

2008 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

***CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
ACROSS BORDER REGIONS***

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ABSTRACTS AND PAPERS

Literary studies section

Across Border Regions/Across Body Borders

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Across from one side to another; on the other side, as a result of crossing. When we cross borders, move from one side to another to stay on the other side, we are invaded by a sense of loss (of a country, friends, relatives, objects of daily life) that gives way to a feeling of mourning. In their psychoanalytic study of migration Leon and Rebecca Grinberg hold that: "The one who leaves dies and so does the one who stays behind. The feeling of mourning with which each side responds to the separation may be compared to that one has at the death of a loved one. The unconscious association between leaving and dying can be extremely intense" (64). Thinking through the dynamics of mourning and melancholia I investigate how this dying of leaving takes place in the body or how crossing is negotiated at the borders of the body in Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*, a novel dealing with two generations of women who emigrate to the United States after Fidel Castro takes power in 1959.

Illuminating Power of Humor

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The aim of our paper is to investigate elements of humor in selected Jewish American fiction and the functions they fulfil as means of portraying the "unspeakable". Our particular attention is drawn to a multilayered and cross-cultural novel "Everything is Illuminated" by Jonathan Safran Foer. Foer belongs to writers of "third generation return"; a theory founded by sociologist Marcus Lee Hansen whose idea is that grandsons will want to remember parts of their grandparent's lives that their fathers wanted to forget (in this case their Jewishness).

By means of analyzing major characters and their comic portrayal we aim to explore author's intention to use elements of humor as anti-thesis to frustrating situations such as identity issues, feelings of guilt, cross-cultural misunderstandings or even tragic events such as Holocaust.

Foer's novel is a rare example of how humor can unite, connect and help to "illuminate" various clashes of today's world. By juxtaposing opposites; east and west, young and old, past and present, we aim to show how effectively elements of humor in contemporary Jewish American fiction can resolve issues which initially seem too painful to understand.

How to View Daffodils: Cultural Borders in Jamaica Kincaid's Lucy

Stanislav Kolář

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My paper, entitled "How to View Daffodils: Cultural Borders in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*" aims to examine how the remaining colonial mentality and ethnocentric prejudices of the dominant society create cultural borders in the urban contact zone of otherwise friendly community in New York City. It deconstructs the impact of implicit "internal colonialism" on the immigrant experience of Kincaid's teenage protagonist Lucy who comes from the West Indies. This impact leads to the marginalization of people who are "other" and to the cavalier treatment of them. The paper concentrates especially on the interpretation of the complex relationship between the narrator and her host (and simultaneously employer) because it mirrors the cultural interaction between colonized and colonizer, between the superior and the submissive. This relationship is marked by the protagonist's resistance to the residues of colonial mentality and cultural stereotypes, pertinent to postcolonial society. The protagonist represents subversive elements in the dominant society and this paper intends to clearly demonstrate how her revolt against the ruling set of cultural values helps her to achieve a certain state of independence and freedom and how it undermines the expected notions of dominance and submission, the master-servant construction in her life in the diaspora. However, it also points to the undesirable effects of the narrator's decision to deny her past. Considering the topic of the paper, one of the key issues that will be scrutinized is the question of identity that is in focus of many immigrant novels depicting cultural hybridization of immigrants.

In the Western Eyes: the Image of Eastern Europeans in Florence Farmborough's Diary from the Great War

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The paper presents the analysis of the twofold perspective of the Great War and people involved in it depicted by a British nurse, Florence Farmborough (1887 - 1980), who joined the Russian Army as a Red Cross Nurse in the years 1915-1918. Her diary, kept all through the Great War and published in 1974 under the title *Nurse at the Russian Front* is of a particular interest to historians of culture, since she was both an "insider": a nurse of

a Red Cross flying column attached to a Russian division fighting in Galicia, Belorussia and Ukraine, a witness of war atrocities and horrors; and an “outsider”: a female in a male world of war, an Englishwoman among Russians, a “lady” among ordinary soldiers and common people. The author of the paper concentrates on Farmborough’s entries referring to her relations not only with the Russians but Polish and Ukrainian peasants, refugees and Austrian prisoners of war; as well as her changing views on the war and people it struck, emphasizing her unique situation in comparison with other British people staying at that time in Russia.

Forms of Romanticism and Culture Shock in the Works of the Lebanese Poets in Exile

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In my paper for the conference, I intend to discuss aspects of romanticism in the poetry of the Lebanese poets who emigrated to America in the early 20th century as well as the influence of their country of origin and their nostalgia for Lebanon and Syria.

In the first part of my presentation, I will introduce the three poets Jabran Khalil Jabran, Ilya Abou Madhi and Mikhail Nouaima (to mention only the three main figures of this literary trend), who set up an association that pertained to the Romantic style of writing. This group of poets appeared in New York around 1920, in the wake of the European Romanticism of the 19th century. Their expatriation was due to several causes such as the political conditions in Lebanon (generally in the Middle East), which was under the dominion of the French and British colonizers, in addition to the prosperity of trade in America.

The poetry of these three main poets of the "League of the Pen", as they are sometimes referred to, shares some features of the Romanticism that had existed in Europe: sentiment and self-expression as criteria for the evaluation of poetry, solitude and closeness to Nature, rather than reasoning, as the sources of inspiration, distrust of civilisation. These poets also called for innovation in poetry and linked literature with social issues.

In the second part, I will illustrate the reactions of these poets to their new environment, their attachment to Lebanon and Syria and the influence of the Arab Middle East on their writings. Many critics have pointed out the features of estrangement and nostalgia in the writings of the poets in exile. Their emigration to America was the source of their feeling of loneliness in the new environment. It also caused them to describe their longing for the country of their childhood and early youth. Some of them experienced a sense of loss and had a sentiment of disharmony with the new society they lived in.

Katherine Mansfield’s Disturbing the Universe

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Modernism is sometimes presented as art which managed to surpass the political boundaries of countries, and enabled artists to socialize on the basis of their talent and

artistic vision, rather than nationality. Literary history shows many cases of multinational movements, groups and societies within Modernism; what Bradbury, in the influential *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*, called an “unprecedented acceleration in the intellectual traffic between nations”. Moving artists actually contributed to the spread of new ideas and approaches and created a kind of pre-globalization era. One of the key figures of the Anglo-Saxon Modernism with a strong impact on French and other literatures as well, was a New Zealander, Katherine Mansfield. This short story writer was a prototype of a “border” person, always living in between two worlds, dealing with an unstable identity of an exile.

This paper aims at showing the multifaceted character of Mansfield’s experience of “border crossing” and how she translated the instability and disruption it caused into her art.

Margaret Atwood: *The Robber Bride. Zenia Crosses Boundaries (Again)*

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The paper deals with a question of Canadian identity in Atwood’s novel *The Robber-Bride*. Atwood criticizes English Canadian prejudices and she engages with the issues of immigration and ethnicity in her novels. *The Robber-Bride* addresses Canadian anxieties about changing representations of national identity in the context of the 1990s and the references to the events in Eastern and Central Europe and the Middle-East. She presents the varying answers to the identity-question according to the historical period and power relations. The paper uses the Bhabha’s concept of the subject-in-between to interpret postwar Toronto (1940 -1990s) and the protagonists. The terms offered by post-colonial theory and criticism (mimicry, split selves and socially constructed others) are applied to analyze the novel. The emphasis is on displacement and shifting subjects because reconstruction and self-transformation operates as a survival strategy in Atwood’s *The Robber-Bride*.

The Robber-Bride, Zenia, the European postwar immigrant, crosses boundaries between reality and fiction, moving into and out of the three female protagonists’ lives. As Zenia disrupts these boundaries, she makes Charis, Roz and Tony reconstruct and redefine their own illusory stability of identities.

A Comparative Study of the Tales in Kathasaritsagara by Somadeva and Masnavi(Mathnawi) by Mevlana

Hulya Tafli

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The literature of any country is best understood when studied against a background of the larger historical and cultural developments of a region. Literature is shaped by the world that creates it and helps to create the word that shapes it. In order to understand literature, one should consider the historical and cultural events of the society in which it was formed. Literature depends for its success on the imaginative penetration of a writer into

the material of human consciousness found in the fabric of society. In this respect it may be asserted that literary genres such as the legends, epics or the tales reflect the significance of the society. This article aims to reflect the similarities of the Indian literature and Turkish literature, through a comparison of the tales in Kathasaritsagara and Masnavi. Such a study hopes to contribute to a wider appreciation of world literature.

Language, Reality, and Popular Culture in David Foster Wallace's "The Suffering Channel" and "Good Old Neon" (2005).

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A new generation of authors such as David Foster Wallace, William Vollmann, David Eggers, Richard Powers and others represent a generation of authors who started to re-consider traditional paradigms of postmodern poetics by its parodic re-writing and by the use of metaphors related to sciences such as biology or computer sciences. By parodic re-writing of literary inventory of motifs, narrative techniques and style, in his literary works David Foster Wallace point out both the exhaustion of this kind of writing and a critiques its commodification through institutionalization. At the same time, he critiques various aspects of American cultural identity and its changing role in contemporary consumerist society influenced by media. In my paper, I will analyze David Foster Wallace's critique of commodification of postmodern poetics, its language and the relationship between language and reality generated by this kind of writing as it manifests itself in his short stories "The Suffering Channel" and "Good Old Neon." At the same time, the emphasis of this paper will be on Foster Wallace's treatment of various aspects of American popular culture and his treatment of its commodification in postmodern culture influenced by media and popular culture.

***Doing 'Good', Maintaining Dignity:
the Effects of Apartheid on Ethical Choices Studied via Contemporary South African
Fiction***

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National borders form the official divide between peoples of different cultures and speakers of different languages. Nevertheless since cultures and languages are not static but amorphous and fluctuating, they seep through the borders without permits and modify and mutually enrich the cultures of the neighbouring societies. These ideally positive processes can be observed in European countries.

In Africa however a mere glimpse at the map of the continent evokes questions about the origins of its national borders. Some African countries have been drawn literally with a ruler without any consideration for the diversity of the people inhabiting the area. As a result many have turbulent and entangled histories. The Republic of South Africa is no

exception and in this paper I will try to illuminate on the specificities of the effects of the recent past on this diverse multicultural society.

There have been many infamous attempts of social engineering throughout history (e.g. Third Reich), Apartheid in South Africa being one of the most recent examples. The confinement of peoples within certain areas - 'homelands'- along with legal racial segregation ceased to be enforced in South Africa over a decade ago. However apartheid left a legacy of divisions, cultural, economic and social gaps, mistrust, feelings of anger and guilt, which haunt relentlessly as shadows, to use the analogy from David Medalie's recently published novel *The Shadows Follows*¹.

In this paper I study Damon Galgut's novel *The Good Doctor*² with a specific focus on the disruptions (or 'disjoints of time' in the Derrida-ean sense³) as direct and/or indirect consequences of apartheid policies in analogy with the current challenges of a transitional society in the multicultural South Africa. I intend to offer a working theory on how in the recent past of South Africa it was impossible to maintain dignity due to the socio-political structure. How 'being good' was in some cases impossible and the shadows of the past still often render it impossible, this is exemplified by the actions of the Doctor Frank Eloff one of the main protagonists in *The Good Doctor*. Contemporary South African fiction in many ways explores the different ways of looking at the past, and helps us understand present social dynamics.

As Long as the Grass Grows

Jack Lala

PWSZ Krosno, Poland

An examination of the concepts of private property as seen by diverse American cultures: Anglo/Colonial/US, Native Americans and Hispanic. I will also examine how this somewhat contentious relationship is related in the novels of Tony Hillerman concerning the Navajo nation of the Southwestern United States. Few items in American history and culture better highlight the differences in these varied cultures than their disparate views of property and the nature of ownership.

Crossing Identity Borders in Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior

Dorota Mihułka

PWSZ Krosno, Poland

The purpose of this paper is to discuss Asian American women writers' dilemmas in the process of identity formation. In my paper I will concentrate on the novel *The Woman Warrior* written by Maxine Hong Kingston, a prominent contemporary Chinese American female writer. Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* focuses on the generational and cultural differences between a Chinese-born mother and her American-born daughter. First, I will discuss the relationship between the mother and the daughter which is often

¹ David Medalie. *The Shadow Follows*. Johannesburg: Picador, 2006.

² Damon Galgut. *The Good Doctor*. London: Atlantic Books, 2003.

³ Jacques Derrida. *Spectres of Marx*. New York: Routledge, 1994 (in English).

painful and problematic. Then I will show how the relationship has evolved throughout the novel. Finally, I will move on to discuss the daughter's quest for self-identity which is one of the central issues of the novel. Living on the edges of two communities, the daughter, a second-generation Chinese American woman, is forced to negotiate her position between conflicting sets of discourses: of family, ethnicity, culture, history and nationality. In order to reach a reconciliation, the American-born daughter has to come to terms with herself and the world of her parents. This is what happens at the end of the novel – the American-born daughter accepts and affirms not only her Chinese-born mother but also her Chinese heritage. Finally, the daughter is proud of her identity as an Asian American and an Asian American woman in particular.

Where the West Meets the East: California's (Inter)cultural Experience

Petr Kopecký

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The paper aims to trace the history of the interaction between the Western and Eastern cultures in what is seen as the westernmost sector of the Western civilization — California.

It scrutinizes the concept of “continent's end” and the gradual shift toward what cultural studies scholars commonly call Pacific Rim. This change suggests a move from the sphere of European influence to the Pacific domain and includes especially Southeast Asia, China, Japan, a host of Pacific Islands and Mexico. This does not come as a surprise considering that almost half of the population of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the USA live in California. Although the image of the Pacific Rim was not firmly established until the 1980s, some of its spiritual and philosophical components had exerted a noteworthy influence on California's arts and literature much earlier. This paper explores the literary manifestations of the notion of Pacific Rim in Californian literature. In doing so, it probes into the writing of eminent authors such as Mary Austin, Robinson Jeffers, John Steinbeck, Aldous Huxley, and the countercultural representatives including Gary Snyder and Lawrence Ferlinghetti who holds the view that “the West coast is not only still the last Frontier but also where the Orient begins, where the Far east begins again.”

'I am an Englishman born and bred, almost': Belonging and Identity in Hanif Kureishi's The Buddha of Suburbia.

Dorota Rygiel, Poland

Hanif Kureishi, the son of a Pakistani father and English mother, has experienced himself that the person who is not wholly white is labelled as the Other by the postcolonial British society. In his novel *The Buddha of Suburbia* Kureishi deals with the problem of being an outsider and of not being fully accepted by the society because of the skin colour. Karim Amir, the main protagonist of the novel, as well as the other Asian characters are affected by the history of colonisation and subject to prejudices. They are

caught between "belonging and not," between their Indian origin and desire to assimilate into British society.

This paper shows how the unfriendly attitude of the postcolonial British society towards the Asians contributes to their crisis of identity and the quest of the new one. It also shows the consequences of the crisis in different spheres of the characters' lives.

“But in what country have we been?” Observations of the Border in Contemporary Irish Poetry

Péter Dolmányos

Eszterházy Károly College, Eger, Hungary

One of the most curious instances of the border is the one between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The physical reminder of the partition of the island is an abstract notion as well as an observable location, thus it possesses ready metaphoric and even symbolic dimensions. Interpretations of the border are different for different communities: some regard it as only a temporary category standing in the way of ultimate unification while for others it is a permanent and thus sacrosanct pillar of difference. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the two countries separated by the border are both members of the European Union, thus the significance, and the very concept itself, of the border is undermined by considerations of another kind.

The border zone is a strange place of strange events and encounters with strange characters and the impression is that of another world altogether where normal categories come to be suspended. The most shocking observations belong to the local people themselves: the inhabitants of the border zone, regardless of their position and affiliation, often recognise an inherent element of absurdity both in the location and in the concept of the border; this absurdity amounts to total irrelevance in a number of cases as even the locals themselves do not know the exact whereabouts of the border.

Cultural Identity, Borders and Globalisation

Tabor Tóth

EKF Eger, Hungary

In my paper I intend to discuss some aspects of cultural identity in its relation to globalisation. Although it has been common to speak about cultural identity for centuries it is rather difficult to define the term. Traditional attempts to explain the nature of cultural identity link it to a given geographical region and stress its continuity with the past. As globalisation aims by its nature at dissolving borders and insists on the free circulation of contemporary trends those who consider cultural identity a treasure that can be lost stress its deconstructive characteristics. In my view globalisation nearly always challenges traditional patterns in all walks of life, but at the same time it contributes to the strengthening of cultural identity. I intend to demonstrate the accuracy of the above theses through examples taken from Irish and British cultural history (Irish Renaissance, Northern Ireland before and after EU membership). The reason for my choice is that most of the controversies regarding the ideological, political, or religious controversies seem to

have been settled and thus the discussion of the relationship between cultural identity, borders and globalisation can offer useful conclusions for other regions of the world.

Custom-duty: American Drama Crossing the Borders

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The paper focuses on the transformation of the role of theatre in Slovakia in the fifties and sixties, and on the transformation of specifically American dramatical pieces after having entered Slovak theatrical territory. The ideological borders of the state restricted the free movement of western culture and conditioned the import of particularly American theatrical pieces through a set of ideological criteria, which imprinted these dramas with new and radical interpretations.

While contemporary world deals mainly with different aspects of Americanization, the paper will focus on reversed phenomenon appearing in the field of drama during the era of normalization, a phenomenon which we may call “slovakization”.

Linguistic study section

Legal Language Necessary for Each Eurocitizen Crossing Borders and Professional Fields

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On the 1st May 2004 The Slovak republic joined the European family and entered the European house. The Slovak inhabitants as the members of that family are expected to assume obligations, common language, meet the prescribed duties of European legislation. To be able to exercise their rights as eurocitizens on one side and to be able to meet the prescribed rules and conditions on the other side, the Slovaks should be able to know „the common language“ of regulations, directives and decisions, which we can simply indicate as “European acts“.

“The ignorance of European law and its language is no defence.“ Based on the abovementioned, there is a new language, crossing all the imaginary borders among European and world languages, the language of European legal acts, particularly regulations, directives and decisions issued by the institutions of European Union.

The primary aim of my presentation is to point out the key words which are common to majority of European legal acts and key stones of language of “eurocitizen” which penetrates into language of each member state of the European Union. The penetration of European legal terminology into each language results in many problems concerning its translation. I would like to point out several examples how key words of regulations, directives and decisions have been translated into the Slovak language. I would like to pay particular attention to the problems which common people and the professionals reading the original text of European legal acts as well as their Slovak translations have to face.

My contribution is focused on providing participants of conference and the others involved with the basic list of words which should know each man trying to become the valid member of the European family and with their Slovak translation.

Expressing Negation in Legal English

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Law is a consistent body of rules which regulates human conduct and in case the rules are violated, the state imposes a sanction to deter others from acting in such a way in the future. Thus, everyone is expected to follow the maxim "*Ignorancia legis, non excusat*" (i.e. ignorance of the law, excuses no one) which presupposes the knowledge and awareness of the law. However, to a non-lawyer the language constructing the law may seem too complicated and incomprehensible. Long complex sentences intended to encompass every possible situation and circumstance exhibit certain linguistic peculiarities which may only be found in the legal register. The paper attempts to analyse one of these features, namely the mode of expressing negation; it outlines various ways

of formation of negatives, tackles the issue of double (multiple) negation and investigates negative affixation in Legal English.

Accounting Across Borders

Ildikó Dósa

Pannon University Veszprém, Hungary

This study compares a Hungarian accounting text and its translation into English. The texts were taken from the notes to the financial statements in the annual report of Zwack plc. The contrastive analysis points out differences in the linguistic systems of the two languages and in the special terminologies of the accounting language, calling attention to differences in the legal background, as well. Last but not least, based on all the previous observations, conclusions are made in connection with differences in the cultures, using Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

On Phonetic Iconicity in Evaluative Morphology of Slavonic Languages

Pavol Štekauer, Renáta Gregová, Zuzana Kolaříková,

Lívia Körtvélyessy, Renáta Panocová

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Universal 1926 of The Universals Archive (Plank and Filimonova) maintains that there is an apparently universal iconic tendency in diminutives and augmentatives: diminutives tend to contain high front vowels, whereas augmentatives tend to contain high back vowels. This Universal has been called in to question by the data obtained within a broadly conceived research into word-formation universals (Štekauer & Valera, manuscript).

The purpose of this paper is to verify Universal 1926 on a sample of Slavonic languages. A point of departure for our conclusions is a list of core-vocabulary items, including 35 basic words supposed to exist in all languages of the world. The diminutive and augmentative forms of these items have been obtained from native speaker informants.

The Sociolinguistic Factor of the Language Background in Research Realization

Lívia Körtvélyessy

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In the frames of my PhD dissertation I carried out research among Hungarian-English and Hungarian-Slovak bilingual speakers. The aim of the research was to examine the influence of sociolinguistic factors on productivity in word-formation. The points of departure were the onomasiological theory of the linguistic sign by Ján Horecký, the onomasiological theory of word-formation by Miloslav Dokulil and the theory of productivity in word-formation by Pavol Štekauer. My hypothesis was that new naming units presented the "crossroads" of sociolinguistic factors and pressure of the productivity on individual word-formation types. The studies on sociolinguistics provide a variety of

definitions of what should be considered a sociolinguistic factor. Commonly, gender, age, education, occupation and language background are recognized as sociolinguistic factors. My conclusion is that each of these factors is specific in its own way and is more or less clear cut except for the language/ethnic background. While age, education and occupation showed high correlation, the language background has proved to be an independent factor. The purpose of the paper is to present the issues that the factor of the language background may bring about during the research related to bilingualism, biculturalism and language contacts.

How to Approximate the Ideal of 'Idiomatic' English?

Stanislav J. Kavka

Ostrava, Czech Republic / Raciborz, Poland

As implied in the title, the author makes it optimistically clear that although the adult person trained in 'classical' conditions, i.e. in classroom, can only hardly master a foreign language on the level of native speakers, we can, or even must approximate such an ideal at least and make our performance idiomatic enough, namely (in a broader sense of the word) natural, acceptable for the native ear. Besides others, the author operates with the concept of 'identification of the student with the world of speakers of the target language': the worlds of the two parties concerned are, naturally enough, partially identical (overlapping) and partially dissimilar. As for the process of identification, this is to be understood as a smooth advance toward 'absorption', i.e. full identification. It is believed that the degree of approximation to the ideal of idiomatic proficiency in a foreign language is directly proportional to the degree of identification.

A Diachronic View on Synonymous Verbs and Deverbatives in English: Cross-cultural Interaction and Borrowability

Michael Bilynsky

Ivan Franko National University, Lviv, Ukraine

The constitutional make-up of the thesauri of English verbs and deverbal coinages was coming into being as an overlap of the onomasiological potentials of diverse communities participating in the English – French or/and Latinate interaction over time. Presented in the paper will be some outcomes of the application of the developed computerized framework addressing the issues of expansion similarity of etymologically homo-/heterogeneous (sub)strings of parent verbs and their respective common-root coinages employing a single or variant same/mixed etymology formative(s). The modelling of the diachronic thesaurus of English verbs and deverbatives is conceivable as a juxtaposition of the earliest OED attestations of WF-families members stringed into synonymous resources of variedly re-categorized verbs. We will specifically focus on the peculiarities of the formation of the said diachronic lexicological object for the derivatives from *verbs of abstract relations* and the remaining semantic classes of verbs trying to pinpoint the likely encouraging factors of inter-language contacts and borrowability along this significant axis of cognitive semantics. Constituents' permutations of present-day and

diachronically rearranged synonymy are estimated in terms of the vectors' lengths subtraction calculated from the sequential or/and absolute chronology (re)placement within the respective (sub-)strings.

The elaborated framework is oriented at minute exemplification and alternating diagram visualization of the collected diachronic evidence of vocabulary expansion over time demonstrating powerful forces of constituents' mix within systemic infusion resembling cross-cultural influences at the sub-/superstratal dissemination of languages in contact. The substantiation of two supplementary branches of English diachronic lexicology thus seems expedient: inter-lingual contactology and etymological stratigraphy. A study of the diachronic experience of language contacts is argued to be of some relevance for the assessment of intercultural discourse in border regions.

Words know no borders 2: True and False Internationalisms

Alicja Witalisz
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The article discusses the concept of linguistic internationalisms understood here to include not only international lexemes but also international phraseological structures and semantic internationalisms. The aim of the article is to analyse ways in which the lexicon of Polish, a language that remained for quite a time behind the Iron Curtain, is catching up with west European languages such as German, French or English. This process of enriching Polish lexical and semantic systems is an effect of globalisation which in linguistic studies is reflected by the introduction of the concept of 'globalisms', i.e. language elements (lexemes, word senses, phraseological units) appearing globally. One other issue discussed in the paper are the linguistic consequences of the fast growth of Polish lexicon.

Cross-Linguistic Word-Formative Interference Influence of English on Neologisms in Slovak

Ada Böhmerová
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The topic of my paper is cross-linguistic word-formative interference, with focus on the influence of some English word-formative types upon neological word-formation in Slovak. Although the two languages are geographically not adjacent to each other in any border regions, in the contemporary globalizing and much anglicized world English is omnipresent and has a cross-cultural impact also on the dynamism of the Slovak lexis. On the basis of analyzing recent Slovak neologisms excerpted above all from the media, the paper deals with the rise of new types of word-formation, so far unacknowledged in Slovak linguistic theory but lexically already existing and relatively productive, which have resulted from prolific borrowing from English. Some of these borrowings have served as word-formative prototypes and have gradually led to subsequent cross-linguistic word-formative analogies.

While both diachronically and synchronically lexical systems are in principle characterized by being open, constituting the most dynamic linguistic level, the types of

word-formation are relatively stable and any changes of them occur only within rather long periods of time. The fact that for Slovak during the recent two or three decades there have arisen and become productive new types of word-formation "borrowed" from English testifies to an unprecedented extent and intensity of cross-linguistic contacts within which the impact of English has penetrated even into the otherwise closed system of word-formative types and has extended them.

As the exposure to the influence of English is nearly literally global, we can presuppose that it might lead to changes also in the word-formative systems of other languages. In view of the above our data and conclusions have been checked against some relevant neologisms occurring also in several other European languages.

We hope that the results of our research can contribute to cross-linguistic studies and to universal studies of word-formative typology.

Language Loss and Language Revitalization: a Lakota Perspective

Miroslav Černý

University of Ostrava, Czech Republic

There are not only clearly defined borders between neighboring states and nations, but also less demarcated borders, both political and cultural, within particular countries; Native American reservations in the United States being a representative example. Drawing on the experience of the Lakota people, one of the most populous North American indigenous groups, the present contribution attempts to inform about the importance of languages for keeping the identity and integrity of nations in multiethnic regions. First, the paper discusses the issue of global language loss. Second, it presents the most recent news regarding Lakota language revitalization project. Third, it outlines some benefits of language revitalizations and mother tongue transmissions. In place of a conclusion, there is a summary of strategies for successful language renewal.

Global Language – One Language for One World?

Ľudmila Petriková & Hedviga Semanová

Technical University, Košice, Slovakia

The aim of the paper is to make a contribution to the ongoing discussion of the issues related to linguistic globalisation, the rise of English as an unquestioned global language and its role in international mass communication today. In the article we have attempted to give some insights into the effectiveness of English for that matter and show the impact of globalisation on learners' motivation to learn the language.

Indeed, Global English has become the symbol of power, modernity, and technological superiority, simply prestigious. It unites the world, it is in, but should it be one voice, one language for one world? Or it would be too boring to have one and other voices should be heard as well. The present paper intends to outline certain advantages and disadvantages of global language unity and English as the language of global culture.

Global Language – a Vision or Reality?

Katarína Szabová

Technical University, Košice, Slovakia

The divergent development of the hypothetical common ancestor of languages, Proto-Indo-European, was later on followed by a convergent development of varieties into national languages. Efforts to break the language barriers by creating or adopting one common international language are not new in linguistics. Theoretically, there are four possible solutions: simplification of one of the widely spread languages, creation of a constructed or an artificial international language (e.g. esperanto, volapük, interlingua), expect and support merging of natural, predominantly, national languages into one or by synthesis of existing national languages create one ideal language able to fulfil all the functions of national languages. In practice, only the first two options are more or less viable. It has been believed that an artificial language could serve as a neutral, easy-to-learn auxiliary language for international communication. Nevertheless, the number of artificial languages has risen considerably and, consequently, the choice of the proper one, situation similar to natural human languages, still remains unsolved. The new global economy has resulted in more companies doing business in more languages than ever before. Due to the political, military and economic power of Great Britain and the USA the English language, natural human language, has reached the unofficial global status. As a result, the language itself is undergoing a process of radical change. It is being forecasted that the global spread of the English language might lead to its fragmentation into a “family of languages” with a new form of “global English”. Furthermore, the contemporary global trend is towards multilingualism. In business Spanish and Russian follow closely behind English. Many international corporations value language competence also in non-European languages including Arabic, Chinese or Urdu.

Gendered Talk: Politeness in Chatroom

Markéta Johnová

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Despite predictions that computer-mediated communication (CMC) would break down traditional gender binaries (e.g. Rodino, 1997), further research shows that computer-mediated discourse is recognisably gendered (e.g. Herring, 1996; Jaffe, 1995; Savicki, 1996; Sussman, 2000). The present paper wishes to interrogate the relationship between politeness and gender identity in chatroom and challenge the notion that women are always more polite than men.

One of the well established sociolinguistic stereotypes is the concept of woman as a gentle and delicate creature whose language tallies with this notion. Women are brought up to mind their manners and be in command of their choice of vocabulary markedly more than men (Romaine, 1999).

The anonymity of cyberspace lessens the pressure of social expectations and gives the impression of impunity. The chat environment is known to abound with aggressive behaviour and foul language. This study will attempt to find out whether both men and women succumb to this tendency in the same extent.

***Narrative as an Element Crossing Boundaries between Information and Entertainment
within Television News Discourse.***

Slávka Tomaščíková
Šafárik University, Košice, Slovakia

In the post-modern period narrative loses its marginal status and its analysis becomes a crucial element of fields dealing with the study of society, culture and individual. Media studies cannot ignore narrative that is typical for blurring boundaries between information and entertainment. Theorists and researchers recognize the presence of narrative in the discourse of media and its role to structure people's sense of reality. Narrative is viewed not only as a method of understanding of people's past experience but also a possible explanation and mediator of present knowledge and practice. Narrative in the discourse of television news programmes reflects changing reality but at the same time it has to respect particular requirements of genre. Television news programmes belong to non-fiction genres and their high credibility is linked to the stability of their format. The paper discusses partial findings of the on-going research into the discourse of British television news bulletins. It intends to show that pluralism, relativity, problematisation and elementarisation of post-modern discourse cause replacement of the information tradition by a communicative tradition, the emphasis of which is on audience and simple information that is able to attract viewers and involve them in the process of communication. Absence of dominant narratives, relativity of values, and plurality of opinions lead to a less coherent structure of both macro- and micro-narratives

(Close) Encounters of a Religious Kind

Jaroslav Marcin
Šafárik University, Košice, Slovakia

Our language is shaped by cross-cultural encounters, the most typical of which are encounters between the cultures of geographically neighboring or overlapping groups of people. However, religious thought has also been of considerable importance. As Christianity became a major influence on Western civilization, so did the vocabulary of the Bible pervade our language. This paper examines how modern-day Slovak, English and German have been influenced by the vocabulary of the New Testament. By comparing lexicon entries of a given set of words, it demonstrates that not only has the religious concept behind these words changed but human playfulness has also broadened individual concepts to include ideas quite distant to the original concepts.

Personal Advertisements as a Mirror of Societal Standards?

Jitka Vlčková

Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

Cultural and linguistic influences can be observed far beyond the political frontiers, not only in social and behavioral practices, including face-to-face conversations but also in the media and the language of printed documents. By contrasting personal advertisements in Czech, and English newspapers, with flashbacks to 1990ies, the paper will show the influences of globalization on the language and values that are being advertised in them.

Cultural studies section

The Policy Context of Citizenship and the European Union's Lisbon Treaty

Gerard McCann

St Mary's University College, Queens University, Belfast

The Lisbon Treaty, which will be ratified throughout the European Union in 2008, is one of the most engaging and pervasive pieces of legislation to be introduced to member states since the founding of the Community. It not only distinguishes an authoritative treaty base for the governments involved, but it also redesigns the role of citizenship within the standing of the EU itself. The shift from being a complementary designation to being additional to national citizenship provides for a new socio-cultural interpretation of each individual's position within the Community framework. In effect, this reworking of the concept of citizenship by the European Convention and the Commission has brought into play a new and more assertive understanding of the idea of what it is to be a citizen of the EU. This presentation will look at the emergence of the concept of citizenship within the EU and will analyse the manner in which it has transformed through various policy contexts to arrive at the Lisbon Treaty's assertive, if not innovative, interpretation. It also aims to gain a greater understanding of the EU's idea of citizenship while exploring the legal and policy underpinnings of this peculiar interpretation of citizenship. It will focus on the way in which the EU has adapted its policy implementation to integrate the idea of European citizenship, particularly with reference to education policy, and, finally, will critically review the implications of competing concepts of citizenship from within the various European regions.

The Role of Translation in Malta's Expanding Linguistic and Cultural Landscape.

Clare Thake Vassallo

University of Malta

In an age in which political and national borders are being re-invented within an expanding Europe, the very concept and conceptualization of 'border' is up for redefinition. The physicality of national borders and the effects upon diverse groups living on either side, have been overcome, to varying degrees, through digital technology. The Digital Age has challenged and, to a large extent, modified our fundamental notions of space and time. The division of self between the physical and the virtual has freed us and enabled us to communicate in 'real time' and to be 'in touch with' people who are spatially very far away, while simultaneously obliterating temporal distance.

Does this mean that the notion of 'border' cannot hold any more? No-where are borders more clearly defined than in stark geographical terms such as a river, range of mountains or the sea, as in the case of islands. I would like to investigate this issue with a brief case study of linguistic influence, language change and language use on the Island of Malta since EU accession in 2004. I will look briefly at the manner in which the Maltese language, a national language and one of the E.U.'s minority languages is affected by globalized English and English as a EU working language, since English also

has official status in Malta. These issues will be further discussed in terms of the E.U.'s Policy on Multilingualism

The GDR, or the Antipode of Schengen

Fritz Hanz König

University of Northern Iowa

The GDR, or the Antipode of Schengen. The writing of the GDR is a very unique body of texts; it represents the attempt to create something like a national literary canon that spans barely 40 years, thus making it possible to acquire a rather thorough familiarity with it. At least after the building of the Wall, the GDR isolated itself more and more, creating in the process a dreamlike atmosphere, a society which exists in a cage. It is no surprise then that the wish to break out of this cage becomes prevalent and "Travel" turns into the chief topic and permeates most GDR literature from 1961 to 1989. Many book titles already exemplify this, starting with Christa Wolf's "The Divided Heaven", as early as 1962, which juxtaposes in a doctrinaire fashion the two worlds East and "West", to Joochen Laabs's "The Outbreak" (1976) and Erich Loest's "A Crack Goes through the Earth" (1979). The social realism in the cage begets the wish to escape, not only physically, but also philosophically and ideologically. In that respect the situation was similar in most formerly communist countries. However, in the GDR, a highly artificial state with lots of identity problems, the "cage" has a very special flavor and escape always has a direction: going West.

Is the Globalization of American Culture Truly "American?"

Keith Hughes

Embassy of the USA, Bratislava, Slovakia

From language usage to culture, especially in film and music, America appears to dominate popular culture worldwide. Though decidedly not quantitative, through observations from a life spent living in many different nations and cultures, the case will be made that American culture is not hegemonic but collaborative and the result of natural creative interaction among different peoples. America's language and culture is an amalgam of the world's languages and cultures and therefore American culture reflects cultures throughout the world rather than the world reflecting America's culture.

Language and Culture Relationship in the Context of Globalization

Myroslava Fabian

Šafárik University, Košice, Slovakia

21st century is characterized by both linguistic and cultural globalization which affects nearly every sphere of human activity. Multinational and multicultural Transcarpathian region of Ukraine serves a good example of cross-language and cross-cultural relationships between the nations inhabiting it. In this respect the study of languages and

cultures, their functioning across border regions seems urgent, perspective and the one which needs further development, improvement, and working out certain principles and methods of its research. The present paper focuses on main aspects of English, Hungarian and Ukrainian language and culture influences, their common and specific characteristics which can be observed in language and speech of their bearers. Certain pure linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the languages under study, the results of their cross-language and cross-cultural contacts discussed. Much attention is paid to both the study of intercultural discourse between communities living in Transcarpathia, and the reflection of their traditions, peculiar customs, behavioural speech patterns, ways of life in language and speech.

Modern life, together with globalization, has certain negative impacts on human civilization, as it may threaten ethnic minorities and their cultures. Because of migration to big cities young people leave villages, and in some five – ten years the latter ones will disappear from the country maps. Globalization started penetrating people's everyday lives, their social activities, relations, even the ways they behave and speak to each other. Thus, the languages of national ethnic minority groups undergo serious changes, and the same can be said about their cultures. Traditional forms of address, certain long-existing customs, patterns of behaviour, sets of manners and cultural values, long-lasting norms of etiquette, etc. slowly but steadily tend to be replaced by completely new forms and means of their description and presentation. Of course, nothing remains stable, everything changes, and as the time passes, people usually try to adapt themselves to existing circumstances, obey newly accepted rules, answer the requirements of today's business and private dealings, and it is only the question of time how long this state of affairs will last. Correspondingly, what really matters is the following: people should not lose their origin, language and culture. Learning new languages and new things to do should enrich the people's knowledge of their own language and culture, make people's lives better and happier.

***Silesian Home Language and its Role in Youth Public Life in Teschen Region,
Czech Republic***
Aniela Rozanska

Silesian University in Katowice, Poland

Silesia forms a large part of Poland and Czech Republic and characterizes by cultural, social and linguistic diversity. It is the area where beside Czech and Polish some regional dialects are spoken by a vast majority of Silesians. The best known is a form of language spoken by people in Katowice region, then Cieszyn Silesia region and Czech Silesia region. In the research the author analyzes the role of local dialect in the area of Teschen Silesia in the Czech Republic. It is a multicultural and multinational area where specific endemic Silesian dialect has evolved as a means of identity preservation present mostly in informal contacts. The author attempts to investigate the form of language as it is learned and used at Silesian home. This home language became the important tool in interpersonal relations among people who cultivate both Polish and Czech traditions. There are also many initiatives which advocate the usage of the dialect communication. The natural milieus where the Silesian home language is practiced are ethnic festivals,

song and dance ensembles and inter-generation contacts. Recent years have revealed increased number of dialect users on the Internet, texting and informal situations. Another phenomenon is the use of the dialect by well-known local singers and writers. The Silesian home dialect is an observable fact which makes the local people distinct and identifiable and which is as yet little investigated.

Identification of Changes in Language When Using English for Presentations

Maria Traum

Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria

The widespread use of English by non-native speakers as an intermediary language has given rise to questions about the cultural or intercultural influences on using a second language. In an attempt to identify changes in personal style during PPT presentations students were asked to reflect on their use of English after presentations. The results of the questionnaire indicate that although students in the seventh semester are close to reaching a C2 level of English according to the Common European Framework there seem to be areas in need of improvement. These can be speed, change in voice, pronunciation, intonation, eye contact and reading from preparations such as the slides or a written text. Identifying the areas for improvement is necessary for the student and helps the teacher when preparing for adequate support.

7th semester students having had formal education in English for about 15 years show very good English language skills, yet during presentations supported by PPT approximately half indicate that reading and less eye contact with the audience occur. Half of the students indicate that the speed of English during presentations changes from their usual speed of speaking. Some experience changes in pronunciation, intonation and speak livelier.

As a core competence in business today English needs to be implemented well. For use with business partners the level of perfection may not even be as important as establishing a good working relationship. The simple act of looking at someone is of such basic and essential importance that there seems to be a need to re-consider the learning and teaching approach needed to achieve this goal. Apart from methodology insight into culture and personality may also reveal aspects for research in this area.

Bridging the Borders with Social Software

Eva Kaščáková

Technical University, Košice, Slovakia

The rapid and accelerating adoption and use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in all areas of life has provided students with the ability to study away from the classroom. As the dominant language of the World Wide Web is English, the most widely learnt foreign language in Europe, the access to the Internet and information opens vast opportunities especially for the learners of English. On the other hand Internet also enables learners of any language to find information, texts or native speakers online. ICT have the potential to bridge the distance and natural borders separating the learners

from the country of the target language. However, it is important to bear in mind that utilization of standard e-learning tools in foreign language acquisition has some limitations. In the SWOT analysis of e-learning the major threats and weaknesses proved to be related to the isolation of the learner from the tutor and other learners. This may not be such a serious drawback of e-learning used in other courses, however communication is both the aim and the means of foreign language learning. To turn the weaknesses and threats of technology based/aided language learning into strengths and new opportunities it is essential to enhance the social aspect of foreign language learning.

The paper focuses on the utilization of social software in foreign language learning. Authentic interactions among learners encourage them to discover not only new languages but also new cultures and literatures. Even if learners from various countries are learning English, by using social networks, blogs, webquests, voice over IP, and wikis they can also learn to appreciate the diversity of their own languages, dialects, and cultures.

Oliver Racz – an Unforgettable Storyteller and Educator from Kosice

Oliver Rácz Jr, Sebastian Kis, Katarína Ráczová-Lokšová, Katarina Loksa-Miechowka
Košice, Bad Altenburg, Paris

Oliver Rácz (1918 – 1997) was born in Košice. His lifelong involvement with literature started already during his school years. During WWII he studied at several universities in Slovakia and Hungary but after a short time spent as a teacher in Košice he was mobilized and as an “unreliable element” sent to the office of the local interment camp. Here he had access to blank forms and stamps and used his literary aptitudes to write false documents. With these he saved the life not only of his later wife but also of Colonel Šimko, the founder of burns medicine in Czechoslovakia, of Professor Ganz, one of the discoverers of a cardiac catheter and of many other people. The last days of the “Nyilas” terror he survived in the cellars of the Dominican Church in Kosice.

When the communist regime allowed the reopening of Hungarian schools he went back to teaching and writing. He published books for children and a collection of poems (*Kassai dalok – Songs from Košice*, 1959). He was also a devoted interpreter of Slovak and Czech authors (*Hviezdoslav’s Bloody Sonets* in 1956, poems of F. Král’, J. Smrek, E.B. Lukáč, novels of Čapek-Chod, Aškenázy, Hoffmeister, Mňačko and many others). At the same time he began to work on a novel describing the story of his beloved town, its people and his own life during the war. The book titled “*Megtudtam, hogy élsz – I got to know you are alive*” published first in 1963 was a breakthrough not only in his own literary career but also opened a new chapter in the postwar Hungarian literature in Czechoslovakia.

The book was a pronounced success among readers (2 reeditions and a Slovak translation in a short time) and was well accepted by the contemporary reviewers despite (or just because) its unambiguous distinction from the officially supported “socialist realistic” style. His first novel was followed by more than 30 other titles including novels, collection of short stories, translations of world poetry and of contemporary Czech and Slovak authors and numerous essays. As a teacher and director of the Hungarian school

in Košice he educated hundreds of pupils and inoculated them with enduring attitudes towards humanity, literature, arts and sciences.

In 2006 the heirs of Oliver Rácz succeeded in publishing his first novel in a slightly revised form. They are also convinced that his international acknowledgement is only a question of finding people devoted to the same values as are his children, his students and the heroes of his novels and stories.

Warum lernen Erwachsene in der Grenzregion Deutschland-Polen die Nachbarsprache Polnisch?

Monika Kowalonek

Adam Mickiewicz Universität, Poznań, Poland

So seind doch bey und in diesen Landen und örten zwo nöthlichste und nützlichste Sprachen. Als nemlich die Deutsche und die Polnische. (...) Deshalben wir uns am aller meisten befeissen sollen / damit wir unser Kinder diese beiden Sprachen fürnemlich lernen / und lernen lassen. Und ob wol ein jedes Volk bez seiner angeborenen Sprach möchte bleiben / und daran begnüget sein / so ist doch besser und nothwendiger / das man die verwandten / und benachbarten auch wisse (...).

(DAUBMANN 1566, zitiert nach WORBS 2001: 134)

Diese bereits 1566 von dem Danziger Verleger DAUBMANN im Vorwort zu dem ersten Polnisch-Lehrwerk für Deutsche formulierte Feststellung über die Wichtigkeit des Nachbarspracherwerbs hat auch noch nach gut 450 Jahren nicht an Wert verloren. Gerade in einer Zeit, in der Mehrsprachigkeit im Europa der Regionen verwirklicht werden soll, und der Europarat explizit zum Nachbarspracherwerb aufruft, führt diese Aussage vor Augen, dass besonders Grenzregionen Anlässe für Kontakte zwischen Sprachen und Kulturen geben. Die besondere Situation von Sprachen und Kulturen an Grenzen gibt auch Anlass, eine spezifische Fremdsprachendidaktik zu entwickeln, von der in der einschlägigen Literatur (RAASCH 2002, BAHR/ SCHRÖDER 2000) und in der Lehrerpraxis (SCHWARZ 2004) die Rede wird.

In diesem Beitrag wird versucht, die Frage zu beantworten, welche Motive fürs Lernen der Nachbarsprache Polnisch im Vordergrund stehen. Zielgruppe der Befragung waren deutschsprachige Erwachsene ab 18 Jahren, die Polnisch als Fremdsprache in den Grenzstädten Frankfurt(Oder) und Görlitz an den dortigen Hochschulen, Volkshochschulen und bei privaten Anbietern lernen.

Das gegenseitige Wahrnehmen in Grenzgebieten am deutsch-polnischen Beispiel

Krystyna Mihulka

Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, Poland

Die deutsch-polnische Nachbarschaft wird seit Jahren als eine schwierige Nachbarschaft bezeichnet, worauf die geschichtlichen Ereignisse sowohl des letzten Jahrhunderts als auch der früheren, einen großen Einfluss hatten. In meinem Referat schenke ich besondere Aufmerksamkeit der Darstellung der gesellschaftlichen Dimension der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen vor allem in den Grenzgebieten, weil sich eben dort jeden Tag die Schicksale der „durchschnittlichen“, an den beiden Seiten der Grenze lebenden Menschen verflechten. Es wird also präsentiert, wie die Polen von den

Deutschen und wie die Deutschen von den Polen gesehen werden, wobei bei der Darstellung auf verschiedene für deutsch-polnische Beziehungen wichtige politische Ereignisse eingegangen wird, weil eben sie steigende oder sinkende Sympathie, Angst und Abneigung der andren Nation gegenüber stark beeinflussen.

Geistige Barrieren der tschechischen Mehrheitsbevölkerung und deren Auswirkung auf die Verwendung des Romanes

Barbara Tiefenbacher

Basis dieses Beitrags ist die aus Feldforschungen resultierende Arbeit „Die gegenwärtige Situation der Roma-Minderheit in Tschechien aus soziolinguistischer Sicht. Eine Fallstudie in der Roma-Gemeinde Libčice nad Vltavou“, die die Sprachverwendung des Romanes untersucht. Das Ziel dieser Feldforschung war herauszufinden, inwiefern gegenwärtig noch Romanes von den Roma gesprochen wird, auf welchen Ebenen – vom Akro- über Meso- bis hin zur Basilekt-Ebene – es verwendet wird, in welchen Kommunikationssituationen es bereits zu einem Language Shift vom Romanes hin zum Tschechischen kam und wie ausgeprägt Code Switching auftritt. Der gegenwärtige Stand der Forschung zur Verwendung des Romanes innerhalb der tschechischen Roma-Gemeinde scheint relativ dünn zu sein, genauere Untersuchungen fehlen vollständig. Peripher beschäftigten sich damit Milena Hübschmannová (Hübschmannová M., Šaj pes dovakeras / Můžeme se domluvit, Olomouc 1993) und Viktor Elšík (Elšík V., Je romština jazykem Romů? In: Host 04/2006, S. 18-19)

Bei der Beschäftigung mit der Verwendung des Romanes ist es unerlässlich, einen Blick auch in die Geschichte des Romanes und v.a. auf die Politik des kommunistischen Regimes zu werfen, die auf eine absolute Assimilierung, in Form einer Zerstörung der Sprache und Kultur der Roma abzielte. Zu einem Umkehrtrend kam es in den 90er Jahren, als Roma-AktivistInnen versuchten, die vom Aussterben bedrohte Volksgruppensprache wiederzubeleben. Im romistischen Diskurs spricht man von einem „romské obrození“ / „roma uprising“. Ein nicht unwesentlicher Faktor bei der Auseinandersetzung mit der Sprachverwendung ist die Beachtung der Diskriminierung besonders von staatlicher Seite, aber auch durch Privatpersonen. Im Falle der Analyse der Verwendung dieser Minderheitensprache wird es also nicht um geographische Grenzen und Barrieren gehen sondern um geistige Barrieren, die zu Ausgrenzung und Marginalisierung führen oder diese legitimieren. Gerade diese Abtrennungs- und Beschränkungsmechanismen haben enorme Auswirkungen auf die Sprachverwendung des Romanes.

Culture - an Invisible Dimension in Communication across Cultural Borders

Piotr Romanowski
PWSZ Krosno, Poland

The title of the paper addresses one of the areas investigated by Louise Damen in her book – *Culture Learning: The fifth dimension in the Language Classroom*, which is aimed at explaining how to transcend cultural borders successfully. To understand the

phenomenon one has to answer what kind of barrier a cultural border may pose. Those who undertake the challenge of crossing such a border move to a new reality which is governed by a set of new intellectual and emotional values characteristic of the new dimension only.

Culture is a natural habitat of each person. Crossing cultural borders means a change in our identity previously created by our native culture. The whole process requires from us to look at ourselves from a new perspective. How does culture determine the manner in which we communicate if we experience another human being in interpersonal encounters where communication is a basic dimension? If a language is a tool for articulating culture which areas of it are especially prone to producing communication barriers? To what extent are the components of a communication act responsible for miscommunication?

However, the knowledge of certain culture specific features accounts for favourable communication across borders.

Intercultural Competence or When in Rome Do as the Romans Do

Dagmar Blight

Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia

Intercultural competence is a generally accepted necessity in foreign language teaching and learning. Yet reality may be different. This paper will present the reality, the outcomes of a questionnaire designed to find out in which areas Slovaks speaking English to Brits break the code of British behaviour. The questionnaire was a research tool in a Comenius University Baby-grant project called *Intercultural Competence in Foreign Language Teaching*. It included 11 questions concerning: weather talk, greetings, privacy, political correctness, queuing, the use of “please” and “thank you” and so on. The idea was to identify the areas in which Slovaks come across as very un-British or even rude when speaking to Brits. The findings will hopefully be applied in the preparation of English language teachers at the Faculty of Education, Comenius University Bratislava.

Teaching and Learning as a Multicultural Communication

Alica Petrasová & Jozef Liba

Prešov University, Slovakia

The presentation consists of three parts. In the first one the authors discuss the multicultural education as a term used in different ways to define different kinds of educational strategies and approaches. The most frequently used approach is characterized by the addition of ethnic heroes and holidays into the curriculum. The mainstream curriculum remains unchanged in terms of its basic structure and goals. The problems with this approach is that students do not obtain a global view of the role of ethnic and cultural groups. It tends to simplify the concepts and issues related to the victimization and oppression of ethnic groups and their struggle against racism. The second part focuses on social and cultural aspects of the educational process and the

improvement of linguistic skills of children. The last part presents Standards of Teacher drawing on international educational practice.

The Foreign Language and Intercultural Competence Teacher

Eva Henčeková
PdF TU Trnava, Slovakia

It has become commonplace to state that foreign language learning should be viewed and taught in an intercultural perspective. The main objective of foreign language education is no longer defined strictly in terms of the acquisition of communicative competence. Teachers face the task to teach intercultural communicative competence. The paper presents to what extent and in what way teachers' current professional profiles meet the specifications formulated in the theoretical literature regarding the 'foreign language and intercultural competence teacher'.

Chaos and Coincidence in Language Learning

Anthony Hall
University of Klagenfurt

Borders indicate clarity, fixed boundaries that impose a will, a determination by some higher authority of where permission must be sought to enter. Changes in borders usually mean conflict, before or after the event, but the European Union's process of removing political borders has been a generally calm, peaceful process, supported by generous funding and meeting with little opposition, perhaps expressing an underlying will in the population. Neighbouring languages have become less foreign and forbidding in the process, with various initiatives from translation to cultural exchanges to multilingual classrooms to individuals with individual plans contributing to this increase in presence and exposure. I would like to briefly report on five areas in which it is not so much a regularised or standard form of language instruction that proves successful in widening the sphere and scope of language learners, but a more random one based on self-determination and freedom of expression. I will try to show that in the same way that the European authorities are removing borders to encourage the "four freedoms", so teachers and non-teachers are subtly and indiscernibly(?) handing over responsibility for language learning to groups and their surroundings.

The benefits of having good „false friends“

Helena Petruňová
Šafárik University, Košice, Slovakia

In this paper, the problem of cross-language homonymy with the focus on semantic aspect is investigated. When learning foreign languages, the effect of the mother tongue can be on any aspect of language, including vocabulary, and may result in various misunderstandings and confusion. Some groups of words with the same or very similar formal properties in English, Czech, Polish, Russian and Slovak languages are

introduced, as these, more or less equivalent units (so called „false friends“), may have completely different meanings and usage. For instance, English *para* (*BrE informal* a paratrooper, a soldier trained to jump out of planes wearing a parachute) and Czech *pára* (steam), Polish *para* (steam, breath, pair, couple), Russian *para* (pair, couple, suit), Slovak *para* (steam, vapour). Examples of cross-language homonyms (absolute and partial) are provided. In second/third language teaching it is useful to benefit from having „false friends“. It is recommended to include them in the syllabus to avoid mistakes and confusion, to increase learners' confidence with words and promote vocabulary extension.

Metaphoricity as a means in teaching English and intercultural communication

Anatol Szewel

Rzeszow University, Poland

There will be made an attempt to show and discuss the extent and possibilities of metaphoric processes in reflecting the reality in English, Russian, Ukrainian and Polish. Conclusions on vocabulary teaching techniques shall be drawn offering illustrative materials for EFL teachers.

Neuroanatomical Perspective of Age in L2 Acquisition

Janusz Arabski

University of Silesia, Poland

The age of the learner is one of the most important factors deciding about the degree of success in second and foreign language acquisition and learning.

It has been known for a long time that children acquire language better and faster than adults. This belief, however, is not very precise and only within the last thirty years has research concerning the problem of age in language acquisition made it possible to see its complexity. We also became aware of many aspects of the problem.

In our presentation we would like to discuss some of them and present the results of the most recent research. Special attention will be paid to neurolinguistic studies.

The critical period hypothesis will be discussed in connection with the newest neurolinguistic research.