

BOOK REVIEWS

Marlena Iwona Bielak, *Formation of the Transcommunicator as the Goal of Non-native Language Pedagogy*. Piła, Poland: Wydawnictwo Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej im. Stanisława w Pile, 2014. Pp. 312. ISBN 978-83-62617-53-1.

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The monograph, based on the author's PhD dissertation, brings forth an analysis of the communicator in relation to the non-native language pedagogy, which will help shape a transcommunicator, i.e. a person who, faced with the challenges of globalization and the threat of acculturation in the context of the English language imperialism, has to reposition their own native language, culture and identity in a central place.

It consists of four chapters, each concerned with an important aspect of the theory postulated by the author.

Chapter One, *Communication models and the formation of the transcommunicator* presents an overview of the most important theories of communication, underpinning their importance and usefulness in relation with the development of a transcommunicator, as well as the role played by culture in this process. The communication models under scrutiny were selected taking into consideration the following three criteria: the attitude towards the notion of culture within a given framework; the relevance for the development of a transcommunicator, and the significance of a given model in the overall communication theory. The communication process models presented are: Shannon and Weaver, Gerbner, Lasswell, Berlo, Newcomb, Scramm, Barnlund, Jakobson, together with an interpretation of how these may influence the development of the transcommunicator. Second, semiotic models are also analysed as well as their relevance to the process of becoming a transcommunicator. Third, rhetoric is given an insight into, from the same perspective. Last but not least, Puppel's communicological model is presented as the optimal communication model, in order to underline the inclusion of culture in the semiosphere, which is perceived as a matrix of signs.

Chapter Two, *Conception of the Transcommunicator*, brings forth the issues connected with the formation of the transcommunicator in the context of both English and Polish languages. The position of the English language, as one of dominance will create a special treatment of the Polish language, especially by Polish teachers of English language, who should assume an additional role of

preservers and transmitters of their mother tongue, and the Polish national identity. The process of awareness raising as to the status of the Polish language is perceived as a result of cultural competence widening, which promotes equal footing for cultures and a positive attitude towards one's native language and community, being an integral part of the process of elaborating communicative skills. The pedagogical solution offered is that of teaching English not in the sole context of the English culture, but mainly in the comparative perspective of Polish culture vs. the English culture. Therefore, the hypotheses put forth by this book are:

- a) Raising the translinguistic awareness of both non-native teachers and students should be conducive to the formation of a trascommunicator;
- b) The higher the traslinguistic awareness, the more likely is the formation of a trascommunicator.

Chapter Three, *An Analysis of the awareness of the status of Polish, as opposed to English, among the Polish teachers and students of the English language, and the existence of the style striving for communication aesthetics*, represents the proper research into the awareness mentioned above, carried out on two group of subjects, i.e. 90 Polish teachers of English (from different types of schools: primary schools, junior high schools, high schools, higher education colleges) and 90 Polish students, native speakers of Polish, studying English as their major, from Stanisław Staszic Higher Vocational State School in Piła and the Teacher Training College in Wałcz. The questionnaires (one version for teachers and one for students respectively) consist of 41 questions, assessed on a 1-10 scale, 1 being the lowest value and 10 the highest one, and they focus on two awareness aspects, i.e. the status of the Polish language among Polish teachers and students, and second, the development of the style striving for communicative aesthetics, underlying the role of culture. The indicators of awareness are the following:

- a) Translinguistic awareness of the status of the Polish language vs. the English language;
- b) Translinguistic awareness of the need to practice aspects of Polish cultural competence;
- c) Awareness of Polish communicators as to their need to practice aspects of English cultural competence;
- d) Traslinguistic awareness as to the introduction of English cultural element following the presentation of Polish cultural elements;
- e) Translinguistic awareness of the need the emphasise an equal footing for both cultures;
- f) Linguistic communicative awareness of the existence of universal elements of style that contribute to communicative aesthetics.

Given the fact that the formation of the transcommunicator is based on the equality of Polish and English cultures, the data obtained as a result of the survey carried out by the author will be central to the understanding of how this process can be put into practice.

Chapter Four, *Results of the analysis of data referring to the awareness of*

the status of Polish, as opposed to English, and to the existence of the style striving for communication aesthetics, provides detailed comments, explanations and conclusions on the data obtained by Dr. Bielak following her research. The analysis of the research results will emphasize both the quantitative and qualitative aspects entailed. First, the author focuses on the awareness of the status of the Polish language vs. the English language, and secondly, on the awareness of the existence of the communicative style striving for communicative aesthetics. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the awareness scrutinized in the previous chapters is a mosaic-like structure, seen as a construct encompassing different components, whose interrelatedness may change in relation to each parameter. Thus, it can be inferred that:

- a) Considering the character of the awareness (in which different modes of arrangement of the constituents can be distinguished), this awareness appears easy to be changed;
- b) The process of awareness raising should concentrate on building (from out of all the awareness components), a single uniform class of high awareness.

In conclusion, the book very convincingly demonstrates that the goal of non-native language teaching and learning pedagogy should be the creation of a transcommunicator, focusing on the development of skills of the non-native language while strengthening the national identity of communicators. The book is a must read not only for Polish teachers of English, but also for all non-native English teachers.

References

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