

Summary

The article is devoted to the problem of language and culture interaction in modern linguistics. There are several approaches to their treatment nowadays. Some scholars treat them as "a mirror of the culture" (instrumental approach), others as "a cultural code of the nation"(syncretic approach), but the most widely spread is the opinion that language and culture are two autonomic semiotic systems intersupplementing one another (integrated approach).

Connotation combines the signs of the language and the concepts of the culture. It's a bearer of ethnosemantics and many linguists prove this point. It's common to distinguish between wide and narrow meanings of connotation in modern science of the language. In the frames of a wide approach connotative units supplement the basic content of nominative ones. It makes the utterance sound more solemn, familiar, emotional etc. The narrow meaning to the treatment of connotation is more popular among linguists nowadays. Its supporters view connotation in unity with denotation. In spite of the fact that this issue has already been studied profoundly, it still remains disputable and hasn't lost its topicality for today.

CHANGING ASPECTS OF IMMIGRATION INTO THE UK

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Since 2004, the accession of Slovakia to the European Union the problems springing from the flow of Eastern European workforce to the United Kingdom has been occupying leading analysts, journalists, politicians and sociologists. The topic is still relevant even after seven years of the political decision and signature of the treaties of accession to the EU. Mass migration and immigration has elicited a chain of mixed reactions in the UK as well as in the home countries of the migrants provoking social debates investigating the contradictory aspects of the phenomenon. As new immigrant communities have come to existence and grown stronger and gradually the groups of Poles, Slovaks, Czechs, and Hungarians – just to mention the Visegrád Group – have become significant communities in the British cities, the native society started to voice worries.

Though, a number of analysts, e.g. Philippe Legrain in 2005, argue that the struggling economy of the British Isles badly needs the newly arrived workforce, the reactions towards the newer waves of migrants have not always been welcoming and friendly and the positive idol of British multiculturalism and tolerance have started to

show differing aspects. Nevertheless, a tangible result of the modern wondering of the nations is, that by time numerous groups of immigrants have come to existence and a relatively significant number of communities have been formed, which in many aspects fulfil the definition of diaspora. As Kokot, Tölölyan, and Alfonso argue, “the concept of ‘diaspora’ cannot be usefully limited to any single type of community or historical situation” [2004: 3]. Thus, the integration process of the immigrants can be slowed and even stopped. Growing communities have reached the size when they have become ‘immune’ to the dominant culture’s influence and manage to sustain independent cultural enclaves. The most significant ones are the Polish communities, however Slovaks, in proportion to the state’s population is also unequivocally represented. According to the WRS (Working Registration Scheme) in 2007, 16,160 Slovaks were registered in the UK. [Világi, Gál, Bilčík, 2008:23]

At this stage, however, is indispensable to diversify the inhomogeneous groups of newcomers and emphasize the differences at least between those people whose primary intention is to settle down in the target country and obtain British citizenship as soon as possible and diversify them of those who primarily look for temporary work possibilities and whose main intention is to accumulate a reasonable amount of capital before returning to their home country. While the migrant workers are primarily young, independent, and relatively well-educated people, whose primary goal is to gain experience, improve language proficiency and travel the world, the latter group is more heterogeneous. It is the group of families. This does not necessarily mean a whole immigrant family, though in many cases this is the dominant pattern. While the former group dominantly comprises people whose primary intention is not a permanent migration and settling down in the target country, the latter one is a considerably static configuration where once the members of a family had decided to move their decision was usually well grounded, established and finite. While the pull factor is dominant in the decision making process of the migrants it is highly predictable that among the permanent immigrants the push factor is equally present. The ever-present economic factor is dominant in both groups, however in most cases the economic factor is generally not sufficient when deciding for permanent immigration. A number of people had chosen immigration not exclusively on the grounds of economic factors, but also because in the home country had to face some kind of discrimination. Since a considerably big number of migrants belong to the Roma communities in Slovakia the suspicion that discriminative factors can play a relatively dominant role in their decision to move to the UK is at least worth mentioning.

Aspects of integration also differ according to the primary intention of the migration. While the people searching for temporary work possibilities are often treated as ‘guest’ workers in the country – primarily employed in seasonal jobs, mainly in agriculture, fishery, etc. – the immigrants need to find a more permanent job facility to be able to support the life of generally their whole family. While language mastery for the first group is not vital, the second group of permanent immigrants has to be able to communicate at a relatively higher level so as to be successful in the demanding tasks of finding a place of residence, a permanent job, schooling facilities for the children, etc.

The first group is aware of the fact that in a foreign community not all his needs – notably of cultural character – can be met, while permanent immigrants will sooner or later face the question of integration and the dilemma of assimilation though, our modern, globalized world offers a range of possibilities for maintaining cultural continuity with the homeland and thus reduces cultural erosion. According to Kokot, Tölölyan, and Alfonso, “Today, the concept of diaspora has become an element of self-reference and political identification wherever – by access to new channels of communication, by economic exchange or physical mobility – extraterritorial groups or organizations seek political influence in their homelands or other communities of the same perceived origin, or vice versa” [2005:3]. Among the most significant sources of cultural life can be mentioned the communication facilities offered by the Internet and satellite TV and radio programmes. Except of these sources of information the communities, if they are strong enough in number and finance, might organize social clubs along different lines offering a wide range of community activities from religious and folk traditions through celebrating national holidays and commemorating national anniversaries. These communities can maintain libraries and shops offering traditional national foods and drinks, domestic press and books. What is more, as we can see in the case of the London Slovak community, weekend language school(s), functioning on commercial grounds, offer language courses for children coming from mixed or immigrant families helping maintain and develop Slovak language in active use. A very important aspect is the establishment and maintenance of mutual cultural centres under common management of British and Slovak people. Lastly the different cultural events can also be listed that are organized under the aegis of the British Slovak embassy and other institutions.

From the point of view of the target society of immigration, however, these activities can also be viewed negatively as they definitely slow down the integration and assimilation process. The relatively unlimited access to cultural products available in the native language of the immigrants on one side help them to maintain their cultural heritage, on the other hand it can sometimes lead to a situation when the members of the immigrant groups, primarily the children, are not able to build up an extensive social network, become isolated and could not become an active member of the local society. One of the most significant side effects of diasporic life is isolation. Thus it becomes questionable whether the British school and education system is able to cater the needs of these children when these children usually grow up in areas with mixed population due to the presence of visible minorities who in a number of cases are ready to take revenge on the newcomers for the unfair treatment they had to face earlier.

Nevertheless, it is already evident that the British labour government underestimated the challenge the integration of the newer waves of immigrants from Eastern Europe might mean for the British society. Neither its social and welfare system nor its education system were fully prepared for the shock the number of new migrants and immigrants brought about. The surprising numbers the statistics revealed naturally provoked overreactions and the picture of the Eastern European immigrant had been soon depicted very negatively, primarily in the tabloid press. The British society

afflicted by the effects of the world economic crisis and military conflicts in global measures as well as the visible irresoluteness of the labour government called for changes. The conservatives revitalised a sceptical aptitude towards immigration and included the topic in their campaign during the 2010 elections. Undoubtedly, this choice also contributed to David Cameron's success during the elections and the establishment of a conservative-liberal British government. Since the topic of minorities and immigration has always been a sensitive question and is frequently talked about there has not been any significant or revolutionary change in the political handling of the question. Since the Polish still form the most numerous Eastern European communities in the UK, their moves provoke the most visible reactions. Many times, since the outbreak of the economic crises have been emphasized even in the less reliable tabloid press that Poles gradually leave Britain, as the available job vacancies have dramatically shrunk. On the other hand, the German restrictions introduced towards Eastern European citizens limiting their numbers to be employed legally in Germany are gradually abolished by the year 2011. This might also accelerate the speed at which migrant workers will leave the British Isles.

Based on the earlier described changing aspects of immigration into the United Kingdom the following conclusion can be drawn. Firstly the British society, primarily the 2004 labour government greatly underestimated the extent of immigration and migration. Though reputable analysts point out the evidently positive impact of the Eastern European immigrants' on the growth of the British economy due to the insufficient governmental support as well as the manipulative campaign of the British tabloid press the general acceptance of these immigrant groups is low. Secondly the diasporic style of life, which had become possible as the result of the big enough number of the immigrants living in coherent communities did contribute to the isolation of the immigrant groups. Finally the lack of support from local native communities and the visible conflict inherited from the past struggles of the visible communities had made it relatively complicated for the newcomers to successfully integrate even if language proficiency would have allowed it.

Literature

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Summary

This paper summarizes some of the aspects of the Eastern European migration and immigration into the United Kingdom. The author's main objective is to provide a comprehensive outline based on the analyses of the later political and social events presented in the British tabloid press as well as compare and contrast these pieces of information to up to date economical and sociological research.