tendencies in foreign language teaching methodology. Their ideas were soon absorbed by general language coursebooks whose authors further enriched the repertoire of cross-culturally activities. Neither group of coursebooks, however, introduced evaluation tasks for intercultural competence.

3.3. Methods and techniques in developing intercultural skills

Even with the best of authoring syllabus documents, efficient teaching can only take place when – alongside with listening and reading texts on cultural issues – varied culture oriented activities and interactive tasks are introduced, such as:

- discussions or debates based on a set of questions related to a cross-cultural issue,
- brainstorming tasks consisting in the pooling of ideas or solutions to a given problem,
- problem-solving with discussions based on cultural cartoons (cultoons) illustrating a topic,
- culture capsules presenting information on a particular aspect of culture, the so-called culture bump presenting an uncomfortable situation in a cross-cultural contact,
- the so-called culture assimilator where interpretations are pooled in and evaluated in relation to an incident of cultural misunderstanding,
- role-plays based on role-cards presenting conflicting opinions,
- value hierarchies where random lists of e.g. professions are to be prioritized,
- compare and contrast tasks calling for a comparative analysis of a given aspect of life in two cultures,
- mini-lecture with discussion, also involving note-taking and reporting

- i.e. more traditional activities already described by various authors (Dunnnett, Dubin, Lenzberg 1986, Sercu 1998, Bandura 2003), as well as relatively recently introduced tasks employing information technology as, for instance,
- webquests (Buchowska 2004), or
- projects based on internet exchanges, where students are encouraged to reflect on their own culture and to justify their opinions (O'Dowd 2003).

Most of the above activities base on the analysis of differences and reflection on one's own culture and identity. Canagarajah gives examples of this approach from the educational context of Sri Lanka where Tamil speakers from indirect communication culture learn to communicate directly acquiring English as a foreign language. Basing on a British text about a talkative lady missing a bus in England the teacher asks a set of questions of the type "Why did the lady miss the bus? Why does the situation appear comical (for the writers of the book)? What are the authors teaching about proper ways of talking? How does it compare with typical ways of talking in our society? Do speakers have similar ways of digressing and deviating from the point in conversations? Why do we do that? What cultural factors influence us to behave so in our conversations? How does the direct conversational style of the Westerners (as represented in the book) appear to you? How would our indirect conversational style appear to Westerners? Why would our conversational norms appear comical to them? To what extent should we maintain our own communicative norms in order to assert our own identity and values? To what extent should we accommodate to the conversational style of native English speakers when we interact with them?" (Canagarajah 1999: 189)

This kind of discussions might, however, be too difficult for the learners to conduct in a foreign language. Culture oriented information might, therefore, from time to time call for explanations or discussions in L1. This is a solution supported by proponents of critical language pedagogy turning against what they call a *monolingual fallacy* (Philipson 1992), a belief that the use of the learner's native language hampers the process of second language development. It is also in line with the Council of Europe and the European Union efforts to make teachers aware of the value of the so-called *plurilingual competencies* and *transversal competencies*, where a foreign language does not substitute L1 or run parallel to it in the process of code-shifting but is embedded in the repertoire of learner's language codes (Canagarajah 1999). Finally, there is empirical evidence confirming the value of L1 as "a tool for critical thinking, for making sense of and acting on issues of importance in one's own life" which can then "facilitate more meaningful interactions in L2" as well as function as a way to "negotiate the syllabus, develop ideas as a precursor to expressing them in L2, to reduce inhibitions and affective blocks to L2 production... to provide explanations, etc" (Auerbach 1995: 26).

Providing a variety of cultural content is not enough. What should not be forgotten is the evaluation of the educational attainment in this field. This can be done in the form of projects, mini-essays, logs or portfolios to assess the learner's ability to use different sources of information, deal with discrepancies, identify stereotypes and

situations of potential conflict as well as to assess his/her capacity to explain an aspect of a foreign culture to a person from one's own culture or to reflect on aspects of one's own culture when dealing with representatives of another culture.

Formative and summative assessment of intercultural competence is sometimes, though not often enough, accompanied by a variety of self-assessment checklists in order to promote autonomy and *learning to learn* skills. A set of clear criteria for the evaluation of intercultural competence is, however, needed as educational aims tend to be vague and difficult to operationalize (e.g. *sharing meanings* or *shifting perspectives*).

4. Implications for teacher education

Many tasks face teacher education today. Pre- and in-service teacher education should ensure modules offering socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural skills for trainees as well as syllabus components developing pedagogical skills for intercultural competence, according to the European recommendations (Komorowska 2004). Attention should be given to similarities and differences in the way particular cultures envisage variables such as time, space, power, gender roles, communication styles, nonverbal communication, cultural taboos related to food, clothing or conversation topics. Aspects of corporate and professional culture, gender and age culture, religious, regional or class culture should not be forgotten, either. (Gibson 2002). Pedagogical skills should be developed in the way that would encourage teacher trainees to introduce more high culture in their teaching, offer more cultural content to learners at higher levels of language advancement, and prepare their students for real life situations and problems, they can face in another country, as well as for a possible culture shock with its typical symptoms of confusion, anxiety and helplessness (Aleksandrowicz-Pędich 2003).

Curricular guidelines related to socio-cultural knowledge and to the development of intercultural competence offered in official documents are never sufficient to guarantee their proper implementation by the teaching profession. Recommendations formulated more precisely must follow. They should list desired outcomes in operational categories, possibly within the four general competences of the Common European Framework of the Council of Europe. Only then will it be possible to prepare coherent materials for teacher education.

Changes are slowly but systematically being introduced. Methods and materials used in initial teacher education in most of the countries now present life and institutions through the medium of the target language, offering at the same time plenty of varied activities aiming at the development of prospective teacher's own intercultural competence. Activities offered to trainees are presented as generic tasks, adaptable to lower language levels, so as to be used later in the teacher's future work. Teacher education in Europe is now supported not only by EU exchange programmes, but also by nationally and internationally sponsored e-learning programmes, such as e-twinning, or Global Gateway, Internet portals for teachers with lesson scenarios and pools of classroom activities offer tasks which can be used for interdisciplinary and intercultural language teaching.

Although developing intercultural skills is the task of the whole system of general education, the special role of foreign language teachers in promoting intercultural communication has already been noticed. Today many linguists and educators stress the role of culture oriented information, the need to teach aspects of cross-cultural communication and develop intercultural and mediation skills (Franklin 2000, Zarate 2003, Zarate 2004, Zawadzka 2004). Research is, however, needed to find more useful and motivating pedagogical procedures in this field which would encourage team teaching and engage teachers of other subject areas as the process of developing intercultural competence should not be the responsibility of language teachers alone.

5. Conclusions

To sum up, the most important problems facing educators in the field of language and culture in foreign language education are the following:

- It has to be decided whether language and culture are as inseparable in foreign language teaching as has been claimed for more of a decade now.
- It has to be decided whether a uniform approach to the teaching of language and culture is to be promoted or whether distinctions should be made depending on the age and communicative needs of the learners.
- Finally, it has to be decided what content seems useful and educationally valuable for upper-intermediate and advanced learners, whose language proficiency is high enough for them to benefit from *content and language integrated learning* (CLIL) and to reflect on the role of culture from this perspective.

Today it seems that, although there is an educational value in developing intercultural competence at lessons of foreign languages, it is useful to make a distinction between teaching a foreign language as a *lingua franca* with a limited time devoted to culture and teaching it as a *foreign language* with strong emphasis on the socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural skills.

It also seems that a distinction is to be made between the teaching of adult professionals who learn a foreign language for specific purposes and the young people in the school system who learn a foreign language for non-specific purposes as part of their general education – the former need intercultural skills even more immediately than a high degree of language proficiency, the latter need to primarily develop language skills. For the former – ability to successfully function in another community forms part of their employable skills, for the latter – intercultural competence is a long-term, broad aim of their general education, to be developed in various subject areas, of which foreign language is just one.

Finally, it is quite likely, that the socio-cultural content will be gaining more and more attention in FLT materials for reasons other than the need to develop intercultural skills. The early start promoted in most of the European school systems results in more and more students reaching relatively high levels of language skills while still in

compulsory education. A need, therefore, arises to provide them with attractive, but educationally valuable learning materials. The socio-cultural content, with its motivational role, can help develop listening reading comprehension, while intercultural activities for pair, group and project work and support speaking, writing and interaction in the foreign language classroom.

Bibliography

- Aleksandrowicz-Pędich, L. 2003. Ukryty program w podręcznikach do nauki języków obcych. In: H. Komorowska (ed.). 2003. *Reforma w nauce języka obcego. Nowe programy i podręczniki*. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych
- Artal, A., M.J. Carrión, G. Monrós. 1997. Can a cultural syllabus be integrated in the general language syllabus? In: M. Byram, G. Zarate (eds.). 1997. *The Sociocultural and Intercultural Dimension of Language Learning and Teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. 21-37.
- Auerbach, E. 1995. The politics of the ESL classroom. In: J.W. Tollefson (ed.). 1995. *Power and Inequality in Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandura, E. 2000. Rozwijanie kompetencji interkulturowej w nauczaniu języka angielskiego. In: H. Komorowska (ed.). 2000. *Nauczanie języków obcych w zreformowanej szkole*. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych.
- Bandura, E. 2002. Ewaluacja kompetencji interkulturowej. In: H. Komorowska (ed.). 2002. *Ewaluacja w nauce języka obcego*. Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku.
- Bandura, E. 2003. Rozwijanie kompetencji interkulturowej w nowych materiałach do nauczania języka angielskiego w szkołach średnich. In: H. Komorowska (ed.). 2003. *Reforma w nauce języka obcego. Nowe programy i podręczniki*. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych
- Bandura, E. 2004. Rozwijanie kompetencji interkulturowej w nauczaniu języka angielskiego. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Warsaw: Institute of English, Warsaw University.
- Berting, J., Ch. Villain-Gandossi. 1995. Rola i znaczenie stereotypów narodowych w stosunkach międzynarodowych: podejście interdyscyplinarne. In: T. Walas (ed.). 1995. *Narody i stereotypy*. Kraków: Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury.
- Buchowska, A. 2004. Promoting Learner Autonomy through Webquest Activities In: H. Miatluk et al (eds.). 2004. *Linguistic Research and Language Teaching*. Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku.
- Byram, M. 1997. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Byram, M., G. Zarate. 1997. *The Sociocultural and Intercultural Dimension of Language Learning and Teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Byram, M., M. Fleming (eds.) 1998. *Language Learning in Intercultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Byram, M. 1998. Relationships Between Language Learning and Identity. In: B. Fink (ed.). 1998. *Modern Language Learning and Teaching in Central and Eastern Europe: Which Diversification and How It Can Be Achieved?*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Byram, M., G. Zarate. 1998. Definitions, objectives and assessment of sociocultural competence. In: M. Byram, G. Zarate, G. Neuner (eds.). 1998. *Sociocultural competence in language learning and teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Byram, M., B. Gribkova, H. Starkey. 2002. *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: a practical introduction for teachers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Canagarajah, A. S. 1999. *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Collier, M.J., M. Thomas. 1988. Cultural Identity – An Interpretive Perspective. In: Y.Y. Kim, W.B. Gudykunst (eds.) 1988. *Theories in Intercultural Communication*. International and Intercultural Communication Annual. Vol. XII. Newbury Park: Sage. 99-120.
- Davies, B., R. Harre. 1990. Positioning; the Discursive Production of Selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*. Vol. 20, no 1. 43-63
- Dunnnett, S.C., F. Dubin, A. Lenzberg. 1986. English Language Teaching from an Intercultural perspective. In: J.M. Valdes (ed.). 1986 *Culture Bound*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edmondson, W., J. House. 1998. Interkulturelles Lernen – ein überflüssiger Begriff. *Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung*. 9(2). 161-188.
- Fairclough, N. 1989. *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- Fenner, A. 2001. *Cultural Awareness and Language Awareness Based on Dialogic Interaction with Texts in Foreign Language Learning*. Graz: European Centre for Modern Languages. Council of Europe Publishing.
- Franklin, P. 2000. Komunikacja w lingua franca w globalnej wiosce – rola kultury a wzbogacony program nauczania języków obcych. In: G. Szpila (ed.). 2000. *Język trzeciego tysiąclecia*. Tertium: Kraków.
- Frankowska, A., 2000. Język i kultura – nowe sposoby wykorzystania literatury w nauczaniu języka angielskiego. In: H. Komorowska (ed.). 2000. *Nauczanie języków obcych w zreformowanej szkole*. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych.
- Frankowska, A. 2004. Culture Sensitive Methodologies. Sociocultural Components in Curricula and Textbooks for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Warsaw: Institute of English, Warsaw University.
- Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Culture*. London: Basic Books.
- Gesteland, R. 1999. *Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour. Marketing, Negotiating and Managing Across Cultures*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Gibson, R. 2002. *Intercultural Business Communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goodenough, W. H. 1964. Cultural anthropology and Linguistics. In: D. Hymes (ed.). 1964. *Language in Culture and Society*. New York: Harper and Row. 36-39.
- Gudykunst, W.B., Y.Y. Kim. 1984 *Communication with Strangers. An Approach to Intercultural Communication*. New York: Random House.
- Gullestrup, H. The Complexity of Intercultural Communication in Cross-Cultural Management.. In: J. Allwood (ed.). 2002. *Intercultural Communication*. Issue 6
- Hall, E. 1959. *The Silent Language*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. 1966. *The Hidden Dimension*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. 1976. *Beyond Culture*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hasselgreen, A., 2003. *Bergen 'Can Do' Project*. Graz: European Centre for Modern Languages. Council of Europe Publishing.
- Hofstede, G. 1991. *Cultures and Organisations*. London: McGraw Hill.

- Humpden-Turner, C., F. Trompenaars. 2000. *Building Cross-Cultural Competence*. Chichester: John Wiley.
- Hoecklin L. 1994. *Managing Cultural Differences*. Wokingham: Addison Wesley.
- Jandt, F. 2001. *Intercultural Communication*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Jensen, I. 1997. Intercultural Communication. Constructions of Cultural Identity Between Young People. *Nordicom Information*, no 4 1997
- Jensen, I. *The Practice of Intercultural Communication*. jensen.pdf
- Kluckhohn, F., F. Strodtbeck. 1961. *Variations in Value Orientations*. Evanston: Row Petersen.
- Komorowska, H. 2004. CEF in Pre- and In-Service Teacher Education. In: K. Morrow (ed.). 2004. *Insights into the Common European Framework*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Komorowska, H. 2005. *Programy nauczania w kształceniu ogólnym i w kształceniu językowym*. Warszawa: Fraszka Edukacyjna.
- Kramersch, C. 1993. *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kramersch, C. *Language and Culture*. 2000. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kuada, J., H. Gullestrup. 1998. The Cultural Context of Corporate Governance, Performance, Pressures and Accountability. In: Istemi Demiraq (ed.). 1998. *Corporate Governance, Accountability and Pressures to Perform an International Study*. London: JAI-Press.
- McKay, S. 2002. *Teaching English as an International Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Neuner, G. 1998. The role of sociocultural competence in foreign language teaching and learning. In: Byram, M., Zarate, G., Neuner G. (eds). 1998. *Sociocultural competence in language learning and teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Niżegorodcew, A. 1998. Teaching English Language Culture in the Polish EFL Classroom. In: I. Dobosiewicz, I., L. Piasecka, J. Zaleski (eds). 1998. *Crossing the Borders. English Studies At the Turn of the Century*. Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego.
- O'Dowd, R. 2003. Understanding the "other side". Intercultural learning in a Spanish-English e-mail exchange. *Language Learning and Technology*, vol 7, no 2. 118-144.
- Pennycook, A. 1995. English in the world / The world in English. In: J. W. Tollefson (ed.). 1995. *Power and Inequality in Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pennycook, A. 1999. *English as an International Language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Pfeiffer, W. 2002. *Nauka języków obcych*. Poznań: WAGROS.
- Robinson, G.L. 1988. *Crosscultural Understanding*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Samovar, L.A., R.E. Porter, N. Jain. 1981. *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Sercu, L. 1998. In-service training and the acquisition of intercultural competence. In M. Byram, M. Fleming (eds.). 1998. *Language learning in intercultural perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tollefson, J. W. 1995. *Power and Inequality in Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tomalin, B., S. Stempleski. 1996. *Cultural Awareness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Trompenaars, F., C. Hampden-Turner. 1997. *Riding the Waves of Culture*. London: Nicholas Brealey.

- Wierzbicka, A. 1992. *Semantics, culture, and cognition: universal human concepts – specific configurations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zarate, G. 2003. Identities and Plurilingualism: preconditions for the recognition of intercultural competences. In: M. Byram (ed.). 2003. *Intercultural Competence*. Graz: European Centre for Modern Languages. Council of Europe Publishing.
- Zarate, G. 2004. *Cultural mediation in language learning and teaching*. Kapfenberg: European Centre for Modern Languages / Council of European Languages.
- Zawadzka, E. 2004. *Nauczyciele języków obcych w dobie przemian*. Kraków: Impuls.