

Jarosław Krajka

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University,

Lublin, Poland

jarek.krajka@umcs.pl

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4172-9960

L1 Use in Language Tests – Investigating Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Language Assessment

ABSTRACT

Objective: Assessment is a crucial part of language teaching, with great effect on learners' motivation, willingness to study and learning success. Since language assessment is rooted in local policies and cultures of learning, it seems pertinent to look at how opinions on assessment can differ depending on the country of teacher training. The purpose of the paper is to compare Polish and Turkish teacher trainees' on L1 use and translation in testing.

Methodology: The methodology applied in the paper is a qualitative action research study, where the groups of teacher trainees from Poland and Turkey participating in a telecollaborative

project were prompted for reflection on different aspects of cultural appropriacy of language assessment. The data were collected via private diaries and public discussion forums. The corpus of student reflections was subject to qualitative analysis for key concepts, recurrent themes, similarities and differences across the two countries involved in analysis.

Findings: The effect of the local setting in which language instruction is to take place on assessment beliefs and strategies is stronger than that of teacher training. The language testing procedures of the Communicative Approach vary in the two countries under consideration (Poland and Turkey) due to a differing role and status of English in the country, cultural orientations of the society, preferred learning styles and habits, country openness to the Western culture and values as well as societal expectations towards the language teacher. Despite much standardization in language teacher education, significant variation in the shape of language teaching methodology can be attributed to the effect of cultural differences.

Value Added: Telecollaboration in teacher training is promoted as an instructional technique enabling expansion of teacher trainees' intercultural competence, intercultural communication skills, awareness of the effect of cultural differences on preferred ways of learning and teaching. The cultural appropriacy of language assessment can be achieved through filtering testing methods and techniques to adapt them to the cultural, political and social reality of target users.

Recommendations: The telecollaborative exchange as described in the present paper proves to be an effective vehicle to achieve the purpose of increasing internalization of teacher education and creating better skilled professionals. Since language teaching has become a largely multicultural and multilingual experience, it is necessary to increase teacher trainees' awareness of cultural appropriacy of its different aspects, including assessment, throughout the teacher training programme.

Key words: testing, assessment, L1 vs. L2, translation

JEL codes: O350 Social innovation, O330 Technological, Change: Choices and Consequences, Diffusion Processes

Introduction

Since the introduction of the Communicative Approach in the late 1970s, foreign language teaching in different parts of the world has witnessed quite striking, though slow, process of standardization of methodology. This is evidenced in the widespread promotion of communicative tasks, authentic

materials, learner autonomy as a framework for teacher-learner relations, transmission of social values of the Western world, all embedded in internationally-distributed coursebooks as well as externally-administered examinations.

However, as far as language assessment is concerned, teachers in many parts of the world may face the dilemma – should assessment be globalized, to conform to internationally-administered exams and ELT publisher-made tests, or should it be localized, reflecting cultures of learning of students and responding to societal expectations? The differences in the way language assessment can be conceptualized are particularly visible when confronting views, expectations and beliefs of teachers coming from different countries. Quite interestingly, such a confrontation can lead to increased language awareness, improved testing skills and enhanced ability to diagnose and respond to learners' language and personal needs.

The purpose of the paper is to examine the impact of local language learning cultures (Polish and Turkish) on the way teacher trainees from both countries perceive the use of native language and translation in assessment. The data from intercultural telecollaborative exchange will be used to draw conclusions on the way language assessment can (or should) be shaped by the local cultures of learning. Given how different the two cultures are, how different attitudes to the English language vs. the native language can be in Poland and Turkey, how different societal expectations of English language teachers are in the two countries, it can be reasonably expected that there might be a clash between globally promoted methodology and local conditions for language teaching. It is precisely this issue that will be taken under scrutiny in the present study.

Materials and methods

In order to examine the attitudes to the role of L1 in language assessment and to investigate the differences in perception of translation as a valid testing tool across cultures, an action research study was conducted. In the academic

year 2016/2017 tandems of student teachers from two different universities (University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw and Mehmet Akif Ersoy University in Burdur, Turkey) were established and encouraged to work online to deepen students' test design and evaluation skills. A two-semester study, commencing October 2016, teamed up tandems of Polish (N=25) and Turkish (N=60) students who participated in a specialized teacher training course of a similar focus – "Language testing". Ss got divided into 3-4 person groups mixed from the two classes and were supposed to create their own tests on a specific topic (vocabulary/grammar, receptive skills, productive skills, taking secondary school-leaving examinations as a model). Partners were supposed to provide feedback on student-made tests and, apart from this private communication, Moodle forums and journals were used to stimulate in-group and individual reflection.

In particular, the study was supposed to tap into teacher trainees' perceptions of

- traditional vs. alternative assessment;
- suitability of assessment measures with different age groups;
- expected level of L autonomy/T power in the classroom;
- predominant methodology/ies – e.g., the local variation of Communicative Language Teaching.

It was predicted that through reflecting upon such variables for language testing as choice of tasks, type of response (select vs. constructed), task instructions, time allocation, scoring procedures, answer key and feedback and curriculum fit (pre- and post-test teaching) teacher trainees would increase their awareness of how different the local expectations for language assessment can be and how local sensitivity means appropriation of global solutions to the actual reality of trainees' practicum in particular schools.

Current state of knowledge

L1 and Translation in Teaching and Testing in The Past

The extent to which L1 and translation should be exploited in foreign language instruction has been much debated in numerous studies. The use of the students' mother tongue in the teaching of a foreign language has encountered both positive and negative feelings, with the corresponding change in the attitudes and preferences over the proportion of L1 in relation to L2.

To start with, the concept of interference ever since its first major treatment by Weinreich (1953) raised quite a lot of interest of contrastive and generative linguists (e.g., Krzeszowski, 1974) who were quite concerned about the pedagogical potential of contrastive studies for exposing frequent problems and investigating sources of errors (e.g., Marton, 1972). However, in terms of the practical methodology, Audiolingualists claimed that foreign language teachers should avoid the use of L1 as much as possible. This was because second language learners were believed to make mistakes due to the native language patterns which are transferred to the target language and overgeneralized (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). As Krashen (1987) maintained, the two languages should be kept apart and L1 should be avoided at all costs since errors appear when the rules between the first and the second language are not similar. Interference, or negative impact of the first language habits that learners come to the second language classroom with, has a harmful effect on the acquisition of second language habits (Brown, 2007). L2 learners cannot refrain from subconscious comparison of new second language structures with the ones well-established in the native language (Kaczmarek, 2003). Therefore, contemporary methodology, very much structured according to the communicative teaching paradigm, favours global and integrated testing, with items well contextualized in L2 (Komorowska, 2002). Even though interference, contrastive analysis and error fossilization perspectives were put forward quite a few years ago, both classroom evidence and empirical studies still seem to prove their, at least partial, validity.

The background for the avoidance of L1 usage and translation has been the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which assumed that the more the two languages differ, the more difficult language acquisition is going to be. The areas which can be isolated as largely incompatible through structural and systematic interlingual comparison should be devoted more attention to, more mechanical drilling would need to be applied in order to prevent the formation of bad habits or to eradicate the ones that have already been formed (Richards & Rodgers, 1990). This is in sharp contrast with the Grammar Translation paradigm dominating language teaching until the beginning of the twentieth century, according to which it is only through relating target language structures to the first language system that the second language competence is built (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Plausible as the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis might sound, together with the decline of Behaviourism as an educational theory and the criticism of Audiolingualism as a predominant language teaching methodology, researchers started to notice the inadequacies of the contrastive paradigm. Learners did not prove to have difficulties with all those areas that have been isolated as troublesome via contrastive language studies (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). Similarly, errors predicted by the CAH should be bidirectional, that is work in both directions – for learners of both languages learning the opposite ones. However, not all language aspects which are difficult to master by Polish learners of English are equally troublesome for English learners of Polish.

Therefore, researchers started to devote more and more attention to investigation of how to make good use of learners' mother tongue, to give them confidence and build a necessary foundation for second language acquisition. As Cummins (1979) believed, sufficiently developed L1 skills are the precondition for successful accomplishment of bilingualism. There is evidence that cross-linguistic transfer of L1-L2 skills facilitates L2 learning (Sparks, 2009) and the learners whose native language skills are better mastered gain superior second language proficiency, exhibit higher levels of second language competence and second language classroom accomplish-

ment. When learners are rarely exposed to natural input, quite a lot of useful practice can be gained through translation (Krashen, 1981). Some learners, especially adult and analytically-oriented ones, could benefit from translation as a way of making input more comprehensible and giving them a sense of security to lower the affective filter (Krashen, 1981). Actually, many L1 users do activate their acquired L1 knowledge in order to simplify the process of foreign language learning (Karim 2003). Finally, even though Audiolingualism did much to remove quite radically the errors caused by first language effect, some scholars note the learning value of errors disclosed in translation that is not to be neglected in the classroom (Zybert, 2000, 2001).

Similarly to the changing understanding and acceptance of the role of L1 in language acquisition, translation as an assessment procedure has also raised diverse opinions. These range from dominating L2 usage in Grammar Translation Method to virtually no use (or almost forbidden usage) in Communicative Language Teaching. These two extremes demand greater elaboration as they set the boundaries within which language teachers' testing activities can be located.

Grammar Translation Method was inspired by literature studies in those times when the primary (and sole) source of language input were works of literature. According to Richards and Rodgers (1990), the purpose of learning as reading literature works in the target language was to be accomplished by studying grammar rules and paradigms, translating sentences and texts from L2 to L1, understanding and manipulating the morphology and syntax of the target language. Students' native language was used as the medium of instruction to explain grammatical rules, to translate across languages and to draw comparisons between L1 and L2 and vice versa. Great emphasis was laid on grammatical accuracy in translation, with learners exposed to target language literary texts along with grammatical paradigms and rules (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The study of words was followed by prescribed translation exercises, practising a given grammatical point with the use of structures and vocabulary from the text (see Mackey, 1965).

In a similar vein language evaluation was conducted – selected skills of reading, writing and translation were used to check students' mastery of particular structures by manipulation of single words, phrases, sentences from their native language to the target language or vice versa. Other activities that tapped into learners' awareness of existence of selected structures were also used in the assessment process.

On the other extreme of the L1-L2 scale one can see the Communicative Approach with its various forms (Task-Based Teaching, Lexical Approach), where L1 use was neither recommended nor allowed in teaching and testing. The Communicative Approach aimed to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and to develop procedures for the teaching of all the language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. Learners are supposed to cooperate with one another without teacher's intervention and students have to understand that failure in communication is the common liability, not the speaker's or the listener's error (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Richards & Rodgers, 1990).

The communication principle and the task principle described above have a direct effect on the kinds and roles of tasks and instructional materials, emphasizing authenticity as a way of bringing real-world interaction into the language classroom. Authentic language materials were supposed to help overcome the problem of transfer of the classroom knowledge to the outside world. While authenticity might be difficult to achieve with beginning learners, the teacher might need to try to find simpler authentic/ more realistic resources or implement realia that do not contain a lot of language, but about which a lot of discussion could be generated (e.g., menus). Materials promoting communicative language use encompass text-based materials (e.g., textbooks containing pair work activities, comprehension activities, paraphrase exercises, following a functional/notional or hybrid syllabus); task-based materials (games, role plays, simulations, tasks, whole-class, group work and pair work materials) and realia (authentic, real-life textual and visual materials, such as signs, magazines, advertisements, newspapers, maps, pictures, symbols, graphs, charts).

Similarly to teaching, also language testing was supposed to be an authenticated communicative event, framed in the social context, attempting to integrate the language skills to perform assessment in a more globalized manner than just testing isolated subcomponents of language proficiency. The teacher evaluates not only the students' accuracy, but also their fluency and communicative efficiency; they can informally evaluate the students' performance in the role of advisor and participant; for more formal evaluation, a teacher is likely to use a communicative test (an integrative test which has a real communicative function).

Interlingual Transfer in Assessment in Contemporary European Language Policy

Since appreciation for individual languages of the member states and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity have always been some of the most fundamental values of the European integration process, it is no wonder that the tenets of the European language policy emphasize the role of learners' mother tongues, thus exerting pressure on their conscious use in the foreign language classroom. Ever since the *New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* (2005), member states have been encouraged to maintain the multilingual nature of the Union's institutions, based on its translation and interpretation services, underlining the major role that languages and multilingualism play in the European economy and increasing efforts to encourage all citizens to learn and speak more languages. This policy line was strengthened by the 2008 Council of the European Union's *Resolution on a European Strategy for Multilingualism*, according to which member states have been requested to promote multilingualism with a view to strengthening social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and European identity construction.

Through preserving linguistic diversity of member states, EU aims at promoting multilingualism as a factor in the European economy's competitiveness and people's mobility and employability. Ensuring intercultural

dialogue, linguistic diversity and heritage language/culture preservation can be done by providing systematic and high-quality translation services, which is currently done at the Commission's level to ensure that citizens and institutions can gain access to decisions and information on the EU policy in their own language. Efforts to promote better understanding and communication between citizens guarantee the preservation of their cultural identity and linguistic diversity.

It has become clear, thus, that the current research directions to a large extent would involve the interrelation between different languages that are spoken by EU member states citizens. Much of research effort has been into investigating the following aspects at the intersection of mother tongues and foreign languages:

- Transferable competences e.g. L2 learning strategies to L1 reading (Garfinkel & Tabor, 1991; Dumas, 1999);
- Multicompetence (Cook, 2002; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Kormi-Nouri et al., 2008);
- Early bilingualism (Singleton, 1989; Muñoz, 2006a, 2006b, 2008);
- Intercomprehension (Doyé, 2005; Hufeisen & Marx, 2007);
- Communication in the mother tongue and in a foreign language as Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (Krajka & Gadomska, 2011; Lewicka-Mroczek & Krajka, 2011).

The major instrument of the European language policy, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001), for as many as twenty years has been the standard of how language proficiency is to be defined, how to ensure success of language acquisition and what the shape of language teaching and assessment should be in the contemporary classroom. Ever since its publication in 2001 CEFR provided a common basis for language learning, teaching and assessment across Europe. It described in a comprehensive manner communicative competences, necessary skills, knowledge, and situations and domains in language learning. The descriptions of CEFR are not related to a specific language, hence, it has

proved to be not only a valuable instrument for the comparison of language proficiency levels, but it served to facilitate the understanding of language learning and teaching process in the different languages that are used in Europe. CEFR's major contribution in the form of the Descriptive Scheme and the Common Reference Levels with learner achievements worded as positive can-do statements enabled language learners to think positively about their partial competences and allowed teachers to appreciate even tiniest achievements of students.

Even though the 2001 edition of the Framework exerted great influence on language education throughout Europe and even abroad, it has often been criticized on numerous points: confusion on its purpose as CEFR is not a manual, lack of sufficient accessibility and learner- and teacher-friendliness, lack of full validity of the way of describing and classifying competences and difficulties in applying it in language testing and coursebook validation. In particular, the way of implementation has differed across different countries, the set of six competence levels was not fully accepted by all countries and some actually developed sub-levels on their own.

Together with the publication of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Companion Volume with New Descriptors* in 2018, another important step was taken by the Council of Europe in the process of defining language proficiency and methodology. *Companion Volume* is the CoE's response to requests that have been made by the groups involved in the field of language education to complement the original illustrative scales with more descriptors. In addition to the extended illustrative descriptors, it contains an introduction to the aims and main principles of CEFR. Out of the key components of the document, updated versions of the 2001 scales (gaps filled: better description at A1 and the C-levels, new analytic scale for phonology), descriptors for the new areas of mediation (including reactions to creative text/literature), online interaction and plurilingual/pluricultural competence, finally, examples for mediation descriptors for the public, personal, occupational, educational domains have been provided, among others.

Since the 2018 CEFR CV language proficiency has been conceptualized in four pillars of reception, production, interaction and mediation, replacing the traditional division into four skills of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking and writing and the 2001 CEFR six-skill typology: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral production, written production, oral interaction and written interaction. The enhanced role of mediation as the fourth major area of language proficiency means focus on transfer of ideas, concepts and meanings across languages, modes of use or registers.

In mediation, the user/learner acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another (cross-linguistic mediation). The focus is on the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communicating and/or learning, collaborating to construct new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, and passing on new information in an appropriate form. The context can be social, pedagogic, cultural, linguistic or professional.

(CEFR Companion Volume, 2018, p. 103)

Thus, the specific mediating activities and strategies are promoted, both between oral and written medium, within L1 as well as between L1 and L2:

- relating events to persons absent;
- reconstructing texts for those who did understand;
- summarising gist;
- oral summaries of texts previously read;
- transactions;
- casual conversation;
- informal discussion;
- formal discussion;
- debate;
- interview;

- negotiations;
- co-planning;
- practical goal-oriented co-operation.

Communicative language strategies focusing on mediation encompass, for instance, linking to previous knowledge, adapting language, breaking down complicated information, amplifying a dense text or streamlining a text.

Hence, rather than think in terms of interlingual language crossing through translation, *Companion Volume to CEFR* encourages reflecting on crossing boundaries by relaying information in a different mode, language or register (see Figures 1–4 with selected reference scales for mediation).

Figure 1. Relaying specific information in writing

RELAYING SPECIFIC INFORMATION IN WRITING	
C2	No descriptors available; see B2
C1	No descriptors available; see B2
B2	Can relay in writing (in Language B) which presentations at a conference (given in Language A) were relevant, pointing out which would be worth detailed consideration. Can relay in writing (in Language B) the relevant point(s) contained in propositionally complex but well-structured texts (written Language A) within his/her fields of professional, academic and personal interest. Can relay in writing (in Language B) the relevant point(s) contained in an article (written in Language A) from an academic or professional journal.
	Can relay in a written report (in Language B) relevant decisions that were taken in a meeting (in Language A). Can relay in writing the significant point(s) contained in formal correspondence (in Language A).
B1	Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information points contained in texts (spoken in Language A) on familiar subjects (e.g. telephone calls, announcements, and instructions). Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific, relevant information contained in straightforward informational texts (written in Language A) on familiar subjects.
	Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information given in a straightforward recorded message (left in Language A), provided that the topics concerned are familiar and the delivery is slow and clear.
A2	Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information contained in short simple informational texts (written in Language A), provided the texts concern concrete, familiar subjects and are written in simple everyday language.
	Can list (in Language B) the main points of short, clear, simple messages and announcements (given in Language A) provided that speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Can list (in Language B) specific information contained in simple texts (written in Language A) on everyday subjects of immediate interest or need.
A1	Can list (in Language B) names, numbers, prices and very simple information of immediate interest (given in Language A), provided that the speaker articulates very slowly and clearly, with repetition.
Pre-A1	Can list (in Language B) names, numbers, prices and very simple information from texts (written Language A) that are of immediate interest, that are written in very simple language and contain illustrations.

Source: *CEFR Companion Volume*, 2018, p. 108.

Figure 2. Translating a written text in speech

TRANSLATING A WRITTEN TEXT IN SPEECH	
Note: As in any case in which mediation across languages is involved, users may wish to complete the descriptor by specifying the languages concerned.	
C2	Can provide fluent spoken translation into (Language B) of abstract texts written in (Language A) on a wide range of subjects of personal, academic and professional interest, successfully conveying evaluative aspects and arguments, including the nuances and implications associated with them.
C1	Can provide fluent spoken translation into (Language B) of complex written texts written in (Language A) on a wide range of general and specialised topics, capturing most nuances.
B2	Can provide spoken translation into (Language B) of complex texts written in (Language A) containing information and arguments on subjects within his/her fields of professional, academic and personal interest.
B1	Can provide spoken translation into (Language B) of texts written in (Language A) containing information and arguments on subjects within his/her fields of professional, academic and personal interest, provided that they are written in uncomplicated, standard language.
	Can provide an approximate spoken translation into (Language B) of clear, well-structured informational texts written in (Language A) on subjects that are familiar or of personal interest, although his/her lexical limitations cause difficulty with formulation at times.
A2	Can provide an approximate spoken translation into (Language B) of short, simple everyday texts (e.g. brochure entries, notices, instructions, letters or emails) written in (Language A).
	Can provide a simple, rough, spoken translation into (Language B) of short, simple texts (e.g. notices on familiar subjects) written in (Language A), capturing the most essential point.
A1	Can provide a simple, rough spoken translation into (Language B) of routine information on familiar everyday subjects that is written in simple sentences in (Language A) (e.g. personal news, short narratives, directions, notices or instructions).
	Can provide a simple, rough spoken translation into (Language B) of simple, everyday words and phrases written in (Language A) that are encountered on signs and notices, posters, programmes, leaflets etc.
Pre-A1	<i>No descriptors available</i>

Source: *CEFR Companion Volume*, 2018, p. 114.

Figure 3. Translating a written text in writing

TRANSLATING A WRITTEN TEXT IN WRITING	
C2	Can translate into (Language B) technical material outside his/her field of specialisation written in (Language A), provided subject matter accuracy is checked by a specialist in the field concerned.
C1	Can translate into (Language B) abstract texts on social, academic and professional subjects in his/her field written in (Language A), successfully conveying evaluative aspects and arguments, including many of the implications associated with them, though some expression may be over-influenced by the original.
B2	Can produce clearly organised translations from (Language A) into (Language B) that reflect normal language usage but may be over-influenced by the order, paragraphing, punctuation and particular formulations of the original.
	Can produce translations into (Language B), which closely follow the sentence and paragraph structure of the original text in (Language A), conveying the main points of the source text accurately, though the translation may read awkwardly.
B1	Can produce approximate translations from (Language A) into (Language B) of straightforward, factual texts that are written in uncomplicated, standard language, closely following the structure of the original; although linguistic errors may occur, the translation remains comprehensible.
	Can produce approximate translations from (Language A) into (Language B) of information contained in short, factual texts written in uncomplicated, standard language; despite errors, the translation remains comprehensible.
A2	Can use simple language to provide an approximate translation from (Language A) into (Language B) of very short texts on familiar and everyday themes that contain the highest frequency vocabulary; despite errors, the translation remains comprehensible.
A1	Can, with the help of a dictionary, translate simple words and phrases from (Language A) into (Language B), but may not always select the appropriate meaning.
Pre-A1	No descriptors available

Source: *CEFR Companion Volume*, 2018, p. 114.

Figure 4. Acting as intermediary in informal situations

ACTING AS INTERMEDIARY IN INFORMAL SITUATIONS (WITH FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES)	
C2	Can communicate in clear, fluent, well-structured (Language B) the sense of what is said in (Language A) on a wide range of general and specialised topics, maintaining appropriate style and register, conveying finer shades of meaning and elaborating on sociocultural implications.
C1	Can communicate fluently in (Language B) the sense of what is said in (Language A) on a wide range of subjects of personal, academic and professional interest, conveying significant information clearly and concisely as well as explaining cultural references.
B2	Can mediate (between Language A and Language B), conveying detailed information, drawing the attention of both sides to background information and sociocultural cues, and posing clarification and follow-up questions or statements as necessary.
	Can communicate in (Language B) the sense of what is said in a welcome address, anecdote or presentation in his/her field given in (Language A), interpreting cultural cues appropriately and giving additional explanations when necessary, provided that the speaker stops frequently in order to allow time for him/her to do so. Can communicate in (Language B) the sense of what is said in (Language A) on subjects within his/her fields of interest, conveying and when necessary explaining the significance of important statements and viewpoints, provided speakers give clarifications if needed.
B1	Can communicate in (Language B) the main sense of what is said in (Language A) on subjects within his/her fields of interest, conveying straightforward factual information and explicit cultural references, provided that he/she can prepare beforehand and that the speakers articulate clearly in everyday language.
	Can communicate in (Language B) the main sense of what is said in (Language A) on subjects of personal interest, whilst following important politeness conventions, provided that the speakers articulate clearly in standard language and that he/she can ask for clarification and pause to plan how to express things.
A2	Can communicate in (Language B) the overall sense of what is said in (Language A) in everyday situations, following basic cultural conventions and conveying the essential information, provided that the speakers articulate clearly in standard language and that he/she can ask for repetition and clarification.
	Can communicate in (Language B) the main point of what is said in (Language A) in predictable, everyday situations, conveying back and forth information about personal wants and needs, provided that the speakers help with formulation.
A1	Can communicate (in Language B) other people's personal details and very simple, predictable information available (in Language A), provided other people help with formulation.
Pre-A1	<i>No descriptors available</i>

Source: *CEFR Companion Volume*, 2018, p. 124.

Results

The telecollaborative partnership, among other tasks, involved individual reflection and group discussions on suggested topics concerned with parameters of assessment enumerated above. The qualitative analysis of the trainees' input produced the following findings:

- quite a few Turkish participants developed a clearer idea that while so many Turkish students expect L1 use in the classroom, both for teaching and testing, this situation is far from being satisfactory;
- Turkish teacher trainees see that the use of L1 and translation makes

tests more practical for teachers and helps them meet the expectations of students, however, this is not fully beneficial in terms of overall language development;

- both Polish and Turkish Ss proposed to use visuals, synonymy, L2 definitions as alternatives to equivalents and translation;
- both groups thought that testing grammar and vocabulary through translation depends much on age and level of learners, with adults expecting much more L1 support than children.

Quite interestingly, the forum posts show an important role of national and societal expectations in the way tests are constructed, as reported by one of the trainees below:

L1 use is a big problem in our country. If we teach English, we have to use L2. Although there are some real observations, teachers give even basic instructions in L1. I am sure that giving instructions (open book, clean the board...) can be in L2, it is so easy. In my country, in rural areas, none of the teachers who work especially in these areas, does not use L2. Students are also not happy because they do not understand English even if they graduate from university. English is not included some basic exams here, so they don't need to study for it.

Even though the testing recommendations of the Communicative Approach (transferred to the participants in course materials and in-class instruction) promote integrated approaches avoiding use of translation and focusing on discrete items, the participants showed an appreciation of translation as a part of the local culture of learning and an overall positive attitude to this concept. This can be seen in the quotes below:

In my opinion vocabulary can be tested by translation, however it shouldn't be the only way it's tested. Having an exercise that depends on that is perfectly okay, but a whole test, or even all tests, that rely on this method entirely, in my opinion doesn't work. Language should be acquired as a whole, and not only through independent words or sentences without context. As to age and level, I believe this might work best with older students, not with kids, that are on intermediate level or above.

If we cannot use L1-L2 or L2-L1 translation we can use other methods, like “imitating”, “role-playing”, “pointing out” and much more. Translation is a fast and safe way to test vocabulary and grammar but it is not the only way.

L1 use in tests reflects the way the Communicative Approach has been appropriated in Turkey – greater use of L1 during classes, most instruction devoted to written skills, with accuracy and linguistic competence still being the major instructional objectives:

When the students have difficulty in understanding, we generally use L1. In Turkey, the students are content with this situation. They want to hear in Turkish in order to understand better. In education system of Turkey, when we learn and teach English, we lack speaking and listening skills. It is generally based on grammar and theoretical knowledge. And unfortunately, most of the teachers are happy with this.

Based on my observation I can say that L1 usage in English classes in Turkey is very frequent because it is easy for both learner and teacher. If teacher uses L2 mostly it ends up with misunderstanding and boredom. Usually teacher uses L1 in order to make the lesson quick and understandable so both the teacher and the learners are happy with the result.

On the other hand, Polish teacher trainees proved to be generally less willing to use translation and L1 in tests, even though they acknowledged the fact that this can actually be a way of adapting instruction to the specific age and proficiency level of students.

The amount of L1 used by teachers in the lesson probably depends on the level and age of the ss, and complexity of the subject matter. Still, I guess, too much of L1 is used in an ordinary language lesson. Teachers are afraid that ss won't be able to understand everything properly and they overuse L1 for giving instruction as well as during the presentation stage. Some ss impose their using L1 on teachers by.

In my opinion vocabulary can be tested by translation, however it shouldn't be the only way it's tested. Having an exercise that depends on that is perfectly okay, but a whole test, or even all tests, that rely on this method entirely, in

my opinion doesn't work. Language should be acquired as a whole, and not only through independent words or sentences without context. As to age and level, I believe this might work best with older students, not with kids, that are on intermediate level or above.

I feel that at lower levels it can be beneficial both for students and teachers to give L1 equivalents. I consider that it would be difficult for lower grades to give equivalents in L2 for some of the words e.g. cat or dog.

A greater number of Polish teacher trainees share the opinion that language teaching should have a more communicative focus, simulating real-life exchanges and preparing learners for coping with communication problems in interactions with non-native speakers. Due to that, more integrated and holistic approaches gain greater recognition. Also the traditional translation tasks which presented individual words in a decontextualized manner are to a large extent deemed old-fashioned and inappropriate for the requirements of the contemporary classroom.

I believe that our learning is more effective when our approach to the language is more holistic. There is no point to translate every single word. We should rather enhance our students to switch into English and to start to think in English. Instead of giving the translation of the word students can expand and show their knowledge and understanding of the foreign language, by giving, for example, synonyms or antonyms of the word given.

What is worrying, perhaps, is that such word-for-word translation is still promoted at lower levels of learning, e.g., in teaching children. Rather than choose much easier items to be tested in an integrated L2 contexts, teacher trainees think increasing L1 use in the classroom will adapt input to the learners' capacity.

I think that in the beginning of the learning process, especially when teaching children, teachers usually ask for L1 or L2 equivalents because they want to make 100% sure that students understand the meanings of the words. It is essential when the abstract words are tested and the student doesn't have enough words to describe the meaning of a certain word in L2.

Sometimes the students are asked to match the word with the appropriate picture, however these pictures must in 100% reflect the meaning of the word as not to mislead the students.

Discussion

It becomes evident from the current research that even though in the era of globalization English language teacher education can try to proceed in different countries according to almost the same procedures (here, both instructors used the same kind of educational program, the same major coursebook, the same syllabus, the same methodological orientation, close coordination of the telecollaborative partnership), the effect of the local setting in which language instruction is to take place on assessment beliefs and strategies is stronger than that of teacher training. The findings of the study show that the language testing procedures of the Communicative Approach vary in the two countries under consideration due to a differing role and status of English in the country, cultural orientations of the society, preferred learning styles and habits, country openness to the Western culture and values as well as societal expectations towards the language teacher. It is clear that despite much standardization in language teacher education, significant variation in the shape of language teaching methodology can be attributed to the effect of cultural differences.

Therefore, the concept of cultural appropriation of language methodology (Ellis, 1995; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996) needs to gain much greater ground. Rather than try to force the ready-made Western recommendations on language assessment published in most popular teacher handbooks, teacher trainees need to become aware that the teaching methodologies and materials developed in Europe or the United States could not be used in the way they were intended by their original authors once they reached Swaziland or Malaysia (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996). Widdowson (1994, p. 387) clearly states the consequences for English language teaching: instead of a pedagogy of

the authentic which “[inappropriately] privileges native-speaker use” and imposes its norms at the global level, he suggests a pedagogy of the appropriate, which revises the authentic and adapts it to local conditions. Also Phillipson (1992) is of the opinion that ELT materials (here, ready-made tests) export not only globally conceived English content, but also a methodology often associated with an Anglo-Saxon view of communication and one should instead seek to develop a pedagogy more appropriate to local conditions.

In terms of the use of L1, translation and mediation tasks in language tests, the great role of university teacher training in different countries all over the world, be it Eastern Europe for Poland or Asia for Turkey, is to make trainees aware of the multitude of influences that have to be effectively and smoothly brought together in their own language assessment philosophy.

On the one hand, the dominant communicative methodology encourages global and integrated rather than discrete point testing, all in L2, with little place for the mother tongue. On the other hand, depending on the local culture of learning, students’ preferences, generally accepted beliefs about testing as well as certain in-school regulations, the particular testing strategies and techniques need to respond to individual and societal expectations. This is because the aim of culturally-appropriate language methodology (Porto, 2010) is to go beyond the acquisition of linguistic, non-linguistic, cultural, etc., information and knowledge towards a fundamental transformation of the participants’ actions and thoughts at a personal and social level (Chen, 2005), focusing on the development of learners as individuals. This development takes place when human beings reconcile new and challenging ideas with their pre-existing beliefs and values through diverse reading and writing experiences in the foreign language. Culturally-responsive educators (Porto, 2010) believe in foreign language teaching as educational improvement and aim at their learners’ overall literacy, not only linguistic, development.

Finally, since language assessment is to a large extent intertwined with issues of power, identity, national sovereignty, macro- and micropolitics (Bachman & Purpura, 2008; Ross, 2011), the tensions that exist between

competing ideologies and practices will also influence daily testing procedures of language teachers. The requirements of national examinations will most probably affect individual assessment much more than well-researched methodology solutions or globally accepted external examinations.

Final remarks

Almost 40 years after the outbreak of the Communicative Revolution and almost 20 years after the publication of *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, we see more and more individual variation in how foreign language methodology is developing in response to particular national, societal and individual needs. Language assessment also reflects the attempts to escape the uniformity of English language teaching and shows in practice the cultural appropriation of communicative teaching and testing.

Initial teacher training is a crucial moment in the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes of language teachers to ensure the application of culturally-sensitive pedagogy. It seems necessary and proper, thus, to increase student teachers' awareness of the effect of different parameters, such as the role of L1 and translation, on teaching and testing effectiveness across cultures. The telecollaborative exchange as described in the present paper seems to be a useful vehicle to achieve the purpose of increasing internalization of teacher education and creating better skilled professionals.

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