LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND

Bogusia TEMPLE
University of Central Lancashire, School of Social Work, GB-PR1 2HE Preston, Harrington 301
e-mail: btemple1@uclan.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

In this article I discuss findings from a research project in a city in the Northwest of England that explored language and identity amongst Polish speakers. The research involved narrative interviews with Polish speakers about their views of being Polish and living in England. The interviews were translated and transcribed and this article focuses on participants' views about integration. The results suggest that participants felt they were integrating into English society. What they meant by this varied from brief everyday encounters with English language speakers through to sustained attempts to mix with people from a variety of backgrounds. English language proficiency was seen to influence but not determine integration. Other factors that influenced the desire or ability to integrate were the availability and cost of English language classes, views about other language speakers that resulted from everyday encounters and their uncertainty about whether their future lie in Poland or England.

Key words: integration, Polish migration, identity, language

LINGUA, IDENTITÀ E INTEGRAZIONE: LE SCOPERTE DI STUDI DELLE COMUNITÀ POLACCHE NELL'INGHILTERRA NORDOCCIDENTALE

SINTESI

L'articolo discute i risultati di un progetto di ricerca eseguito in una città dell'Inghilterra nordoccidentale che investigava la lingua e l'identità tra i parlanti della lingua polacca. Il progetto, eseguito per mezzo di interviste narrative con i parlanti del polacco, investigava le loro opinioni su cosa significhi essere polacchi e vivere in Inghilterra. In base alle interviste tradotte e trascritte, l'articolo focalizza le opinioni dei partecipanti concernenti la loro integrazione. I risultati suggeriscono che i partecipanti al progetto, secondo loro, si stanno integrando nella società inglese, ma la loro interpretazione di cosa significhi intraprendere il processo d'integrazione varia da partecipazione in brevi incontri quotidiani con i parlanti della lingua inglese a tentativi di socializzare con persone di diversi ambienti sociali. La conoscenza della lingua inglese è vista come rilevante ma non decisiva per l'integrazione. Altri fattori che influiscono sul desiderio o l'abilità di integrarsi sono la disponibilità e il costo dei corsi d'inglese, le opinioni di altri parlanti della lingua inglese che gli intervistati hanno formato attraverso gli incontri quotidiani, e l'incertezza sul dove gli intervistati vedono il loro futuro, in Polonia o in Inghilterra.

Parole chiave: integrazione, migrazione polacca, identità, lingua

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

INTRODUCTION

In this article I discuss how Polish people in a borough in the Northwest of England viewed the role of language in their lives, in forming their own identities and making judgements about the identities of others. I start with policies concerned with migrants from the European Union (EU), discuss relevant literature on language acquisition and present findings from the research. I use relevant literature on what it means to be bilingual as well as on translation to situate the research. I then describe the narrative approach used to situate the findings within the context of the lives of all involved in it, including the researchers/translators and the participants themselves. This approach builds on existing literature within narrative analysis to extend reflexivity within research to the translation process. I suggest that looking at people's views on language may provide some clues as to why numbers of migrants choose to continue using their preferred language whenever they can in spite of the widely recognised benefits of learning to speak the language of the country they are living in. Deciding to use another language, I argue, is not determined solely by instrumental concerns. The implications are discussed in terms of challenging the simplistic assumption behind government policies that learning a language leads to integration.

POLICY BACKGROUND

As Spencer et al. (2007)[1] note, although migrants are being brought within the community cohesion and integration agenda under the remit of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion there is currently no written or comprehensive government policy in the United Kingdom towards new migrants other than for recognised refugees (2007, 10). Of particular concern for the research discussed in this article, many researchers (see for example Alexander et al., 2007) have documented the status of the English language within the British government's policies on citizenship, nationhood and belonging. The ties between citizenship, integration and the English language have been made explicit in the Crick Report (2003) that sets out 'the blueprint for citizenship education' (Alexander et al., 784) and the citizenship ceremony. A migrant who wants to become a British citizen has to take the 'Life in the UK' test and levels of English fluency form part of the criteria for assessing acceptability as a future citizen. Alexander et al. have noted the desire for a homogeneous culture with 'common values...the common currency of the English language' and the tensions between this and the diversity of communities within Britain'.

In May 2004 workers from the EU accession states, which included Poland, were given free access to the UK labour market. The much larger than predicted numbers gave rise to concerns about 'floods' of migrants who were taking British jobs and putting pressure on schools, hospitals and other public services without any guidance or resources from the government on how to meet their needs. Moreover, the growing costs of translation and interpretation services in the UK have fuelled concerns about language and integration. It has been suggested, for example, that providing interpretation and translation services encourages migrants not to learn English (Ruth Kelly quoted in Simpson, 2007). The evidence for this claim is not provided. Moreover, the narrow view of language use that this statement demonstrates focuses on the instrumental aspects of learning a language at the expense of evidence that suggests other issues may be significant in learning a language, including the role of language in self and other identification, the effects of racism and inequality in society and the changing nature of migration after the expansion of the EU since 2004.

Questioning the role of language testing in citizenship Milani (2008, 46) argues that it:

....is based on given norms of Britishness..., it intrinsically forecloses the possibility of re-shaping these norms, and thereby precludes the recognition and acceptance of each person's individual traits, which is the basis of a truly multicultural society.

He argues that such tests can *'contribute to, rather than challenge, the reproduction of social differentiation, thereby legitimising the exclusion of certain groups from both the civic and symbolic domains of Sweden as a nation-state'* (2008, 27). He suggests that this is likely to be the case in other countries in Europe that tie citizenship to English language proficiency. He goes on to argue that polices that tie proficiency in one language to knowledge of one culture view language in a problematic way. That is, they assume that a language can be used as if it is an objective mirror onto one social world rather than viewing it as helping to shape that world in terms of national identity. He suggests that language is embedded in the *'(re)production or contestation of power asymmetries and domination'* (2008, 32). Social and economic factors influence second language attainment and policy makers neglect these when they define immigrants in terms of deficiencies rather than diversity.

In a similar way, Cheong et al. (2007, 28–29) argue that the New Labour communitarian agenda *'privileges homogeneity, cohesion and consensus over approaches that emphasize material and cultural difference, and responsibilities to society rather than rights'* (see also Wetherell, 2007, 8). There is substantial evidence of inequalities in access to services as well as the provision of inappropriate services and the inclusion of people from minority ethnic communities as an afterthought in

---

1 The complex entitlements of migrants to the UK are discussed in Spencer et al. (2007) and are not discussed here.

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

service provision (see for example Mir et al. (2001) in relation to learning difficulties and Temple et al. (2008) for an overview and an example in relation to services for disabled children).

This article adds to the evidence on the influences on English language learning and helps to explain why people may not have learnt English, sometimes after many years living in England. It focuses on a sample of Polish people's views of the significance of language rather than on professional or academic views. In relation to services for people who speak little or no English research has shown that asking about their views within the cultural, social and political context of their lives can produce findings that challenge the assumptions of service providers and policy makers (Alexander et al., 2004).

Many migrants would undoubtedly welcome the recommendations of the Goldsmith Report (2008) as these include improvements in the ways English language learning is provided, for example, suggesting easier access to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes in appropriate venues. However, writers have argued that learning a new language involves more than changing the words used to communicate. As pointed out by Milani (2008) above second language acquisition is influenced by a variety of factors, including social and economic (Milani, 2008). Pavlenko (2005; 2006) also shows how people's attachments to languages vary according to, for example, socio-economic and political circumstances and the age at which people learn new languages. Moreover researchers have convincingly demonstrated that language and identity are interwoven (Bourdieu, 1992; Pavlenko, 2005; 2006; Spivak, 1993) and that learning a new language involves re-assessing who we are and how we live and interact with others. This 'self translation' across language can be traumatic and not the simple transfer of meanings between languages:

....the languages speakers choose to learn, speak, or abandon are intrinsically linked to their social, political, gender, and national identities and imagined futures...... cross-linguistic differences in affective repertoires, perceived language emotionality, and emotions linked to particular languages are oftentimes central in speakers' decisions about which languages they would rather live, write, undergo therapy, argue, or whisper sweet nothings in (Pavlenko, 2005, 234).

The implications of possible language differences in how narratives are constructed and presented in different languages have been explored by a number of writers. Blommaert (2001), for example, shows how narratives in one language can be presented as written texts

in another language in ways that ignore the different expectations from speakers of what constitutes a coherent account. Moreover, Spivak (1992) and Venuti (1998) have argued that translation is a political and ethical process that involves representing others and that the process of translation should not be based on the structures and assumptions of the target language but should include an engagement with other ways of presentation. Venuti (1998) has called for translation not to become a form of 'domestication' of the source language by the target language but an ethical project of engaging with different language use.

THE RESEARCH APPROACH[2]

The research presented in this article had two overall aims: firstly, to develop conceptual thinking on the place of language in narrative constructions of identity and secondly, to contribute to developments in methodological and epistemological debates on cross language research. The second of these aims is not discussed in this article (see Temple, 2008a; 2008b). The specific research topics included use of Polish and English, social networks, ways of learning English and influences and constraints on learning English.

The researchers adopted a narrative approach. Riessman provides a useful definition of narrative analysis as the investigation of an account and the analysis of *'how it is put together, the linguistic and cultural resources that it draws on, and how it persuades a listener of authenticity'* (Riessman, 1993, 2). This approach involves looking at how people tell their lives as well as what they say and sees narratives as involving processes of identity construction, being context specific and depending on an audience for interpretation. Holstein and Gubrium (2000, 105) argue that narratives of identity are moving away from *'traditional queries into who am I to progressively become questions of when, where, and how am I'.* A narrative approach helped to situate learning another language within the context of people's lives and involved asking for specific examples of experiences of the use of language or attempts to engage with other language speakers. The approach used proved useful in addressing issues of choice and constraint in ways that enabled these to change according to the context being discussed.

THE SAMPLE AND DATA ANALYSIS

A theoretical sampling strategy was used (Mason, 1996). The aim was to include people who identified themselves as Polish in any way. The sample included men and women of different ages, who came at different

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

periods for different reasons, some alone and some with family or friends. Some were born here. A few were active in Polish organisations whilst others avoided them. They also had a range of religious beliefs. The desired make-up of interviews was achieved by using snowball sampling, that is, asking participants if they know of anyone who would talk to us, for example, who did not attend Polish centres and by selecting people from venues where a lot of Polish speakers were know to visit such as Polish evenings run by the recent arrivals in venues. Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Central Lancashire's Faculty Ethics Committee.

Narrative interviews were undertaken with 30 people over 18 living in the districts that surround a large city in the North West of England. The city itself has the largest number of people from Poland but the districts around it have also seen numbers of Polish people arriving since 2004. All participants were asked about how Polish and English languages (and others if relevant) were used in their everyday lives. For people whose first language was not English, the interviews focused on the process of learning English and the changes they saw in themselves and their lives. For bilingual Polish speakers the interviews covered the place of different languages in their lives and the effects on their identity. Each interview was transcribed/translated.[3] Decisions about how much of the detail about translation choices to leave in had to be made as well as how much to 'tidy up' interviews to conform to English grammar structure. This involved moving away from representing participants as if they had described themselves in the same way as English speakers whilst guarding against the danger of presenting them as barely literate foreigners (Temple, 2004). In other words, we negotiated a balance between 'tidying up' narratives in Polish to confirm to English language standards in order to present coherent accounts with the desire to indicate that the participants did not present their narratives using English conventions (Venuti, 1998). The various versions of the translations and a trail of decisions made about word choice have been kept. In effect we produced translation histories for the research and a 'linguistic ethnography' (UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum, 2004).

The data analysis was informed by existing literature on identity and language across disciplines including by writers mentioned above and others, particularly Spivak (1992), Venuti (1998) and Blommaert (2001). The data was analysed using a method successfully applied in previous research (Alexander et al., 2004). General topics for inclusion in a grid for each participant were agreed by the Principle Investigator and the Research Assistant after reading through the interviews. The grids provided cross sample comparisons of participants' views on themes within language and identity whilst allowing for

conceptual and methodological issues of interpretation, translation, representation and narrative structuring to be noted in a way that maintained the integrity of individual cases in line with a narrative approach.

Sixteen men and 14 women were interviewed. Four participants had come to England as refugees after the Second World War, one had come to marry in the 1960s, two were students, 14 had come to find work either before or since Poland joined the EU and nine had been born in England, one of whom was third generation. Many of the recent migrants were highly mobile. They were chosen from all the districts around the city. Only one participant born in Poland definitely wanted to stay in England and three hadn't decided whether to stay or not. Three intended to stay for a long time and considered living in England permanently and one was unsure. All the other migrants intended to return to Poland. The older participants had always wanted to return to Poland.

All but two participants from the second and third generation described themselves as professionals. It was more problematic to classify people who came over from Poland. Eleven out of 16 new arrivals were university graduates, all but four were now working in manual jobs. None of the three participants who were manual workers in Poland worked in the same trade in England.

LANGUAGE, INTEGRATION AND INEQUALITY

Ahmed (2008) has documented the structural barriers that exist in accessing English language classes. These are well documented. All participants expressed willingness to learn/continue learning English but the majority found it difficult. The most common reasons for not attending language courses were lack of time due to work reasons such as shift patterns or long hours or family commitments such as childcare. The cost and lack of classes were also mentioned. Some migrants complained about the lack of opportunities to practice English on an everyday level. Older participants thought their age had an impact on their language ability. When they were younger they had spoken better English. The Goldsmith Report (2008) suggests that:

- ESOL needs to be delivered in a variety of venues;
- ESOL needs to be delivered at times convenient to the learner;
- ESOL should be less classroom based and recognises the role of 'the lived environment' (2008, 122) through mentoring and language supporters;
- ESOL needs to be affordable;
- Language loans should be considered.

Participants recognised, in particular, the importance of 'the lived environment', that is, the need to learn a language in a way that was relevant to their lives and the

---

3   I use the term translation when discussing changing words from one language to another and transcription to indicate that the language used in the interview was English.

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

need for classes to be easily available and not expensive.

The research also picked up on the effects of 'cultural and patriarchal structures' (Ahmed, 2008, 15) that meant that within households men took up limited places at classes as it was considered more important for men to get better jobs than for women who had the responsibility of looking after children and passing on Polish traditions that re-enforced those values seen as important to Polish life.

However, some participants suggested that whatever their level of English proficiency they felt they would never be accepted as equals in the UK. Some of these comments were related to the kinds of people they could meet (see below in relation to class and language use). Other comments indicate that the racism Polish people experienced affected their decision about the extent they felt they could or wanted to integrate. Some of the participants described incidents ranging form verbal abuse to broken windows and some mentioned discrimination at work. As Cheong et al. (2007) and others have argued the focus on research with migrants on their social capital neglects such issues of inequality between people.

Pollard et al. have talked of 'turnstiles' in relation to migration post EU enlargement (Pollard et al., 2008). Throughout the research it was evident that most recent migrants had not decided about whether to stay permanently in the UK or not. This affected the extent to which they wanted to invest time, effort and money in learning English. It is much easier than for previous generations to travel regularly between Poland and England. Recent migrants can be seen as 'transnational' (Cronin, 2006, 61) in the sense of *'being attached to or experiencing two places simultaneously'*, rather than being linked solely to England or Poland. Cronin (2006, 61) argues that transnationalism *'strengthens the bonds of association and familiarity with the source language and, arguably, makes migrants even more aware of the fact that they are, in a sense, living in translation'*. This suggests limits to the effects of government policies that assume that migrants will choose one country as the basis of their identity.

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

I do not focus here in detail on the findings on language and identity as I have discussed this issue elsewhere (Temple, 2008a; 2008b). I give a brief description of participants' views as this is necessary to contextualise the findings on integration and language which are the main focus of this article.

Seventeen participants described their ethnicity as unequivocally Polish. These included including twelve migrants and one person born in England. All but two participants born in Poland, one migrant and one student, described themselves as Polish. For others ethnicity was more problematic and they focused on how the new arrivals from Poland since 2004 has led them to think again about what being Polish meant to them. Seven out of nine people born in the UK spoke of the effects of recent migration on their ethnicity. They spoke of the differences between the recent migrants and the long established Polish diaspora. Comments such as *'we're of the same community but we're not... I don't feel a hundred per cent English and I don't feel a hundred per cent Polish'* (transcribed by B. Temple) exemplified these feelings.

Twenty out of the thirty participants specifically referred to language when discussing being Polish and others mentioned it in relation to integration. Participants recognised the significance of language to ethnic identity and used the Polish language to identify people who were 'like us' in terms of likely values (see below):

For all participants changing between languages involved, in Pavlenko's (2005; 2006) terms 'self translation'. For example, Magda Poznanska noted:

...there are some things you can't say. ...telling someone that you like or love them in English or any other language is unimaginable to me. So I think that I will continue to be a Polish woman (translated by B. Temple).

Language was seen here in terms of Pavlenko's possibly different emotional repertoires and was used to make judgements about speakers' values. These informed decisions about integration (see below). Participants discussed stronger family bonds in Polish culture, a stronger work ethic, better discipline for children and more respect for adults. They expressed concerns about 'anti-social' behaviour when discussing other language speakers. For some, participation in social life with people from other communities was problematic as they ascribed differences in lifestyles and values to them. Belonging also had an emotional aspect and they spoke of bonds with family and friends in Poland and of feeling more comfortable with Polish people, loving Poland and 'feeling' Polish. These narratives were also class narratives and some participants discussed the kinds of people they were prepared to integrate with. Krzystof Biel came to England about two years ago and lived with his girlfriend. He wanted to return to Poland in a few years and stated that in English culture *'there is all the time shagging (English word used here), boozing, drinking and parties'* (translated by K. Koterba). He felt that he wasn't safe in this country. Bartosz Bigaj, also a recent migrant, said: *'They are wild and spoiled whereas Polish people are more disciplined'* (translated by K. Koterba). However, some participants preferred 'English' values, defined in terms of multiculturalism, providing financially for vulnerable people and career opportunities. They felt that the English government looked after older people and those who could not look after themselves. This was not the case in Poland. Moreover, for migrants career

projection was seen to result from hard work rather than nepotism.

Polish language was not just used to differentiate between Polish speakers and people who did not speak Polish. It was also used to differentiate between Polish speakers, usually in terms of migration period and 'acceptable' reasons for coming to England. The following comment suggests that the way Polish was being spoken was used to distinguish between the older diaspora and more recent migrants. A man born in England who described himself as Polish and English remarked on how language was being used to distinguish between Polish people: *'They [other Polish people] can analyse who's being polite, what background they come from'* (transcribed by B. Temple*)*. They questioned the assumption of a homogeneous language group.

Government policies around integration have recognised the significance of speaking English for British identity and being one of 'us' with common values and a shared language (see above). The results from the research suggest that the links between integration, language and values are complex, changing and significantly raise questions about polices that link language use to integration in any simplistic way. I now go on to discuss some of the findings in relation to language and integration.

LANGUAGE, INTEGRATION AND VALUES

In this section I focus on the implications of participants' judgements about people based on the language used for policies of integration developed around the assumptions of shared values.

Eight participants had come to England without knowing any English (at different times: two after the Second World War, two in the 60s and four recently since Poland joined the EU in 2004). Eleven participants who had come from Poland decided to learn or continue to learn English in the UK in different education settings. Four respondents have never learnt English. Of those born in Poland only two considered themselves as bilingual. One third of participants born in Poland described their English as good/communicative and one third as poor or very poor.

Participants recognised the need to integrate. What they meant by integration varied. Some felt that they had integrated to some extent by just living in England, usually in the area of employment. Although the English language was discussed in instrumental terms, it was also seen as part of belonging and participating: *'anyone who lives in the country should live their language'* (second generation Polish woman, transcribed by K. Koterba). Some recent migrants were content with a level of English that was enough for getting by as a result of their views of 'English' values. For example, Krzystof Biel stated he didn't make any effort to integrate because of his views about English values (see above). He felt that even at work

he talked about 'trifles' because he was not interested in football and TV. Benjamin Kwasniak suggested that he would integrate only with people of high culture'.

Some participants felt that their level of language proficiency was not enough to socialise in any meaningful way with people they respected: *'But when we talk to English people we talk about, excuse my language, about not important things (o dupie Maryny literally Mary's ass, slang word for unimportant things'* (translated by K. Koterba). Learning the language helped people to speak about everyday issues but for these participants their level was not enough to bridge the gap.

These findings suggest that decisions about learning and speaking English were made in relation to factors other than instrumental concerns about the need to communicate. They point to the significance for participants of Polish in identification of self and other and suggest that this affected the kinds of social networks people were part of.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The influences I have discussed above on integration suggest that the role of language is complex and influenced by a combination of factors, including the significance of a language for a person's identity, their views about other language speakers, experiences at home and at work with people from other communities, views about their likely future home and levels of English language proficiency when they arrive in a country. The availability and cost of suitable language classes are not the only concerns. This wider range of factors all influenced the choices they made about how they lived in England and affected the kinds of networks they formed.

The social networks formed can be broken down into four broad groups: Polish networks, limited choice networks, divided networks and mixed networks. These groups are not intended to be definitive and are only used to indicate the complexity of influences at work when discussing who migrants mix with.

Polish networks: There has been previous research showing how some Polish people have chosen to live in ways that enable them to mix as much as possible with other Polish speakers (Alexander et al., 2004). Contact with English speakers would be minimal and usually at work. The geographical location in which the research was carried out has had an established Polish community since the Second World War. It is therefore possible to choose to have a Polish dentist, doctor or plumber and to live completely in a Polish speaking environment. Since 2004 this is increasingly possible. Most of the participants in this group were recent migrants who recognised that their poor level of English affected the kinds of social networks they had. The older people in this group also felt that their age mitigated against learning English. However, other factors such as their uncertainty about where their future lay and their views

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

about people from other communities affected their desire to mix with other language speakers and to learn English. Aleksandra Burzanska lived with her husband and children and planned to return to Poland. She said: *'the neighbours know that I can't speak (any English) and they are not trying any proper conversation with me because they know we wouldn't be able to communicate'* (translated by K. Koterba). All but one also described their English proficiency as poor or very poor, even those who had been here since the War. This one migrant felt that his English was 'good', he had no intention of staying in England and described English people as living in pubs and shagging (see above). He did not want his children to grow up here and said *'I definitely don't make an effort to go into this society'* (translated by K. Koterba). This group contained the participants who made the most negative comments about 'English' values and everyone in this group had no problem in defining their ethnicity as Polish.

Limited choice networks: These participants had regular contacts with English people, mostly through work. Although they preferred to socialise with Polish people they also occasionally met with English people. Some recent Polish arrivals mentioned that they found it difficult to become friends with English people. Benjamin Kwasniak said *'they seemed not really looking for any contacts with new immigrants'* (translated by K. Koterba). The four professionals from Poland fell into this group. Although their English was described as 'good' or 'very good' they did not want to spend their time with English people. This was a choice that resulted from their views about the differences between Polish and English values and a belief that the kinds of English people they could socialise with only wanted limited contact with them. They had also not made up their minds about whether to stay in England or not. There was no point in putting too many roots down if they were to move on.

Divided networks: Some people spoke about how different Polish and English people were and kept their Polish and English friends separate. They valued the friendship of people from both groups. Second and third generation participants born in the UK mixed with Polish and English people. They tended to work with English people and they socialised with both Polish and English. Ewelina Kowalska, who was born in England said: *'Always a mixture but I always keep them separate because they don't mix.... I don't feel very comfortable if I'm mixing two different er... groups of people and it's not just the language. It's the whole background. It's the thing of conversation, everything. And for me it's Polish English very separate'* (transcribed by K. Koterba).

Mixed networks: A few participants valued mixing with people from a range of communities and made an effort to ensure that social gatherings included this mix. For example, Marta Sacha said that when she went out with Polish friends she tried to take English friends with her.

When looking at the social networks of Polish people Ryan et al. (2008) note that migrants' ability to mobilise social capital and engage with people from different communities may depend upon their cultural capital, which includes language and educational qualifications. Our research suggests that some participants see the cultural capital that they have at their disposal as never being enough fro them to be accepted. As Cheong et al. (2007) have pointed out, focusing on social capital can mask structural inequalities. The findings from the research suggest the continued significance of factors such as class on access to networks and employment.

DISCUSSION

The research described in this article suggests that the influences on integration are varied and that the role of language within integration is more complex than suggested by current government policies. Other factors found to be significant in the decision about language use in the research include: recognition of the role of language in identity formation, the context of migration flows, views about other language speakers and experiences of racism.

The research described in this article suggests that participants recognised the language they used as who they were and that changing it was significant in who they would become. This aspect of language has been identified in the literature on bilingualism and translation (see above) but the implications have rarely been acknowledged when considering why people choose to learn or not to learn a language. Polish language is an important aspect of living as Polish people. It can be used to identify those who are likely to be 'like us' in terms of values as well as those who are not. The research findings suggest that decisions about language use and integration are affected by how participants view other language speakers. For those who see English values in negative terms speaking English may not be valued. Moreover, experiences in England of racism may lead to decisions not to integrate. Views of other languages speakers influence the kinds of networks formed. These are not a result of language ability alone.

Research participants also pointed out that until they had decided about their future investing in learning English at a level sufficient for meaningful integration did not make sense. Clarke et al. (2007, 96) argue that people may be less willing to spend time and effort developing links with 'a temporary community'. The majority of participants in our research had made no firm decisions about whether to stay permanently in England or to return to Poland. Since Poland has joined the EU it is easer to travel between the two without the need to make a decision about the longer term. Many who came after the Second World War held onto a belief that they would return, even with the passing of time and development of ties in England. Researchers have described

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

this as 'the myth of return' (Anwar, 1979; Cohen, Gold, 1997). The myth has been shown as one way of forging a distinct identity that serves both individuals and groups and involves preserving language, cultural symbols, shared biographies and 'us' versus 'them' stereotypes (Cohen, Gold, 1997). More recent migrants can move between countries in the EU and can hold on to the possibility of return as travel between Poland and England is easier and they may be able to keep a foothold in both countries. The myth may have been modified in the sense that they do not necessarily see being Polish in the same way as the older diaspora but it still functions to provide a familiar arena for living in ways that they see as Polish.

Alexander (2007, 120) argues that:

At the heart of the community cohesion project, of course, lies the idea(l) of community, in which Blunkett's shared norms and values provide an overarching identity lived through at the level of the local and the national (but not the global – diasporic communities are significantly absent).

People who form these diasporic communities increasingly move between countries, live in more than one country and engage with established communities in varying degrees and in different ways. Our research involved a small sample of Polish speakers and possibly attracted those most likely to want to hold onto their Polish language and identity. However, it does provide some evidence both of the need to look at the effects of the changing nature of migration on policies aimed at encouraging integration and on the kinds of social networks that people form. Fluency in English did not necessarily result in the desire to form social networks with people from other language communities. Indeed this research suggests that assumptions about people from other communities may lead to restrictions in interactions.

JEZIK, IDENTITETA IN INTEGRACIJA: UGOTOVITVE RAZISKAV O POLJSKIH SKUPNOSTIH V SEVEROZAHODNI ANGLIJI

Bogusia TEMPLE
Univerza v osrednjem Lancashiru, Fakulteta za socialno delo, GB-PR1 2HE Preston, Harrington 301
e-mail: btemple1@uclan.ac.uk

POVZETEK

Prispevek razpravlja o ugotovitvah raziskovalnega projekta, ki je potekal v mestu na severozahodu Anglije in se je osredotočal na jezik in identiteto med govorci poljskega jezika. Nedavna vladna politika v Veliki Britaniji povezuje uporabo angleškega jezika z državljanstvom, narodnostjo in pripadnostjo, pri tem pa zanemarja napetosti med to povezavo in raznolikostjo skupnosti živečih v Veliki Britaniji. Poleg tega raziskave kažejo, da se, čeprav vselej priznavajo vrednost učenja angleščine, pri migrantih pojavljajo dvomi tako glede razpoložljivosti kot glede cene trenutnega programa tečajev angleškega jezika in njegove primernosti v obstoječi obliki. Raziskovalci iz različnih področij so tudi izrazili dvom nad poenostavljenim pogledom na učenje jezika, ki ga sedanja vladna politika sovseblja na področju družbene kohezije in integracije. Jezik je več kot sporazumevalno sredstvo. Predstavlja namreč tudi del procesa opredelitve samega sebe in okolice. Še več, o statusu različnih jezikov znotraj Velike Britanije je potrebno razpravljati v smislu moči, kot tudi v smislu praktične uporabnosti.

Raziskava je vključevala pripovedne intervjuje s poljsko govorečimi prebivalci o njihovih pogledih na življenje Poljakov v Angliji. Uporabljeni pripovedni pristop se je osredotočal tako na vsebino tega, kar so udeleženci raziskave povedali o vprašanju integracije in kohezije, kot tudi na sam način, kako so svoje mnenje izrazili. To je omogočilo, da je analiza upoštevala kontekst, v katerem so bili komentarji udeležencev zbrani, pri tem uporabljen jezik in vprašanje, kako predstaviti udeležence v jeziku, ki ga morda pri podajanju svojih mnenj niso uporabili. Intervjuji so bili prevedeni in transkribirani.

Rezultati kažejo, da izpraševanci čutijo, da se vključujejo v angleško družbo, pri čemer pa se pomen tega giblje med kratkimi vsakodnevnimi srečanji z angleško govorečimi prebivalci do trajnih poskusov druženja z ljudmi iz različnih okolij. Opaziti je, da jezikovna spretnost v angleškem jeziku sicer vpliva na integracijo, je pa ne določa. Drugi dejavniki, ki vplivajo na željo ali sposobnost izpraševancev za vključitev, so obseg in narava čustvene navezanosti na poljski jezik in na Poljsko, spol, razpoložljivost in cena tečajev angleškega jezika, mnenja o drugih govorcih, ustvarjena na podlagi vsakodnevnega srečevanja, in negotovost o tem, ali je njihova prihodnost na Poljskem ali v Angliji. Stališča o ljudeh iz drugih manjšinskih etničnih skupnosti vplivajo na to, s kom so se udeleženci pripravljeni družiti in

ANNALES · Ser. hist. sociol. · 21 · 2011 · 2

Bogusia TEMPLE: LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND INTEGRATION: FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH WITH POLISH COMMUNITIES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND, 307–316

koliko so si pripravljeni prizadevati za komuniciranje z ljudmi, ki govorijo druge jezike. Nekateri negativni pogledi na ljudi iz drugih skupnosti so posledica izkušenj z rasizmom kot tudi lastnih rasističnih predsodkov. Nekateri migranti so na primer namignili, da ne glede na to, kako dobro obvladajo angleški jezik, se nikoli ne bi mogli družiti z ljudmi, ki imajo različne vrednote od njih. Ugotovitve kažejo, da udeleženci uporabljajo jezik za presojanje o vrednotah ljudi, kar potem vpliva na njihove odločitve o tem, s kom se družijo in kje živijo.

Poleg tega so dobljeni rezultati pokazali, da zaradi spreminjajoče se narave postevropskih migracijskih tokov nekateri priseljenci morda ne želijo ali ne čutijo potrebe po odločanju o integraciji v Veliki Britaniji. Ti tokovi so namreč bolj kakor zgolj enosmernemu gibanju podobni vrtljivim vratom; podvrženi so vplivom gospodarskih in socialnih razmer na Poljskem in drugod po EU in niso odraz dokončne odločitve posameznikov o tem, kje se bodo ustalili.

Ključne besede: integracija, poljske migracije, identiteta, jezik

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahmed, N. (2008): Language, Gender and Citizenship: Obstacles in the Path to learning English for Bangladeshi Women in London's East End. In: Sociological Research Online. Http://www.socresonline.org.uk/13/5/12.html (06. 11. 2009).

Alexander, C., Edwards, R., Temple, B., Kanani, U., Zhuang, L., Miah, M., Sam, A. (2004): Access to Services with Interpreters: User Views. York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Alexander, C., Edwards, R., Temple, B. (2007): Contesting Cultural Communities: Language, Ethnicity and Citizenship in Britain'. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 33, 5. Abingdon, 783–800.

Anwar, M. (1979): The Myth of Return: Pakistanis in Britain. London, Heinemann.

Blommaert, J. (2001): Investigating narrative inequality: African asylum seekers' stories in Belgium. Discourse & Society, 12. London, 413–449.

Bourdieu, P. (1992): Language and Symbolic Power. Edited and Introduced by John B. Thompson. Cambridge, Cambridge Polity Press.

Cheong, P., Edwards, R., Goulbourne, H., Solomos, J. (2007): Immigration, social cohesion and social capital: A critical review. Critical Social Policy, 27, 4. London, 24–49.

Clarke, S., Gilmour, R., Garner, S. (2007): Home, Identity and Community Cohesion. In: Wetherell, M., Lafleche M., Berkeley, R. (eds): Identity, Ethnic Diversity and Community Cohesion. London, Sage Publication, 87–101.

Cohen, R., Gold, G. (1997): Constructing ethnicity: Myth of Return and Modes of Exclusion among Israelis in Toronto. International Migration, 35, 3. Oxford, 373–394.

Cronin, M. (2006): Translation and Identity. London, Routledge.

Crick, B. (2003): Life in the United Kingdom. London, HMSO.

Goldsmith Report (2008): Citizenship: Our Common Bond. Http://www.justice.gov.uk/citzenship-report-full.pdf (04. 12. 2009).

Holstein, J., Gubrium, J. (2000): The Self We Live By: Narrative Identity in a Postmodern World. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Mason, J. (1996): Qualitative researching. London, Sage Publications.

Milani, T. (2008): Language testing and citizenship: A language ideological debate in Sweden. Language in Society, 37. London – New York, 27–59.

Mir, G., Nocon, A., Ahmad, W., Jones, L. (2001): Learning difficulties and ethnicity. Department of Health. Http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/0401/46/99/04014699.pdf (20. 11. 2009).

Pavlenko, A. (2005): Emotions and multilingualism. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Pavlenko, A. (ed.) (2006): Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression and Representation. Clevedon, MultiLingual Matters Ltd.

Pollard, N., Latorre, M. and Sriskandarajah, D. (2008): Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU enlargement migration flows to (and from) the UK. London, Institute for Public Policy Research.

Riessman, C. (1993): Narrative analysis. London, Sage Publications.

Ryan, L., Sales, R., Tilki, M., Siara, S. (2008): Social Networks, Social Support and Social Capital: The Experiences of Recent Polish Migrants in London. Sociology, 42, 4. London, 672–690.

Simpson, J. (2007): How English lessons got lost in translation. Guardian, 19. 6. 2007. Http://education.guardian.co.uk/egweekly/story/0,,2105621,00.html (15. 9. 2009).

Spencer, S., Ruhs, M., Anderson, B., Rogaly, B. (2007): Migrants' lives beyond the workplace: The experiences of Central and East Europeans in the UK. York, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Spivak, G. (1992): The Politics of Translation. In: Barrett, M., Philips, A. (eds.): Destabilizing theory: Contemporary feminist debates. Cambridge, Polity Press, 177–200.

Temple, B. (2005): Nice and tidy: translation and representation. Sociological Research Online. Http://www. socresonline.org.uk/10/2/temple.html (20. 11. 2009).

Temple, B. (2008a): Investigating language and identity in cross-language narratives. Migrations & Identities, 1, 1. London, 1–18.

Temple, B. (2008b): Narrative Analysis of Written Texts: Reflexivity in Cross Language Research. Special Issue on Narrative Analysis. Qualitative Research, 8, 3. London, 355–365.

Temple, B., Young, A., Bolton, J. (2008): 'They know where to find us...' Service Providers' Views on Early Support and Minority Ethnic Communities. Disability & Society, 23, 3. Basingstoke, 223–234.

UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum (2004): UK linguistic ethnography: a discussion paper. http://www.lancs.ac. uk/fss/organisations/lingethn/documents/discussion_paper_jan_05.pdf (02. 02. 2007).

Venuti, L. (1998): The scandals of translation: Towards an ethics of difference. London, Routledge.

Wetherell, M. (2007): Introduction: Community Cohesion and Identity Dynamics: Dilemmas and Challenges. In: Wetherell, M., Lafleche, M., Berkeley, R. (eds.): Identity, Ethnic Diversity and Community Cohesion. London, Sage Publications, 1–14.