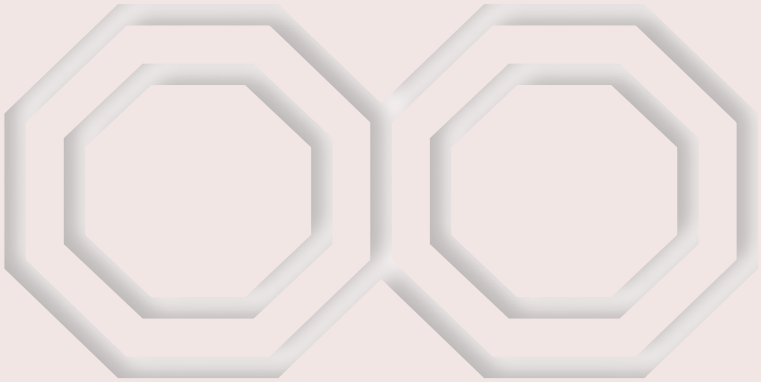
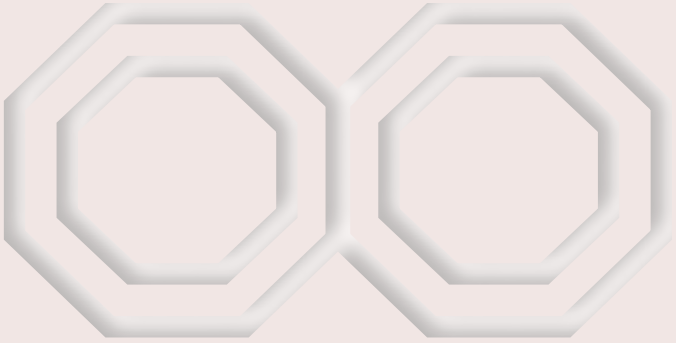
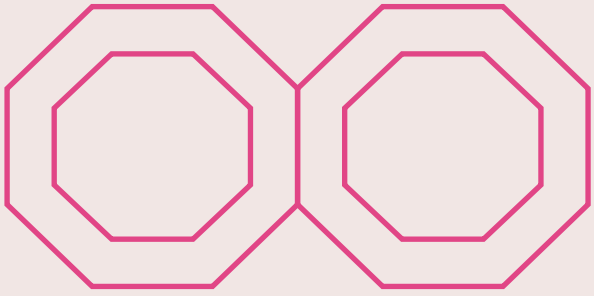


Teaching and Learning in Postmodernity

The Professional Role of ESP Teachers

Agata Radecka





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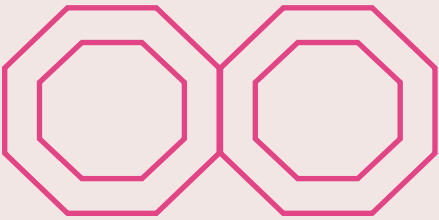
In a globalising world, knowledge of language for specific purposes (LSP) opens up worldwide career opportunities. Do those teaching LSP at Polish universities have a status relevant to the importance of what they teach? How do they see their role and what shapes it? The author of *Teaching and Learning in Postmodernity* is interested both in how cultural shifts affect the teaching-to-learn paradigm and how teachers of English for specific purposes (ESP) respond to such challenges. The research has identified certain new, disturbing issues.



Teaching and Learning in Postmodernity

The Professional Role of ESP Teachers

Agata Radecka

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Publications

Teaching and Learning in Postmodernity. The Professional Role of ESP Teachers

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Introduction

Foreign language skills are a core competence in the 21st century. The constant presence of languages in the social space and the ubiquity of their teaching in primary and secondary schools have influenced the development of EU recommendations indicating that one should speak not one, but two foreign languages and — at the level of higher education — master elements of language for specific purposes (Kutyłowska, 2013). These recommendations have also become normative, as an increasing number of faculties have a provision in their educational standards that graduates should speak a foreign language at proficiency level B2, as per the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and be able to use specialist vocabulary from their field of study (Kutyłowska, 2013). Moreover, for several years now, there has been a shift in language teaching at universities — the emphasis has moved from a general foreign language (GFL) to a foreign language for specific purposes (LSP).

This is now discussed quite extensively in the linguistic and glottodidactic literature. The studies mainly point to the distinctiveness of general and specific-purpose languages and the impact of this on methodological and educational solutions (see Dudley-Evans, St John, 1998; Lesiak-Bielawska, 2018; Crystal, 2005; Mitera, 2017; Siek-Piskozub, 2018). However, there is a noticeable dearth of research in the literature, particularly qualitative and critical research on teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes facing the new tasks and challenges of teaching such a language in a university setting. They have to face the new reality as "changes in customs, culture are not without influence on modern man, his views, attitudes, judgements, choices. Successive generations are constantly transforming; therefore, the social role of the teacher is also changing" (Kutrowska, 2008, p. 51).

Considering both the postmodern context and the transformations within the language taught (which cause far-reaching changes in practically every pedeutological aspect), I am interested in **how university teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes define the changes that have occurred, and how they experience and respond to them as they shape their professional role**. In the following chapters of the book, I examine this issue from a methodological and theoretical level, and give voice to the research participants who presented their own experiences in this area[1].

1 Throughout the original Polish version of the work, I consistently and consciously use masculine and feminine forms to refer to individuals associated with education. This seems necessary to me because, although teaching is dominated by women, men are also present in the profession.

The book consists of five chapters: a methodological chapter, two theoretical chapters and two research chapters, as well as an introduction, a conclusion and a *post scriptum* chapter.

In the first chapter, I present the methodological basis of the research project. These topics are deliberately included at the beginning of the dissertation, as they cover ontological and epistemological assumptions that are central to the monograph as a whole. Indeed, it is at the start of the research, when its outline is created, that the issues pertinent to the entire project are decided: the research problem, how to research it, what questions to ask and what answers are possible. I focus on the interpretivist paradigm, and present the problems and the questions that allowed the issues of interest to be explored. The research method used was the narrative interview, as defined in the first chapter of the monograph.

The second chapter presents the cultural and social context of the current times in which the research participants operate. This is a critical element that cannot be overlooked in studies relating to teachers. The postmodern dimension of the world is shown through the lens of education, considering specific entanglements and dependencies. In this chapter, I also focus on the human being who, in response to postmodern living conditions, adopts a variety of attitudes, which are sometimes contradictory and certainly require frequent redefinition or updating. In fact, this modification of attitudes becomes a mandatory task embedded in one's biography. The chapter concludes with reflections on the discursiveness of pedagogy and, even more broadly, of all educational research. It highlights the necessity of using narrative research and a qualitative paradigm, insofar as the aim of the given activity is to try to show the intersubjective world of work of those involved in education.

Chapter III is devoted to the professional and social roles of teachers. The considerations begin by presenting the various approaches to roles in pedeutological studies. These approaches are also presented due to the desire to show different epistemological justifications for knowledge. Looking at the teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes through a glottodidactic lens is also an important part of this chapter. The different nature of specific-purpose foreign language teaching has entailed the creation of numerous studies on the distinctive features of a language for specific purposes, its didactics and the requirements for the teachers. However, there is still an apparent gap in the description of the experiences of those involved in teaching LSP, especially from a pedagogical standpoint. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the understanding of the professional role prescription as an

ambiguous, discursive, multidimensional and pulsating category. This term recurs in the subsequent chapters and is detailed in them.

Chapters four and five constitute the research section. Chapter four is devoted to the presentation and analysis of the narrative interviews. In it, I describe and interpret the study participants' knowledge of their surrounding world and of themselves through the holistic model of learning in working life by Knud Illeris at al. (2011) and using a proprietary view of professional role prescription. This made it possible to obtain answers to all the research questions posed in the methodological section. Chapter five contains a critical analysis, the need for which became apparent during the development and interpretation of the research material — it revealed the phenomenon of oppression experienced by the participants in the study. I used the concept of oppression as defined by Iris Marion Young (1992) because of the wide possibilities of its interpretation.

The *post scriptum* chapter presents the autoethnographic theme, which is an important element of my research, but only in an individual dimension, not related to the research as such.

I hope that my research will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the specific work of teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes, fill a research gap with an interpretative orientation, and contribute to a greater awareness of the presence of such teachers at universities.

Acknowledgements

The research and the book would not have come into being if it were not for the openness, honesty, and courage in sharing their experience by my Narrators, for which I thank them immensely.

I would like to thank Professor Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz, from the bottom of my heart (and mind), for her immense support at every stage of the research work, the true master-student relationship, and taking me under her researcher's wings. I also owe my thanks to the reviewers of my doctoral thesis — Professor Inetta Nowosad and Professor Bogusława Dorota Gołębniak, as well as the reviewers of this monograph, Professor Dorota Werbińska and Professor Joanna Madalińska-Michalak — for their insightful analysis and all the hints that made it possible to refine the dissertation. I thank the entire team at FRSE Publishing House for their extremely warm and creative cooperation.

Lastly, I would like to thank my nearest and dearest — my mum Agnieszka for all she does, for bringing me up and believing in my abilities, my husband Piotr for his love, support and understanding, and my children Kacper and Marcel for being the best sons in the world.

1

On the Road to Methodological Cognition – Towards Knowledge

When we set out on a journey, we usually determine where we want to go. Thanks to an efficient global navigation satellite system (GPS), popular mobile applications offer the shortest or fastest route, and when a traffic jam forms somewhere down the road, they suggest changes and guide us safely to our destination. Marc Auge (2010) would call such a route a 'non-place', that is, a space that is not itself a place: "'Non-places' are created both by the solutions necessary for the accelerated movement of people and goods (expressways, grade-separated junctions, airports) and by the means of transport itself, the large shopping centres" (Auge, 2010, p. 20). The road is thus merely a transitional state between point A and point B, with little relevance to either point A or B.

Yet, the road towards scientific cognition is governed by its own rules. When we embark on it, it is necessary to define the research question, to pose the questions we want to learn the answer to, to decide what we want to find out about the world, about Others and about ourselves. In the case of a doctoral dissertation, one sets out on the journey with their supervisor, who, as a passenger, accompanies them on the journey, and who sometimes, like a co-driver, helps one to navigate the paths, road junctions and road signs encountered. In further research, we already follow our own paths. This path towards scientific cognition, towards knowledge, can no longer be called a 'non-place', although it would seem that its immaterial character would be more in favour of such a designation than in the previously mentioned case. However, the path towards scientific knowledge is just as important as reaching the destination – the stage of research analysis and the monograph's completion. In this case, the path towards knowledge, leading through the theoretical chapters of the thesis and the research carried out, is just as vital as the final conclusions of the dissertation. Unlike the 'non-place road', the road to scientific knowledge is a record of the history of building the scientific Self, finding one's own justifications in the world of science, creating one's *creed*.

Thus, I construe the research methodology as a roadmap towards scientific cognition, which indicates both the directions of theoretical explorations aimed at attempting to understand and grasp reality, as well as the principles of moving through the research material and choosing some, and not other, categories of interpretation and understanding of the world and the actions of the research participants. This understanding is consistent with a broad view of methodology, which views it "as a discipline that concerns the place of science in the system of human knowledge, the results of scientific cognition and the research processes by which these results are obtained" (Urbaniak-Zając and Piekarski, 2022, p. 12). The aforementioned elements must be linked by a coherent vision. "The two-way link between the research method and the set of assumptions that characterise the reality under investigation means that the scope of methodological

considerations absolutely extends beyond the technical dimension of research organisation. [...] Thus, it is clear that the specificity of qualitative research cannot be limited to the method of data collection and the methodology of data development" (Urbaniak-Zając and Kos, 2013, p. 47).

Ontological-Epistemological Assumptions of Research: The Interpretivist Paradigm

As noted above, one of the first tasks in scientific exploration is to establish the point of departure. This is done in Chapter 2, which outlines the complex cultural and social context in which we currently operate. The elements of late modernity and contemporaneity (a new form of trust, new forms of risk, opacity and globalisation), as present in it and described by such scholars as Piotr Sztompka (2010, pp. 576–578), cause sociologists to define 21st-century reality in different ways, emphasising selected elements and thus giving them different meanings. However, the aspect I would like to highlight concerns not the names themselves, but precisely their multiplicity. This indicates that reality is diverse, heterogeneous, difficult to grasp and changeable, and that research aimed at gaining insight into this reality cannot ignore this fact.

At the core of any research lies some ontological truth about the world, society, the individual and the relationships between them and the possibilities of learning about them. When deciding on research, whether in a normative or interpretivist paradigm, it is vital to remember that "the methodological dimension is one of several dimensions and is secondary to the ontological dimension, i.e. the assumptions made that define the way society exists" (Urbaniak-Zając and Kos, 2013, p. 44). The world we now live in is no longer an ordered set with clearly defined rules for the actions and behaviour of those who are part of it – if it ever was one. I recognised, therefore, that the "[t]raditional order of hierarchies, authorities, social roles, statuses and guarantees is no longer sufficient in dealing with the problems faced by modern man. [...] A new view of man's management of his life, of education, of the social sciences, as well as of politics as a mode of governance, is needed" (Dróżka, 2017, p. 116). Thus, in my research, I adopt a narrative methodological perspective that fits in with:

– qualitative research – which "is a way of learning about educational reality in a specific context [...] [and] enables the understanding of many facts that seem incomprehensible on the surface. This understanding comes with cognition, with experience of the context in which they occurred" (Rubacha, 2003a, p. 35),

– the interpretivist paradigm – which "seeks to understand how individuals gain consciousness within social structures. It thus focuses on understanding subjective human experience by testing knowledge in the practice of specific communities" (Rubacha, 2003b, p. 62).

This narrative methodological outlook that I adopted makes it possible to navigate open systems, construed as "systems that can be continuously modified without *a priori* assumptions about them, thus ranking among theories that break with normativity and are closer to real life" (Nowak, 2010, p. 18).

My research does not focus on facts, comparative analysis or verification of theories against the research material, which is appropriate to the positivist paradigm (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2002, pp. 18–19). I focus on exploring the reality of my interlocutors in their subjective thinking about it; I try to reach knowledge understood as "a form of interpretation, made within traditions and specific social conditions" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2002, p. 20), in line with understanding sociology, treated as a stream of research.

Qualitative research emphasises its heterogeneity, often allowing for different interpretations of the material. Malewski (2017) suggests distinguishing four stages of qualitative research: (1) data collection, (2) insights, (3) results interpretation, and (4) compiling the research report. Notably, these stages are linked by such processes as 1) reflexivity, 2) theorising and 3) narrativity. This seems to be a meta-view of the practical conduct of research in which control is given over to the researchers themselves, guaranteeing them a great deal of freedom within the various processes and expecting an "attitude of openness" (Nowak, 2010).

The aforementioned reflexivity, which should characterise every stage of qualitative research, cannot be overestimated. Wanda Dróżka goes as far as to advocate a reflexive methodology, which aims to "reconstruct the different types of practice and its SEMANTIC FRAMEWORK, i.e. the deeper, ontological ground of actions. This brings us closer to knowing how people interpret structure, how they use the opportunities it creates, how they counteract structural constraints, how they themselves contribute to 'structural violence' (Bourdieu), how they perceive their position, what strategies of action they adopt" (Dróżka, 2017, p. 122). In my research, I tried to be guided precisely by deep reflexivity, to keep an open attitude towards the narrators' stories and to stay aware of my own assumptions, which are an indispensable part of research.

Using optics focused on understanding the world as it appears and situating the researcher "in the internal perspective of the 'researcher-in-the-world'" (Malewski, 2017, p. 109), I was able to conduct the study using narrative interviewing among female teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes.

I chose this approach while also bearing in mind the concept of interrelationality of the interviews (Kvale, 2004) that I conducted.

Of course, the most important question to the narrators was the one about the meaning they gave to the various practices. "The interview gives no direct access to unadulterated provinces of pure meanings, but is a social production of meanings through linguistic interaction: The interviewer is the co-producer and coauthor of the resulting interview text. In this interrelational conception the interviewer does not uncover some preexisting meanings, but supports the interviewees in developing their meanings throughout the course of the interview" (Kvale, 2004, p. 229). In such a relationship, the interlocutors present their world in frank conversation, placing trust in their interviewers, believing that the meanings and senses expressed will not be misrepresented, and that the interviewers will try to understand the situation as close as possible to how it is seen by the interlocutors. I consider this as an ethical demand (Løgstrup, 2020) directed at me personally. It is an unspoken demand that what the narrators say be treated ethically, not be misrepresented, and that I, the researcher, make an effort to understand – from a position beside rather than above them.

Research Problem and Research Questions, or From Problem to Critical Knowledge

The primary objectives of my research were exploration and description, i.e. finding out, showing, describing and interpreting the experience, specific features and working conditions of the teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes (English for Specific Purposes) employed at Polish universities today and in the past.

It also became important for the research to identify and present the context of postmodernity itself. The dissertation thus exemplifies the sociological-pedagogical lines of pedeutological research. As such, I adopted the following objectives:

- understanding and describing how teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes working at universities experience changes in their professional role in the context of postmodernity;
- understanding and describing the ongoing cultural changes, constantly challenging the sense of stability of a linear social and pro--developmental order and modifying the teaching for learning paradigm, as well as understanding and describing how teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes are responding to such challenges;

- identifying and describing the problems and constraints that may stand in the way of teachers consciously transcending their professional role.

To achieve the above objectives, I formulated the following questions that guided the research:

1. What are the experiences of teachers in relation to their professional role in the context of postmodern changes?
   - 1.1 Do they perceive the cultural changes taking place, and to what extent?
   - 1.2 What actions do they take in response to the challenges of postmodern culture?
   - 1.3 What are their emotions and experiences related to the changes taking place?
   - 1.4 How do teachers understand and perceive their role as university teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes today?
     - 1.4.1 What threats and opportunities do they see in fulfilling their roles?
   - 1.5 What importance do they attribute to experiencing change in teaching?
   - 1.6 What aspects of their day-to-day work do they find most difficult, and what aspects do they find most challenging?
     - 1.6.1 How do they deal with possible difficulties and challenges?

As qualitative research methodology permits the selection of categories with which to analyse the research material (Bauman, 1998), I decided to base the presentation and subsequent analysis on Knud Illeris et al. (2011) model of learning in working life. I chose a specific, holistic view of this model with the associated triad of teacher knowledge (knowledge of the world, of the self and of the 'I–world' relations), as visually depicted in Figure 6 in Chapter 3. Applying this analytical construct as a distinctive framework for presenting and describing the specific place of teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes working at universities allowed me to broadly show the context of the dissertation (both its technical-organisational and socio-cultural elements), which is rooted in postmodern conditions, as well as to understand and interpret it. By paying attention to the individual dimension, I was able to focus on the learning potential of individuals through the lens of their life experience. I then proceeded on to the next stage – exploring the relationship at the interface between these elements. This is where the individual professional role prescription of my narrators comes into being – I described it according to a proprietary account of the change in the professional role prescription of language teachers.

Critical potential became apparent while working with the research material. I analysed it according to the assumptions of critical pedagogy, which "[s]eeks to diagnose, as adequately as possible, the mechanisms of domination and violence

inherent in the functioning of educational institutions (and, more broadly, social and cultural practices of control over people's minds and behaviour)" (Szkudlarek, 2003, p. 366). I chose to follow the methodological approach to critical research proposed by Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2020). The concept she created and described, KRYNAROZ (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020), encapsulates the following sequence: critique, narrative, understanding and change. In this case, *critique* is construed as a specific competence (ability) of the researchers to perceive the sometimes implicit, symbolic and not directly captured manifestations of injustice that have affected the research participants and, consequently, to discover, understand and describe them as accurately as possible.

Such a specific diagnosis of a problem is possible precisely thanks to a *narrative* – someone's story about their life, about experiencing something, about daily and unusual events, about actions and feelings that accompany a person (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2002, p. 61). Through narratives, researchers can access the system of meanings "that people give to their lives, the space in which they find the meaning of their existence" (Krawczyk-Bocian, 2019, p. 10), as narrative "is a particular form of cognitive representation of reality [...]. Narrative is [...] a way of understanding reality" (Trzebiński, 2002, p. 13). In pedagogical research and, more broadly, in the social sciences, in an interpretivist orientation, narrative has a special meaning and can be understood and interpreted in many ways. As shown by Amelia Krawczyk-Bocian (2019, pp. 56–98), narrative can be a life story, an encounter, a (self-)understanding, an interpretation and a making of meaning – it seems that, research-wise, narrative can be considered each time separately or as each of these options simultaneously. It is possible to study either whole-life narratives or thematic biographies that will focus on a selected area of activity of interest to the researchers (Majewska-Kafarowska, 2010).

Narrative enables *understanding*, which is another element from the KRYNAROZ sequence. "Understanding, as the fundamental method of the humanities, involves grasping what is common to human presence in the world, mentally reconstructing this commonality and reading its socially shared meanings. [...] The things that the humanities deal with are constituted in acts of cognition. They are entities created in the acts of understanding that take place in the cognitive subject's contacts with reality" (Malewski, 1998, p. 28).

In the process of understanding, there must therefore be a dialogue, treated as a condition that makes understanding possible (Rutkowiak, 1992a), a dialogue that is an exchange of thoughts, a way of being, an interpretation and reinterpretation of meanings, a movement of thoughts, a continuity of questions about the unknown and the new, and freedom. In this way, understanding acquires an almost transcendental dimension, as it is concerned

with transcending one's boundaries, particularisms, as well as learning more fully about the world. As noted by Nowak-Dziemianowicz: "Experiencing the Other allows me to understand my own world, which is constituted in the mutuality of understanding with the other. Through understanding the Other, I understand myself" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020, p. 27).

The final element of critical research in Nowak-Dziemianowicz's (2020) proposal is *change*. This is a crucial element, though difficult to capture. Not only is it inherent in the course of things, in history, in life (if only in a biological sense), but it is also an important part of the research concerned, being a kind of ultimate 'overarching' research objective. Change in itself cannot be the goal; what matters is only what is produced through it. Therefore, on the other hand, *change* is a kind of empty signifier, that is, a signifying element without the signified (Laclau, 2004). It is not imbued with meaning until we specify what is to be changed, and possibly, what it is to be changed into.

Narrators and Study Description

In the course of the research, language emerged as an important element, including in terms of its role, its meaning-making nature and its perception as an ingredient for gaining insights into people's world (Kawecki, 2004). I came to the conclusion that the teaching I was involved with had some elements tying it to the natural world, so I felt empowered to use additional symbolism related to language. "Just as a tulip instinctively moves towards becoming as complete and perfect a tulip as possible, so the human being moves towards growth and fulfilment and the accomplishment of the highest possible level of 'human-beingness'. The only constraints placed upon the actualizing tendency arise from the environment in which the person finds himself or herself. Just as the tulip is unlikely to flourish in poor soil and without proper care and watering, so, too, the growth of the human being will be stunted if the conditions for the encouragement of the actualizing tendency are unfavourable." (Thorne, 2003, p. 26). Such a romantic vision of development can be found in naturalism and humanistic psychological concepts (Sajdak, 2013). Taking this route, I assigned my interviewees codenames which in Polish are directly related to flowers and plants: Rose, Malvina, Jasmine, Kalina, Laura, Lily, Rosalia, Dahlia and Violet.

Table 1, *Narrators*, contains some information about my interviewees, which is more formal rather than focused on describing them. This is because the best way to describe them is through their own words, with which they relate their experience.

TABLE 1. NARRATORS

Narrator	Development stage according to Michael Huberman (Day, 2004)	Works in the profession (at the time of interview)	Language types taught	Interview date	Duration (narrative and questions phase)
Violet	experimentation stage	no	general, business, technical, medical	September 2021	1 h
Rose	disengagement stage	yes	general, business, medical, Polish as a foreign language	April 2019	2 h 15 min
Rosalia	experimentation stage	no	general, business, medical	November 2019	1 h 43 min
Malvina	experimentation stage	yes	general, medical, business, technical	April 2019	1 h 47 min
Lily	experimentation stage	yes	general, medical, business, Polish as a foreign language	July 2019	1 h 15 min
Laura	stabilisation stage	yes	general, business, medical	June 2019	1 h 51 min
Kalina	experimentation stage	yes	general, medical	June 2019	1 h 55 min
Jasmine	experimentation stage	yes	general, medical, Polish as a foreign language	May 2019	1 h 57 min
Dahlia	experimentation stage	yes	general, business, legal, technical	December 2019	1 h 45 min

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

To avoid cluttering the table, I used common names for specific-purpose language types, but I would like to emphasise the multiplicity of different specialisations in this regard. Thus, it is worth clarifying that the term "medical language" covers such specialisations as English in medicine, pharmacy, medical analysis, cosmetology, biotechnology, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, dietetics; "business language" denotes English in banking, marketing, human resource management; "technical language" applies to English in construction, mechatronics, robotics, physics, computer science, new technologies; and "legal language" refers to: English in administration, in the judiciary and in EU law-making.

The study uses purposive selection (Maszke, 2010), which is characteristic of qualitative and narrative research. As mentioned earlier, I was keen to interview people who had been teaching a foreign language for specific purposes at university (for at least five years) or who had such experience in the past and were employed full-time during the period of language teaching. At the time

of planning the study, I did not know that only women would participate in it. The sampling was done using the snowball method (Babbie, 2004). I started the survey with people I knew and then asked them to recommend further participants. Once the research participant had identified further potential narrators, I conducted verification according to the guidelines of purposive selection. My narrators worked at medical schools and universities of technology, with one of them employed at a physical education university. The participants were always informed of the need to record the interview and gave their informed consent before proceeding.

Citing Harry Hermanns, Kaźmierska distinguishes five phases of the interview, which I used in my research: the starting phase, the story stimulation phase, the narrative phase, the inquiry phase and the ending phase (Kaźmierska, 2004, pp. 75–78). Each interview was preceded by a brief introduction (if I did not know the narrator) and an outline of the research I was planning. This stage was intended to introduce the participant to the atmosphere of the narrative study (the starting phase).

In the story stimulation phase, I asked the participants to focus on their personal experiences, individual feelings, emotions and experiences of being a teacher of foreign languages for specific purposes. I informed the narrators that I would not interrupt them or ask other questions during the story, and would only ask them to clarify any statements that were unclear to me or inquire about issues that had not been raised once they have finished their narrative. I also assured them that their statements would remain fully anonymous and that their stories would only be used for research purposes. The main question I asked the narrators was as follows: "Could you tell me about the part of your life that is related to teaching a foreign language for specific purposes and everything that seems important to you in this context, referring to both the past and the present, as well as your expectations for the future? Could you tell your story from when you became a teacher to the present, and discuss any plans or expectations for the future?".

I also prepared additional questions that were important in terms of the research topic, questions and objectives (Kaźmierska, 2004). These were as follows:

- What does it mean to you to be a teacher? / Are you satisfied with becoming a teacher?
- Do you feel valued in your work?
- How did you feel about teaching when you started, and how do you feel about it now?

- Do you teach a foreign language differently now than you used to? Has anything changed?
- What does your future look like as a teacher of foreign languages for specific purposes?
- What was your perceptions of students when you started work, and how do you see them now?
- What do you think students expect from you?
- Could you say how you used to work when you started your job, and how you work now?
- What do you like best about your job, and what do you like least? What do you find most satisfying, and what do you find most difficult?

The above questions were never asked exactly as presented. Rather, they were a kind of signpost rather than a rigid task to be completed. It was important to let the narrator feel that what she was saying was important, and it was her words that set the tone of the conversation. Where the narrator did not address a topic, or where she had already spoken at length about a particular issue in the main phase of the narrative, I avoided asking further questions to reduce any possible feeling of being pressured to speak.

The ending phase of the interview often brought interesting comments from the narrators, confirming that the conversation was indeed a narrative, as not every story, tale or account can be described as such (Grzegorek, 2003). However, the statements made by my narrators, for example Lily's words: "You inspired me to think about things" or Dahlia's: "I did not realise these things before", reinforced my belief that introspection and retrospection were present in the stories, which conveyed my interviewees' knowledge of themselves (Krawczyk-Bocian, 2019). The recordings of the interviews were then transcribed.

Taking into account Clifford Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' concept in describing the research, it is also worth outlining the context of the interviews held. Most of the interviews were conducted in the university studios and rooms where the research participants were employed (always in places proposed by them), after their working hours. This fostered the unravelling of themes related precisely to their work and conditions (including the premises and equipment, etc.) in which they teach, while also giving room for other reflections. Two of the interviews took place in the homes of the narrators, and two others were conducted online.

The interviews involved some surprising elements I had to deal with, such as a question addressed directly to me: "What do you think about this?". This was no easy task – on the one hand, I did not want to instil a sense of

insincerity or lack of openness, while on the other hand, I had to take care that my statement did not influence the rest of the interview. This experience showed me that a live conversation is always unpredictable. There were times when my interviewees expressed uncertainty during the interview whether they really "should/shouldn't say something specific". I regard such reactions as a lack of familiarity with the narrative interview method, which is rarely used in glottodidactics.

The Narrative Interview in the Hermeneutic--Phenomenological Mirror of Interpretation

The narrative interview, a form of qualitative research, was developed by German researcher Fritz Schütze in the 1970s and 1980s (Rokuszewska-Pawełek, 2006). Such research makes use of the natural competencies of individuals, acquired in everyday life. "According to Schütze, storytelling is the form by which we report our experiences and sensations, and thus it can be a means by which one can attempt to access the experiences that make up an individual's social reality" (Urbaniak--Zając, 2013, p. 234).

Jerome Bruner (2010) even argues that reality can be structured in just such a way and identifies nine "universal principles that organise narrative reality" (Bruner, 2010, p. 182). These are: the structure of recorded time, genre specificity, intentionality of human action, hermeneutic composition, assumed canonicity, ambiguity of reference, centrality of the problem, inherent negotiability and historical extensibility of narrative (Bruner, 2010, pp. 185–204). The aforementioned principles also characterise the narratives that people create about their lives. Accordingly, narrative divides narrated time into episodes, but these are not measured by clock time, but by meanings of events in a time that is meaningful to the individual. Narratives are constructed by genre specificity, which helps in their interpretation, and also include the reasons for the actions taken by individuals and the 'intentional states' underlying them. What is vital here is motivation (which can only be studied by focusing on interpretation – through the understanding sciences: the humanities or social sciences) rather than causation (important for the natural sciences, which are "concerned with 'explaining' their object of study by correctly showing what relationships exist between cause and action". Nowak, 1993, p. 51). It is also important to remember that the social world is linguistic: the telling of past events becomes a present experience.

Elsewhere, Bruner (1990) argues that "lived life cannot be separated from narrated life – or more bluntly, life is not 'as it is' but as it is interpreted and

reinterpreted, told and told again" (Bruner, 1990, p. 17). One can also speak of a certain duality of human experience – it includes both past events and the retelling of what has happened, including the interpretation and meanings and senses given by the narrators. Understanding can then be a kind of "mediation between past and present" (Nowak, 1993, p. 54). The hermeneutic composition of a narrative indicates that there can be no single correct interpretation or unique reading of it. The object of hermeneutic analysis is to provide a convincing and non-contradictory account of what a story means, a reading in keeping with the particulars that constitute it (Bruner, 2010, p. 191).

Perversely, the assumed canonicity mentioned by Bruner is not implemented. Indeed, it is its violation – a breach of convention – that makes the narrative worthy of telling. Its interpretation is ambiguous, multifaceted and open to changing meanings depending on the context, which also affects another element of narrative reality – the ambiguity of reference. Depending on the context in which an issue is viewed, the narrative and its interpretation can change. This leads to a situation in which several equal versions of the narrative may exist simultaneously, and the person listening or interpreting must be ready for narrative negotiation. The final element of the reality identified by Bruner is the historical extensibility of narrative. In an increasingly diverse world, an individual's narrative of their reality seems to be the unifying element of identity and history-making.

Hermeneutics remains closely linked to research focusing on narratives. Marcin Urbaniak (2014) identified its six main principles. The most important one seems to be the possibility of interpretation and understanding, taken as an individual's way of being in the world. "Additionally, the act of understanding has the form of transcending, of crossing the already known towards otherness; towards an assumed fullness of meaning" (Urbaniak, 2014, p. 21). Furthermore, Urbaniak points out the "[...] awareness of one's own limitation by a given context, aspect or particular cultural-historical perspective of human cognition (Urbaniak, 2014, p. 21)" and the mediality of knowledge, understood as its mediation through and in language. Even an individual's understanding of the Other's message (their narrative) is thus, to some extent, mediated by one's own or collective history and language itself.

Further points identified by Urbaniak are the universality of self-understanding and the presence of culture, described as "an inalienable element of all hermeneutic activity" (Urbaniak, 2014, p. 22). The narrative expresses the 'self' of the storyteller, which is, however, always part of some culture.

Interpretation and understanding can thus be a way of being in the world (Ablewicz, 1994) for both the narrators and the researchers. Hermeneutics offers a double possibility of understanding – it is the narrators' experience construed again, expanded by the new experience of the researchers.

Despite the undeniable role that hermeneutics plays as a research tool, it seems that it is also necessary to turn to phenomenology, which, in a nutshell, is a method of "knowing the essence of things [...], whereby by penetrating (through description) the phenomena of the everyday world, one obtains a view of their essence" (Ablewicz, 2010, p. 112). Martin Heidegger saw phenomenology through the lens of hermeneutics. He described the interaction of these concepts as "a process of achieving selfx-transparency of one's being, which always happens alongside its existence, and only secondarily concerns concrete interpretations, methods and theories of interpretation. It is thoughtful listening to the story of which we ourselves are the messenger – the truth of being" (Urbaniak, 2014, p. 16).

In opposition to his teacher Edmund Husserl, Heidegger abandoned the idea of phenomenological reduction: researchers could not remain outside the research – in an interpretivist perspective, they appear to be an integral part of it. "Heidegger pointed to pre-understanding and interpretation as the key elements of being in the world and our understanding of it. All our understanding is dependent on the reality of historical pre-structures, and hence one's awareness and constant interpretations of worldly phenomena are expected in hermeneutic phenomenology. Heidegger stressed interpretation as the critical element in understanding our existence" (Nigar, 2022, p. ii).

The phenomenological approach, however, does not refer to the obvious; conversely, it is supposed to "focus on 'flickering' phenomena – those that manifest partially or occasionally" (Waligóra, 2013, p. 83). This is why phenomenology, or rather phenomenological hermeneutics, seems to be an integral part of critical research, which (in one of its various possibilities), through the discovery of hidden or ambiguous phenomena, allows one to perceive injustice, persecution, oppression or other injustice in the words of the research participants.

The narrative interview is therefore the research method that provided the fullest insight into the lives of the participants in the study, while also helping to answer the research questions and meet the research objectives. Through a hermeneutic and hermeneutic-phenomenological approach, I was able to interpret the words of the narrators, reaching the meanings given to them. The image I present in the analysis and interpretation, in the research chapters, is a mediated vision. Yet, I do not regard this as a flaw in my research; indeed, following Martin Heidegger's example, I reject Husserl's *epoche* – it is rather an expression of an awareness of the subjectivity (Urbaniak-Zając, 2006) of narrative research, which I regard as a great advantage.

2

Postmodern Horizons and Education

When researching any issue related to education, teaching or learning, one cannot ignore the cultural and social context in which the research participants operate. Human beings do not function and live in a vacuum – they belong to a community or a larger system or arrangement. This is particularly true in education, where one never acts alone, but is always in relationship with others. Therefore, it is vital to describe and understand the social and cultural contexts in which many explanations for seemingly incomprehensible actions may lie.

Socio-Cultural Contexts of Postmodernity

Piotr Sztompka defines social contexts as "areas of people's life activity in which social life takes place (e.g. family, professional, educational, religious), distinguishable by their purpose, specificity of actions, specific style of behaviour, etc." (Sztompka, 2010, p. 41). Context is needed to comprehend someone's message, and therefore also to understand someone's world. Indeed, one cannot "leap beyond one's own biography and identity (however decentralised), beyond socialisation. One cannot dismiss the millions of seconds and micro-events that have given shape to one's 'self'" (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009, p. 34). It is also essential to define what society and culture are and how they are construed in this study.

Sztompka uses two metaphors to describe the ways in which society is captured and understood in the 21st century. These are 'interpersonal space' and 'social life' (Sztompka, 2010, p. 36). They express the idea of a third sociology (the sociology of everyday life), rooted back in the 20th century in the work of George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, Alfred Schütz, Erving Goffman, Norbert Elias, Jonathan H. Turner and Randall Collins, where the common denominator is interpersonal relations. The arguments in favour of this view are four ontological theses:

1. Human life always takes place in the company of and in a variety of relationships with others (real, imagined or even virtual others), and never separately;
2. Even in isolation, reference to others remains the essence of people's lives.
3. The interpersonal space is constantly changing as a result of new arrangements of interpersonal relationships; and
4. Social groups/communities exist as long as there are relations and mutual references between members of these groups (Sztompka, 2016, pp. 26–29).

As shown by Sztompka (2016), symbolic interactionism is one of the American roots of the third sociology. Created by G.H. Mead, the concept originates from the Chicago School tradition (Charmaz, 2006, p. 186), but it was Blumer who

expanded it and introduced the term 'symbolic interactionism'. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the origins of this trend can also be found in the thought of Florian Znaniecki. "Elżbieta Hałas has every right to claim that Florian Znaniecki should be recognised for his role as a forerunner (albeit unacknowledged) of symbolic interactionism [...]. Znaniecki's view that it is the value-driven action (interaction, to be precise), rather than the 'role', should be the focus and starting point of sociological inquiry and the construction of theoretical models" (Bauman, 1999, p. 99–103). Znaniecki's views are thus considered to be ahead of their time, although they only gained prominence at a later date.

Symbolic interactionism as proposed by G.H. Mead is based on three main premises. The first states that people take action in relation to things and objects based on the meanings they have for them. The second states that the meaning of objects is rooted in the social interactions that occur between a person and their environment. The third and final premise focuses on the possible change or modification of a given meaning under the influence of interpretation or subsequent interactions (Blumer, 2007).

Ireneusz Kawecki (2004) also draws attention to a more contemporary definition of interactionism proposed by Norman K. Denzin (1978), which involves three assumptions. First, social reality as we sense, know and understand it is a social product. Interacting individuals create and define their own definitions of situations. Second, it is assumed that people are capable of engaging in *minded*, self-reflective behaviour. They are therefore able to shape and direct their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. Third, people interact with each other in the process of taking their own positions (points of view) and aligning them with the behaviour of others. This is seen as an emerging, nascent (created), negotiated and often unpredictable issue. Interaction also has a symbolic dimension as it involves the manipulation of symbols, words, meanings and languages (Denzin, 1978, p. 7).

As used by G.H. Mead in the first premise of symbolic interactionism, the concept of things or objects refers to everything "that the human being may note in his world–physical objects [...] other human beings [...]; categories of human beings [...]; institutions [...]; guiding ideals [...]; activities of others [...]; and such situations as an individual encounters in his daily life" (Blumer, 2007). Another classification was presented by Blumer himself, dividing objects into physical, social and abstract (Blumer, 2007, p. 12). The implication is that people interact not only with other human beings, but also with inanimate elements, ideas, and events that they experience directly and through mediation (Giddens, 2012).

The rationale of symbolic interactionism in a broader frame of mind assumes that "human society is made up of individuals who have selves (that is, make

indications to themselves); that individual action is a construction and not a release, being built up by the individual through noting and interpreting features of the situations in which he acts; that group or collective action consists of the aligning of individual actions, brought about by the individuals' interpreting or taking into account each other's actions" (Blumer, 2007, p. 64). It follows, then, that interactionists see society as a creation in a continuous process of becoming that exists in the here and now, which is an arena for direct face-to-face encounter or an indirect platform for the exchange of action and experience (Kawecki, 2004, p. 99).

The self, which the human being has, makes it possible "to represent to oneself the meanings of objects, to create these meanings and to communicate them" (Hałas, 2006, p. 36). This means that, for interactionists, the self, or as Sztompka puts it, the individual's personality – their identity – is not a monolithic creation but a process (Sztompka, 2016, p. 60). Moreover, as claimed by G.H. Mead, only the process of reflection is able to create the self, and the human being is seen as an organism that acts precisely because it has this self (Blumer, 2007).

The interactionist concept of the self, as Hałas demonstrates, can also be used to describe, interpret and understand the humans of late modernity. "It is important to note this basic fact that the repeatedly described changes in postmodern social organisation, which make the descriptive language referring to the concept of social ties lose its usefulness, have positively verified the appropriateness of the interactionist approach. It can be said that 'time has demonstrated' the aptness of this theory for analyses of late modern change" (Hałas, 2007, p. 96). As Hałas goes on to explain, it is the interactionist approach that accepts the multiplicity of the self, without excluding the social self, which is based on relationships and cannot arise outside of them.

Yet, the human being does not only enter into relationships with others, but also with itself. According to G.H. Mead, it is through the self that humans can perceive themselves not only subjectively but also objectively. Although not entirely convinced by G.H. Mead's concept of the identity of the individual, Anthony Giddens explains that the "Objective Self: is conceived as a social identity and the 'Subjective Self' as the action of the individual, who sees the 'Objective Self' as a reflection of social bonds (Giddens, 2012). This duo interacts with each other under the influence of various interactions, which means that the self never reaches a final shape. It is a process, an emanation of a constantly shaped and changing 'Self'.

The idea that the two parts of the 'Self' are in interaction or dialogue with each other was further elaborated on by Hubert Hermans, who developed the concept of the 'Dialogical Self'. "The originality of the theory lies in the application of

the metaphor of community to a system of 'Self' that not only encompasses distinct centres of (self-)narration, but also implies their mutual references described in terms of dialogue. A person can relate to themselves as they relate to others, as well as discuss, agree and disagree with each other, criticise, praise and ridicule each other" (Oleś, 2012, p. 48). As stressed by Mirosława Nowak-–Dziemianowicz (2016a), the importance of the 'dialogical self', the ability to sustain an internal dialogue, is an important element of constructing one's identity understood as a 'biographical task'.

While not every interaction has to be related to communication understood as an "exchange of words" (because observation or non-verbal communication also play a crucial role), it is worth noting the important role of language – including meaning-generative – in a kind of process of 'negotiating' meanings. This view of language is made possible by the linguistic turn. "In this regard, the turn consists in moving from understanding language as a reflection of thoughts or things to treating it as an active factor in shaping reality" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b, p. 19).

Citing Ludwig Wittgenstein's understanding of language, Aleksandra Derra notes that "Language does not arise or function in a vacuum, but develops in relation to the material world (it describes this world and expresses it), the historically changing human being and his environment, the feelings and sensations that accompany man; it also adapts to the needs and purposes it serves for man. When learning a language, one simultaneously learns the behaviours that accompany it, recognises the circumstances in which some, and not other, expressions can be used, and learns to express attitudes towards judgements in the full range of their possibilities. All this would make up a way of life, i.e. a context that is observable as accompanying the use of language, but above all, a context that, to some extent, also determines one way of using language over another" (Derra, 2007, p. 135). The processual nature of the social interactions that make up social reality is thus effected in close connection with language, which gives it greater completeness and verbality.

Ireneusz Kawecki defines the meaning of language in symbolic interactionism as "a window that provides insight into the inner life of the individual" (Kawecki, 2004, p. 91). What is uttered becomes reality, acquires tangibility and, at the same time, can become a point of reference for the other participant. Language allows us to express ourselves, to give greater meaning to one thing and to devalue something else. Language, and more broadly discourse, is therefore the most important tool with which we can create ourselves and the reality, as well as influence others, and not only in a positive way. Indeed, language can also be a weapon; it can be used in an attacking narrative, in hate speech. When we use it, we convey information about the wider context – including the socio-cultural

context. Language is both an element of it and a building block: "We exist in and through language" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b, p. 21).

The semantic fields of culture and cultural context are equally complex. Culture is defined as a term used to "describe the set of meanings, symbols, patterns, rules, standards, values, etc., which guide people's actions, determine their individual identity, define their community involvement, and determine the relations they establish with other people" (Sztompka, 2010, p. 31). Culture is also referred to as "the totality of humanity's achievements created in the general historical development or in its specific epoch. The concept of culture was born from observing people's way of life, their everyday routines, beliefs, customs and convictions" (Janas, 2016, p. 7). Thus, it should be emphasised that every nation has its own culture, rooted not only in national symbols, grand ideals featured on its banners, but also, and perhaps above all, reproduced in everyday actions, practices and traditions handed down from generation to generation.

Culture can take many forms and express itself in different ways: through artistic creation, religious practices rooted in tradition, customs and the aforementioned language. "It is language that determines one's belonging to an environment (vernaculars, dialects), a group (subcultures, languages of professional groups) and society (national languages)" (Janas, 2016, p. 8).

Culture and consequently all its symbols have a fundamental impact on the individual and communities. Nevertheless, they are not fixed elements, especially now in late modernity. Since the second half of the 20th century, the former triad of cultural determinants, i.e. school, family and church, has been replaced by pop culture, rapid media development and the Internet (Pankowska, 2013). It seems futile not to acknowledge the influence of popular culture on young people, who are largely socialised by it from an early age. In an educational setting where teachers and students meet, a cultural pedagogical inversion often takes place. As noted by Zbyszko Melosik (2015), citing Margaret Mead, culture takes on the character of a prefigurative culture, where it is the young who explain the world of pop culture to the adults – that is, of a culture that not only celebrates the products of low culture, but brings with it a change in the axionormative system. Consumerism, the decline in appreciation of formal education, ludicism, individualism, the loosening of social ties and their transfer to the virtual world are just some elements of today's culture.

Jolanta Szempruch (2012) draws attention to the cultural dissonance present in Poland after the political transition. New attitudes, models and ideas, which came with democracy and capitalism, stood in opposition to the values and traditions rooted in real socialist realism, but did not completely displace them. We are dealing with a kind of closed coexistence with "ingrained norms and habits" (Szempruch, 2012, p. 17).

Cultural change has affected many aspects of social life. Sztompka (2010) classifies the most important differences into a list of nine opposing elements (Table 2), which express the cultural dissonance present in the lives of Polish men and women. Krzysztof Olechnicki and Tomasz Szlendak (2017), who researched new cultural practices in Poland, emphasise that: "Polish post-1989 society is still emerging: Poles now live in two different cultural times, not on the basis of assigning specific groups to a particular time concept but oscillating between them, gravitating more or less strongly towards one of the models" (Olechnicki and Szlendak, 2017, p. 21). Olechnicki and Szlendak (2017) argue that Polish men and women live in two times: linear time and quasi-cyclical time (a still incomplete cyclical time that allows for a 'full circle' and regular returns to what was, but already allowing for a break from linear time marked by transience). Importantly, everyone experiences both times and lives between them. The transition initiated in Poland in the late 1980s had a turbulent course. It seems that for these and other reasons, the dualism of time may be more strongly felt there than in Western European societies.

TABLE 2. CULTURAL DISSONANCE

Real socialism culture		Democratic and market culture
collectivism	⟷	individualism
egalitarianism	⟷	meritocracy
mediocrity	⟷	success
safety and security	⟷	risk
fate	⟷	agency
welfare	⟷	self-sufficiency
blaming the system	⟷	taking responsibility
passive privacy	⟷	public participation
focusing on the past	⟷	orientation towards the future

Source: Sztompka, P. (2010). Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa. Wydawnictwo Znak, p. 279.

Chantal Delsol (2003), on the other hand, points out that cultural change is associated with a kind of criticism, or pseudo-criticism, of the weaknesses of previous orders, by which the new ones are supposed to gain in value. As a result, a culture of late modernity is emerging, involving a break with linear and progressive movement in favour of dreams of cyclical time, a break with the idea of the future in favour of living the moment without setting goals to achieve, a break with the cult of work in favour of leisure and doing nothing, a break with the traditional model of family ties in favour of freedom and lack of hierarchy,

and finally, a break with the domination of man over animals and the natural world in favour of the equality of all living beings.

An important point that Delsol (2003) raises is a certain incoherence of the postmodern/late modern world. "In other words, we want to escape our demons and rebuild the human rights that the 20th century despised. But in running away from them, we remove the very subject that justifies the existence of these rights" (Delsol, 2003, p. 13). Delsol (2003) demonstrates that seemingly antagonistic slogans often share a common ideological basis.

In general, the socio-cultural context of the contemporary world is referred to by contemporary sociologists as liquid modernity (Bauman, 2011), late modernity (Giddens, 2012), the risk society (Beck, 2002) and the times of interregnum (Bauman, 2012). Some even conclude that contemporary society has already entered the conditions of postmodernity (Giddens and Sutton, 2017).

Sztompka (2010) outlines four main features of late modernity. These are: a new form of trust, new forms of risk, opacity and globalisation (Sztompka, 2010, pp. 576–578).

Trust is a fundamental element of interaction, relationships and the functioning of society or other communities. In developing his theory of ethical demand, Knud Løgstrup even stated that trust is necessary for life. "Trust is a basic, natural quality of human life. Without it, life would not be possible. This condition of trust imposes on us an ethical demand of duty towards others. We have a duty to recognise as essential that part of the lives of others which they present to us in sincere conversation, to treat these confessions with respect and care" (Løgstrup, 1997, pp. 8–100, 148–158, as cited in Peavy, 2014, p. 36). According to him, trust is prior, natural, innate, and only later transforms into distrust, which is learned.

According to Bauman (1996), who valued Løgstrup's views and through whom they gained recognition outside Denmark (Andersen and van Kooten Niekerk, 2007), trust is "an adaptation to a state of anxiety, not an overcoming of it" (Bauman, 1996, p. 154). This thesis seems extremely pertinent and helpful for understanding new forms of trust in the world of late modernity. Trust has now gained a new dimension, as people have to bestow it not only on others, but also on the abstract systems which surround them (Sztompka, 2010). The development of industry and technology, including the Internet and all services based on it, has meant that people not only have to trust these systems, but have even become dependent on them. Young people treat abstract systems as part of everyday life, accompanying them throughout their lives. They do not reflect on how they work, nor do they try to understand them because they have placed their natural trust in them. The situation is different among older people, who have to tame these systems.

The next feature of late modernity is also closely related to new forms of trust. This feature is **risk**, which has always been known to human beings; however, as perceived by sociologists, in late modernity it also began to relate to the prevailing social conditions, as "people in the industrial societies start to reflect on the more detrimental aspects of modernity" (Giddens and Sutton, 2017, p. 170). This means that the world created by humans has become a threat to them. It is not without reason that Ulrich Beck has called the entire period of modernity a 'risk society', whose characteristic feature is "living with a calculative attitude to the open possibilities of action, positive and negative, with which, as individuals and globally, we are confronted in a continuous way in our contemporary social existence (Giddens, 2012, p. 47).

Giddens himself also adds that risk, in a world in which society "is taking leave of the past, of traditional ways of doing things, and which is opening itself up to a problematic future" (Giddens, 2012, p. 152), takes on a new dimension, and thinking about it is a kind of way of taming the future, i.e. colonising it (Giddens, 2012, p. 181).

Another element of late modernity, as highlighted by Sztompka (2010), is the **opacity** of the social situations in which people operate. Bauman (2011) refers to the whole current period as 'liquid modernity' because of this opacity and, at the same time, frequent change that accompanies people practically every day. Opacity is also a result of the rise in social knowledge (Sztompka, 2010), causing an increase in reflexivity understood as "a characterization of the relationship between knowledge and society" (Giddens and Sutton, 2017, p. 117). Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2001) refer to late-modern human as 'homo optionis', highlighting the need to make decisions about all aspects of life, even those that were once not subject to decision at all, such as gender, life, death, religion, identity, marriage and parenthood.

On the other hand, as noted by Melosik and Szkudlarek (2009), such a peculiar emancipation can also be a curse "for those who are unable to free themselves from the limitations imposed on them and who, in good faith, remain in the positions they have been assigned" (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009, p. 37). Therefore, at a time when traditional values have lost their relevance, particularism, individualism and relativism emerge – not forming a single coherent world, but rather different versions of reality in which humans live, between which they can move freely and which they can create themselves (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009).

The last element that Sztompka (2010) distinguishes is **globalisation**. In its most general definition, it is "a process of dynamic growing of relationships and interdependence between countries and communities around the world" (Szymański, 2016, p. 14) or, to put it even more briefly, "a set of processes that

make the social world one" (Robertson, 1995, pp. 359–411, as cited in Sztompka, 2010, p. 582). From the perspective of this monograph, the social and cultural dimension of globalisation was considered the most important. Nonetheless, one must remember that globalisation also has an economic and political dimension. This process is often referred to as Westernisation or Americanisation, which indicates the origin of the changes. It involves the unification and homogenisation of culture, which, thanks to free movement across national borders and mass media development, are increasingly expanding. According to some sociologists and educators, these processes negatively affect the identity of the young generation, which is losing its sense of national belonging. As noted by Melosik: "The identity of the global teenager is shaped much less by national and state values, much more by popular culture and the consumption ideology" (Melosik, 2007, pp. 84–85).

However, the homogenisation of culture is only one face of globalisation. Indeed, there is also the heterogenisation – otherwise known as cultural distinction (Pasamonik, 2013) – in which elements of global culture are absorbed and adapted to local cultures (Appadurai, 2005). In a broader perspective, Ronald Robertson calls this phenomenon 'glocalisation', which means "the adaptation of local cultures to the global conditions of life, as well as the bringing of local content and values into global circulation" (Pasamonik, 2013, p. 134). Notably, in this view, homogenisation is intertwined with heterogenisation, the global with the local, and the flow of culture, resources and symbols is a continuous movement. It is therefore an ongoing process based on interaction.

Globalisation also has a technological dimension, linked to the Internet, modern technologies, mass media and modern communication channels. With these tools, the global world has become closer to every person who receives or sends their signal locally. One crucial implication of the existence of the Internet and the virtual world is that we are not only receivers of content, but we can also create it in increasingly easy ways. The digital revolution we are witnessing and participating in has affected every aspect of today's world and education, be it for students, teachers or lecturers.

The popularity of English seems to be one element of globalisation that cannot be overlooked. As noted by Jaroslaw Krajka (2016), English is spoken by almost two billion people worldwide, and it is estimated that only one in four of them is a native speaker (Seidlhofer, 2005). The extent to which it is spreading across the Internet, political discourse and culture means that it is also seeping into other languages, becoming a permanent fixture in them. Moreover, it is increasingly said that English is a *lingua franca* (Strzałka, 2017), i.e. a common, international language, and that the goal of learners is not to attain a near-native proficiency

but to adapt their speaking skills to specific situations. In this sense, English is no longer a foreign language – it has become the language of all who speak it. According to some studies, as much as 40% of English vocabulary derives from non-Anglo-Saxon origins (Richler, 2006, after Kurcz, 2009, p. 23). The implication is that if non-native speakers outnumber native speakers, they are more influential than those for whom English is their native tongue.

At the opposite spectrum of attitudes towards English (or any other foreign language) is the increasingly popular bilingualism. It is construed as the intentional upbringing of children in bilingualism and biculturalism (see Jegiela, 2022; Lipińska, 2003; Szramek-Karcz, 2014; Kuros-Kowalska, Loewe and Moćko, 2017), which also impacts education itself. The market offers bilingual teaching, i.e. Content and Language Integrated Learning, as early as kindergarten and primary and secondary school (see Jagodzińska, 2017; Lesiak-Bielawska, 2018; Muszyńska and Papaja, 2019).

Individual in Postmodernity

The cultural and social context of postmodernity affects the individuals within it. Human beings change along with the conditions in which they function, resulting in further changes to the context itself. While the literature offers many descriptions of the postmodern human, these attempts, as noted by Bauman (1994, p. 20), will always be unfinished and incomplete. I will limit myself to two typologies that may be most useful in describing and trying to understand individuals and their experiences in education. These will be the distinction between generations X, Y, Z (Table 3) and Bauman's description of postmodern identities (Table 4).

TABLE 3. GENERATION X, Y, Z

Generation's name	Years of birth	Description
Generation X (alternatively: Gen X, breakthrough generation, MTV generation, post generation, End of Century Generation, Generation '89, Children of Transformation, End-of-Century Marauders)	1965–1980 or 1965–1982	– grew up in a period of political and social uncertainty (in Poland), – values stability (commitment to work while fearing potential loss of employment), – appreciates work that is not rife with new challenges, – emphasises personal development, – sees 'face-to-face' communication as a value in itself, – is interested in innovative solutions, but based on sound fundamentals, – has a utilitarian attitude toward the Internet.

Generation Y (alternatively: Gen Y, millenials, digital generation, European Seekers, the net generation)	1981–1994 (often broken down into two periods: before and after 1989)	– grew up in an emerging democracy and capitalism, which provided a sense of freedom and lack of political and social constraints (in Poland), – values a sense of security and is optimistic about the future. – is flexible and open to change, – is reluctant to make long-term commitments, – expresses a willingness to learn, – focuses on themselves, their needs and their benefits, – communicates through digital technologies, but considers direct social relationships as the norm, – is characterised by multi-tasking, – has a need for feedback, – has a shorter attention span.
Generation Z (alternatively: Gen Z, 3C, 7C, Facebook generation, Instagram generation, SMS generation)	1995–2009	– grew up in a democracy (in Poland), – has no sense of the dichotomy of the real and virtual worlds, – has used modern technology from an early age, – does not only consume media but creates media content, – is averse to effort, routine, stability, and needs instant gratification, – is accustomed to frequent change; no longer treats the Internet as a place to look for information but as a wide-ranging forum for communication, – has a shorter attention span, – its knowledge comes from the Internet and is at its fingertips as and when required.

Source: own elaboration based on: Hysa, B. (2016). Zarządzanie różnorodnością pokoleniową. *Zeszyty Naukowe, Organizacja i Zarządzanie/Politechnika Śląska*, vol. 97; and McCrindle, M., Wolfinger, E. (2010). *The ABC of XYZ. Understanding the Global Generation*. University of New South Wales Press Ltd; and Wasylewicz, M. (2016). Transformacja sposobu komunikowania się pokolenia X, Y, Z – bilans zysków i strat. In: A. Kamińska (ed.), *Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Humanitas – Pedagogika*, No. 13, and Morbitzer, J. (2016). O filarach edukacji medialnej – między starożytnością a współczesnością. In: N. Walter (ed.), *Zanurzeni w mediach. Konteksty edukacji medialnej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM; and Waśko, R. (2016). Wybrane aspekty różnicujące pokolenie X, Y i Z w kontekście użytkowania nowych technik i Internetu. W: Z. Rykiel, J. Kinal (eds.), *Socjologia codzienności jako niebanalności*. Stowarzyszenie Naukowe Przestrzeń Społeczna i Środowisko.

Even a cursory review of the descriptions of generations X, Y and Z shows the close ties of the presented characteristics to political, social and economic events, the development of the Internet, modern communication methods and new media. It can also be noted that the characteristics of a given generation are connected with the attitudes of its ancestors – they are a continuation of a twofold tendency: to intensify or suppress a particular behaviour. Bauman (2011) points out that Generation X was born and raised in a world that its predecessors (*baby boomers*) painstakingly rebuilt after World War II. Although industriousness and frugality, as qualities inherited from parents, were no longer as essential, a stable place of work or residence was still valued. The next generation witnessed the profound political changes in Poland, learned about the world of new opportunities, but also felt the force of the cultural dissonance described earlier. The rapidly proliferating technologies have come to be regarded by Generation Y as a source of entertainment, a way to spend leisure time, a form of communication. In contrast, the next generation has recognised the virtual world as just as real as the offline world and technology as part of everyday life

(Wasko, 2016). The enormous impact on the generations growing up at that time was undeniably influenced by the changes seen in the later modern period – but it was uneven and often ambiguous.

The periods indicated in Table 3 are arbitrary. It cannot be taken for granted that a person born in the 1970s will navigate the virtual world and new media in a worse way than a one born in the 1990s. Besides, the above combinations of characteristics and timeframes should be analysed in the light of the specific conditions in a given country or region of the world (not to mention factors such as family affluence or place of residence, for example). Poland's location and the political conditions after World War II meant that its development lagged far behind that of Western Europe or America. Therefore, as stated by Barbara Fatyga in the preface to the Polish edition of Don Tapscott's book, "there is a peculiar cultural and civilisational difference between Polish youth and Western European or American youth [...]. [T]he social, economic and technological conditions in our country still inhibit the processes described by Western researchers" (Tapscott, 2010, p. 19). According to data cited by Tapscott (2010), in 2004, 44% of all US households had a computer and 37% of the population had access to broadband Internet. According to Statistics Poland data, in the same year in Poland 36% of households had a personal computer (42% in urban areas and 25% in rural areas) and 26% of households had access to Internet (31% in urban areas and 25% in rural areas) (Statistics Poland, 2005).

Marc Prensky (2001) describes the differences between a generation that grew up surrounded by modern technology, democracy and prosperity, and one that did not experience such perks while growing up (and only did later in life). To distinguish between the two groups, he uses the terms 'digital natives' and 'digital immigrants'. He also points out that young people who have been in contact with modern technologies from the beginning of their lives think and process information in a completely different way than their parents. Writing about this issue, Prensky also refers to schooling and student-teacher interaction, arguing that teachers, i.e. online immigrants, have to learn to speak the language of their pupils in order for mutual communication to take place. This, however, does not mean a change in 'what' the teachers are supposed to communicate, but in 'how' they are meant to do it. The lives of the students are changing very fast, and the school (university) and the teachers have to be prepared for this hyper-changeability (Wysocka, 2012).

An attempt to understand and describe individual's behaviour in the postmodern era, characteristic of his view of the world, was also made by Bauman, who used four metaphors to do so. The terms used by Bauman (1994) are as follows: stroller, vagabond, tourist and player. Table 4 lists the characteristics specific to each category.

TABLE 4. DESCRIPTION OF POSTMODERN TYPES ACCORDING TO BAUMAN

Type	Description
Stroller	– a modern pattern disseminated in postmodernity, – superficial relationships, – stays hidden in the crowd, but is not part of it, – the episodic nature and casualness of everyday forms of coexistence, – anonymity in the city, – one person is a screen to another, but also nothing more, – consumerism, including at the price of incapacitation, – television as a window to the world, – mediating experience through television.
Vagabond	– a marginal modern pattern becomes mainstream in postmodernity; life construed as movement, change and uncertainty, with movement itself being more important than purpose, – the pursuit of variety driven by constant disappointment; temporality, the world construed as a collection of opportunities not to be missed; not having a home; not having money.
Tourist	– thrill-seeking, – a desire for adventure and new experiences, – having (and needing) a home, – home is a point of reference, – having money to afford holiday trips and peace of mind, – a sense of security in foreign lands, – navigating along marked trails, – temporariness, – the world exists to be enjoyed.
Player	– relying on luck, – risk and uncertainty seen as elements that govern the world, – the rules of the game can be manipulated to succeed, – there is no room in the game for sentiment, leniency or help, – winning is what counts most, – a defeat is merely one stage in a series of games or matches, – life is a game.

Source: own elaboration based on Bauman, Z. (1994). *Dwa szkice o moralności ponowoczesnej* (pp. 21–36). Instytut Kultury; Bauman, Z. (1996). *Etyka ponowoczesna* (pp. 326–333). Wydawnictwo Aletheia.

Ewa Wysocka (2012) characterises the stroller as an indifferent consumer who does not get attached to anything or anyone, and treats life as a game of appearances in which they participate in such a way as not to lose. By contrast, the vagabond does not engage in the fight for success. The vagabond's non-conformist approach to the world may expose them to social ostracism and suffering, with "self--marginalisation, self-exclusion and abnegation being the potential consequences of adopting such an attitude towards life" (Wysocka, 2012, p. 13).

A tourist, as interpreted by Wysocka, is "an egocentric thrill-seeker, for whom the attainment of thrill has an autotelic value; therefore their life plan is to learn about, experience and savour life, but they do so without any allocentric elements" (Wysocka, 2012, p. 13). It seems that egocentrism, selfishness and hedonism are the main principles guiding the tourist, who takes but leaves nothing in return. In contrast, the player-type personality pattern perceives the world as a game that

is about success, which, however, one plays alone. Players treat any cooperation instrumentally and selfishly because the end justifies the means. Failure to take up the fight is by default considered a loss.

Notably, Bauman (2000) views the tourist-vagabond opposition as expressing "the deepest and most momentous division of contemporary society" (Bauman, 2000, p. 151). It is a division between the haves and have-nots, between those who have "the freedom to choose their life paths" (Bauman, 2000, p. 151), and those who do not have this freedom. I believe that the issue of not having a home, as raised by Bauman, is the greatest tragedy of the vagabond – home seems to be a kind of sign of ontological security, which Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2019) defines as "the conviction that I am at home somewhere among other people, in my own place, that I can settle there, that I can trust my surroundings (both materially in terms of the place and socially in terms of other people)" (Nowak--Dziemianowicz, 2019, p. 15).

Ontological security is the certainty of one's place on earth, of the right to that place. The tourists have this certainty: for them, home is always a point of reference, a normality. Thanks to it, the tourists have a past that is a constant support – even when they are not at home. They carry this certainty with them at all times – it is a state of mind that is alien to the vagabond. The vagabond has no home, has never had one, and cannot draw "on the confidence that others can be relied upon, as acquired through the early childhood experiences" (Giddens, 2012, p. 61). Moreover, if this home is understood in a broader perspective, as a community, the vagabond may also lack the security of being rooted in it (Mamzer, 2008). Thus, the vagabond has nowhere to return to, is constantly on the move, lives in constant uncertainty and is never at home.

Multifaceted, incoherent and difficult-to-grasp postmodernity leaves its mark on people, forcing them to constantly redefine and update their own identity. I wanted to show that today's attitudes are both a response to the socio-cultural context and the result of evolving attitudes originating in the past.

Change as a Permanent Feature of Everyday Life

In my literature review, I focused on those elements of postmodernity that have (in my view) the most important impact on education, as well as on the teachers themselves. I also described the phenomenon of change, treated as a permanent element of reality, condemning modern man to experience uncertainty and instability.

Bauman (2011) attributes an extremely important role to changeability in the 21st century, making this category one of the most important elements of the contemporary world. "In short, our world, the world of liquid modernity, constantly surprises us: what seems certain and in the right place today may already turn out to be a pitiful mistake tomorrow; something flimsy and ridiculous. We suspect that this may happen, and so we feel that, like the world that is our home, we too, its inhabitants, and from time to time its designers, actors, users and victims, must be constantly prepared for change; we must be, as is fashionable to say these days, 'flexible'" (Bauman, 2011, p. 6).

Change presented in this way is closely associated with a sense of uncertainty and confusion, a sense of not being able to keep up with processes. Szempruch (2012) points out that change can be equated with trauma, as it is associated with a disruption of the "normal course of social life" (Szempruch, 2012, p. 14), for which society as well as individuals are often unprepared. The changes that give rise to trauma are most often those that are "sudden, rapid, surprising, affecting various areas of life simultaneously, profound and radical; impacting values, rules and beliefs that are fundamental to a given collectivity" (Szempruch, 2012, p. 14).

Any change can create a sense of uncertainty and disrupt ontological security. "The changeability of the world, the changeability of values, the changeability of ideals and the glorification of change as a value have shaken the traditionally understood sense of ontological security" (Mamzer, 2008, p. 10), i.e. "the belief in a certain unchangeability of the cultural rules governing the social behaviour of subjects engaging in socio-cultural situations" (Mamzer, 2008, p. 164).

Historically (before the 20th century), the values in different societies evolved slowly. Their permanence was the cornerstone and building block of tradition. "An unshakeable value system was a fundamental variable in the processes of socialisation, providing the basis of the 'identity matrix' into which each new generation was pressed" (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009, p. 55). Yet, in postmodernity, change has become more frequent and has affected all areas of human life. As emphasised by Melosik and Szkudlarek (2009), "for the generation born in the early 1980s, change became a form of socialisation" (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009, p. 56). This does not mean, however, that a generation that experiences change from an early age can cope with changeability. The cultural relativism that has emerged in postmodernity has, on the one hand, freed the individual from the compulsion to adhere to a single cultural canon; however, on the other hand, it has forced the individual to make choices that are not necessarily definitive, which may make it difficult to achieve an internal balance. This kind of confusion, the lack of ontological security as a permanent cultural canon ordering social life, can lead to radicalisation (Mamzer, 2008),

the emergence of orthodox social movements and the resurgence of nationalist or even fascist movements.

Bauman (2011, pp. 6–7) points to another consequence of the change, which, especially in the context of education and the people involved in it, can be particularly acute. To keep up with the evolving world, people need information about the ongoing changes, which leads to a constant search for, and ultimately, to an excess of it. Citing James H. Morris, Szlendak (2013) argues that people have even begun to suffer from 'infobesity' – an information overload that makes it difficult or even impossible to distinguish what is important from that which is not.

That "[you] cannot step twice into the same river ... all things move on and nothing stands still" (Khan, 1979, p. 168) was already noted by Heraclitus of Ephesus; changeability is therefore inherent in the world order from time immemorial. Nevertheless, the world used to change slowly, with continuity taking precedence over changeability, whereas now it seems to be in flux and reality is becoming extremely fast (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009). The depth of changes has also gained a new dimension: "They cause radical transformations of institutions and environments, of social, economic, cultural and political processes, of human interactions, of the conditions, quality and style of human life, and of the ways and the lines along which individuals and collectivities construct their social identities" (Szymański, 2016, p. 13). Any change in our environment, in its socio-cultural plane, requires a change in ourselves. It is therefore a never-ending process in which one change entails another.

Education in the Face of the Challenges of Postmodernity

In the context of the issues presented, the impact of postmodernity on education must be raised. Bauman (2011) notes that it is negative. In a world ruled by consumption, learning and education are considered by many people to be a product. Education is no longer an element that enriches people, that opens them up to the unknown. Today, it is supposed to provide tangible benefits – usually a chance to secure specific employment or an increase in earnings. The usefulness of education is becoming one of the most important elements of learning, especially at universities and otherwise in tertiary education. Fields of study are becoming increasingly specialised, with the concept of *lifelong learning* becoming increasingly popular since the second half of the 20th century. Admittedly, education has been part of human life since the dawn of time (Alheit and Dausien, 2002), but postmodern changes (globalisation, industrial

development, social problems, e.g. ageing societies) are forcing it to be mainly "subordinated to the market, i.e. primarily vocational" (Semków, 2010, p. 16). There is therefore a growing importance of a focus on technology in education at the expense of humanistic pursuits.

Martha C. Nussbaum (2008) reached similar conclusions. She points out the danger of turning away from humanistic education (broadly understood as the shaping of critical thinking, empathy, an inclusive social attitude and a broad view beyond local optics) towards the education and training of technical skills, which are expected to produce tangible results for individuals and states in the future. Education conceived in this way not only creates obedient employees who will follow the orders of their superiors well, but also obedient citizens.

A similar concern is expressed by Robert Kwaśnica, who sees the overuse of instrumental thinking and the simultaneous suppression of reflective thinking as the cause of the crisis in education. Although both forms are needed in education, instrumental reasoning "has overstepped the boundaries of its natural place (the order of doing) and has taken over our thinking, which is not subject to its rules because it belongs to the order of understanding" (Kwaśnica, 2014, p. 251). The result has been a degradation of reflexivity. Guided by humanistic thinking, Kwaśnica (2014) points out that "the human, as a subject, has a pragmatic--discursive structure. As such, human experience is shaped in two perspectives: one is produced by intentional-rational action and the other by conversation (communicative action)" (Kwaśnica, 2014, p. 55). According to him, postmodern conditions mean that both types of thinking about education (the order of doing and of understanding) are in crisis and require a response. The response to the crisis of the order of doing should be the shaping of students' cognitive and technical autonomy, whereas the reaction to the crisis of understanding should be the broadly understood humanisation of students (Kwaśnica, 2014). Kwaśnica explains this as follows, quoting Michał Paweł Markowski: "Humanities shows us that there is no single dictionary with which we can explain the world, that there is no single overarching ideology [...] that we can use, that there exists no pre-emptively privileged set of symbolic representations that is more adequate than other sets. Humanities sensitises us to the fact that none of the dictionaries in circulation is definitive and can always be changed to another one that serves us better, one that corresponds better *not* to reality [...] but to our convictions, our beliefs, our dreams" (Markowski, 2014, pp. 70–80, as cited in Kwaśnica, 2014, p. 248). Humanities, therefore, are needed for people to be able to find their way through the maze of changes brought about by the postmodern context, to be able to build their identity on the "moved map" (Stopińska-Pająk, 2018b) of today's world, and to be able to look critically at the surrounding reality.

The frequency of change and its unpredictability in late modernity means that knowledge may no longer be a "reliable representation of the world" (Bauman, 2011, p. 152), as that which is taught at schools does not seem to keep up with this world; especially in the social dimension. As noted by Bauman (2011), "the world outside the school building has become completely different from that in which classical schools prepared their pupils for life" (2011, pp. 156–157). Postmodernism brought a shift away from a single truth towards a multiplicity of truths, and even gave rise to the phenomenon of post-truth (although the term is mainly used in relation to politics, it is hard not to notice that the phenomenon also impacts society and education).

Melosik (2011) states that "from a postmodern perspective, the modernist policy of 'truth distribution' is to be replaced by a policy of multiplying 'truth representation'" (2011, s. 67), in which everyone finds some justification for a particular position. These are not new problems for the school, but rather unresolved crises from the years of Poland's political transition. Zbigniew Kwieciński (1990) stated in his book published as early as 1990 that "the following paradox becomes the central educational issue: the more children and young people needed help in developing their intellectual and moral competencies, in acquiring a valuable identity in a world of cultural confusion, disintegration of ties and lack of acceptable axiological offers, the less such help could be provided by official institutions, professionally established for this purpose. The anti-developmental character of the functioning of schools and other educational institutions was becoming apparent" (1990, p. 6).

This unresolved dilemma, i.e. the cultural and social lag of the school in the face of progressive and accelerating change, is further exacerbated in postmodernity. Arguably, the school will never fully keep up with social change because, as a state institution focused on mass education, it aims to maintain the order existing in that state. Thus, one can agree with Magdalena Archacka's (2017) position when she presents the school as an apparatus of the state, i.e. "an institution in a relationship of unequivocal coherence with the strategy of the government and the truth about reality it produces" (2017, p. 22). The truth about reality can thus be as the government sees it. This is another example or argument pointing to the need for the presence of the humanities in school and higher education – they allow people to learn how to think critically.

Reflecting on the problems of contemporary Polish schooling, Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014c, p. 98) also remarks that it is dominated by a discourse of scientific knowledge (embedded in the positivist and modernist trends) – a discourse that is considered to be coherent, objective, allowing one to explain and understand but not to feel or experience. Such knowledge can be easily tested and evaluated.

Yet, modernist values are no longer compatible with the postmodern world. As noted by Bauman (2006), the indisputability of knowledge afforded the teachers a confirmation of their position and provided support for them, should anyone dare to question a given model and order of things. It was "a world of authorities: leaders who know better and teachers who tell you what to do" (Bauman, 2006, p. 98). Postmodernism has turned this arrangement upside down. "Authority no longer applies in postmodern pedagogy, nor is there any appeal to obedience, adherence to norms or following patterns, no commitment to contracts, no community between contractors. The predominant category in postmodern society is voluntariness" (Śliwerski, 1998, p. 362, as cited in Zieliński, 2012, p. 66).

Accordingly, the most important change seems to be the shift away from the traditional understanding of teacher authority, top-down assigned to this position, towards becoming an authority, which, as Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014c) puts it, can be regarded as "the professional task of the contemporary teacher" (2014c, p. 124); a task that has a beginning but no ultimate end since the authority gained can be easily lost.

It seems that the Polish school does not want to give up its role in making and assigning meanings (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009) and authoritatively stating what is right. However, I am not speaking against teachers here, as they themselves are entangled in the system and often have no say or opportunity to voice their opposition to education policy (even loud protests may not yield any results, as evidenced by the 2019 strikes). All this means that teachers have to face not only socio-cultural changes, but also 'emotion labour' due to emotions that are hidden, experienced individually and internally and arise from the clash between education policy and their own views (Benesch, 2017).

Melosik (2003) describes the above impacts of postmodernity on education in terms of opportunities and threats. These include: the loss of the teachers' institutional authority in favour of personal authority; the legitimisation of differences – cultural, ethnic, gender and religious – in the school classroom and thus the loss of the basis for imposing a single perspective on reality, and the restoration and meaningfulness of students' everyday lives and experiences (Melosik, 2003, p. 461).

A Discursive "Conclusion"

In summarising the consideration of the socio-cultural context of action, the relationship between postmodernity and education, and the phenomenon of change itself, a "discursive bracket" can be applied, allowing for the possibility

of unconscious elements that may influence the discourse. The word "conclusion" in the subsection title is deliberately put in quotation marks, as discourse is a beginning rather than an end – it is a becoming.

The discursive character of pedagogy is indicated by Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2011): "the basic assumption for perceiving pedagogy as a discursive discipline is the thesis that the social world is the result of interpretation processes, it is socially constructed" (2011, p. 315), whereas pedagogy itself "explores the world of meanings; explores the particular kind of social practice that is education. It does so always in the context of culture, time and place, i.e. history. It does so with an awareness of the subjects' involvement in this construction process. Each time, it negotiates – constructs its object of study – without reducing the possible approaches in this aspect. This is why it can be called a discursive discipline" (2011, p. 316). This framing of pedagogy and its research is made possible by the linguistic turn (Bieszczad, 2019) and the shift towards qualitative, critical and emancipatory research in pedagogy (Kwieciński, 2011). The processes of interpreting and negotiating meanings occur between different elements of discourse, through the mutual relations of these elements.

Relationships are particularly important for Ernesto Laclau (2005), who assigns them a prominent place in his theory of discourse. "By discourse [...] I do not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which relations play the constitutive role. This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it" (Laclau, 2005, p. 68, as cited in Szkudlarek, 2008, p. 127). These words are vital from the point of view of the specific discursive situation, as well as the analysis of the discourse under study. Laclau (2005) shows that understanding discourse only as a text, whether written or spoken, is incomplete, and thus can significantly limit or even distort the reception of a message or communication. The 'elements' mentioned earlier are, for Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, "differences located within the discursive field, but still unconnected in a discursive way" (Przyłęcki, 2013, p. 15). Only through the process of articulation, understood as "the connections between signs that contribute to their coherence or differentiation" (Sousa and Magalahaes, 2018, p. 136), is a new identity created. Importantly, Laclau and Mouffe do not consider identity to be a fixed whole that, once constituted, remains unchanged – conversely, any change within the elements leads to a change in identity, making its relational nature visible (Przyłęcki, 2013, p. 14).

In my view, identity can also be understood as self-consciousness, as an attitude adopted by the participants in a discourse. Relationships, on the other hand, are the arrangement of social roles they adopt. For this reason, one must not

overlook the social context in which the persons involved in the communicative act are immersed: it remains in a continuous relationship with language, that is, what we say and how we say it. This thought expresses a "sociologically oriented discourse analysis" (Dobrołowicz, 2016, p. 40), through which the analysed reality or a particular fragment of it can be described and explained. A step forward is recognising that "the social world is socially constructed, and that discourse has causal power in social constructions" (Dobrołowicz, 2016, p. 42), which is a fundamental argument of social constructivism and critical discourse analysis. Margareth Wetherell (1998) notes that the distinction between discursive and post-discursive, or between speech and the world, makes no sense for Laclau and Mouffe as all social space is discursive; it is a field of meaning-making from which social actors emerge.

The most important aim of this chapter was to outline the context of the present time – the time in which the participants in my research operate. It is impossible to separate them from a particular action, as an analysis of a given situation and an attempt to understand the participants would then be incomplete. Their actions are a response to the socio-cultural context in which they live. As such, to understand them fully, one must try to understand their world as well.

3

The Social and Professional Roles of Teachers as an Unfinished Project in the Postmodern World

The previous chapter presented the socio-cultural context in which social individuals exist and interact with themselves and others. Considering the social changes described earlier, this chapter presents – in terms partly rooted in sociology – a proprietary understanding of the professional role prescription of the teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes who participated in my research.

Role – Understanding the Problem

As Jolanta Szempruch notes, the concept of professional roles of teachers is understood ambiguously, although "[t]he dominant view today is that a social role is a link between personality, culture and social structure" (Szempruch, 2012, p. 177). Barbara Kutrowska states that "[w]ith its complexity and multiple determinants, the social role mediates between society and personality, being the inner and outer world of the individual" (Kutrowska, 2008, p. 53).

Social roles can be described from a functional-structural and interactional perspective (Szacka, 2003). The first approach is based on indicating the functions a person is expected to perform in response to specific social demands, making social reality orderly, stable and predictable. It has been described in this way by American sociologists, including Ralph Linton and Robert Merton (Sztompka, 2010). "In the functional-structural approach, roles are something external to the person, a kind of socially created ready-made clothes or rather corsets that the person chooses or is forced to wear. Construed in this way, a role makes it possible to consider the collective as an arrangement of roles, rather than as a collection of individuals. Individuals may exchange, while the arrangement of positions and roles remains essentially unchanged and it is this arrangement that creates the structure of the collectivity" (Szacka, 2003, p. 147).

The normative nature of the functional-structural approach is one of the main objects of contention between the proponents of conventional (functional--structural) versus interpretive (interactional) role theory. As the name suggests, roles in the interactional approach are closely related to symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 2007; Hałas, 2006, 2007; Hewitt, 1997). The conventional approach was criticised by such scholars as Ralph Herbert Turner, who argued that social reality is dynamic rather than static, not always predictable and complex, and that consequently "social roles are not adopted by people in some finished, completed form, but rather are created and modified in processes of interaction with others who also perform a variety of changing roles" (Łoś, 1985, p. 126).

The interactional approach, which describes roles as "socially shared, abstract categories of types of people that one uses to organise one's own behaviour" (Hałas, 2006, p. 246), is part of an understanding of society as a constructivist expression, a creation in constant becoming, changing under the influence of the meanings and senses given by its participants. Equally importantly, in structural theory, roles are pre-existing with respect to the individual who is supposed to fulfil them, whereas interactional role theory sees the issue in the opposite way. "Unlike the various structural theories, *interactional* role theory begins with patterns of social interaction between individuals and groups of individuals" (Turner, 2001, p. 234).

Linton (Łoś, 1985), who was mainly concerned with a normative approach to social roles, acknowledged that such a view of roles is applicable to traditional societies but not in describing modern societies, which are increasingly unstructured and prone to change. As such, I agree that the interactional approach to social roles is more in line with reality and is an interesting and inspiring research category. In a changing world, each social role seems to undergo an evolution; it does not persist in one fixed pattern.

Table 5 presents subjectively selected elements of role theory[1] as described by R. Linton, R. Merton, G.H. Mead and Ralph H. Turner. It is limited only to the aforementioned sociologists, as their depictions of social roles seem to be the most diverse, providing a good starting point for further discussion.

1 I use the term 'role theory', but I am aware that sociologists question its scientific character (Kawka, 1998). Notably, there is also a group of researchers who adopt a combined view of social roles, intertwining elements of normative and interactional theory (see Hewitt, 1997).

TABLE 5. SOCIAL ROLE THEORIES

Comparative categories	**Role theory – normative – conventional – functional-structural**	**Role theory – interpretive – interactional**
Researchers	Ralph Linton Robert Merton	George Herbert Mead Ralph Herbert Turner
Understanding	"a role is culturally defined and recognised as a normative prescription for the behaviour of a person occupying a given social position. Culture contains ideal patterns of relationships, enabling anticipation and interaction" (Hałas, 2006, p. 226)	"Roles are understood as a set of behaviours forming a meaningful whole, inherent in a person having some status in society (e.g. doctor, father), holding some position informally in interpersonal relations (e.g. leader or negotiator), or a set of behaviours inherent to a person identified with a value in society (e.g. an honest person or a patriot)" (Turner, n.d., p. 316, as cited in Hałas, 2006, p. 246)
Position	– an element of an ordered social structure, – external to the individual.	– an element of society in the process of 'becoming', – created by humans in the process of interaction.
Research questions	What roles are assigned? Are they fulfilled, and to what extent?	How are the roles played, modified, created?
Research interests	– prohibitions, orders and rigid role regulations, – social structure research.	– the margin of freedom of the role played, – research into individuals and their development.
Role structure	– repetitive, pattern-based, standard, – reproducible.	– individual, modifiable, variable, – creative, pragmatic.
Expectations	– defined, specified, assigned; forming a baseline for the role's performance.	– the possibility of assuming the role of another; the possibility of freely creating a role.

Source: own elaboration based on Arczewska, M. (2009). *Role społeczne sędziów rodzinnych*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego; Hałas, E. (2006). *Interakcjonizm symboliczny. Społeczny kontekst znaczeń*. Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN; Łoś, M. (1985). „Role społeczne" w nowej roli. In: E. Mokrzycki, M. Ofierska, J. Szacki (eds.), *O społeczeństwie i teorii społecznej. Księga poświęcona pamięci Stanisława Ossowskiego*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN; Szacka, B. (2003). *Wprowadzenie do socjologii*. Oficyna Naukowa.

I would like to juxtapose the presented approaches to social roles (in normative and interpretative terms) with Kazimierz Obuchowski's (1993) concept of objectivity and subjectivity. Table 6 presents the criteria that differentiate them. For the social roles discussed here, the most important ones include conditions, individual vs. society, source, knowledge, culture, codes and social participation.

Even a basic analysis of these elements shows that there is an object standard behind the normative approach to social roles, while the interactional concept of social roles is linked to the subject standard. As Obuchowski (Sajdak, 2013) explains, in line with the object standard, individuals will judge themselves positively when they fulfil the conditions of their ascribed role (assigned socially

and externally, inherited and belonging to a given social position), when the goals of their actions align with their commitments, and when the world in which they move is a space for action.

On the other hand, there is the subject approach, in which people evaluate themselves according to whether and to what extent they are the source of their actions, and the goals they set for themselves are evaluated based on whether and to what extent they are the object of their intentions. People also evaluate whether and to what extent the world provides opportunities to take advantage of individual possibilities. As one can see, the object standard is linked to a normative approach to social roles, with the individual adapting to the situation at hand; the subject standard, on the other hand, is closer to an interactional approach in which the individual is a creative maker.

TABLE 6. SUBJECT AND OBJECT STANDARD – A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Differentiation criterion	**Object standard**	**Subject standard**
1	2	3
Psychology	– the psychology of adjustment, – homeostasis, – biological heritage.	– humanistic psychology, – individualism, – a preference for mental abilities, human capabilities.
Conditions	– the external conditions of an individual's existence.	– the internal conditions of an individual's existence.
Individual vs. society	– the precedence of the interests of society and its representative institutions over the interests of the individual.	– the precedence of the values and interests of the individual over those of society and its representative institutions.
Source	– a standard is mechanically learned, introduced into the mind from outside.	– a product of the individual; it comes from within.
Standard content	– stereotypes about issues of importance to the community, – roles ascribed to the individual (responsibilities, behaviour patterns, language formulas, assessment patterns, etc.), – no need to understand the standard.	– the result of an intellectual view of the world, – the fulfilment of the individual's personal, individual tasks.
Knowledge	– introduced from outside, learned mechanically, framed in stereotypes; lack of orientation towards reflection, – the assessment is not subject to revision, – 'cold' knowledge, preferring stable and unambiguous facts, – a focus on knowledge reproduction and accumulation of experience.	– the result of one's own judgement, one's own reasoning, – a focus on reflection, – distance from one's own judgements, – 'hot' knowledge – emotionally and personally charged, – a focus on creative activity and knowledge production.

Differentiation criterion	Object standard	Subject standard
1	2	3
Freedom	– limiting intentional human freedom; shifting responsibility to institutions, – the supreme value is obedience, the submission of the individual to external role models.	– choice and responsibility constitute human freedom, – the absolute relationship of the categories of subjectivity, freedom and responsibility.
Change, development mechanism	– mechanical adaptation, obedience, compliance.	– creative adaptation.
Good–evil assessment	– the good vs. evil assessment is arbitrary, based on stereotypes, not subject to verification.	– the good vs. evil assessments are based on an analysis of the meaning of the current situation and are constantly revised.
Culture	– the culture of the object, – the imperative to reproduce cultural patterns, – the imperative to fulfil the role assigned to the individual.	– the culture of the subject, – creative activity.
Codes	– the concrete codes, serving to reproduce mental representations of the world, are dominant, – they are carriers of concrete experiences, – they enable representations to be constructed.	– the hierarchical codes, serving to abstract the world and making the individual independent of the control of experience, are predominant, – they are carriers of knowledge on the processing of information captured by hierarchical concepts, – they enable the construction of arbitrary models of reality and thus concepts of the world.
Social participation	– adaptation or non-adaptation, – meeting or not meeting the criteria for positive social assessments, – competition.	– creative participation; consciously taking part in the ongoing changes, staying ahead of them, – cooperation and the ability to negotiate.

Source: Sajdak, A. (2013). *Paradygmaty kształcenia studentów i wspierania rozwoju nauczycieli akademickich. Teoretyczne podstawy dydaktyki akademickiej* (pp. 155–156). Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

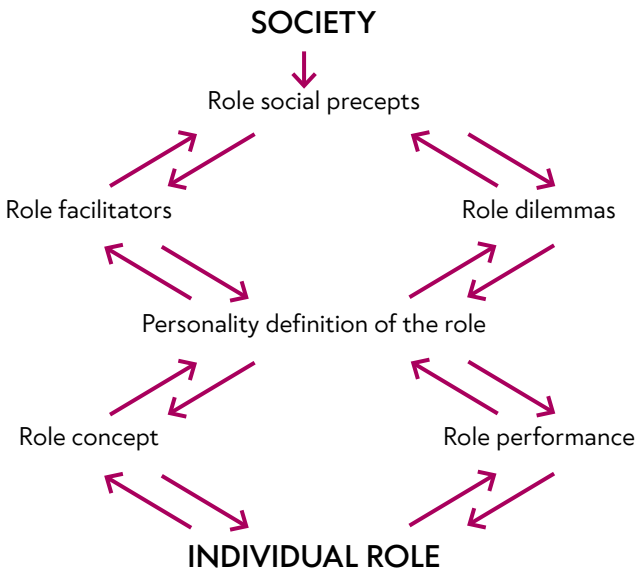
Looking at social roles from the point of view of their place and the different understanding of this place in the social structure is by no means exhaustive as regards the description of the specificity of the teachers' social role. Irrespective of the perspective adopted, teachers play or shape their roles in different ways. As such, researchers also undertake reflections on personality and its relation to social role (Szacka, 2003). Importantly, this interaction is reciprocal.

Such a view is presented by Krzysztof Rubacha (2000). In his concept of the social role of teachers, built on Daniel J. Levinson's individual role theory (Rubacha, 2000; Chomczyńska-Rubacha and Rubacha, 2007), he introduces the personality factor into the considerations. Rubacha (2000) does not advocate framing social roles in normative or interactional terms – his model involves a transition from society (along with the social imperatives of the role), through a personality-based definition of the role, to an individual role (Figure 1.)

In the teaching profession, this transition is a regular, renewable and iterative process, especially since, as Rubacha (2000) points out, the social role of teachers is a heuristic one. A single question thus becomes a trigger for subsequent steps on the way to a better understanding of oneself, including in relation to the world and others.

The final individual role "is the product of the social precepts of the role and the individual's subjective interpretation of its prescription" (Rubacha, 2000, p. 103). The social precepts of the role are understood as rules (formal and informal – not written down, but fixed in the social consciousness) and requirements regulating a person's behaviour, originating from various social groups, e.g. the ministry, the management of the institution employing the teachers or the very subject being taught. Within this category are the role facilitators (the specific cultural capital and technical skills of the teachers strengthening their identification with the role imperatives) and the role dilemmas (the various circumstances affecting role fulfilment, including role conflicts) (Rubacha, 2000). The next level in the structure of the individual role is the 'personality definition of the role', in which what arises from the social precepts of the role is "internalised by the individual, becoming elements of their personality structure" (Szmatka, 1989, p. 196).

FIGURE 1. INDIVIDUAL ROLE STRUCTURE



Source: Rubacha, K. (2000). *Pełnienie roli nauczyciela a realizacja zadań rozwojowych w okresie wczesnej dorosłości* (p. 102). Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika.

Not all social imperatives are internalised, however, because all individuals have a self, their own socio-cultural capital and value system, which means that each personality version of the role will take on an individualistic character. This process requires "the individual to adapt the role to the personality and the personality to the role. In the process, individuals have to construct a vision of themselves in the role" (Rubacha, 2000, p. 120). At this level, two dimensions of this process can be distinguished: the ideational dimension, i.e. the role concept construed as a kind of personal definition, using specific pedagogical theories, and the behavioural dimension (i.e. 'role performance'), involving the actual, concrete action of the teachers, which, to varying degrees, may be consistent with their concept of teaching (Rubacha, 2000).

Rubacha (2000) concludes that the individual social role is dualistic, both in a structural sense (the division between the role social precepts and the personality definition) and in a functional sense. In the latter case, there is an interaction between the individual's behaviour and the subjective dimension of the role: the role may determine the individual's actions and choices, but sometimes the social precepts may be interpreted individualistically. Therefore, an individual role has a modal dimension (common or universal to the performers of the role) and an individual (unitary) dimension (Chomczyńska-Rubacha and Rubacha, 2007).

Returning to the originally outlined picture of roles, i.e. the breakdown into normative and interpretivist, one can see that in the case of the description of the teaching profession we are dealing with a process of continuous becoming. Despite starting from the normative role prescriptions, the specific nature of this profession makes it impossible to conclude the process at this stage. Moreover, a social role subjected to an individual's interpretation changes and returns to society, once again interacting with and changing social norms (e.g. socially ingrained knowledge of a profession). Thus, "from the perspective of the institutional order, the roles appear as institutional representations and mediations of the institutionally objectivated aggregates of knowledge" (Berger and Luckmann, 1983, p. 130) and, on the other hand, "each role carries with it a socially defined appendage of knowledge" (Berger and Luckmann, 1983, p. 130). This process (the relationship between social roles and social knowledge, their interdependence and co-creation) seems to be particularly tangible in relation to teachers, as well as their social and professional roles.

Teachers – Between Teaching and Learning

Knowledge seems to be one of the intrinsic attributes of teachers – as research shows, the demands on educators in terms of subject or didactic knowledge are high (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2008a). Equally important is knowledge about the world (rooted in pedagogy, psychology, sociology), which is essential for the shaping of an individual professional role. This kind of experience-building knowledge must be acquired by each teacher independently[2]. Like Illeris (2006), I consider experience broadly in this respect – as including content and cognitive components, an emotional component and a social component – while assuming that certain aspects of learning must be important to the learner. I would therefore like to attempt to answer the question of what a person – especially a teacher – learns to consciously shape their individual professional role.

Learning can be understood and examined from many points of view. The understanding of the term in this dissertation is consistent with the approach of Wiesław Łukaszewski (1984), who describes learning "as forms of recording experience in human memory" (1984, p. 200). This is consistent with Illeris' (2006) view presented above. Thanks to "the experience accumulation effect, as well as the fact that the learning outcomes already attained retrospectively modify both the course and the results of further learning, a person reaches what can be called a personality base" (Łukaszewski, 1984, p. 200).

Among the elements that build knowledge and experience, Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b) identified three categories and, giving them a contemporary twist, developed the concept of a triad of professional teacher knowledge necessary for teachers to shape and perform a satisfying professional role (Table 7).

2 The issue of adult learning and the concept of lifelong learning were described in a number of theories, particularly those developed in the 20th century after the establishment of andragogy as a sub-discipline of pedagogy. Nonetheless, it is vital to mention that, as shown by Agnieszka Stopińska-Pająk (2018a), the roots of adult education (including in Poland) date as far back as the 16th century, and the 19th century saw the publication of many pioneering works pointing to the need for lifelong learning and efforts aimed at adult education. One example is the Flying University, a project aimed mainly at adult women, who were unable to access university education at the turn of the 20th century. The importance of adult learning is increasing with the transition from modern society to postmodernity (Malewski, 2010).

TABLE 7. TRIAD OF TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge	Content scope
"about the world"	– cultural, anthropological and philosophical issues, – the sociological descriptions of the present day, – the place, goals and functioning of state and social institutions (including, above all, educational institutions), – the types and roles of ideologies in social life (especially the role and significance of educational ideologies), – descriptions, characteristics, specificity, social location, developmental blockages and opportunities of different social groups, – a description of threats, – areas and dimensions of crisis in the present and the present as a time of crisis.
"about the 'I–world' relations"	– understanding the processes of upbringing and education in the modern world, – the role and functions that education plays in the life of societies and the existence of individuals, – a description of the types of interpersonal relationships and the processes governing these relationships, – theories of social communication, – theories of influencing people, – contemporary trends and theories of education and teaching, development and mass culture, together with the stereotype positioned within it.
"about oneself (self-knowledge of the teacher)"	– the knowledge and ability to recognise, name and master one's emotions, fears, – meeting needs, – recognising motivations and life goals, – revealing one's assumptions and intentions during a pedagogical action, – the ability to analyse one's situation, – having one's own ways of making sense of the world.

Source: compiled based on Nowak-Dziemianowicz, M. (2014b). *Oblicza edukacji. Między pozorami a refleksyjną zmianą* (pp. 186–187). Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.

As emphasised by Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2008a), the discussed triad of teacher knowledge applies to two areas of experience: practical-moral knowledge and technical knowledge; in turn, Robert Kwaśnica (2007) links it to the notions of communicative action (having emancipatory power) and instrumental action (expressing adaptive rationality).

Practical-moral knowledge allows teachers to:

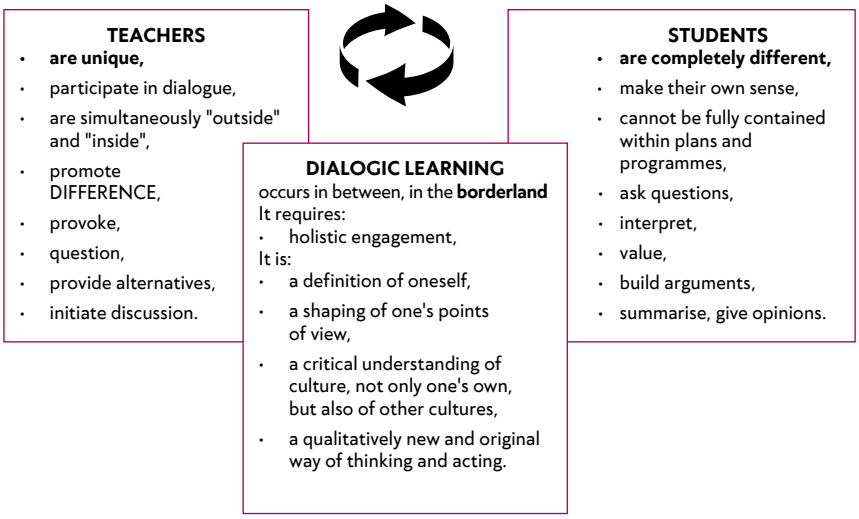
- derive a holistic vision of the world, which gives them an understanding of the world and their place in it,
- learn the rules for the constitution of meaning, provide moral principles and regulate behaviour towards themselves and others,
- enable dialogic communication with other people.

Technical knowledge allows teachers to:

- see the goals to be achieved,
- learn the methods to achieve these goals,
- identify the means and prerequisites that condition the achievement of the goals (Kwaśnica, 2003, p. 299).

The dialogic communication referred to above is presented by Kwaśnica (2003) in terms of dialogical pedagogy (Figure 2), in which dialogue has a broader meaning than just conversation.

FIGURE 2. DIALOGIC LEARNING



Source: Gołębniak, B.D., Zamorska, B. (2014). *Nowy profesjonalizm nauczycieli. Podejścia – praktyka – przestrzeń rozwoju* (p. 82). Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.

Dialogue in this sense allows teachers to teach and learn, as they do not direct the dialogue but participate in it. At the same time, they are inside and outside the educational situation, inspire discussion, do not have the final say in it and do not introduce the recognised canons of knowledge but promote an individual approach to and interpretation of them, as well as improvise; this is because dialogue construed in this way does not lead to a predetermined goal but rather into the unknown (Gołębniak and Zamorska, 2014).

In the second chapter, I described contemporary contexts that present humans with many challenges. Yet, it seems that teachers are in a particularly complicated situation. On the one hand, just like any other human, they need knowledge about the world to move freely in it; on the other, this knowledge is essential for them to be able to shape their professional role. Society is, after all, the starting point for role prescriptions and expectations rooted in the collective consciousness. Knowledge of the world is therefore essential to know what to look for and how to read (in this context, *how* does not mean a single 'correct' version of reading and understanding, but an openness to and awareness of possible interpretations).

Responding to expectations requires knowledge of the 'I–world' relations. As noted by Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2008a), teachers can respond to this from three perspectives: the knower (sending a persuasive message aimed at inducing a change in the student), the interlocutor (treating otherness as a task to be accomplished) and the listener (allowing the student to speak). One cannot help but notice that, once again, it is language – both spoken but also listened to, the language used by the Other – that has an extremely high status. It is an element of creation and cognition, understanding, symbol and community. Where the other party does not understand the language and the symbols it contains, there is no dialogue, understanding or cognitive exchange. The world of the teachers and the world of the pupils must find a point of contact (talking and listening) if education and upbringing is to take place there.

The listener's position does not only involve allowing the Other to speak but also to be able to "generate a transgressive opening to the opaque dimensions of the self" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2008a, p. 141). Thanks to someone else's speech, the 'I' changes, transcends boundaries it might not even have known about, building up its self-knowledge – the third knowledge type identified by Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b) in Table 7. Knowing the truth about oneself, one's emotions, views, values, one's own understanding of the world and the meaning one gives to it, the teacher builds and increases one's autonomy, which is essential for creating a satisfying professional role.

The three dimensions of knowledge acquired during teaching practice are complementary, forming the basis of the next category – after all, without knowledge of the world, there is no 'I–world' knowledge, and without the latter, there is no self-knowledge (or it is limited).

Autonomy, which is the result of teachers acquiring different types of knowledge, unifies the professional role as outlined by Robert Kwaśnica (2003). In his concept of the development of the professional role of teachers, based on a logic of change derived from Lawrence Kohlberg, autonomy (also called autonomous identity) is a central element of the third and final stage of development. As noted by Kwaśnica (2003), autonomy "in this case means – on the one hand – critically distancing oneself from all patterns of thought and behaviour imposed on the individuals by their social and cultural environment, and on the other hand, searching for one's own way of being and remaining faithful to one's own concept of the world and one's own understanding of those norms and values which are recognised as the socio-cultural heritage that produces and sustains the communicative community to which one belongs" (2003, p. 306). In this understanding of autonomy, one can easily find the three types of knowledge discussed by Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b).

The aforementioned stages of professional role development, described by Kwaśnica (2003, pp. 306–308), are divided into pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. In the first stage of entering the professional role, the teachers rely on copying existing patterns to ensure that their conduct is acceptable. This behaviour results from a lack of full awareness of conventions; this awareness only appears in the next stage of development.

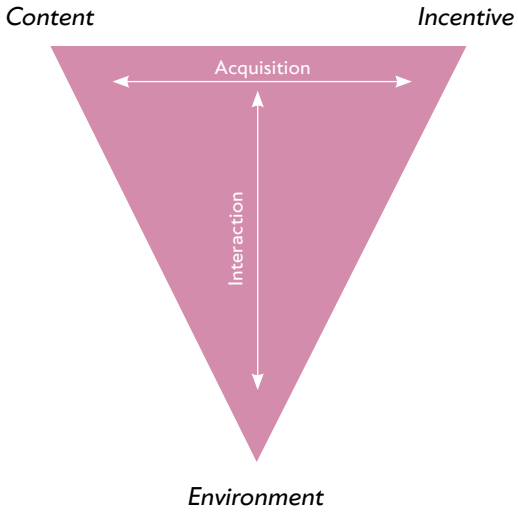
The conventional stage is the development of the professional role, in which the teacher fully adapts to the role prescription, its justifications (coming from outside) and accepts the convention. Any changes or modifications to the understanding and performance of the role are limited to the realm of implementation, i.e. technical knowledge, with no questions of a practical-moral or emancipatory nature being raised. Research shows that almost 65% of teachers remain at this stage of professional role development without reaching the final stage (Kwiatkowska, 2008, p. 211).

Reaching the post-conventional stage of professional role development involves posing critical questions aimed at discovering the true sources and motives behind specific conventions and role prescriptions. It also involves reflective questions about making sense of and ultimately creating "one's own personal concept of understanding educational reality and one's own ways of acting in that reality" (Kwaśnica, 2003, p. 308). The knowledge that a teacher acquires, or rather the process by which this is done, can be called a 'subject-forming' activity that contributes to the development of personality.

Apart from Kwaśnica's considerations, the theory of the three dimensions of learning, as described by Illeris (2006; 2018), is also intriguing in this context. By considering not only the psychological side of this process, but also all the conditions that influence it, Illeris' approach serves for me as an open research context for the broad topic of teacher learning.

Illeris distinguishes between two main learning processes: the interaction between the learners and their environment (indirect and mediated) and the internal mental processes of assimilation, processing and acquisition of knowledge (it is difficult not to find links here to symbolic interactionism, for which interaction is the basis of the meanings people assign to the social reality around them). Through signs and symbols, our knowledge is constructed and potentially reconstructed in the face of new interaction. Illeris (2018) emphasises that both of these processes must be activated for learning to take place. They form and fill the framework of the three dimensions of learning, as presented in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. BASIC PROCESSES VS. THE LEARNING TENSION FIELD



Source: own elaboration based on Illeris, K. (2018). A comprehensive understanding of human learning. In: K. Illeris (ed.), *Contemporary Theories of Learning. Learning Theorists In Their Own Words* (p. 3). Routledge; and Illeris, K. (2006). *The Three Dimensions of Learning. Contemporary Learning Theory in the Tension Field between the Cognitive, the Emotional and the Social* (p. 26). Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.

In this construct, cognition, emotion and society constitute three dimensions, three tension fields that, in the process of the individual's interaction with society and their acquisition of knowledge, must always be linked if learning is to occur. Cognition, also discussed by Illeris (2018), refers to that which is acquired; it can be knowledge or skills, opinions, meanings, attitudes, values, strategies and many other elements that build an individual's awareness and understanding. The emotional dimension, on the other hand, includes elements such as feelings, emotions, motivation and the will of the learner (Illeris, 2018). The social dimension of learning has to do both with the fact that each instance of learning, each learning individual, is immersed in a specific social and historical context and that they grow out of a context, a social structure, which cannot be overlooked in the learning process (Illeris, 2006).

The concept of learning proposed by Illeris is constructivist in nature, as it assumes that "a person constructs his or her own understanding of the world around him or her through learning and knowledge" (Illeris, 2006, p. 34). Inspired by Jean Piaget, Illeris (2006) assumes that there are four types of learning (the cognitive dimension of learning). These are cumulative learning (mechanical, with no connection to previously acquired knowledge), assimilative learning (learning by addition, involving the adaptation of pre-established structures

to emerging conditions), accommodative learning (transcendent learning, involving the reconstruction of pre-established structures through the complete breakdown or softening of meaning relations and, ultimately, their reorganisation) and transformative learning (a type of complex accommodation, occurring in a crisis, which triggers a change within the learner's 'Self', reconstructing their ways of understanding and acting) (Stochmiałek, 2012).

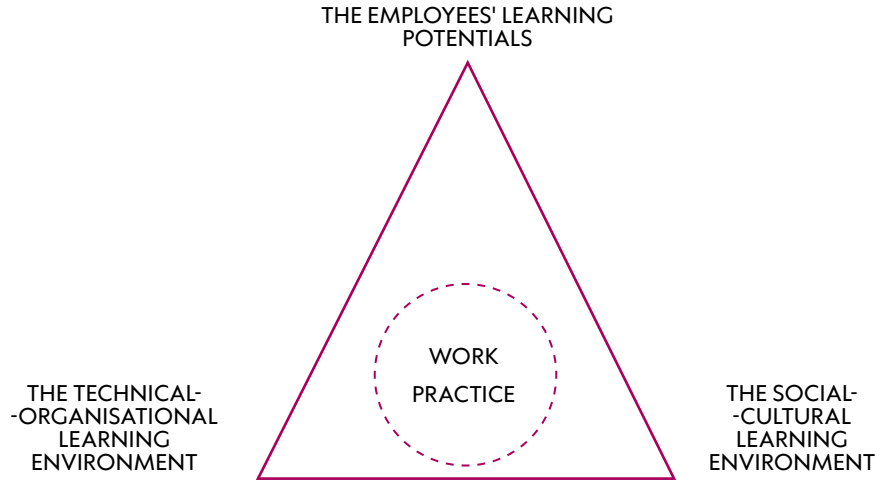
In presenting his concept, Illeris (2006) also describes the distinctive features of adult learning, which usually takes place outside formal education. Just as children learn to discover the world around them, and young people do so to construct their identities, adults learn to pursue life goals relating to such areas of life as family, career, hobbies and other activities.

I believe that for adults, especially teachers, education – as phrased by Krzysztof Maliszewski (2011), citing Mieczysław Malewski – "as learning, ceases to be an activity separated from life and becomes an integral part as a reflective interpretation of the components of existence at work, among loved ones, in social contacts" (Maliszewski, 2011, pp. 34–35). The context of workplace learning, as referred to above, is particularly important for teachers, as this is where they draw much of the information from which they construct the knowledge they need. This is because learning always takes place in a specific space (an organisation in which the person is employed), which may be more or less favourable. The learning process also takes place in a specific time and socio-cultural dimension.

As in the case of the three dimensions of learning, Illeris (2011) also frames the issue in terms of the tension between the three points in the model of learning at work and in working life[3]. Figure 4 shows a basic version of the model in question.

3 It must be mentioned that this model originates from the work of Christian Helms Jørgensen and Niels Warring in 2002 (Illeris et al., 2011, p. 30); however, Illeris, in collaboration with a group of researchers, made some important changes to it, such as rearranging the vertices of the triangle, and broadening the meaning of each of the categories originally given by their predecessors.

FIGURE 4. THE WORKING LIFE LEARNING MODEL



Source: Illeris, K. et al (2011). *Learning in Working Life* (s. 46). Roskilde University Press.

The three vertices of the triangle presenting the dimensions of learning in working life are the employees' learning potentials, the technical-organisational learning environment and the social-cultural learning environment. As can be seen, the working life learning triangle is inverted in comparison to that presenting the three learning dimensions (see Figure 3). In both cases, however, society and environment are at the base, whereas the upper part is reserved for the individual and has a unique dimension. This is important because, in the process of developing the concept, Illeris (2011) combines the two models into one with a holistic character – it is presented further in the subsection.

As a dynamic process and a relationship between the learning capacity of employees, the technical-organisational environment and the socio-cultural environment, learning is construed, according to Jürgen Habermas, as a tension between the system and the world of life, between the individual and society and between the subject and the market. Moreover, workplace learning has to be understood more broadly than just learning during work in the sense of mere hours spent at an organisation – learning can also occur in contexts not directly related to work, for example, in more private settings (Illeris et al., 2011).

As already mentioned, the technical-organisational learning environment and the socio-cultural learning environment form the social level; however, the two dimensions are described in separate categories. The first dimension encompasses six categories of understanding of this part of the work environment:

- the division of labour (this is the organisational form of the place, corresponding to the extent to which the arrangement in an organisation, e.g. hierarchical or horizontal, allows for learning, freedom to decide on one's own duties or to look at one's work outside the box – as having a specific purpose, even if one's specific work is one of many elements building the whole of the final product);
- the work content (determines the meanings that are given to the work; however, crucially, the individual meanings people give to their work do not always correspond to the social stratification of the work. On the other hand, employees can also learn something about their positions and roles in society precisely by referring to this stratification. The content of the work (depending on whether the person works with other people or not) may offer the possibility to acquire other knowledge and build further competencies);
- the possibilities for making decisions (this category describes the extent of freedom and autonomy at work, which largely translates into the conclusion that the higher the position at work, the greater the autonomy and the wider the learning opportunities);
- the possibilites for using qualifications in the work (this category is related to the profile of the specific organisation) and the matching of the job with the qualifications of individual employees. This category is affected by a paradox: on the one hand, there is an increase in the requirements for employees' qualifications, and on the other, there is a trend towards the unification of requirements, which is hardly conducive to the development of individual competencies and learning;
- the possibilities for social interactions (this concept refers to the idea that learning is social; it happens during interaction, exchange of ideas, experiences or negotiation of meanings between employees);
- the stresses and strains of the work (this indicates that the greater the stress and hardship of work, the fewer the opportunities for learning; at the same time, however, work must be challenging to stimulate the desire to learn) (Illeris et al., 2011, pp. 31–35).

The presented phenomena, which occur in the technical-organisational work environment, create both challenges and opportunities for learning. Nevertheless, as Illeris (2011) points out, while these are elements of learning opportunities, they say nothing about what employees actually learn.

The second element that creates the social level of learning is the socio-cultural environment. The links between the individual and society, as well as culture

and the learning process, are undeniable. Viewing society from a workplace-specific standpoint, three categories have been identified that are important in the learning process:

- communities of work (they are of great importance as a source of support and recognition on a personal and emotional level, and are usually created around a shared task or work organisation. Though learning in communities is mainly about being more effective, it can also have a creative dimension);
- political communities (they focus on such issues as power, control and influence. They include organisations established by employees, such as trade unions, which can enable the learning of norms and shared values, solidarity, resistance and a struggle for recognition, not only within the organisation but also, for example, in relation to local communities or society in general);
- cultural communities (they are grounded in converging values, ideals, norms or world views, or are organised around traditional socio-cultural categories such as gender, age and origin, whether social or ethnic. Culture may lead to unification, but it can also be a source of conflict; however, it can be a source of cognition, openness and tolerance as well) (Illeris et al., 2011, pp. 36–39).

The presented categories of learning in working life, forming the level of the socio-cultural environment, are based on interpreting and reinterpreting changes in the surrounding world of the three levels (working, political and cultural) of shared assumptions and values (Illeris et al., 2011, p. 40).

The final vertex of the working life learning model represents the individual level of the process. In this respect, Illeris (2011) identifies three groups of factors, which, however, often occur in very close contact and are intertwined. These include:

- social background (this category is one of the broadest in meaning, as it can refer to the conditions in which a person grew up in terms of social class, the gender and culture with which they interacted, or the generation of people in their environment. Experience can also result from the development of the personality during active interaction with the social environment);
- education (workplace learning opportunities and general attitudes towards learning are largely dependent on previous experiences, most often with formal education. Researchers link the understanding

of this category and the category of social experience to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social and economic capital);
- work experience (to a large extent, this category is understood as an active and passive adaptation of attitudes and expectations about work. Work experience also contributes to the construction of the meaning of one's work, the construction of one's identity and one's professional self-awareness, which, in today's times of frequent and sudden change, means that employees often have to redefine themselves in the face of change or stay with their existing identity despite change) (Illeris et al., 2011, pp. 40–43).

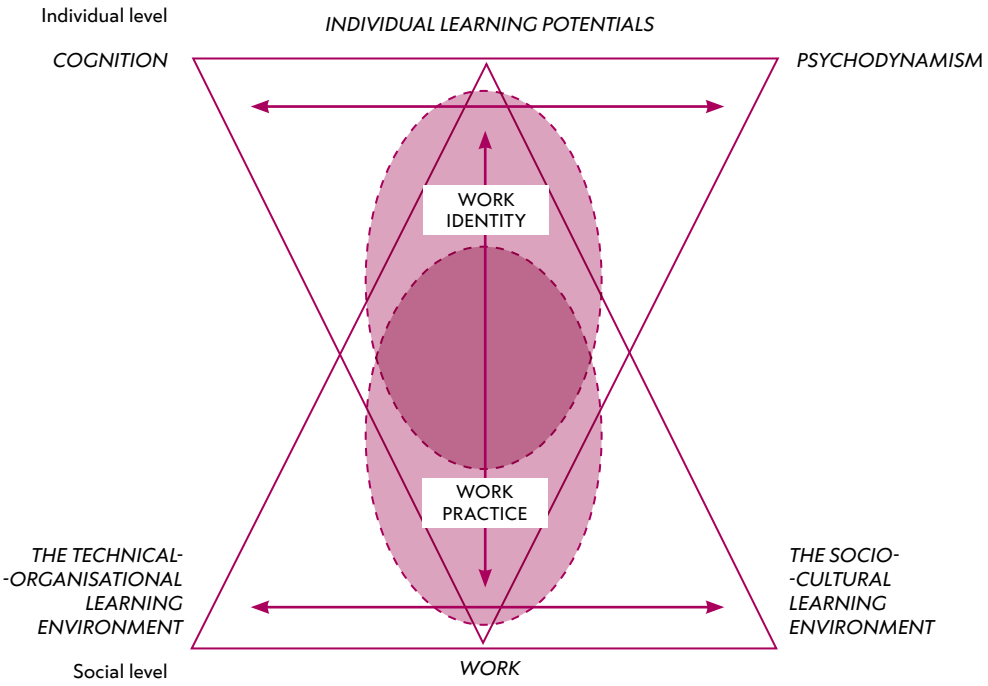
The validity of these three elements of workplace learning opportunities is also expressed in the fact that "[t]here is not a single 'point' in our experience that has its origin outside the social. Our reason, our ways of criticising, our visions and utopias, are always rooted somewhere and in something. One cannot leap beyond one's own biography and identity (however decentralised), beyond socialisation. One cannot dismiss the millions of seconds and micro-events that have given shape to one's 'Self'. Any theory we create is therefore condemned to the particularity of our biography, its randomness and conditionality. It is an expression of what has happened to us" (Melosik and Szkudlarek, 2009, pp. 33–34). Our biographies (both that which is social and that which is individual) are therefore highly relevant to every aspect of life, including workplace learning, in terms of what we learn, how we relate to it and how this knowledge will affect us later.

The aforementioned elements of the three vertices broadly define learning as "the set of conditions and circumstances that initiate the process, thus determining whether a learning process will occur, how it will take place and what the outcomes will be" (Rojek, 2014, p. 421). To me, such a broad view of learning seems to be necessary in qualitative research when the researchers are trying to understand their interlocutors and enter their world. Therefore, the awareness of the validity and multiplicity of elements that form the context of learning in professional life cannot be overestimated.

In developing the concept of learning, Illeris (2011) combines a model of the three dimensions of learning with a model of learning in working life to create a holistic picture, as shown in Figure 5. When superimposed, the two models are consistent in terms of the positioning of the social (bottom) and individual (top) zones. Also consistent are the interaction processes that occur between the elements and produce knowledge acquisition. A vital part of this view is the overlap between professional practice and professional identity.

According to Illeris (2011), the shaded part between the two elements means that "the employees' identities influence and develop the practice of the community, and the community's practice forms the individual work identity" (Illeris et al., 2011, pp. 68–69). Thus, this is another example of how knowledge and practice (whether social or professional) form professional identities, professional roles, intertwined in a never-ending process of learning and knowledge construction.

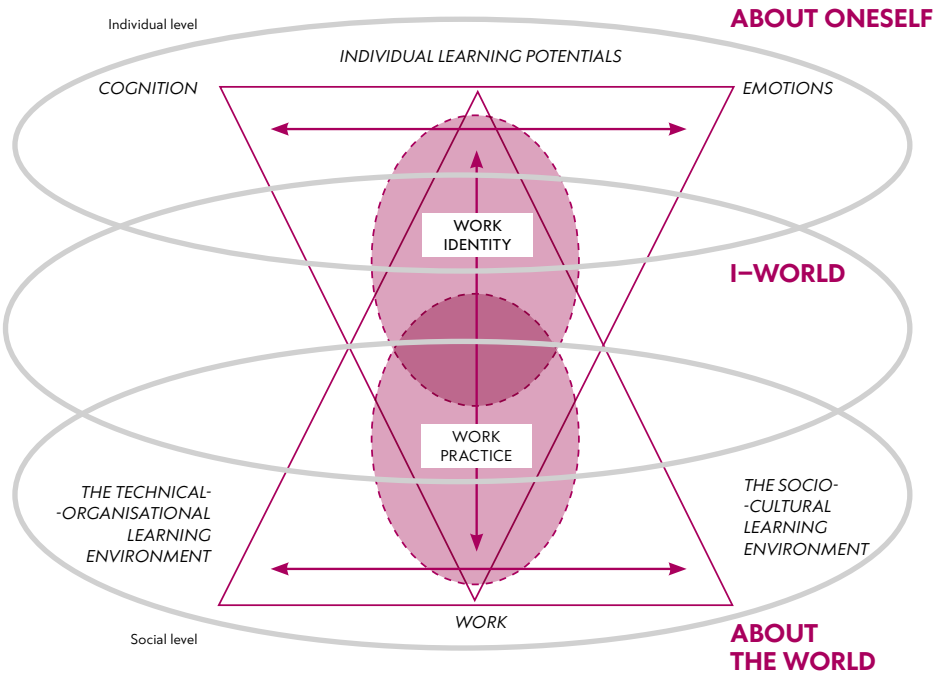
FIGURE 5. A HOLISTIC VIEW OF THE WORKING LIFE LEARNING MODEL



Source: Illeris, K. et al (2011). *Learning in Working Life* (s. 67). Roskilde University Press.

The holistic model presented by Illeris (2011) is open for further research exploration, so I juxtaposed it with the triad of knowledge needed by the teachers to fulfil their professional role according to Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b). This juxtaposition involves asking "what" the teachers need to know and "how" they can learn it, and also whether these elements of knowledge can work together or will occur side by side. In my view, the two approaches are compatible, as shown in Figure 6. Indeed, I believe that these approaches must inevitably resonate – not only in terms of the research problem itself, but also in terms of the paradigmatic approach.

FIGURE 6. THE HOLISTIC VIEW OF THE WORKING LIFE LEARNING MODEL VS. THE KNOWLEDGE TRIAD



Source: own elaboration based on Illeris, K. et al. (2011). *Learning in Working Life* (s. 67). Roskilde University Press; and Nowak-Dziemianowicz, M. (2014b). *Oblicza edukacji. Między pozorami a refleksyjną zmianą* (pp. 186–187). Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.

The link I propose is an attempt to look analytically at knowledge and its construction by teachers in their workplace, even though in real life both knowledge and the ways in which it is constructed often occur as a single experience. It is not analysed and dissected – it is complete, constant and occurs daily.

As can be seen, the social level, which is at the bottom of the learning model, contains a wide range of social and socio-cultural context – this is where the knowledge of the world on which the teachers will build their professional role can originate. With Illeris' (2011) holistic combination of the two models of learning, society is understood broadly as a socio-cultural-political context, but also at a micro level as a workplace creating a specific society governed by specific laws, with specific power arrangements, social stratification and culture. Teachers can construct knowledge about the 'I–world' relationship based on the interactions – symbolic and meaningful – that take place between the participants of a given community. This relationship shows a person's place and their relation to the world.

This knowledge is built up by the teachers during their professional practice as they actively seek their unique place in this relationship. Finally, there is the self-knowledge, located at the individual level, which on the one hand constitutes the whole and, on the other, is constantly reconstructed as it is part of the whole with the changing social context. Self-knowledge is not only receptive and passively adaptive, but also has a causal power, as it changes the 'I–world' relationship, which in turn influences the perception and shape of society.

It is important to remember that in both the holistic model and the triad of knowledge needed to create a professional role, the interactional, relational and knowledge-generating processes intermingle to create a process of exchange that is virtually endless. This seems extremely pertinent for teachers, who are constantly operating in unique learning situations and whose teaching, as well as learning, seems to be a biographical task.

The Scientistic Approach vs. the Anti--Scientistic Approach – The Multiple Views on Teachers' Roles

The teacher's profession (see Cęcelek, 2023; Karpińska, Zińczuk and Kowalczuk, 2021; Kwiatkowska, 2008; Madalińska-Michalak, 2019, 2021; Michalski, 2021; Szempruch, 2012, 2013) is one in which constant contact, cooperation and collaboration with another person or group of people is an extremely important part of the work. Therefore, a distinctive feature of this profession is its indeterminacy: despite some "fixed rules of the game", the fact that we are dealing with spontaneous and creative people in an educational setting makes it difficult to have a complete definition or any closed description of roles, competencies or identity frameworks in relation to teachers (Kwiatkowski, 2017). Moreover, Sigmund Freud claimed that the profession of teachers falls into the category of the 'impossible', as "the demands placed on their profession are so great and so diverse (they do, after all, concern a very wide area covering qualitatively different groups of complex duties), and at the same time undergo such rapid changes that their complete fulfilment is essentially impossible – a task that even the best of the profession will not be able to handle" (Kwiatkowski, 2017, p. 128).

This leads to a "normative overload", i.e. a situation in which knowledge about the teacher is postulative in nature and valued to such an extent that it no longer constitutes a description of social reality that would have a regulatory or interpretative

function (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2012, p. 8). Zdzisława Kawka's research, cited by Łukasz Michalski (2018), shows that this overload also causes a certain disjunction between what is declared and the actual conduct of the teachers.

Even a cursory survey of position on teaching roles signals a huge variety of approaches as well as nomenclature in relation to this topic. Nonetheless, any review has to be done based on a specific selection criterion, a feature that draws the lines of differentiation. As already hinted at in the title of this subsection, I will attempt to describe teaching roles with a breakdown into scientistic and anti-scientistic, with the specific distinction being the attitude towards knowledge in the different approaches[4].

The previous subsections discuss the relationship of roles to knowledge and knowledge to roles, and their place of production or creation. I believe that how knowledge is understood, and how the world or reality around us is construed, is the reason why roles are approached in one way and not another. "All roles represent the institutional order in the aforementioned sense" (Berger and Luckmann, 1983, p. 126) – this institutional order is conceived by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1983) precisely as knowledge. This simple "equation", in which roles represent knowledge, will serve as a marker for my understanding of roles described as scientistic or anti-scientistic.

One approach that clearly outlines the split between scientistic and anti-scientistic approaches to knowledge is the concept of three cognitive interests and their assigned three sciences and three types of knowledge by Jürgen Habermas (Habermas, 1995; Mizerek, 1999; Czarnocka, 2016). "The three interests constituting scientific cognition – technical, practical and emancipatory – orient cognition towards technical control, towards mutual understanding between subjects, or towards emancipation from biological bonds. The technical cognitive interest is the basis of the empirical sciences, the historical-hermeneutic sciences incorporate the practical interest as their base, and the critical sciences are based on the emancipatory cognitive interest" (Czarnocka, 2016, p. 65). Habermas's concept is pictured in Table 8.

I will briefly present these three orientations (empirical-analytic, hermeneutic and critical) in their relation to pedagogy and, most importantly, show the teachers' place, attempting to answer 'who they are' in the different approaches.

4 In this regard, I chose to emphasise the distinction more strongly than in the case of the scientistic/non-scientistic opposition proposed by Bogusława Dorota Gołębniak (2021).

TABLE 8. MODEL OF FORMS OF MANIFESTATION OF KNOWLEDGE-CONSTITUTING INTERESTS

Interest	Knowledge	Medium	Science
Technical	instrumental (casual explanation)	work	empirical-analytic or natural sciences
Practical	practical (understanding)	language	hermeneutic or 'interpretive' sciences
Emancipatory	emancipatory (reflection)	power	critical sciences

Source: Carr, W., Kemmis, S. (1995). *Becoming Critical. Education, Knowledge and Action Research,* as cited in H. Mizerek (1999), *Dyskursy współczesnej edukacji nauczycielskiej. Między tradycjonalizmem a ponowoczesnością* (p. 97). Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Science, and more narrowly **empirical-analytic pedagogy**, is closely related to the positivist approach. Knowledge derived from empirical research is considered a "certainty" that can be replicated and used to predict events, reality and even human behaviour. Technological rationality is the reason behind the production of instrumental knowledge of a technological nature, which is intended to be useful for achieving specific goals or dealing with a problem (applying an effective solution). Such knowledge creates a conviction of the need to control (preferably all) educational processes to drive their success (Hejnicka-Bezwińska, 2003).

Values such as success and failure are crucial in the empirical-analytical approach. Indeed, the two categories are antagonistic to reality, as "the content of empirical knowledge, including its cognitive representations of reality, is not important; what is important is that it is a tool for the implementation of the interest of controlling reality" (Czarnocka, 2016, p. 67). The reality created within this science is, therefore, postulative, wishful and ought-based. As noted by Dorota Klus-Stańska (2012), the traditional, transmissive nature of knowledge transmission is underpinned by scientistic knowledge (this is popular in Polish schooling), with a dominant postfigurative culture (Mead, 1978); this is supported by objective textbooks structured linearly, giving unambiguous, verifiable knowledge or, as Gołębniak puts it, "the class and lesson system, the teacher's managerial role, the 'top-down' selection of content" (2021, p. 30). The image of the teachers whose knowledge is derived from analytical-empirical learning is that of a controller who stands guard over knowledge (this knowledge being certain because it is supported by empirical research or contained in an objective textbook). In such a role set-up, there is no room for cultural pluralism, doubt, questions or student subjectivity. Teacher subjectivity is also questionable – in a situation where one is the keeper of knowledge, the guardian of its correctness, supported by an authority granted *ex officio* rather than developed

(Klus-Stańska, 2012), it is difficult to be proactive and actualise from the inside out, and there is little room for reflection, evaluation or creativity.

I find similar conclusions in the description of the implementer teacher, understood as a practitioner, though only in instrumental-utilitarian terms, who implements curricula developed by specialists and who is expected to achieve the intended and planned effect (Rutkowiak, 1992b). Other examples are the artisan teacher and adaptive technician models. In the case of the former, we are dealing with a person whose knowledge is based on tradition, on the experience of other masters, on their guidance, on simple truths that are supposed to ensure the success of an action. This model does not provide for a reflection on action. The second one conceives of scientific knowledge as objective, providing answers to practical problems, making it a scientistic model (Mizerek, 1999). Analytical-empirical science, with instrumental knowledge and pursuing a technical interest, is thus, as can be seen, enslaving for both teachers and students.

The second of the knowledge-constructing interests mentioned by Habermas (Habermas, 1995; Mizerek, 1999; Czarnocka 2016) is the **practical** interest, which produces knowledge of the understanding type, and its sources derive from hermeneutics[5]. The difference between analytic-empirical science and hermeneutics can be outlined by pointing out the difference between 'explanation' and 'understanding'. These two terms represent different positions, including subject-object positions, although they are often used interchangeably in everyday language. As noted by Ablewicz (1994), 'explanation' is a key word in the empirical sciences – you can explain something that is fixed, unchanging and can be tested by experiment. It refers to an object rather than a subject of action. 'Explanation' is thus deeply associated with the natural sciences. 'Understanding', on the other hand, is a key word in the humanities, where one deals with the subject, because "by means of observation alone, we do not gain access to the symbolic reality already structured, and because the understanding of meaning does not lend itself to methodological control in the way that we can subject observation to control in an experimental study" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2002, p. 47).

For this reason, understanding "is an elite type of cognition, reserved for the cultural sciences. The rules of meaning that determine the validity of claims in the cultural sciences are possible when both worlds are exposed – the world of meanings conceived traditionally and the interpreter's own

5 As Krystyna Ablewicz (1994) explains, the origin of the word 'hermeneutics' is linked to Hermes, an intermediary between the gods and humans, whose task was to interpret divine judgements (i.e. to make the 'incomprehensible' become 'comprehensible') and present their meaning to humans. This reference to Greek mythology captures the spirit and most basic premise of hermeneutics – understanding.

world – and juxtaposed" (Czarnocka, 2016, p. 70). As noted in the above quote, the interpreter cannot be excluded from the process of understanding, i.e. interpreting meaning, as their contribution to explanation and understanding is also essential. Everyone has their own definition of meaning, more or less conscious, and comprehends and views the world through it. We are speaking here, of course, of pre-understanding, which "provides us with the concepts with which we think, defines the stock of cultural obviousness from which we draw patterns and categories of interpretation, the language we speak and which imposes on us this and not that view of the world" (Kwaśnica, 2014, p. 65).

Put in yet other words, one can conclude that understanding, so vital in the hermeneutic approach, is "a way of being in the world; a way that distinguishes humans from other beings, makes their situation unique and unrepeatable. It is, at the same time, a method of cognition of this world" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2002, p. 49). While the above quote is one of many definitions of understanding, it can be successfully read as a synthetic description of the teacher in the hermeneutic approach – a person for whom understanding oneself and the other person is a way of being in the world, a form of fulfilling their teaching practice. It is a person who differentiates one person from another – who sees a group of students as a collection of individualities.

Understanding is also a method of knowing the world, the latter being construed as a process with a fixed character. Understanding is a type of knowledge that does not recognise or give an 'objective' picture of reality, but allows for diverse viewpoints. It is also an invitation to a dialogue which is a condition of understanding (Rutkowiak, 1992a; Kwaśnica, 1990b) – but not one in which the teacher is responsible for shaping it, for the questions and, often, also for determining the 'correct' or desired answers or conclusions. Rather, it is a 'dialogue without an arbitrator', as described by Joanna Rutkowiak, which is characterised by "a style of relying on recognition of the equality of partners, not making their position dependent on age, experience, social prestige or knowledge, but conversely, on finding the strengths of their diversity and difference [...]. [A]s a whole concept, it is above all about maintaining an appreciation of difference in the process of constantly creating new solutions, drawing inspiration from it, respecting it" (Rutkowiak, 1992a, pp. 39–40).

Despite the fact that Rutkowiak herself notes a certain utopianism or unrealistic nature of 'dialogue without an arbiter', open dialogue remains a condition for understanding (Rutkowiak, 1992a). At the same time, Ablewicz (1994) explains that understanding cannot be limited to the interpretation of text (whether written or spoken), but should be perceived as "a fundamental feature of the human mind, through which the sense of the world is revealed" (1994, p. 51),

the sense given to various symbols or products of the wider culture, one to be perceived and understood.

With its emphasis on practical knowledge, the hermeneutic approach is evident in the model of the teacher as a "reflective practitioner". Donald Schön (1983) explicitly writes that the 'reflective practitioner' is aware that their knowledge is not the only possible or existing knowledge. It does not stop there: the task of the 'reflective practitioner' is also to understand the value of another's knowledge or action. Moreover, the meaning of their knowledge, as well as actions, should be presented in a way that the other party understands. Such an approach enables an exchange of knowledge without categorising it into a better one – coming from teachers – and an inferior one – coming from students – and, ultimately, the creation of new knowledge through the negotiation of meanings.

The constructivist nature of such an approach cannot be overlooked. The reflection that should accompany the teacher model under discussion is one in action and on action. Reflection-in-action is simultaneous to the activity undertaken and allows decisions to be made quickly to correct or modify a situation (often a new or unprecedented problem). Reflection-on-action allows a situation to be viewed *post factum* – from a certain distance – and subjected to reflection, which may lead to changed or modified actions in the future (Mizerek, 1999)[6].

One crucial element of the concept of the 'reflective practitioner' is drawing on one's own experience and recognising this experience as a valuable source of knowledge about the world, one's relationship with this world and oneself. It is thus an important element of an anti-scientistic approach to knowledge. Dorota Wolska (2012) believes that experience, considered as a specific tool of humanistic cognition, may become a category that actually liberates the humanities from the domination of scientism. Recognising the importance of personal experience in relation to teachers, Nowak-Dziemianowicz sees the role of the 'reflective practitioner' as one "who 'knows what', 'knows how', 'knows why', as well as 'knows who' and 'why-me', and all these dimensions of their knowledge, without being mutually exclusive, enable the necessary reflection" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014b, pp. 125–126). This is a way of defining a teacher who is close to the idea put forth by Schön, who "does not formulate any postulative 'model' of a good teacher. He merely describes the way a practitioner thinks and works" (Mizerek, 1999, p. 56).

6 Schön's (1983) line of thought has inspired researchers who, developing his concept of reflection 'in' and 'on' action, have additionally proposed reflection-for-action as a kind of desired effect of the previous two types of reflection aimed at facilitating future action (Killon, Todnew, 1991, p. 15, as cited in Farrell, 2018, p. 6; Werbińska, 2017, p. 68).

It is, after all, they who are supposed to be able to answer questions such as "What? How? Why?" (the answers being different each time), and feel the need to ask such questions.

The third orientation distinguished by Habermas (Habermas, 1995; Mizerek, 1999; Czarnocka, 2016) is based on **emancipatory knowledge implemented in critical theory**. In the light of this concept, knowledge is conceived as humanistic (often radically humanistic), social and political at the same time, it is not absolute, objective and not merely the product of an intellectual act (Mizerek, 1999), but appears to be discursive – related to the person (who creates it, speaks it and experiences it), as well as to the historical time and place.

Critical researchers of pedagogy recognise and bring to the fore the political entanglement of knowledge and thus education. In the second chapter, I pointed out the concerns expressed by such scholars as Martha C. Nussbaum (2008) regarding the disappearance of the humanities, and concerns about the appearance of the world and the human condition when rationality and instrumental knowledge continue to dominate educational discourse. The answer to these fears is precisely the model of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual' (in particular, as described by Henry Giroux), and in which hopes are placed for a reversal of the worrying trend. This concept places a special emphasis on the cultural and social dimension of the work – the teacher's influence and action – "in which cognition is closely coupled with critical thinking, by referring to the experiences and experiences of learners and teachers in concrete social and political situations" (Dróżka, 2000, p. 41).

The task facing the 'transformative intellectual' is thus to stimulate thinking, have a critical view of reality and, ultimately, emancipation. It is noteworthy that emancipation is considered not only as a task to be accomplished by the students, but also as a biographical task for teachers themselves. That is not all, however. As Rutkowiak (1995b) argues, if the 'transformative intellectual' is to create the future, their *empowerment* must take place, so that they are capable of manifesting activity and taking action.

In contrast to the empirical-analytical sciences, in critical theory, education appears as a subjective relationship, or rather a relationship between two subjects – the teacher and the student. No value judgements on better or worse experience are made here – the principle of democracy and equality of experience, of the past, of cultural and social background and, one might assume, of axiological background is upheld. Theory and practice – being in opposition to each other in previous approaches – seem to have the most points in common in this concept, as "teachers, inspired by formal theory, are expected to produce (and modify) their educational (social) beliefs, in which their value system and social practice

play a significant role" (Dróżka, 2000, p. 42). However, compared to the model of the 'reflective practitioner', the concept of the 'transformative intellectual' puts at the fore the postulative element oriented towards teachers, setting specific tasks and duties for them (Mizerek, 1999).

The roles outlined so far are a record of a certain evolution of thinking about teachers. They are closely related to the historical time in which they were developed. The question that could then be asked is what kind of teachers are needed in postmodern times, the socio-cultural context of which is extensively described in the second chapter. In Poland, it is heterogeneous, based on the clashing but also coexisting elements of tradition, modernity and postmodernity – which must inevitably affect teachers. The social dimension of the work of this professional group is not only characterised by the fact that the relationship with others is present, but also by the fact that the teacher is also a carrier of culture in its broadest sense and of the cultural changes taking place.

In the spirit of this approach, the image of the teacher as a 'post-formal practitioner' was developed by Joe L. Kincheloe (Mizerek, 1999; Rutkowiak, 1995b). It is presented in Table 9, which lists ten categories of description.

TABLE 9. POST-FORMAL PRACTITIONER

Item	Teachers are:	that is
1.	research-oriented	They reflect on their work and professional practice; consider problem situations on their own, referring not only to the work but to the whole life experience.
2.	immersed in the social context	Their thinking cannot be detached from the historical-social-cultural context and ignore the formation of the educational discourse through power.
3.	constructivist--oriented	They are convinced of the knowledge-creating potential of verbal (linguistic) relations between teachers and students in the process of creating reality.
4.	dedicated to the art of improvisation	They understand the uniqueness and unpredictability of the learning setting and the need to react quickly, to think in action.
5.	conducive to coactivity	They are oriented towards stimulating a culture of participation/ co-participation, as well as the exchange of experience, not only by letting the students have their say, but by encouraging it.
6.	engaged in self--criticism and social reflection	Through self-reflection (personal and social), they create situations of dialogue in critical reflection on classroom communication, sources of knowledge, curricula or knowledge-power relations.
7.	committed to democratic education	They use democratic teaching methods, recognising the right of students to express themselves, disagree with the teachers and negotiate the curriculum, giving them influence over their education.
8.	sensitive to cultural pluralism	Not only are they aware of cultural/socio-cultural differences, but also of their relevance to the education of individual students.

Item	Teachers are:	that is
9.	committed to action	They oppose passivity by being inspired to think as an inherent precursor to action.
10.	sensitive to the emotional dimension of human beings	They do not shy away from showing feelings, different emotions (not only positive ones), but also try to understand the emotions of their students, which fosters a sense of authenticity in the relationship.

Source: own elaboration based on Mizerek, H. (1999). *Dyskursy współczesnej edukacji nauczycielskiej. Między tradycjonalizmem a ponowoczesnością* (pp. 61–64). Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego; and Rutkowiak, J. (1995b), Edukacyjna świadomość nauczycieli; intelektualizacja pracy nauczycielskiej jako wyzwanie czasu transformacji. In: J. Rutkowiak (ed.). *Odmiany myślenia o edukacji* (p. 310). Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

The very name of the concept indicates an anti-scientistic approach to knowledge, as well as a view of who the contemporary teachers are in postmodernity; the description includes references to hermeneutics as well. Nevertheless, in their description of the 'post-formal practitioner', Rutkowiak (1995b) and Mizerek (1999) simultaneously identify an instrumental-postulative character, especially in the very structure of the concept's presentation. Moreover, it is not difficult to find some common elements between the previously presented concept of the 'reflective practitioner' (e.g. a focus on research or dedication to the art of improvisation) and the 'transformative intellectual' (e.g. immersion in a social context), and this points to an eclectic approach.

The indeterminacy of teaching roles, due to the social nature of the work and postmodern transformations, encourages the use of metaphors through which certain concepts that are difficult to present and understand can be described in a way that appeals to the imagination[7]. Indeed, Zbigniew Kwieciński (2000), inspired by Bauman's work, uses the metaphor of guide and interpreter to describe teachers in today's postmodern times. Notably, Kwieciński (2000) emphasises that there is a need for both, and they are effectively condemned to perform these two social roles.

The first role is that of guide. In this view, teachers do not command groups; while they walk at the front, they do not set the laws governing the group or reality. They must listen to the group they are leading; they do not impose the destination even though they know it, and nevertheless, they guide the group through the meanders of the path, introducing it into the world or different worlds, as well as encouraging independence. As a kind of leader, it is also supposed to build bridges of understanding (Kwieciński, 2000).

7 It should be noted that a metaphor does not confer meaning; rather, it presents a way of thinking, sets a direction. Moreover, it is not usually used as a linguistic embellishment, but simply serves for better – often symbolic – communication (Kotowska, 2015).

The second role is that of interpreter. Interpreters mediate "between the individual and the social world, the world of culture, [...] their function is to explain to others the various possibilities of choice, whose opportunities arise on the individual, personal, unique path to the full development of the subjective identity, to the proxy preservation of the self in the struggle with the world and the fate of life [...] they know the language, competence, ways of interpretation of their listeners, but their own competence is much broader, as it is enriched by a multiplicity of languages, outlooks, points of view and references" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014b, p. 123). As highlighted earlier, students need both guides and interpreters – depending on where they are at any given time.

The presented lists of roles are not exhaustive and represent only my subjective view. At the same time, however, they show a fairly complete picture of the scientific discourse in this field.

Teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes – A Glottodidactic Perspective

The considerations presented so far have dealt with the concept of the role of teachers and the different perceptions of it in pedagogical and pedeutological discourse. Now I would like to focus strictly on the group of teachers represented by the participants in my research, namely female teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes. I intend to point out what a foreign language for specific purposes is and how it differs from a general foreign language – as this difference has implications for the implementation of the teachers' roles. I will then try to outline the specific place in which this group is situated – between general foreign language teachers and other academic teachers. As noted in the title of the subsection, this will be an overview determined mainly by the boundaries of glottodidactics, since most theoretical studies of the topic are situated within this approach, with possible references to pedagogy.

Foreign Language for Specific Purposes – What It Is, Its Division and History of Development

The main purpose of the following discussion is not to examine the development of foreign languages for specific purposes. I will only present the main elements and results of previous inquiries to help understand the difference between a general foreign language and a foreign language for specific purposes in the context of its teaching. Due to the degree of prevalence and the nature

of the experience of the participants in my study, in the following section I focus on English for Specific Purposes (ESP)[8].

Language for specific purposes is, of course, not separate from general language – it is always part of a larger set, that of language in general. Franciszek Grucza (2008, p. 12) argues that, from a purely linguistic point of view, a language for specific purposes is not a complete one precisely because it always relates to the general language. Ewelina Mitera (2017), in line with Bogusław Kubiak's approach, lists the criteria that are used to distinguish between a language for specific purposes and general language. These include:

„– language users (group, social stratum),
– the area of use (region),
– the degree of formality (accessibility, comprehensibility),
– the medium (writing, speech),
– the purpose and outcome of language use,
– the degree of standardisation (codified norms and actual language use)" (Mitera, 2017, p. 19).

Users of a language for specific purposes may include specific social or professional groups, e.g. scientists working in a particular field. The area of use may refer to both geographical regions and areas of professional activity of the users. The degree of formalisation of the language itself may also be a distinguishing element – the accessibility and comprehensibility of the language depends on knowledge of the field, and knowing the words used in a discourse is not synonymous with simultaneous understanding of the entire language and navigating it freely. Although the medium of language for specific purposes can be both speech and writing, it seems that we are more likely to encounter the written form in day-to-day interactions, e.g. in the case of instruction manuals or court rulings. The main purposes of using language for specific purposes are communicative and cognitive. The degree of standardisation of a language usually refers to a possible discrepancy between the model standard and the usage standard (Kubiak, 2002).

It is difficult to point to an origin for the emergence of language for specific purposes – indeed, it has always existed, ever since people began to deal professionally with various fields and define or create separate discourses within them. Sarah Benesch (2001) relates the origins of the use of language

8 The literature also uses the abbreviation "ESP", which stands for 'English for Specific Purposes' and is more commonly used than the previously used abbreviation "LSP" (Language for Specific Purposes), referring to any foreign language. The term English for Specific Purposes and its abbreviation were adopted in 1977 at the British Council congress in Bogota (Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas, 2020 p. 77) and are still in use today.

for specific purposes to the mid-1960s, when the need to separate the language of the humanities from the language of technology and the sciences was noted in academic circles; however, there are researchers who trace its roots even further back, close to the early 20th century (Lesiak-Bielawska, 2018). One vital phenomenon for the development of LSP was certainly the technological, scientific and industrial progress after World War II, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, which created a huge demand for employees specialised in specific industries. Thus, the need for employee mobility and exchange between countries increased, effectively exacerbating the problem of unfamiliarity with foreign languages (particularly English)[9]. Still, while learning a general foreign language to a communicative level was (and still is) time-consuming, taking a language course tailored to the needs of a specific job was seen as feasible in a much shorter timeframe and with lower costs.

Benesch's (2001) critical research, however, shows that there are two versions of the LSP development story. The official one shows the increasing popularity of English worldwide, its transformation into a *lingua franca* and a certain natural trend towards a focus on language for specific purposes in response to user needs. The other, less popular, view is that these processes were not natural at all – on the contrary, they were well devised and organised efforts to promote English culture and language (while marginalising the importance of other languages and cultures) across all fields and pursuing the purely economic interest of gaining new markets and expanding the audience for services and products. A critical reflection on the development of LSP teaching is not, however, intended to deny the desirability of learning itself. Rather, it is about expanding knowledge as to the causes of a particular state of affairs, which are not always recognised.

The context of LSP teaching has been the subject of many analyses (see Kırkgöz and Dikilitaş, 2018; Anthony, 2018; Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008; Paltridge and Starfield, 2013; Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998; Kic-Drgas and Woźniak, 2022). The literature assumes that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach to language teaching that targets students' current and/or future academic or professional needs, focuses on the necessary language, genres and

9 Increasing linguistic competencies and consequently improving professional mobility was also facilitated by the launch of the Erasmus programme by the European Commission in 1987. It has initiated student exchanges (although not exclusively, as teaching and administrative staff also participate in this programme), with more than one million participants to date (Räisänen and Fortanet-Gómez, 2008, p. 14). There have also been changes at universities, especially those with specialised profiles, where LSP or its elements have been introduced into foreign language courses. This was related to the provision of educational standards for individual fields of study as indicated by the Polish Ministry of Science. In Poland, LSP is taught at universities as part of courses, usually lasting between less than 20 to a maximum of 150 hours (Dzięcioł-Pędich, 2015).

skills to meet those needs, and assists students in meeting those needs through the use of generic and/or discipline-specific materials and teaching methods (Anthony, 2018, p. 10–11).

The first element that draws attention in the above quote is the breakdown of ESP into two main subcategories: English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Of these two groups, the second one seems to be broader[10] as there is an enormous number of subcategories with textbooks for specific professional groups, such as English for Nurses, English for Lawyers, English for Logistics, English for Business (with separate categories like English for Marketing, Accountants, HR etc.), English for Tourism or English for International Drivers. In the remainder of this chapter, I will use the abbreviations ESP or LSP interchangeably when referring to language for specific purposes.

A characterisation of ESP in glottodidactic terms was presented by Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John (1998). They pointed out the following:

- three absolute characteristics (ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learners; it makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves, and is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities);
- four variable characteristics (ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines; it may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English; it is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation, however it could be used for learners at secondary school level; it is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, pp. 4–5).

The teaching of ESP is therefore tailored to the specific needs of the learners and, crucially, is embedded in their target socio-cultural context in which they will use English. Furthermore, LSP teaching may be limited to only one language proficiency area (reading, writing, speaking or listening), marginalise grammar and may not necessarily follow the general principles of foreign language teaching didactics. In the strict sense, the starting point here is not language

10 Nevertheless, as shown by Anthony (2018, p. 14), English for Academic Purposes can also be understood broadly.

but its functional orientation (Richards and Rodgers, 1999, p. 21). Typically, a communicative or eclectic method is used, which enables a high degree of teaching freedom, implies a combination of techniques (Donesch-Jeżo, 2008) and the use of task- and/or project-based methods, and puts the specific (concrete) needs of the learners at the centre and emphasises their multidisciplinarity (Anthony, 2018).

There is no denying that this approach to teaching foreign language for specific purposes is instrumental. It is not seen as a means of creating reality or social practices, but as a tool for achieving specific goals. Learning specific words and phrases is meant to ensure that one can smoothly navigate within a narrow professional context, rather than the freedom to function in a national context. Referring to the three sciences and the three types of knowledge proposed by Habermas (as discussed in the previous section), I find here a predominantly technical interest, treating knowledge in an instrumental way.

Teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes

The training of future language teacher is provided within philological studies and, since the second half of the 20th century, within applied linguistics (Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas, 2020, p. 17). It is conducted in a simultaneous system, i.e. involving the simultaneous study of linguistic (also cultural) issues of a given foreign language and the pedagogical preparation required to work in the profession.

Komorowska (2015) points out that "[t]he current state of teacher education is primarily the result of the dynamic solutions following the socio-political transition at the turn of 1989 and 1990" (p. 20). Polish schools have introduced the option of learning one of four foreign languages (Russian, English, French, German) in primary schools and six in secondary schools (additionally Spanish and Italian). This was followed by the introduction of the compulsory learning of two foreign languages from primary school onwards, triggering the need to quickly provide numerous language teachers. According to Paczuska and Szpotowicz (2014), in 1990 Poland was short of approximately 20,000 English and German language teachers. This demand was to be met by the establishment of teachers' colleges of foreign languages in 1990, with education lasting three years and enabling the student to pursue a bachelor's degree (see Turkowska, 2013). Nevertheless, after 25 years of operation, the procedure to wind up the colleges was undertaken, with the Act of 27 July 2005 – Law on Higher Education setting 2015 as the deadline year. After that, graduates of the colleges could no longer pursue a bachelor's degree (Strzelecka-Ristow, 2015). Future language teachers are now trained only in universities – state or private ones.

Subsequent statutory changes (Act of 20 July 2018) introduced new rules for the cooperation of universities with the business environment. These have resulted in an increased role for the teaching of language for specific purposes, the knowledge of which is expected to facilitate future philologists' entry into the professional market. Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas analysed the curricula of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (both in philology and applied linguistics) at 22 Polish universities from the point of view of teaching foreign languages for specific purposes. The analysis showed that LSP was present in the curricula of both first- and second-cycle programmes in the 2019/2020 academic year. This mainly included language for professional purposes (e.g. business, economics, tourism, legal – the most popular varieties of LSP), as well as vocational languages (for example, English for nurses). These were offered both as compulsory and free-choice subjects, ranging from 15 to 120 hours (usually 30 hours). Some universities offered only the most popular varieties of LSP, while others also offered the rarer ones, such as "FLSP in border control" or "Diplomacy FLSP" (Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas, 2020; Gajewska, 2022).

It was less common for universities to offer specialised glottodidactic teaching. "Of the 22 universities whose language studies programmes were analysed, only at seven universities and a total of 12 philology courses (nine language studies and three linguistics courses) was the presence of specialised glottodidactics content discernible" (Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas, 2020, p. 133). At some universities, however, elements of specialised glottodidactics were embedded in the scope of general subject didactics (Gajewska, Sowa and Kic-Drgas, 2020, p. 135)[11].

The Polish glottodidactic literature on foreign language teachers is extensive and has a long history (see Gabryś-Barker, 2012; Gębal, 2013; Grucza, 1988; Komorowska & Obidniak, 2002; Komorowska, 2007; Szymankiewicz, 2017; Turkowska, 2013; Werbińska, 2006, 2017; Wysocka, 1998, 2003; Zawadzka, 2004). As with the pedagogical or pedeutological literature, there is an emphasis on a shift from the traditional transmissive model of teaching, assuming complete control by the teacher, towards teaching based on more democratic

11 The popularity of language for specific purposes and its widespread use in language teaching for non-philology students is a challenge for teachers who have not had any contact with LSP or its didactics during their studies. As such, the European Commission projects like Catapult (Computer Assisted Training And Platforms to Upskill LSP Teachers, catapult-project.eu), TRAILS (LSP Teacher Training Summer School, trails.hypotheses.org) and LSP-TEOC.PRO (LSP Teacher Education Online Course for Professional Development, lsp-teoc-pro.de) are being developed with such teachers in mind. They offer courses for working LSP teachers who would like to expand or refresh their knowledge, or seek inspiration. The projects and courses are available free of charge, in many languages, including Polish. Their contribution to the development of the competencies of LSP teachers has been recognised as extremely valuable (see Sarre, Skarli and Turula, 2021; Kic-Drgas and Wozniak, 2022; Chateaureynaud and John, 2022; Kic-Drgas and Jurković, 2024).

values. Studies utilising qualitative research methodology based on memoirs (Gabryś-Barker, 2012), as well as phenomenographic (Wawrzyniak-Śliwska, 2017), and phenomenological-narrative (Werbińska, 2017) studies on different aspects of professional development and professional identity development are undertaken.

In addressing the issue of the roles of foreign language teacher, I will only refer to a few of the now seemingly classic glottodidactic approaches. In line with Adrian Underhill's approach, Jim Scrivener (2011, pp. 13–19) lists three defining categories. These are the explainer – the one who explains; the enabler – the one who helps to develop, and the *involver* – the one who engages, pulls. Jeremy Harmer (2007, pp. 108–111) classifies the roles adopted by foreign language teachers as follows: controller, prompter, participant, resource, tutor. Another perspective is presented by Elżbieta Zawadzka (2004), who describes the foreign language teacher as an expert, educator, cultural mediator, organiser, moderator, advisor, evaluator, innovator, researcher and reflective practitioner.

Another noteworthy view of the role, as present in the glottodidactic literature, is related to the specific foreign language teaching method used in practice. In the past, the grammar translation method, with the teacher as the guardian of grammatical correctness, reigned supreme in Poland, while later the communicative approach started to dominate. As part of the latter, the teacher is expected to play the roles of facilitator, manager, advisor and communicator, i.e. one who communicates, moderates or facilitates communication (Arafat, 2005).

Krystyna Szymankiewicz (2017, p. 44) presented an interesting overview of teaching methods, along with the periods in which they were popular, the learning objectives and the roles of the teacher. She argueshat the communicative approach was popular until the late 1990s, and since 2001 a task-based approach has been adopted, in which the role of the teacher is defined as: "animator, cultural mediator, cognitive mediator/facilitator of learning, language mediator, co-learner, innovator, evaluator" (Szymankiewicz, 2017, p. 44). The term 'animator' is crucial in this description, as the glottodidactic literature calls for a shift from the name 'foreign language teacher' towards an animator of the glottodidactic process (Lewicka, 2007), who supports learners and points out the role of their involvement on the way to success in language acquisition. This definition of a teaching person is close to the understanding of the term pedagogue – derived from Greek etymology – as one who accompanies children, takes them to school, but no longer teaches (Sławek, 2021).

The outline of the roles of the foreign language teachers presented above places the methodology of foreign language teaching at the centre of considerations. Indeed, its principles dictate who the teacher is to be in the foreign language teaching process. However, glottodidactics is by no means a domain that is closed to the achievements of other humanities and social sciences and the influence of various currents of thought, including those described, for example, in Chapter 2. There have been attempts to combine linguistics and pedagogy (see Gębal and Kumięga, 2020; Jaroszewska, Kucharczyk, Smuk and Szymankiewicz (eds.), 2021), which emphasise the social dimension of learning and teaching. Thought trends such as social constructivism or postmodern ideas are also infiltrating glottodidactics, triggering a shift in proposed approaches to language teaching. Marzena Żylińska (2009) highlights the positive aspects of such approaches not only for students but also for teachers. The application of these approaches is presented as a response to the current socio-cultural context. Constructivist and postmodern teaching methods can also help to overcome a certain crisis faced by schools, which are evaluated negatively by students, teachers and parents (Żylińska, 2009). Stimulating the autonomy of both learners and teachers, allowing for the learners' experience, their preferences, being open to their needs, stimulating emotional and personal involvement, using an open context for lesson planning (Żylińska, 2009, pp. 10–12), emphasising the importance of the learning process (Zając-Knapik, 2021), orientation towards relationships during the learning process, empowering the personalities of those involved or the primacy of interaction over transmission (Gębal and Nawracka, 2019) – these are just some of the assumptions of constructivist language didactics.

Language teaching didactics also draws inspiration from phenomena that influence most of the humanities and social sciences, such as the linguistic turn. Among other things, thanks to such interaction placing language at the centre, there has been a change in thinking about language, discourse and discursive and narrative practices in relation to glottodidactics. This has inspired the emergence of activities such as *storytelling* and narrative methods, popularised especially in early language learning, mainly for preschool children (see Sowa-Bacia, 2021), but also present in teaching adolescents and adults (Tomczuk, 2022). They have permeated specific foreign language teaching techniques, for example duoethnographic dialogues (Werbińska, 2019).

Dudley-Evans and St John propose their own systematisation of the roles that teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes should play. They note that, apart from teaching, FLSP teachers serve as course designers, collaborators, researchers and evaluators, in effect suggesting that, because of this multiplicity

of roles, they should rather be called ESP practitioners (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p. 13). Table 10 contains a detailed discussion of the different roles.

TABLE 10. ROLES OF A PRACTITIONER – A TEACHER OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Role	Description and characteristics
teacher	– one of the main roles and tasks is to help the student to learn, to acquire the foreign language; – teachers usually have a narrower domain-specific (specialist) knowledge than the person they are teaching, e.g. a surgeon with 10 years of experience will have considerably more medical expertise than a teacher teaching of a medical foreign language who also has 10 years of experience; – there is an opportunity for peer learning between teachers and students; – teachers often have an advisory and partnering role; – a high degree of flexibility is required due to a greater degree of unpredictability in the classroom than in a general foreign language.
course designer	– teachers should analyse the needs of the future learners to determine what they should learn and what they will need. It is also necessary to consider the course's target audience, how long the course will last and the language level of the participants and, on this basis, to find resources suitable for the group; – it is necessary to frequently create learning resources for the students themselves or adapt non-didactic resources for teaching purposes; – fulfilling this role requires in-depth familiarity with the given area of specialist knowledge.
collaborator	– It is advisable to work with specialists in the field covered by the course on the syllabus or specific assignments; – it is possible to collaborate as a translator/interpreter and to work in a team with a specialist in the given field.
researcher	– there is a continuous need to expand not only your linguistic knowledge, but also your specialist knowledge (often in more than one field); – there is a continuous need for further training in course design, as well as the creation of researcher own/proprietary teaching resources; – a reflective practitioner approach involving research-in-action and reflection-on-action is recommended; – continuous monitoring, revision and improvement of the course is required.
evaluator	– it should be formal as well as informal; – it should include ongoing assessment of student progress, not just through testing; – it should include continuous assessment of the resources used for teaching (during the course and after completion); – it should be possible to evaluate the course/resources should together with the student; – the whole course should be continuously evaluated.

Source: own elaboration based on Dudley-Evans, T., St John, M.J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes. A multi-disciplinary approach* (pp. 13–18). Cambridge University Press; and Lesiak-Bielawska, E. (2015). Potrzeby nauczycieli języków specjalistycznych a programy kształcenia i formy doskonalenia zawodowego. *Języki Obce w Szkole*, No. 3.

The presented characteristics of LSP teachers show that the work they do is much more extensive than that of general language teaching: both in terms of the practical activities for which they are responsible and in terms of the necessary knowledge. In the case of LSP teachers, knowledge is always shared and does not

belong to just one side of the educational team. Moreover, with a high degree of immersion in a specialised field, a certain dilemma arises – "To what extent do I teach a language in the given field, and to what extent the field in a foreign language?" (Sowa, 2016). This is a question that everyone needs to answer for themselves.

In her critical study of LSP teachers, Benesch (2001) notes that the literature "often portrays teachers as trainers who accept and enact predetermined requirements, rather than as educators imagining a more equitable and democratic world with their students" (Benesch, 2001, p. XVII). I share this sentiment. Most studies focus on the didactic or didactic-oriented aspects. While these are certainly vital issues, there is a noticeable disproportion between the instrumental and the communicative views, as construed by Kwaśnica (2007). Above all, what is noticeable (for the time being) is the scarcity of critical research on the subject. Nonetheless, I see some changes between the fairly rigid framework for describing the language teachers and a definite loosening and greater autonomy in describing the LSP teachers. This gives hope for the emergence of opportunities to chart proprietary paths and prescriptions of the roles played by teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes.

Professional Role Prescription – Between Convention and Interaction

Speech and the ability to communicate are among the basic elements needed for human beings to live. However, in the context of teaching and learning, education, upbringing and socialisation, I would venture to accept the notion that there must initially be a relationship that provides the impetus for 'creating' words – signs, as well as for constructing their meanings, and eventually using them in conversation. Moreover, relationships make the process of meaning-making seem endless. I understand this relationship as an encounter, contact, conversation or any interaction – even one that does not require words.

Interaction, as described by Stanisław Mika, is defined by Sztompka (2010) as "the mutual interaction of partners, consisting in the fact that, at a certain time, the behaviour of one person becomes a set of stimuli for the other person, to which they react; in turn, their reactions are a set of stimuli for the first person, who reacts to them; these reactions, being stimuli for the partner, evoke their next reaction, and so on, until this process of exchange of stimuli and reactions is interrupted" (Sztompka, 2010, p. 74). An in-depth analysis of the meaning of interaction leads to the concept of symbolic interactionism.

"The starting point in the theory of social interactionism is the analysis of acts of communication and verbal and non-verbal interactions, which, as they function in a given collectivity, acquire a cultural, symbolic character that is understood by the participants in a given interaction" (Krasuska-Betiuk, 2015, p. 51). In the concept of symbolic interactionism, relations for the participants in a communicative situation, or simply a discourse, are creative, unpredictable, unplannable, subject to interpretation from one side and the other. According to this concept, entering into a rigid framework of a social or professional role is simply impossible.

For me, the convergence point of the above issues is the person of the teacher. Describing the specificity of the work of this professional group, Henryka Kwiatkowska (2008) emphasises its communicative character and the "non-standard, undefined nature of the work situation" (2008, p. 207), while Madalińska-Michalak (2021) draws attention to the difficulties that even explaining the term 'teacher' already poses (2021, pp. 33–37). As Kwiatkowska (2008) argues, it is precisely for this reason that any attempt to comprehensively describe the purposefulness of teachers' work, the means of their action and the pursuit of their goals eludes precise definition.

Using the theory of discourse developed by Laclau and Mouffe (Przyłęcki, 2013), it is possible to conclude that the work of teachers has a discursive character, which becomes even more important when working with adults and those entering adulthood. What I focus on in my research is the "sociological framing – determined by professional role" (Kwiatkowska, 2008, p. 37), which takes the social role as the overarching point of consideration.

The professional role of academic teachers of English for Specific Purposes is evolving. The issue of professional role can be viewed from an individual level – as changing the normative perception of the role prescription and replacing it with one's own axionormative prescription, applied appropriately to the specific situation, according to one's own value system and vision of the world, as well as their autonomous 'Self'. In other words, this approach can be seen as a transition from the pre-conventional stage, through the conventional stage, to the post--conventional stage (Kwaśnica, 2003, p. 308). Research shows that this process can be difficult for some teachers, as few of them actually reach the final stage (Kwiatkowska, 2008).

This change also relates to a paradigmatic shift (one may venture to claim that it is forced and is a certain sign of the times) away from a normative perception and observance of the professional role and towards an interpretivist approach, understood as "a process of shaping the consciousness of an individual located in a specific social structure; it uses qualitative methods, taking into account

the subjective, individual judgement of the subjects of the educational space" (Ptak, 2011, p. 22). It is the formation of the individual role as a certain construct of awareness of a role's social imperatives and dilemmas, as well as its personal definition (Rubacha, 2000).

One crucial aspect of academic teacher development is that development is a cyclical rather than a linear process, especially in the face of frequent societal changes that cannot be ignored. Frequent changes in work organisation and responsibilities are also an important element. Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b) describes the triad of knowledge needed to fulfil a professional role, which comprises the knowledge "of the surrounding world, of the 'I–world' relations, and of the self (teacher's self-knowledge)" (2014b, p. 136). The ever-changing world of liquid modernity forces the teachers to constantly redefine or update their knowledge, their place in the world, and thus their understanding of the world and of oneself in this world.

Another view of the professional role consists in limiting its prescription to a normative approach (convention), which is described in the literature as "a script, a scenario, a description of episodes of activity, simultaneously taking into account the socio-cultural rules of their evaluation, usually in line with the legal--formal issues of the workplace" (Czechowska-Bieluga and Sordyl-Lipnicka, 2020, p. 81). These are "activities strongly correlated with social expectations and evaluation" (Zaborowska, 2021, p. 44), "an inviolable canon of social expectations" (Kwiatkowska, 2008, p. 38). Teachers should adhere to it and submit to these standards in a way that is "defined and enunciated in the form of institutionalised patterns of teacher conduct"[12] (Kwaśnica, 1990a, p. 303).

Role prescription, social role and professional role – the understanding of these concepts will vary depending on which role theory we refer to: functional-structural or interactional. The questions that arise are mainly about the functional-structural canon of social expectations – on what basis and as a result of what processes it is created, or indeed whether it is created at all, and whether the canon created in the past is still valid, being inadequate to the fluid modernity that surrounds us today and the realities that are themselves multidimensional and heterogeneous. What is the society or part of it that has created this canon of expectations, which is often constraining and disempowering (after all, society includes the teachers themselves, who are involved in constructing and making meanings, and are therefore also co-responsible for the expectations created).

12 In Poland (guidance) on role prescription can be found in such documents as the Teachers' Charter and the Act on Higher Education, as well as in descriptions of professions according to their classification and specialisation, and in educational standards – each of these contains a prescription of the teachers' role.

The change in the prescription of the role of the foreign language teachers is linked to the foreign language itself and its teaching at the university. With globalisation responsible for the proliferation of English and its recognition as a *lingua franca* (Seidlhofer, 2005), changes in English language teaching are also taking place in Poland[13]. These are not merely modifications but rather a broad response to changing conditions: adapting to a new type of student who, after many years of studying a foreign language, begins learning a language for specific purposes. I also see this shift as an expression of postmodern changes in education, dominated by individualisation, the precise definition of needs and the pursuit of their fulfilment, instant gratification and rapid goal attainment (Bauman, 2011). While foreign language teachers at universities are carriers of change, it should be emphasised that change is also taking place within themselves and in respect to the roles they fill.

In conclusion, it can be said that the category of professional role has a 'pulsating' character, as construed by Joanna Rutkowiak (1995a). She defines the meaning of pulsating categories as "area-intersecting, overlapping, diverging, which cannot be subjected to the disciplined logic of scope relations of concepts that mark the boundaries of the [educational] map[14]. They reflect the real thinking of real people about today's real education" (Rutkowiak, 1995a, p. 45). Elsewhere, Rutkowiak defines pulsating categories as a set of "potentially theory-generating concepts whose meanings are mobile, as they are subject to change depending on the context in which they occur and, at the same time, reflect the outline of the current state of thinking about education. This pulsation of categories constitutes, as it were, the map's 'temporal' dimension, complementing its spatial dimension and making it akin to a mock-up with moving parts" (Rutkowiak, 1995a, p. 14).

The educational map in question seems open to what might come from areas other than pedagogy, such as sociology or psychology. It is also welcoming of borderlines – ideological and individual alike. It is about "certain compositions of boundaries, delineated at every point where thinking has encountered its contradiction and, from this tension, has obtained an impulse introduced into the thinking interior of the individual, as a representation of their own 'depth' and sensibility" (Witkowski, 1990, p. 34).

13 Starting from 2008, English is taught as a subject from the first year of primary school (Szpotowicz, 2013) until the final year of secondary school. Further, a written and oral matriculation exam in a modern language is a compulsory element. In 2019, as many as 93.5% of all secondary school students chose English for this exam (Kozak, n.d.). Thus, after many years of learning English, students coming to universities no longer continue to learn a general foreign language (mainly English), but very often start learning a language for specific purposes (this is particularly noticeable at specialised universities, e.g. medical or technology universities).

14 In this case, the educational map is understood as an area of parallel, non-hierarchical occurrence of diverse (sometimes different) and not only dichotomous ways of thinking about education.

I agree that the category of the professional role of ESP teachers is pulsating – in ideological terms, it is the interface between different disciplines (pedagogy, sociology, psychology, glottodidactics and others), belonging to each, but not exclusively. It takes different forms depending on the thought paradigms adopted. On a personal level, it can be an expression of transgressing one's boundaries, going beyond existing definitions, confronting a possible inner conflict, a contradiction, encountering one's pre-understanding (Woroniecka, 1993).

In the previous and current chapter, I closely examined the above concepts that comprise my understanding of the professional role, as well as at the prescriptions that shape this role, justify the way we do things and give meaning to the behaviours in question. Some of the professional role prescriptions are imposed on us, some we choose ourselves, some are difficult to elude and stay with us for good, and still others we creatively change as we see fit. To critically respond to one's professional role is to "raise questions about the legitimacy of the patterns of action promoted by a given convention and to seek one's own standards and their justifications" (Sajdak, 2013, p. 209). In doing so, a variety of role dilemmas involving a whole spectrum of consequences become apparent (Sajdak, 2015). Role prescriptions are a kind of collection of "orders, regulations and paragraphs" (PWN, n.d.), preserved in social understanding, in social (socially shared) knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1983).

In the research, I would like to look at role prescriptions on an individual basis but interpret them as a collective phenomenon, "a supra-individual state of affairs that is not the sum of its parts, but a specific quality. In this perspective, the individual is an element of the general, not as an expression of the relation of component and sum, but as an expression of the individual's involvement in the socially shared" (Urbaniak-Zając, 2017, p. 193).

While I am aware that the understanding of role prescription I presented is one of many possible ones, I hope that the above concepts form a coherent whole that can contribute to a better knowledge, understanding and comprehension of ESP teachers. "Pedagogy, as a science of education, needs access to a particular kind of experience that is shared by every human being. It needs access to the experience of being a subject of education: both as an educator and as a learner" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014a).

4

The World of Teaching and Learning in the Intersubjective World of Teachers' Cultures

This chapter presents the subjective experiences of the participants in my research – female teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes (English) who work (or have worked) at universities. I keep in mind that in exploring their world, I am analysing the intersubjective world of culture – they are immersed among other people and connected to them through interactions. They must interpret this world, which is a structure of meaning for them, to find their place in it (Schütz, 1984). My description of the particular context in which the narrators act and work, as well as the interpretation and analysis of the meanings they make, will be based on Knud Illeris' concept of workplace and working life learning (Illeris et al., 2011), as discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (see the holistic approach combined with the knowledge triad shown in Figure 6).

An important and indispensable element of consideration, preceding the interpretation of the research material, will be a detailed examination of the narrators' place of functioning, a kind of reconstruction of their world of action (the university, their relationships with other teachers). Indeed, as noted by Schütz, "man finds himself at any moment of his daily life in a biographically determined situation, that is, in a physical and socio-cultural environment" (Schütz, 1984, p. 145). My task as a researcher is precisely to get to know this micro-world or social micro-context in which the individuals in question operate, to be able to attempt to **understand** or interpret their lives.

Teachers' Narratives 'About the World'

Illeris's (2011) concept of learning in working life provides the analytical backbone and framework for the presentation of this research material and enables its interpretation. He views society as a technical-organisational and socio-cultural learning environment. As already mentioned, it is the place that provides the context and source of the teachers' knowledge of their world. Recognising this place, its symbols and distinctive features will allow us to understand the meanings given to both the elements that constitute it and the relationships that exist. In exploring the teacher's knowledge of the world and interpreting its social level, I pursue the two research objectives described below (from among those presented in Chapter 1). I will thus describe:

- how teachers working at universities experience changes in the prescription of the role of a teacher of foreign languages for specific purposes in the context of postmodernity and the ongoing cultural changes, and

- how ongoing cultural changes, which continually challenge the linear and pro-developmental social order that provides a sense of stability, have altered and continue to alter the teaching for learning paradigm.

The guiding questions will be as follows:

1. Do teachers perceive the ongoing cultural changes, and to what extent?
2. What importance do teachers attribute to experiencing change in teaching?

The teachers' technical-organisational learning environment at work

Illeris (2011) distinguishes six categories that map the technical-organisational learning environment. I chose to describe them in a single subsection, as some elements overlap and complement each other to form a coherent picture of the reality of ESP teachers. Importantly, the narratives of my interviewees contain all the elements that Illeris (2011) mentions, i.e. the division of work, the content of work, the opportunity to make decisions, the opportunity to use qualifications at work, the opportunity for social interaction and the stress and hardship of work.

Division of labour

As noted by Illeris (2011), this is a category that can be used to analyse the organisational form of a company or institution. This form includes such elements as planning, decision-making, control and job functions. The division of work was often discussed by my interviewees – they gave it a lot of importance, emphasising that working at a university or college is multifaceted.

Table 11 presents the themes addressed by the narrators in relation to the division of work. Following the table is a discussion of those themes (planning and decision-making) that best illustrate the phenomena identified.

TABLE 11. DIVISION OF LABOUR IN THE NARRATIVES – THEMES ADDRESSED

Category	Category themes in the narratives	Examples of statements
planning	**– possible closure of the entity employing the teachers;** **– actual closure of one entity;** – a reduction in the teaching hours allocated to languages; – the possibility or lack of possibility to propose own courses/lectures.	**Jasmine:** *We are also told from time to time that the college will be dissolved in a couple more years and no one will need it anymore.*

Category	Category themes in the narratives	Examples of statements
decision--making	– **student groups** (people per group, division of people in the group according to their English proficiency); – teacher's hourly workload; – scheduling; – the positioning of the language course in the overall curriculum.	**Rosalia:** *When you are teaching a class of 30 people with an absolute mix of individuals, if we are talking about proficiency, everyone is actually unhappy.*
control	– anonymous student surveys; – regular staff appraisal; – extensive bureaucracy.	**Kalina:** *They require us to conform; we are expected to complete a lot of surveys, but we do not have the required conditions at all. So it is only what is on paper that is important, and we can actually teach somewhat randomly.*
occupational functions	– obligations; – assigned roles; – requirements imposed by institutions.	**Rosalia:** *One of the things that came up right away – apart from teaching – was specialised translation.*

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

Planning refers to the institution, so it is strategic in nature, and therefore does not apply to the level of individual decisions of rank-and-file employees. While it is possible to look at this category from the level of the specific entity (i.e. who is planning its development, whether it is being considered at all, what the rationale is for specific measures), I did not find any reference to this level in the interviews with my narrators. This issue may also be examined from a perspective that includes management, development planning and the possible contribution of a particular entity (Foreign Languages College, FLC[1]) to academia as a whole. This level of planning was addressed by Rosalia, Jasmine, Malvina, Rose, Violet, Dahlia, Kalina and Lily.

Planning, whether horizontal or vertical, should indicate the direction the entity is to take. Whatever we have plans for acquires a certain importance. "The right to speak always reflects some order of power. Those who are powerless flee into silence; those who have power have a voice" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b, p. 37). One might add that those who are powerless not only flee into silence, but are actually driven into it. Moreover, if we function in a community, even a small one, it is natural (indeed, as Hanna Mamzer (2018) argues, atavistic, as it applies to many species) that we want to somehow tame this 'not just physical place': to make it more familiar to us, more predictable, especially in the age of

1 The teachers interviewed were, at the time of the research or before, employed at Foreign Language Colleges, Foreign Languages Centres, Foreign Language Teaching Colleges or other similarly named entities. Since the most common form is the Foreign Language College, I will use this name and its abbreviation to refer to LSP teaching entities at various universities and colleges.

the fluid modernity that defines today's times. We want to feel 'at home' and develop social ties and build community.

This is where I arrive at the category through which I would like to look at planning – ontological security. "Ontological security is the conviction that I am at home somewhere among other people, in my own place, that I can settle there, that I can trust my surroundings (both materially in terms of the place and socially in terms of other people). Ontological security is a generalised trust in other people, places and events. It is the feeling that we can pursue our own plans, our own needs and expectations without hazardous risks" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2019, p. 15).

Do my interviewees have a sense of ontological security in their work? Do they have a sense of community with the rest of academia? And finally, does the FLC-oriented planning support or rather disrupt the peace and ontological security in the feelings and narratives of my interviewees? To begin with, I would like to quote Rosalia, who had the opportunity to participate in several faculty councils in the years when she taught English for Specific Purposes. Here is what she remembers from them:

Rosalia: *All I heard the entire time was that the department had debts [...], they wanted to shut down the whole college, but it turned out that it would be more expensive [...] if they were to outsource.*

Similar themes were raised by my other protagonists: FLCs are seen as a cost, and options are being considered to optimise expenditure by shutting them down and outsourcing foreign language courses. Dahlia commented on this uncertainty about the future as follows:

Dahlia: *The general economic trend is to get rid of these burdens in favour of some kind of language outsourcing [...]. I do not know, I have no idea, but I do not believe we will survive in the current form. That is what I think.*

Dahlia is in a different situation to Rosalia because her FLC runs commercial courses for students and makes a profit for the university. This is a vital argument.

Dahlia: *We are just more untouchable – yes, this has been perceived as a very strong argument for many years. Never mind that these rectors have never been too keen to do anything about it, because money is known to be an issue, and it is indeed fortunate that we turn a profit.*

Although the FLC's profitability is seen as shielding it from dissolution, Dahlia does not perceive her employment as stable. This is what my other narrators say about it:

Lily: *It seems to me that we are unimportant in this whole big university structure.*

Jasmine: *And this also indicates that our entity is not exactly an important one.*

Laura: *We have often been told that "the college can be merged, dissolved; people can be hired off the street" – well, that is the sort of things we have heard from various higher-ups. [...] It is absolutely vital to realise that this is a completely ancillary entity, an entirely supplementary subject, and were it not for the statutory requirement to operate something like this, we certainly would not be retained.*

What emerges from the quoted statements is not only a sense of being unimportant, and of uncertainty and fear for the future. What Jasmine says ("we are also told from time to time" – Table 11) can be interpreted as a kind of discourse that belittles the FLC (it can be dissolved and replaced with third-party lecturers) or a manifestation of ignoring possible needs (why bother managing the entity and those employed there if the FLC will only operate for a few more years).

Rose notes that the subject standards impose compulsory English language teaching and specify the course hours (though this is not the standard for all majors), and this mitigates the threat of FLC closure. Nonetheless, she has adopted the discourse of fear and belittlement, which indicates that it must also have been present at her university. She says the following about the subject she teaches:

Rose: *We certainly have to realise that [we teach] a subject that can be in the curriculum or not...*

Malvina and Laura speak in a similar vein. I interpret this situation as a profound disturbance of ontological security – a distortion of the meaning and value of what one does and why one does it. The insecurity that Rose had long felt made her develop some form of rationale to cope with her insecurity, to make some sense of it. Zygmunt Bauman (1996) construes trust as a strategy for survival or adaptation to the various threats that seem omnipresent in the postmodern/

liquid modern world. What I find in Rose's account and the form of making sense of insecurity presented by her is precisely the same mechanism of survival and preparation for the eventual dissolution of the college.

This was the situation experienced by Violet, whose narrative I would like to present at the end of this theme. The FLC where she was employed was closed down, which for my narrator turned out to be a critical event ("We recognise something as a critical event as a result of a value judgment based on the importance we assign to the meaning of the event" (Tripp, 1996, p. 29). The entity was closed overnight for – as Violet puts – some political reasons. It was done without prior plans (or these plans were not communicated to the teachers), with immediate effect, without employee protection, without notice period, without severance pay and in an inelegant manner. Violet was reluctant to recall the event, speaking of it as follows, among other things:

> **Violet:** *When you work at a university, you get the feeling that while the money may not be crazy – university earnings vary after all – there is a sense of a certain stability, that you have some sort of base there [...], that you have your job, and you have this sense that it may always be there, so it is this sense of stability that was simply annihilated with but a single cut.*

Violet's ontological security relating to work was completely shattered. This critical event was so strong for her that she wanted to change her profession, even though it was indeed special, and one in the context of which we often speak of a vocation and a mission, with some going as far as to claim that this is not a profession at all, because you can only be a teacher and not work as one (Ptak, 2011).

> **Violet:** *I even had this plan that I would completely change my vocation because of this resentment of being treated like this: okay, then I am pursuing something else.*

The author of this statement did undertake and complete postgraduate studies in human resources management. While she was unable to find employment, she admitted: *bit by bit, I have started to realise that I like teaching, [...] I always have.*

Decision-making is the second element of the division of work proposed by Illeris. He points out that in a hierarchical organisational set-up (and such is the case in universities), rank-and-file staff do not decide on strategic matters.

They are responsible for a small part of the overall process of action; sometimes they do not even see the final outcome and cannot see their contribution to it[2].

In the case of my narrators, some of the most important issues that were decided in their workplace were the size and nature of student groups. As reported by the study participants, groups had grown significantly over the last several years (10 at most): from groups of eight to as many as over thirty. This problem was experienced by the vast majority of my interviewees, and the size of the groups and the lack of division of students according to their level of proficiency in the foreign language evoked strong emotions in my interviewees. Such emotions – difficult, evoking extreme states, being a response to top-down decisions, implemented actions or the institution's policy expressed in them (official and unofficial) – are not merely individually experienced states and a psychological response of the body – they are something more. It is 'emotion labour'.

This term was defined by Sarah Benesch, the aforementioned critical researcher of English language teachers, including ESP teachers. In her terms, 'emotion labour' is a category through which emotions can be studied as discursive practices, as they are considered to be shaped by culture, power or ideology (Benesch, 2017). Starting from the category of emotional labour, coined by Arlie R. Hochschild (2012), Benesch abandons the adjective 'emotional' and replaces it with the noun 'emotion' – to avoid associating the word emotional mainly with women and its perception as synonymous with acting too intensely, inappropriate to the situation. Moreover, the slightly different nomenclature is intended to emphasise that the aim of the research is the relationship between emotions and power, rather than classifying the study as having to do with emotions as in the case of A.R. Hochschild (Benesch, 2020). It is also an approach to emotion with constructivist, discursive and postmodern characteristics.

I perceive the reactions of my interlocutors to excessively large student groups precisely as 'emotion labour' – a kind of dilemma; a dissonance that arises in them as a result of a top-down decision. Emotion labour cannot be avoided – it is, as Benesch (2017) notes, an inevitable outcome, a healthy reaction to the difficult

2 Although this comparison may seem distant and inadequate, Zygmunt Bauman (1989) describes a similar mechanism. He points out that the separation of responsibility for the 'whole' in the name of rationality of action and hierarchisation was, or may well have been, responsible for the horrific crime that was the Holocaust. "The most frightening discovery of the Holocaust is exactly that a modern organisation allows barbaric deeds to be carried out coldly and soberly, just as the modern cult of reason demands. It is not so much the enigma of 'How could they do it?' that torments and keeps us awake, but the suspicion (let us face it!) that we could or might – if not in this, then in another act of genocide – be among the perpetrators" (Bauman, 1993, p. 119). The purpose of citing Bauman's words is only to point out that the imbalance between instrumental and moral/emancipatory rationality, which I already discussed in Chapter 2, is dangerous, even if the scale of the danger is incomparably smaller.

conditions or inevitable conflict that can arise when, for example, pedagogical ideals collide with economics and instrumentalism with humanism.

In the case of the first of these collisions, as Tomasz Szkudlarek (2008b) argues, there is a certain shift of the educational discourse closer and closer to the elements conditioning economic growth, which manifests itself, among other things, in the increasing dominance of the category of efficiency over the emancipatory dimension of education. My interviewees have also noticed this process – Rose and Rosalia have no doubt that it is the market ideology that is behind the changes at their university, which are aimed at increasing the profitability of studies for academia.

Rose: *Apparently, if the rector-dean committee has decided that the number of groups should be halved and that is the way to go about it, it means that money is involved. [...] What annoys me is that all the activities that are gratifying with small groups [...] become tedious with these large groups.*

Rosalia: *The only problem that arose during several years of work was precisely the university's cost-cutting, i.e. combining dean groups into seminar groups. When you are teaching a class of 30 people with an absolute mix of individuals, if we are talking about proficiency, everyone is actually unhappy.*

Both narrators are dissatisfied with the changes, perceiving them as contradictory to what they were taught. They also have to face upset and disgruntled students, even though they did not make the decisions for which they are held accountable. As such, they are caught up in a system that they cannot change – they have to adapt.

In this context, Laura's statement is very intriguing in that it presents both 'emotion labour' as construed by Benesch (2017) and 'emotional labour' as seen by A.R. Hochschild (2012).

Laura: *The main disadvantage, which has been present for some years now, is the quantitative changes to the groups (...). This is definitely to everyone's disadvantage. To this day, I still remember that I was almost angry with the students, why are there so many of them in the room. [...] We had 10 at first, then 20, now 25 or 26, so it takes a long time just to check attendance. If I want them to do some short speeches, listening to 10 people – that is about as long as I am able to stay attentive and interested. By that point, listening to more of them and keeping a nice facial expression and the like is just difficult.*

In Laura's speech, one can observe 'emotion labour' (borderline anger at the students who, after all, are not to blame for the situation at hand) and 'emotional labour' (an internal compulsion to show interest and focus on the task at hand). "Keeping a nice facial expression" is what Hochschild (2012) calls the commercialisation of feelings – they not only serve the person who presents them, but also have a value that is converted into 'profit'. In the case of teachers, this profit is the effectiveness of teaching. "A teacher who is aware of how emotions can affect the course and results of learning and the functioning of the student in the classroom tries to make their reactions and behaviour a source of positive emotions that allow students to feel comfortable and believe that they can achieve a lot. The benefits of this approach to teaching include higher student achievements..." (Madalińska-Michalak and Góralska, 2012, p. 123).

Concluding the theme of emotional labour, I will also quote a short statement by Rose, who also sees teachers as public figures who must sometimes keep their emotions in check. Rose argues that this professional group should enjoy greater understanding and support for this reason.

Rose: *Few people realise that [the teacher] is a public person. No matter what happens to me at home or what problem I have, I have to stand fully prepared in front of the group.*

The second opposition involving 'emotion labour' is the relationship between instrumentalism and humanism. Drawing on Jürgen Habermas's social theory, Robert Kwaśnica (2007) uses the category of instrumental (justified, purposeful) rationality and the category of communicative (interactional, emancipatory) rationality to describe the dilemmas at hand and, in this way, diagnoses education in Poland and the place where education is now. Human beings – and therefore also students and teachers – need both rationalities to be able to fully understand their experience and action. However, as Kwaśnica (2014) shows, questions that used to be reserved for instrumental rationality (about efficiency, implementation of a plan, purpose and one truth) dominate almost all educational discourse, pushing questions about reflections on being, understanding, education and humanisation to the background. Efficiency takes the lead and conversation is secondary. There is no time for conversation, as teachers are being 'chased' in a race to deliver educational outcomes.

Below are two statements from Jasmine, who talks about 'emotion labour' associated with her teaching practice, working with large groups, a certain nostalgia for the days gone by and the inability to activate students through conversation.

Jasmine: *For me, unfortunately, the teacher-pupil, teacher-student contact is very important, and I have a frame of reference. I used to [...] teach in groups of up to 10 people [...], there were also groups of five, six, eight people, and I knew everyone. I knew who was who, and even when someone did not want to speak too much, you know, by the right sort of approach, well, there was no chance that this person would not say anything, preventing me from seeing if they had made any progress. [...] For me, teaching is not just about passing on curriculum content, it is about building this relationship, this interpersonal one. Now and then, time permitting, I like to deviate from the topic and talk to my group as well, just like that: about their expectations, about what is important to them, sometimes about the direction they have chosen, and about their work.*

We can see that with fewer people in the group, Jasmine was able to pursue instrumental rationality – nurturing the development of her students, monitoring their progress, but also talking to them about their lives, i.e. interacting with them, building a broad understanding. Increasing the size of the group has made it impossible or extremely difficult for Jasmine to manage both functions. Since learning outcomes cannot deteriorate and, as Jasmine says: *on paper, learning outcomes are satisfactory* and class time is the same regardless of the number of students, maintaining efficiency comes at the expense of humanisation.

Malvina, Kalina and Lily have also noticed this process. During their meetings with me, they manifested their sadness and dissatisfaction – their 'emotion labour' – with words and gestures. Malvina mentioned *students losing the ability to speak for themselves, to speak independently, to present something. During many classes*, [a student] *is simply unable to say anything, or will only say one sentence.*

Kalina, on the other hand, lamented her inability to adequately appreciate her students, even though she feels she should do so and knows it is expected.

Kalina: *People, even if they are adult or indeed very adult, like to be appreciated, to be noticed, and I am unable to do it in such a large group. I can pick out two or three people and appreciate them, and then, only when grading the tests do I notice that this or that person is actually very good [...] This is vital for people: not only to be aware that you know their name, but also to know if they are good, which they do if you praise them.*

The category of division of work, as presented above using two elements, **planning** and **decision-making**, is implemented in separation from the employees who are affected by these decisions and plans. They articulate a hierarchical arrangement that not only disrupts the ontological security of my interviewees,

but also introduces a discourse of power. I described the emotion labour of my interviewees as their reaction to the decisions made and the primacy of the discourse of efficiency over humanisation. However, it is important to bear in mind the limitations inherent in the research presented and, consequently, their impact on the formulation of general conclusions about all FLCs and the structures to which they belong.

Work Content

The second of the six elements of the technical-organisational work environment described by Illeris can be understood as a set of meanings given to work individually by employees. Piotr Stańczyk (2008) defines three possible dimensions for the study of the meanings of work in relation to teachers – the axiological dimension (referring to the general sense of practice), the economic dimension (involving resources exchangeable for other goods or possibilities of human functioning) and the linguistic dimension (referring to the use of language and its critical, discursive study). I will examine the meanings given to the content of work by the study participants through the axiological dimension.

Based on one possible breakdown, values can be divided into intrinsic (autotelic, important in themselves, not serving another purpose) and instrumental (those that matter because of something else) (Judycki, 2012). In table 12, the themes raised by the study participants regarding the content of their work and the meanings given to it are broken down into these two groups. If a particular element was deemed inherently valuable by the narrators, I categorise its meaning as intrinsic. If, on the other hand, its value for the participants consists in its usefulness in achieving another goal (whether by the teachers or by their students), I assume that it has the character of an instrumental value.

TABLE 12. INTRINSIC VALUES AND INSTRUMENTAL WORK CONTENT IN THE NARRATIVES

VALUES	
INTRINSIC	**Themes taken up by**
conversation (*unconscious education*)	Rosalia, Malvina, Lily, Violet, Kalina, Dahlia, Jasmine, Laura
stabilisation	Violet, Dahlia, Jasmine
teaching	Rose, Jasmine, Lily, Kalina
INSTRUMENTAL	
effect	Rosalia, Lily, Malvina, Jasmine
language as a tool	Malvina, Kalina, Dahlia, Lily, Jasmine, Rose, Violet

VALUES	
INSTRUMENTAL	**Themes taken up by**
profit	Lily, Rose, Jasmine, Kalina, Dahlia

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

According to my narrators, conversation is one of the most important elements that create intrinsic values. The teachers presented it as a good in itself (though one can also identify instrumental values in it). Conversation is conceived as valuable because of its very nature (the act of talking, action, human interaction), but also because it can be seen as a form of unconscious education (upbringing). Indeed, it is unconscious because none of my narrators address the issue of education overtly.

Conversation as a value was presented most extensively by Lily. She teaches an extra class at the university, a proseminar, where representatives of different medical backgrounds can meet in one group.

Lily: *Language serves as a pretext for conversation. For instance, talking about something in Polish might seem trivial or obvious, but the [foreign] language is the element that makes us talk about it – and then it turns out that it is not trivial at all. [...] Sometimes I feel like a discussion facilitator in these classes; for example, we discuss an issue and practically everyone is able to talk about it from their point of view. And sometimes, it opens their eyes to different issues.*

As one can see, conversation, whether between teachers and students or within a group of listeners, is a platform for exchanging experiences, points of view, an opportunity to broaden individual perspectives and, ultimately, a form of hermeneutic understanding. Yet, it is also something more.

Jasmine: *Now and then, time permitting, I like to deviate from the topic and talk to my group as well, just like that: about their expectations, about what is important to them, sometimes about the direction they have chosen, and about their work. Then it somehow breaks down a certain barrier. Of course, this does not work for every group, but there are groups who are very willing to talk and tell, and then they also feel that I am not the sort of person to try and bust them for not knowing something. This is not the point at all.*

I interpret both Lily's and Jasmine's statements as highlighting the educational potential inherent in the relationships they build through conversation. In this respect, I perceive education as "a fact of social life, constituting a theme of

history and culture" (Rutkowiak, 1990, p. 176), whose theoretical perspective of thinking is determined by the relationality of "considering the educative sense of the whole dynamic human-world experience, including noticing its implicit and non-obvious dimensions" (Rutkowiak, 1990, p. 184). Construed in this way, education seems to have no beginning or end – it is present all the time in the relationship built between subjects and is not limited to childhood or adolescence. Nonetheless, some scholars of glottodidactic practice note a "depreciation of the university teacher's educational role. It consists in the widespread treatment of 'pedagogical content' as irrelevant to the education of students, who are considered to be adults and thus already 'brought up', socially formed and independent individuals" (Hostyński, 2009, p. 358).

In describing the themes taken up by the study participants in Table 12, I mentioned the unconscious nature of education, as none of the narrators explicitly referred to this process. Nevertheless, researchers argue that every person, at some point in their life, is a learner and an educator. John Dewey defines education as "the intellectual, moral, and emotional growth of the individual" (Dewey, 1963, p. 110, as cited in Mizerek, 2021, p. 23) and, consequently, the evolution of a democratic society; he regarded this evolution as the most important duty of education. Moreover, education as he understood it required reflexive thinking and action, which, in a somewhat simplified sense, can be called experience. However, not every experience has the power of change; one can speak of (reflexive) experience if "we are dealing with the interaction of the subject's 'self' with another person, the material world, the natural world, an idea, or whatever constitutes the environment available at a given moment" (Mizerek, 2021, p. 21).

Jacek Filek (Tomiło, 2019) describes the process of education as a relationship between acting and experiencing, or between the acting subject and the experiencing subject. Echoing Margaret Mead (1978), we assume that the educational relationship can move in a variety of directions – from parents (ancestors) to children within a postfigurative culture (in the context of academia, from teachers to students), between peers in a cofigurative culture, and from children to adults within a prefigurative culture. These categories will be used later in the chapter to illustrate the notion of the possibilities of social interaction; here, they merely point to the multifaceted or multidirectional nature of upbringing.

It should also be mentioned that by semantically limiting the notion of education to values, attitudes and culture (as already mentioned in Chapter 2), postmodernity has multiplied it, forcing man to make a choice, condemning him to live at the interface of different cultures, between what is past and what

is present. In these particular conditions of liquid modernity, all students and educators must make their own choices. Conversation, or rather the dialogue without an arbiter described in the previous chapter (Rutkowiak, 1992a), thus becomes an extraordinary mediator in spreading understanding, comprehension or simply culture – after all, it is not about adopting all values or mindlessly following new fashions, but about choosing for oneself what corresponds to one's own Self and, what is considered extremely valuable and important, demonstrating precisely the understanding of the other person. Seeing someone's experience, their story and their individual contexts helps to understand and build an open and inclusive society. It is through conversation that relationship building and education is possible.

Conversation in my interlocutors' narratives has other facets – sometimes it is a record of an intimate experience between teachers and students:

Jasmine: *Students, just like all people, just like us, have different personal problems. I do not know, for example, someone gets seriously ill, or someone's mum has cancer, is dying, and the student comes to me and explains it, says how it is now, and at that moment the rules and regulations cease to matter to me, I look at him or her as a person with a problem. And then, the rest of it, the whole teaching process... well it is not that important to me. Somehow, I try to empathise with what [the student] is feeling right now, and that is the most important thing.*

The conversation also tends to confirm the existence of deeper relationships.

Laura: *It used to be that they wanted to talk a bit with me. Just like that, even after class, somewhere in the corridor. Well, but I was really only a few years older than them, and now they no longer want to, because I am much older, so it is actually not fun for them anymore.*

Conversation, as I showed, has huge educational potential. This is how 'I-researcher' understand the words and their meaning spoken by my interviewees. For them, conversation is an asset (a value) in itself; it is important for the relationship itself – a more or less conscious education, not a goal to be achieved. It is also important for the teachers themselves, because it plays a role in their construction of practical-moral knowledge, so that they can more fully understand their place in the world, make sense of it and communicate dialogically with others (Kwaśnica, 2003).

Let us now proceed to discuss the meanings of the content of the work, which I interpreted as instrumental. I will focus on language – foreign languages for specific purposes, i.e. the central element that forms the context of the work of the study participants. Its role here is special – as it is both a means to an end and an end in itself. Teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes value the language they teach because of its usefulness in their professional setting. They see its market potential and its impact on a person's attractiveness in the labour market. As such, they feel a sense of teaching something specific, tailored to the student; of giving a tool that can be used in the future.

The glottodidactic literature is not consistent on the similarities and differences in the methodologies of teaching general languages and foreign languages for specific purposes (Sowa, 2016). I do, however, agree with the position of Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John (1998), who argue that the nature of the interaction between the teacher of a foreign language for specific purposes and the learner is atypical – it is characterised by the teacher often acting as consultant on language issues. This is because the students are the experts in the field to which the language for specific purposes relates, which entails changes in didactics and other elements of teaching. This is evident, for example, in Lily's previously mentioned statements – she sometimes sees herself as a 'discussion facilitator', being somewhat on the side of the group or on an equal footing with the student rather than a gatekeeper and sole holder of knowledge.

Pointing to the purposefulness of their work, my interviewees attach great importance to the practical usefulness of the content they teach.

Kalina: *It is definitely something that I like a lot, that I can offer something new and something useful, and I even like that it is difficult in a way [...]. One also has some sense of the meaning of this work, that one has taught something really concrete, and that not everyone can do it, and that someone might find it useful one day.*

Teachers value the results that their students achieve.

Dahlia: *You can see that it works, I mean, they can say it all in Polish, though not so much in English, so they are learning something, they are learning the language, and I find that very pleasant.*

And finally, they see a foreign language for specific purposes as a tool that can be used effectively in the future. It can facilitate and enable work.

Lily: *I also like that in language teaching, that it is such a know-how, that I am giving a tool and not some knowledge in the sense of theory, I mean, in medical language, we obviously also attach a lot of importance to that [...], but it also is nice – this aspect of simply providing a tool which you can use for different things.*

Perceiving the content of work through its instrumental values, as presented above, allows teachers to build up the technical knowledge needed to achieve the goals, to determine the methods to be used and the means and conditions that determine this process (Kwaśnica, 2003). This view of the content of one's work, of one's professional practice, is as important as noting its autotelic values.

To present the content of the work, i.e. the meanings given to it individually by the narrators of my research, I chose autotelic values – discussing conversation and education in detail – as well as instrumental values, among which I drew attention to language and communication. It is hard not to notice that these are converging concepts: conversation and language, as well as education and communication, exist in some relationship with each other; they overlap, and one cannot exist without the other. I selected to describe these elements in detail to visualise this very relationship, to indicate a certain tension between values that are both autotelic and instrumental. They coexist, they interpenetrate, they sometimes remain in a certain opposition to each other, and at other times, they are characterised by a multiplicity of common elements. The autotelic and instrumental values help teachers to give meaning to their actions, but they also help in selecting the appropriate means to achieve this goal.

Possibilities for making decisions

This is the third element highlighted by Illeris (2011) on the map of the technical--organisational learning environment. He concludes[3] that the higher the position one holds and the less hierarchical the organisation, the more individualised the workplace is and the greater the opportunities for decision-making. I must point out, however, that it is not my intention to examine the narrators' autonomy, but rather to examine their workplace through the lens of their words and determine whether it triggers or perhaps inhibits autonomy.

Autonomy is an extremely broad and heterogeneous concept, which is considered as an individual or community phenomenon and, in relation to education, one that is important from the perspective of learners, teachers and institutions (Szempruch, 2013). Autonomy is, as described in Chapter 3, a desired outcome, a target stage of

3 The description of this element refers to commercial companies.

development, enabling a reflective, critical attitude towards oneself and the learning setting, as well as oneself in this setting. It is interesting and noteworthy that autonomy is processual in nature – it is not a fixed state that, once achieved, persists uninterruptedly but, due to the multitude of factors that can determine it, can shape itself according to changing contexts and experiences (Wołodźko, 2018). This is an important finding – especially for research where we talk to people at a specific point in their lives. Our observations and conclusions refer to a specific moment in time and do not represent their overall life or teaching attitude. "Subjectivity and autonomy are not something that is given and deposited in each individual independently and prior to their relationship with other individuals" (Dehnel, 2014, p. 91). According to Habermas, they are – as values and norms – established in intersubjective relations between people (Dehnel, 2014).

In this dimension, decision-making and autonomy express a subject-oriented attitude, according to which a person perceives "themselves as the source of their conduct, their own goals as the object of their intentions, the world around them as the prospects of their opportunities" (Obuchowski, 1993, p. 9). Relating the subjective standard to the educational situation, Tadeusz Lewowicki (1999) defines four areas of the search for an optimal model of subjective education, as presented in Table 13.

TABLE 13. SUBJECT EDUCATION – AREAS OF SEARCH

	Areas of search for an optimal pattern of subject education	Lines of action
1.	Individual-education-society-state relationship	Increasing the rights and real possibilities of the individual
2.	Dominant ideology, worldview monopoly relating to education	Expanding the rights and opportunities for people to make informed choices
3.	**Education, the place and role of the individual in education**	**Shifting away from the dominance of the adaptive education model towards critical-creative education**
4.	Relationships between people, between participants in educational processes	Developing the subjectivity of students and teachers, their authentic participation in the creation of educational processes and the formation of their participants

Source: own elaboration based on Lewowicki, T., Podmiotowość w edukacji (1999). In: W. Pomykało (ed.). *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna* (pp. 597–598). Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

The area of most interest from the standpoint of this research project is 'education, the place and role of the individual in education', which postulates a transition from the dominance of adaptive education towards critical-creative education, which is described as a transition in terms of the perception of knowledge (and thus of the teachers' role) from scientistic to anti-scientistic

positions in the theoretical part of my work. It is through these categories that I would like to describe the 'possibilities for making decisions'.

As argued by Habermas (Carr and Kemmis, 2004), people's knowledge is shaped by three different interests – technical, practical and emancipatory – and each of them creates a different kind of knowledge needed or used for different purposes.

Analysing the statements of my interlocutors in terms of the problem at hand, i.e. the transition from adaptive education to critical-creative education (from the object standard to the subject standard), I focused precisely on the aforementioned interests constituting the different types of knowledge: instrumental, practical (understanding) and emancipatory (reflection). I analysed how my interviewees talk about their practice, about knowledge itself and about some elements from the world of didactics (teaching materials, textbooks, syllabuses) and what kind of interest lies behind their statements. This is summarised in Table 14 below.

TABLE 14. THEMES OF KNOWLEDGE-CONSTRUCTING INTEREST IN THE NARRATIVES

Interest (knowledge)			
		themes taken up	**themes taken up by**
Technical (*instrumental knowledge*)	knowledge	– the type of knowledge expected by students; – knowledge as a commodity/tool.	Dahlia, Malvina, Kalina, Jasmine, Laura
	own practice	– the sense of objectivity; – teachers as omniscient authorities.	Kalina, Laura, Jasmine, Rose, Malvina
	didactics	– the syllabus as a constraint; – the authority of the textbook/ answer key.	Rosalia, Jasmine, Laura, Kalina, Malvina, Rose
		themes taken up	**themes taken up by**
Practical (*understanding--type knowledge*)	knowledge	– knowledge partnership; – learning from students.	Kalina, Rosalia, Dahlia, Violet, Malvina
	own practice	– the teacher as a facilitator; – relationship building; – referring to own/student experience.	Lily, Violet, Dahlia, Malvina, Laura
	didactics	– resources from various sources; – reflection-in-action.	Malvina, Kalina, Rose, Lily
		themes taken up	**themes taken up by**
Emancipatory (*reflective--type knowledge*)	knowledge	– knowledge gives strength, courage; – the opportunity to learn.	Kalina, Malvina, Rose, Lily, Jasmine
	own practice	– stimulating reflection; – questions about the place of the teachers.	Malvina, Kalina, Rose, Lily, Rosalia
	didactics	– the syllabus as an opening.	Rosalia, Lily

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

Even a cursory review of the summary shows that, in the case of my research, the interests constructing the knowledge of teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes are difficult to collect and enclose only within one category: instrumental, understanding or emancipatory. Therefore, the presentation and preliminary analysis of the research material is different from the previous two elements of the technical-organisational work environment (division of work and work content). It is a less structured and more complementary picture, highlighting those elements of practice and didactics that are closely related to the different forces (interests) behind the 'understanding' of knowledge.

In the teaching of a foreign language for specific purposes, knowledge has a special character – it is simultaneously the goal of the educational process, the means of reaching that goal, and the environment in which the learners are immersed. Moreover, in the FLC setting, students usually have a broad knowledge of a particular field (medical, technical, etc.), which they use (or can use) in the language learning process. Teachers of languages for specific purposes have little or no such knowledge (Dudley-Evans and M.J. St John, 1998, p. 188). On the other hand, it is the foreign language teachers who have the linguistic competencies to assist in the learning process. Teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes are often seen as consultants rather than omniscient sages (Dudley-Evans and M.J. St John, 1998, p. 189).

I found each of the three types of knowledge defined by Habermas (Carr and Kemmis, 2004) in the teachers' narratives. Interestingly, the participants' statements reveal that the first of these, instrumental knowledge (repetitive, unchanging, from "a single textbook", with clear-cut boundaries), is downright expected by some students.

Violet: *They have this expectation that they would like such a textbook, page by page – 'I have reached some level' And when they do not feel that this textbook is finite, that you wrap something up within a certain number of lessons, they are quite dissatisfied [...]. There are also people who need that kind of approach, a more structured one: to finish one portion and say that they have gone from B1 to B2, even though this is not so straightforward.*

Lily: *I am open to negotiating with students but if they, I do not know, demand things like, "And can you prepare a list of vocabulary?" – well, excuse me.*

Kalina: *I am often surprised that they do not like to break up the routine... they just prefer to sit over that book of theirs, because anything new is just scary for them.*

The statements presented show that some students resist and somewhat resent the opportunity to learn from a variety of sources and materials, from heterogeneously structured textbooks emphasising a variety of skills. This requires them to make decisions about what they want to learn and what they do not want to learn, to sift through the content and separate the more important from the less important. Life in postmodern times (liquid modernity) brings fewer and fewer unchanging refuges, steadfast authorities, and a person is effectively condemned to the necessity of making decisions and the uncertainty of their consequences (Giddens, 2012). Since any decision is made at the cost of not making another, choice becomes an increasingly heavy burden.

I perceive the students' positions, as presented by the narrators, precisely as a certain sign of the times and a longing for what took place at earlier stages of education. Young people have been accustomed by the educational system to learning from a single textbook, where objective knowledge, communicated in a transmissive manner (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014c), was easier to assimilate and the main goal of learning was to pass a test.

Laura also remarks that the transmission culture in Polish schools accustoms students not to ask questions, which also leaves them with less courage to do so.

Laura: *In our learning culture, asking questions to a teacher is not something you do because you take in knowledge generally. You do not ask the teacher about anything, you do not disturb the teacher in class like that* (laughs). *It is actually very rare for a student to ask something themselves.*

One important element that I noticed in the case of some of the narrators was a sense of objectification.

Kalina: *They often show us, I mean, we often feel this way and I have also heard it from others that we simply feel superfluous in a way... We stand there, say something, [...] I believe that what I am saying is interesting but there is no response; no one wants to listen to me, no one is interested, you really feel superfluous.*

Jasmine: *Well that is it, I am feeling more and more redundant, sometimes I am probably seen by some people as the lady who is supposed to check attendance; I am supposed to give them a test, grade it and give them a pass. Well, sometimes I feel like that.*

My two narrators feel redundant mainly because their role begins to boil down to the technical elements of the practice – checking attendance, giving tests or grading, and 'going through' the content of the textbook they are using in class. These duties are, of course, an indispensable part of the job, but they are definitely not the only elements of it. I thus interpret these statements as specific examples of the appropriation of the space that belongs to reflexivity by the instrumental rationality that Robert Kwaśnica (2014) wrote about. One possible way out of the impasse is precisely the possibility of making decisions, if only with regard to the resources used (a variety of sources instead of a textbook to be completed), resulting from greater teacher autonomy. I find this approach in Rosalia's words.

Rosalia: *I am glad that I could also work on courses that did not have a textbook [...] it was an interesting experience for me. I did not have to use some specific textbook that was not always interesting to follow, but I was able to come up with my own classes from scratch, choosing resources according to the students' proficiency [...]. It was not such a stiff reading of texts, looking for answers in the text and repeating the same thing over and over again.*

Rosalia's narrative shows that being able to independently select the resources discussed in class and create syllabi not only made her happy, but also built her autonomy and gave her a sense of agency. Indeed, designing the course and its content on one's own, as well as developing and modifying resources, preceded by an analysis of needs, are among the distinctive prerogatives of ESP teachers (see Anthony, 2018; Kırkgöz and Dikilitaş, 2018).

Rosalia, as she pointed out, could only enjoy autonomy in certain courses; in others, the textbook was imposed from above. Therefore, it is uncertain whether one can really speak of a psychological-type autonomy in her case, emphasising individual, personal independence based on one's own aspirations, where non--conformism plays an important role and which is not associated with a need for approval from others (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020).

Malvina: *Unfortunately, I am held back a bit by the structures the requirements that are imposed on me at university, that is, sticking to the syllabus, which clearly defines the competencies to be acquired. This makes it a bit difficult for me.*

Dahlia: *In an ideal world, you would select better resources...*

In relation to teachers, autonomy is an ambiguous term because of the multitude of factors that limit it. It is a peculiar situation when the autonomy of a profession is so heavily influenced by state policy (Nowosad, 2001). This situation gives rise to significant tensions. If we conceive of autonomy as a state in which the conditions created by someone allow them to do something – the question arises, as mentioned above, as to whether this is real (deep) autonomy or rather superficial autonomy (Wiśniewska, 2021). Real autonomy is about making autonomous decisions under all conditions, characterised by an attitude that originates from or leads to emancipation.

As already indicated, an image of a partner in the knowledge acquisition process rather than an omniscient person emerges from the theoretical-scientific prescription of the role of ESP teachers. Virtually every one of my interviewees indicated that students have a deeper understanding of the curriculum content discussed in language classes than teachers. The narrators indicated that it is the students who are the experts in the given field, and sometimes they even ask students questions on professional issues when something is unclear. There is, at least to some extent, an exchange of knowledge, a partnership and learning from each other.

Dahlia: *Of course, I do not know physics and chemistry very well, but do I use such resources. It is all about English, of course – I do not lie to them that I am going to teach them physics and chemistry.*

Malvina: *After so many years of working, I think I leverage the fact that I already have quite a deep knowledge of other medical issues; I also have this feeling already, this inner peace that I do not need to be familiar with everything, I do not need to know everything. It is much easier for me to admit now that I do not know some issue, a certain word.*

Violet: *I used to ask them: "okay, guys, but what is this 'offside' thing?"* (laughs) *Now it is still difficult for me to grasp it, but they explained it using various funny examples [...], it really was learning along with them. In fact, when you came across a good group, you would tell them straight away that "I am not a specialist, I am not a doctor, I am not a physiotherapist, I am not a therapist, you are going to teach me a bit here, and I will help you linguistically", which worked really well, because they had this feeling that OK, 'we also have a tool, we also know something, more than you do'. Basically, it was somewhat collaborative. So it was such a benefit that they were able to participate a little bit in this learning process.*

On the one hand, teachers have no problem asking their students about some issues that might be difficult for non-specialists. On the other hand, they also admit that they sometimes feel uncomfortable when, after a lot of searching, they cannot find the Polish equivalent of a word or a phrase or are otherwise unable to explain something.

Kalina: *So I am going through the coursebook for the umpteenth time, but there are some moments with each book where I feel very uncomfortable, because there are some terms that I do not really know how to translate, even after searching for many years and asking various people. It is sometimes the case that they are untranslatable. Well, it is often the case that I write down some terms from medical dictionaries and then the students look at me all weird because it sounds so unprofessional, so I do not quite feel comfortable. All I can do is use different sources, but I am not an expert.*

Jasmine: *It was not so stressful for me back in the day, but now, well, even if I am unable to find something because there are all sorts of words, phrases... and sometimes we do not manage to find them and, despite consulting colleagues, we are not always one hundred per cent sure.*

I interpret this as a certain dissonance felt by my narrators: a discrepancy between the model teacher – an infallible and all-knowing expert – and the specific situation in which they are not fully knowledgeable about the content presented. The first model seems to be internalised in the image of teachers, who must be in control of the educational process and outcome – they must answer every question and dispel any uncertainty. This kind of thinking is rooted in the structures of the empirical-analytical sciences. It is only when we look at a question through the lens of 'understanding-type' knowledge or 'reflection-type' knowledge that we see that it does not have to contain an answer at all – it can be a contribution to reflection. The answer, if it has to appear, can merely be a proposal of a certain description of the situation. Moreover, questions themselves broaden the context and "remind us that truths do not exist independently of the perspectives of those who hold them to be so" (Bruner, 1996, p. 66).

The previously mentioned learning from students mainly concerns curriculum content presented in a foreign language. The situation is slightly different, for example, in the case of cultural issues. A student of one of my research participants questioned the English courteous expressions presented in the textbook. She perceived them as excessively polite and unnatural,

doubting that they would ever be used in real life. This is how my interviewee comments on it:

> **Rose:** *Can you imagine that they questioned it completely [...] well, I did not rely on my authority here; I just told them that it was a book written by native speakers for people who would be going there [abroad], be in a new environment and be expected... first and foremost, to behave there politely.*

I believe that this short fragment contains some crucial themes about knowledge. Indeed, this applies to self-knowledge (the teacher's authority is insufficient, it must be backed up by the authority of the textbook), to knowledge of the world and to the 'I–world' relations (the opinion that one must behave politely in a new place vs. the belief that the courtesies are excessively polite – I consider this a manifestation of the differences between generations X and Z). Such a dispute provides an opportunity (in this case, an untapped one) for a prefigurative culture to emerge. In the end, an instrumental, technocratic view of the sentence in the book won out over an understanding of the context from a broader perspective.

Laura also refers to the authority of the textbook. She admits that she feels more comfortable when the teacher's version of the book comes with an answer key.

> **Laura:** *When students look at me strangely, I tell them "well, please do not have any complaints with me, there is an answer key in the teacher's textbook here. After all, I do not know that either, so we have to trust it".*

Yet, the teaching practices of my narrators are not backed solely by technical interest and instrumental knowledge.

> **Malvina:** *I also relatively often use videos in my classes, that is, just a couple of minutes' worth of speeches by people involved in the medical field, but from different perspectives. [...] This sometimes includes people with disabilities, so they do not necessarily* [present] *only this somewhat professional point of view. And they find that interesting.*

> **Jasmine:** *I actually like teaching based on several sources; at some point, I get tired of teaching solely from one textbook, [...] but for me, it would probably be ideal to include two, three sources while teaching every class, to play a video, if only every other class, because this allows you to avoid this monotony.*

Lily: *I do not give ready-made solutions, because I try to [...] guide them to the solution in terms of language. If a student does not know something, I do not just tell them how it should be, I hint at it somehow, I also listen and observe what the student already knows, so that I can build on that and, in a way, use it as a jumping point or refer to what I have already heard.*

What becomes apparent in the practices mentioned above is a hermeneutic approach to knowledge – one that shows different shades and outlooks and thus broadens understanding. Using a variety of sources and presenting multiple viewpoints raises awareness of the issues at hand, while the interpersonal space widens (Sztompka, 2016). Even the mediated experiences of others have the potential to build and develop the symbolic meaning of objects as understood by George Herbert Mead (Blumer, 2007), that is, things, people, ideals and actions.

The knowledge presented so far, with references to the practice of teachers and some elements of didactics, has focused on the presentation of instrumental knowledge (pursuing technical interest) and understanding-type knowledge (practical interest). As shown above, and what I hope is evident, the two types of knowledge appearing in the case of the narrators are intertwined. However, also evident in the statements quoted are references to student experiences, which can help them find a solution in the here and now. My narrators pursue a reflective approach to their practice in other areas as well.

Malvina: *So again, I go beyond the framework of what applies. Sometimes I do something just to increase their attention, their concentration in class and during tests, to introduce some multidimensionality. Yes, I am a teacher of medical English, yes, I come in for a 1.5 h class, but why not do something different from time to time?*

Lily: *It happens to me sometimes that something in the class does not work out, something I propose is not received the way I expect or there is just no enthusiasm, or it is just not appealing, but it is always a matter of testing things out – "alright, well, this is not good, and maybe it will not work with this group, so maybe I will try it with another group, or maybe in some other way" – I mean these are the kind of stumbling blocks that show... let me put it another way: perhaps there are times when I say something, when someone says something, and I accept that I need to let something go or something needs to change.*

The first statement is related to an action and the simultaneous reflection on it and its possible modification, the critical approach to one's knowledge

in the course of action, which may lead to a reconstruction of the assumptions made. The second is a retrospective reflection on an event that has already taken place, which may enable a deeper and fuller reflection, a more comprehensive one (Kwiatkowska, 2008, p. 69).

A reflective approach to one's practice (and, in a broader perspective, more than one's practice) is difficult to overemphasise. It allows teachers to simply see more. This kind of reflection thus has an emancipatory power and "enables the teacher to change critically and creatively" (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 1997, p. 19). Indeed, Habermas (1995) writes about the unity of scientific cognition (knowledge) and interest in the context of self-reflection – thus, among the interests constituting knowledge, reflection and understanding are both emancipatory factors. The issue of change is extremely important in this theme. The fulfilment of the emancipatory interest "in the process of education must mean, on the one hand, creating opportunities for self-development, educating for critical (self-)reflection, shaping the ability to individually transcend the assigned roles, and on the other hand, it must mean creating, precisely in the sphere of education, and formal one at that, the conditions for the possibility of social change" (Dziemianowicz-Bąk, 2010, p. 13).

Education does not only concern students, but also – through self--reflection, through change – enriches (shapes, teaches) teachers. It is thus a kind of journey "and importantly – not only of the young, but also of the old, of those who are to be the guides" (Sławek, 2021, p. 7). To illustrate this thesis, let me refer to a statement by Jasmine, who, in this case, does not talk about didactics, but rather about her own teachers whom she remembers. However, they too were an important, formative factor.

> **Jasmine:** *As I recall, there were more of all these personalities. [...] When I was a student or pupil, I remember teachers and lecturers – those who are printed in your memory and remain there because they had something to say besides what you can read in a textbook. These classes were simply run differently than according to a prescribed pattern. And I think there are fewer and fewer situations like that, fewer and fewer people like that.*

Jasmine mentions personality and a non-standard approach to classes as some of the distinguishing features of those teachers who were most memorable to her. They were 'somebody' – not just people delivering classes, but *they had something more to say*. I perceive them as people who managed to find or build autonomy, to gain their own individual voice. Jasmine concludes that there are *fewer and fewer people like that*, and although she does not refer to herself

directly in this sentence, I believe that these words – "person" or "people" – also, in a way, refer to her. I construe the word "people" as a certain mediation, a form of interpretation – something is not just about me, but is shared by everyone. Rose adds yet another characteristic related to the category in question.

Rose: *It is a profession for people with, I would say... it is not about strong nerves, but a certain sense of independence.*

This independence is also part of a teacher's autonomy, emancipation – one of the two parties involved in education, both being equally important. I believe that displaying personality, as Jasmine put it, or independence, as mentioned by Rose, is reaching for elements that indicate emancipation, that is, going beyond the established patterns, beyond the obligations of the role.

Below is a longer part of Malvina's narrative, which will make it possible to convey the deeper meaning of her words. As I see it, she refers to one of the many possible shades of emancipation.

Malvina: *I wonder if it is good or bad that, in this profession, we are so expressive in different ways... with this personality of ours. Is it good, or is it bad, because there stands the expert and the student before them is so meagre, so puny. I always wonder about this very thing, about this advantage of ours, which I also create myself, and which is standing. I stand above them – it probably also has an impact on interactions, this is such a general aspect of teaching in our profession; if we were sitting in a circle, in a group around each other, and the teacher was somewhere at the students' eye level, the interactions would probably also be different. And our role will evolve more and more towards that kind of partnership...*

Malvina draws attention to several important elements relating to the personality of a teacher, to the position they occupy, to the elements of dominance resulting from being in a standing position. Leaving aside the conclusion of her statement, it is noteworthy that my narrator showed herself to be very reflective about the relationships built in the classroom. It is evident that she spends a lot of time considering this aspect, thinking about different issues and their consequences for herself as well as for the students.

Emancipatory knowledge – the kind of knowledge that gives you the courage to act, one that is no stranger to changing and broadening the learning horizons – is also relevant to the last two quotes in this theme.

Lily: *I have discovered after years of teaching that, as a teacher with some experience, I can afford to let things go, I do not have to dot all the i's and cross all the t's and be one hundred per cent prepared, but leave some room to improvise. I can see that I have a lot of experience, I know the material, I know the language, and all this does not have to be so close-ended; this work is actually interesting if something new and unexpected appears, something that stimulates and awakens me as well as the student. As such, I also follow the students as much as possible, so sometimes the discussion veers into some areas that I did not expect.*

Jasmine: *As a person gets older, they can no longer afford to be unprepared, at least that is how I do things. When I was in my twenties, somehow it did not stress me out so much... I do not know, it was not that stressful for me...*

The statements quoted seem to represent extremely different attitudes towards learning. Lily, by allowing herself to improvise, enters the class with an open attitude about learning – indeed "[l]earning is the act of doing away with all closure" (Sławek, 2021, p. 10). This openness points to treating knowledge in an emancipatory, reflective and potentially creative way. On the other hand, there is the issue of preparing for the class, following the lesson plan, the (predetermined) goals to be achieved, as well as planning the means and techniques that will be in use and that will produce the desired effect (which is also predetermined). I notice more of these oppositions – opening versus closing, uncertainty versus provisional certainty, autonomy versus enslavement to duty.

The second issue that emerges from Lily's statement is her confidence in herself and her abilities, her trust in knowledge, which she sees as a support and a strength that gives her courage. For Jasmine, knowledge is not a source of support – moreover, its potential absence is a source of stress.

Yet, I believe that Jasmine's words point to one more theme that is worth highlighting. *As a person gets older, they can no longer afford to be unprepared, at least that is how I do things,* she explains. These are elements of common knowledge, defined by Maria Dudzikowa (2004, as cited in Michalski, 2018) as a product of "individual cognitive activity of the individual (and sometimes of whole social groups) and of socialisation processes". According to Dudzikowa, common knowledge "is treated by the individual as something self-evident and self-explanatory" (Dudzikowa, 2004, pp. 11–12, as cited in Michalski, 2018, p. 52). Common knowledge claims about age and its relationship to teaching are also found in Dahlia's words. She, too, is guided by common knowledge, likely accumulated through certain experiences. My narrators are convinced of

the validity of their claims, although it would be difficult to back them up with theoretical evidence.

Dahlia: *Youth matters a lot in language teaching. It seems to me that it is not the case that the older the teacher, the more valuable they are.*

Common knowledge is useful; it has an important role for the person who uses it. It helps to understand the world, to explain it in such a way that its picture is clearer, more transparent or more certain. However, this type of knowledge cannot be devoid of reflection, verification of the validity of existing beliefs and continuous development.

The presentation and interpretation of the statements is not intended – and I would like to emphasise this very strongly – to make judgements about any of the attitudes. Nor do I wish to draw any conclusions about the narrators themselves; indeed, the behaviours indicated here could probably be displayed by any of us. These are the ways in which a professional role is fulfilled, presented under a kind of magnifying glass, so that anyone who has ever taught can see a part of themselves in it.

I interpret the wide range of elements of teaching knowledge presented in two ways – on the one hand, different types of knowledge are needed to participate more consciously, to be able to relate to one's work in the context of what one does, how one does it, for what purpose and what the point of it is. Nonetheless, I cannot help but notice and point to a certain confusion experienced by the teachers who are forced to deal with normative overload (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2012), who want to be important Others (albeit in the declarative sphere), to be someone significant, remembered and appreciated by their students. This raises the question of which path leads to this. Each teacher has to answer it individually and make the right decisions.

Possibilities for Using Qualifications in the Work

This is the fourth element of the technical-organisational learning environment. Illeris (2011) describes this category as the compatibility of the job with the employee's qualifications. In the case of foreign language teachers, the qualifications required for employment (especially in state universities) boil down to a master's degree in the relevant philology studies. It seems that the category of qualifications presented by Illeris (2011) can be expanded to include the category of competencies, which will provide a deeper insight into the situation of the participants in my research in the course of their professional work.

The two concepts – qualifications and competencies – are related, though not identical. As noted by Stefan M. Kwiatkowski, it is possible "to have competencies while having no qualifications. The reverse situation, i.e. having qualifications conferred by schools and universities that are not supported by competencies, is reprehensible and shows the low quality of the work of formal education institutions" (2018, p. 17). Illeris also links these elements: "Developmental changes over the last 20–30 years have triggered a demand for more personality-based qualifications, which today are often referred to as competencies" (Illeris et al., 2011, p. 96). Based on the above quote and the issues raised by the narrators in the interviews, I decided to focus specifically on the notion of competencies.

Jolanta Szempruch (2013) notes that teacher competencies consist of personal qualities and attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills, whereas Magdalena Sowa (2015), focusing on the competencies of teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes, distinguishes linguistic expertise, methodological preparation and professional expertise. Table 15 summarises all the motives I defined as important within the discussed category and found in the narratives of the research participants.

TABLE 15. TEACHING COMPETENCIES THEMES IN THE NARRATIVES

Competencies elements explored	**Themes taken up**	**Examples of statements**
personal qualities and attitudes	– openness to novelty; – readiness for change; – willingness to keep learning.	**Dahlia:** *That is the thing, to have something new from time to time, so that you can learn something.*
knowledge	– linguistic expertise; – professional expertise.	**Malvina:** *I must have lost contact with biology in the second year of high school, maybe in the third, so for the last two years of high school I did not study biology at all. So learning the skeletal system in English, for example, was a major challenge for me because I could no longer recall bone names, even in Polish.*
skills (methodological preparation)	– analysis of learner needs; – course creation/planning; – syllabus preparation; – creating own resources/modifying available resources; – cooperation with specialists (or lack thereof).	**Rose:** *It is the kind of course that you can plan for a certain time, at a certain level, so it has a lot of that practicality and, indeed, adaptability. And... the other psychological aspect is definitely that, in my opinion at least, I feel that it is tailored to me, to what I need.*

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

Like in the case of the previous element of Illeris' (2011) theory, I will be focusing on knowledge in this case as well. This time, however, I will not

analyse the interests behind the different types of knowledge, but will look at the knowledge needed by teachers to work with those who take up LSP learning.

Unlike general foreign language teachers, teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes are not fully prepared for this type of work after graduation (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). This view is supported not only by the narratives of the participants in my research, but also by recent studies. As many as 70% of those participating in a Catapult survey indicated that they had not completed any training in FLSP didactics prior to teaching FLSP (Zourou and Torresin, 2019). In the case of my study, only one of the narrators had taken a course to prepare her to teach ESP, though only a few years after she had started working at the university. The other participants built up their knowledge through informal education, as per the breakdown proposed by Philip H. Coombs (Malewski, 2010).

Rose: *When I started working, nobody taught me any language for specific purposes of course; it was all my job, yes... And there was no discussion of anything like that...*

Rosalia: *You just had to prepare for each class individually, and it was a whole new area in terms of vocabulary. [...] One of the things that appeared in addition to teaching was specialist translation; one worked quite well with the other, and it was a matter of getting into the rhythm of a completely different subject matter.*

Unlike FLSP teachers, those teaching a general foreign language gain capital as early as their studies and later employ it in their work. They get to know the type of target language taught as part of their studies, their own practice and life experience. FLSP teachers, on the other hand, rely mainly on what they learn themselves in the course they teach. As mentioned by Rosalia, they had to get into the rhythm of a different subject matter, which I think can be construed as assimilating a new discourse, familiarising themselves with it. Moreover, even a small gap between assimilating an issue, learning specialised vocabulary and then passing on this knowledge or even just using the language when working on specialised material with students may pose a challenge (Szymańska-Tworek and Makowska-Songin, 2017) – especially in the early days of practice.

Laura: *You know, at the beginning, you simply did not know half, maybe even three-quarters of the vocabulary, so it was a lot of work to learn everything, to prepare.*

Violet: *It is not that I can just walk in there and improvise a lot based on General English; I had to learn it all myself first, even in Polish, all this medical knowledge.*

Dahlia: *Yes, I also learned a lot at the beginning. I was incredibly stressed at the beginning, I was nervous. Now I know that the only way is just to be well-prepared and I do not, and have never had, any trouble with that; now I basically know everything. Well, he only problem is that you have to constantly update this knowledge; these are things that are constantly moving, developing.*

In the course of their work, most teachers take a variety of FLSP courses, which serve to improve their expertise and linguistic competencies and give them greater comfort and opportunities to refer to contexts other than the issue at hand.

Malvina: *I feel like I am on a slightly different level to the students because I generally have much higher linguistic competencies, in terms of language for specific purposes... But they very much enrich me, they respond a lot, they explain things to me in English to the best of their ability, they explain issues, and it is very interesting because I absorb it all.*

My narrators feel more competent in dealing with students in the first year in particular than in the later stages of their studies. One can observe the following relationship: while the substantive knowledge (professional expertise) of the FLSP teachers remains more or less constant, the students' knowledge rises from almost zero to well above that of the teachers.

Lily: *When working first-year students, it sometimes happens that I know more than they do (smiles). I have the impression that sometimes I am explaining something to them, some issue, or giving a substantive answer.*

Kalina: *If I do not know something, I ask them if they can explain it to me because I do not understand it. And they often do, especially in the second year; I do not have any problems with that, and I know it makes them feel appreciated too [...]. So then, when I say something to first-year students, I can also feel more competent myself [...]. And it is very important to feel competent because only then are you confident and able to run a good lesson.*

Rose: *Fifth year students, they really feel very confident with the material [...], so there is a group of students who feel that they are very good, and indeed they are.*

As I pointed out earlier, rarely do FLSP teachers have previous experience within the specialisation they teach. Often, however, these are issues that are of interest to them for various reasons or are a source of their future passions.

Dahlia: *It is all very interesting and I, for one, would love to go to a factory or something to see it [...]. That is the thing, to have something new from time to time, so that you can learn something. I somehow cannot, I do not want to... I do not want to do the same thing for too long; I am very interested in something at the time I am learning it; I mean, this legal language was fascinating in that respect because actually with everybody, with every group, with every person, you could learn something; I was doing something new there.*

Rosalia: *I was able to do what I was more interested in, which was just these technological issues, and not only to introduce vocabulary for the students, but also to do other subject-related things that I was interested in – apart from the fact that I was also supposed to teach it.*

It is worth noting, however, that narrators do not always feel comfortable in the FLSP they have come to teach. That is, they are unable to convey certain types of expertise. I interpret this position as an expression of a high awareness of their own limitations and their own preferences, as well as that language for specific purposes is not just 'vocabulary', as some people think. Indeed, language for specific purposes is also a specific discourse that you need to understand in order to teach it.

Violet: *it is not like I would, for example, go to Katowice Steelworks now and talk about steel and pig iron – oh no, I would not feel competent; we cannot be good at everything. In general, I think that much like in the case of translators, you have to specialise a little bit in certain areas; for example, I have never taught lawyers as I do not know what they are talking about, even in Polish; it is just gibberish to me, I do not feel comfortable doing that.*

Lily: *I used to work at different language schools and I also happened to teach business courses, but it is not my thing, not at all. [...] It is simply [...] not appealing to me, so it was hard for me to teach that.*

Rose: *I would find it problematic if I had to teach, for example, about how some machine works if I did not understand it myself. I would feel terribly unease; for me, it is absolutely essential for a teacher to be somewhat competent in the subject matter.*

This raises the theoretical-practical question (which itself is not unfamiliar to the glottodidactic literature) of whether it is possible to teach a language for specific purposes at all without being familiar with the field of study in which the language will be used. Glottodidactics researchers dealing with the problem present a whole spectrum of opinions – some of them believe that FLSP teachers must at least have a minimum knowledge of the field in which they teach language. Others question such a thesis, wondering whether this would even be possible in a situation where a teacher has two or more LSP courses to manage (Sowa, 2015).

Kalina: *When you teach a language for specific purposes, well, the main problem is that we [...] kind of overstep our competencies; we are basically entering a completely different area of a field that we do not know at all, and it is very, very difficult. As doctors specialise, they do so in areas like gynaecology, but of course they do their general medical studies first. And we need to know something of each field and express ourselves professionally.*

Towards the end of my interviews, as an external question, I asked my interviewees whether they felt they were more like teachers of English in nursing/obstetrics/hospitality/physiotherapy/business/law/biotechnology/cosmetology etc., or whether they felt they were teaching these subjects in English. Although each of them had many years of experience teaching FLSP, and some of them are textbook authors, they always needed time to think when answering. The boundary between one and the other was evidently ambiguous for them, and was often biographically and personality-driven.

The presented framing of teaching competencies within the category of 'opportunities to use qualifications at work' shows that the workplace and the specific working environment not only provide opportunities but indeed require specific qualifications (competencies) for the position of lecturer/senior lecturer of FLSP and these are different from those of general language teaching.

Possibilities for social interaction

Although we are still considering the technical-organisational aspects of the learning environment, it is not difficult to see a certain relationship between

this category and the second vertex of Illeris' triangle (Figure 4), i.e. with the socio-cultural environment (communities of work, political communities, cultural communities). In both cases, the focus is on social interactions, which are an extremely important element not only of any workplace, but also of life. They construct the interpersonal space that is a metaphor for the becoming of society. Here, I will describe the potential for social interactions in the work environment of FLSP teachers.

Piotr Sztompka (2016) notes that "society is everything that happens between people. Or to put it another way: society is the field of interpersonal relations in a continuous process of becoming" (Sztompka, 2016, p. 29). Therefore, the element that fills the interpersonal space is the relations, social events and interactions that occur between people. What emerges is perhaps a simplistic but nevertheless seemingly accurate conclusion: When people are given the opportunity for more interpersonal contact, their space expands and thus social capital develops. Such an open approach to the formation of society, to its continuous development, seems not only "healthy", but also the only way not to let a given society and its culture disappear – due to a lack of space or a lack of opportunities to develop, to contact Others and their cultures (Sobecki, 2007). The relationships we enter or the events we participate in build not only our space, but also the space of Others. Therefore, the possibility of social interaction expands the possibilities for learning in professional life.

Foreign language teachers at universities have the opportunity to interact with people of different ages and relationships of dependency. It is quite obvious that contacts with students are different in nature than those with university teachers or authorities. "We live today in a world where cofigurative, prefigurative and postfigurative cultures function simultaneously, side by side. At one time we are pupils, at another time we are educators, and at the same time we are teaching each other, learning from each other and ourselves. We introduce to culture and are introduced to it ourselves" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2012, p. 46).

I was curious to know how my interviewees build their intersubjective relationships and whether we would be dealing with postfigurative, cofigurative and prefigurative culture in them (Mead, 1978), or perhaps with only some of these. In contrast to the previous categories, where the statements of the study participants were longer and elaborated on a specific theme, in the case of social interaction, the existence of phenomena such as learning or the transmission of

culture through relationships was also found within certain 'interwords'[4]. Thus, I paid attention to what my narrators say about the relationships they create, the interpersonal space and how they themselves function in it. I discovered meanings and assigned meanings – whether in a single word, several words or longer statements.

One interesting take on cultures is to look at them through the lens of their relationship to time (Klus-Stańska, 2012). In this approach, the orientation and reference to the past and the search for patterns in this past are emphasised in the case of postfigurative culture, whereas cofigurative culture is attributed to a "horizontal transfer of meanings, meaning the co-occurrence of cultural patterns of older and younger generations" (Klus-Stańska, 2012, p. 31), and prefigurative culture to a vertical transfer, but one directed towards the future (from "young" to "old").

In the case of the study participants, I noticed two types of transmission of post-, co- and prefigurative cultures: horizontal within groups (teachers – teachers and students – students), as well as vertical between them (teachers – students). I have presented the themes illustrating these phenomena in Table 16, using the breakdown proposed by Margaret Mead (1978).

TABLE 16. CULTURAL THEMES TAKEN UP IN THE NARRATIVES

Culture type	Transmission type	Themes taken up	Themes taken up by
postfigurative	vertical teacher – teacher	introduction to work	Laura, Violet
	vertical teacher – student	education, transfer of knowledge	Violet, Rose, Rosalia, Laura, Kalina
cofigurative	horizontal teacher – teacher	cooperation	Violet, Kalina, Jasmine
	horizontal student – student	openness to others	Lily
prefigurative	vertical student – teacher	transfer of specialist knowledge	Lily, Malvina, Jasmine, Kalina, Violet

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

Of the three cultures discussed, the postfigurative one seems to be the most historically linked to education and training. The transmission of knowledge, ubiquitous in school but also university practice, seems to support such a state

4 The category of 'interword' [*międzysłowie*] comes from poetry; it was introduced by Julian Przyboś (Balcerzan, 2000) and defined as meaning shaped between words – a relation occurring above syntax, making the ambiguity of words visible.

of affairs. "Elders", whose position, based on an authority derived from the past, seems unshakable, do not allow changes or introduce them very slowly, focusing mainly on what has been and on reproducing this knowledge of the world within the following generations (Mead, 1978). As one of the narrators (Malvina) admits: *we teachers find it more difficult to adapt to change*. As Mead writes: "An essential feature of postfigurative cultures is the belief expressed by members of the older generation in their every behaviour that their way of life does not change, that it is eternally the same – whether or not this is in fact true" (Mead, 1978, p. 27).

In this context, it seems reasonable to note Laura's statement comparing the students from when she started working at the university (20 years prior) with the current ones: *I do not think there have been any big, significant changes [...] I do not believe there are any major differences between the two*. Laura's observation expresses precisely a postfigurative attitude – after all, it is hard not to deny the statement that students, or people in general, are the same today as they were twenty years ago. However, Laura refuses to see these differences, intentionally or unintentionally; she merely points out that *back in the day young people used to hide books under the table, and now they hide phones*. Once formed, the image she has created has persisted unchanged.

A postfigurative culture is characteristic of all working environments in which employees differ in age. Older people who have worked in a position for years tend to enjoy the authority that comes from their work experience. Laura recalls her early days in her working environment as follows:

> **Laura:** *I was warmly welcomed at the college, it was very pleasant. I was told which groups I would be starting with, I was also told how to teach the language, how and when to do the tests, what the exam would be like, though I did not take part in any exams at the beginning. There were designated examiners, most likely the people who had worked there the longest.*

The culture of Laura's workplace is best reflected by the statement *I was also told how to teach the language* and the fact that the people who had worked the longest at the college were appointed to manage the exams. My understanding is that these are manifestations of a postfigurative culture – it was assumed that Laura might not know how to teach FLSP; many elements of the work were specified, e.g. how and when to conduct examinations, even though some of these activities could be planned individually by the teachers.

Jasmine speaks in a completely different tone about the beginnings of her work. I interpret her words as a manifestation of a different culture in her working environment – one closer to a cofigurative culture.

Jasmine: *At first, the basic problem was the lack of any specialist textbooks [...]. I remember that when I first came in, my colleague who was in charge of curricula at the time gave me such a curriculum, a very detailed one, of course, but it was all based on texts they had found in various books on general English. I think there was quite a lot of teacher autonomy in those years. Indeed, back then this teacher creativity was... well probably greater, and there was more freedom. There was perhaps more time reserved for extra things that could be adapted to suit a particular group.*

In my opinion, these two contrasting statements illustrate several important issues. First, it is immediately apparent that Jasmine has more to say about her beginnings than Laura – I interpret this as a sign of Jasmine's greater involvement, her more active attitude and deeper interest in the curriculum. In particular, this is how I interpret her statement about being able to incorporate additional resources found on her own.

Second, I find the form of my interviewees' statements significant. Laura says *I was told*, whereas Jasmine mentions a *colleague who was in charge of curricula* – one narrator uses a form that does not specify who told her something, and the other talks about someone specific. Laura's narrative makes it clear that there was a division between those who had worked at the FLC before and those (like her) who had just started. Although she mentions that she was welcomed warmly, she was not allowed to be involved in various decisions, to take part in strategic tasks like, for example, exams. She seems to have been put on the sidelines, to observe, perhaps to learn how to find her way in a new situation. In contrast, Jasmine's narrative is permeated by a memory of collaboration, of finding resources together, of adjusting them to suit the needs of specific student groups. She seems to have been at work together with her other colleagues, rather than alongside them. The statements present a picture of postfigurative culture (Laura's narrative) and cofigurative culture (Jasmine's narrative) in the work environment.

The second manifestation of postfigurative culture to be mentioned is the relationship between my interviewees and their students. Here, I will quote three short statements. One of them is only a few words long, and yet, much can be read from its 'interwords'.

Kalina: *In fact, I think it is somewhat outrageous, because it is a lesson, whether they are interested in it or not, they should look [at the film]. But they immediately look at their smartphones and that is why it is difficult, increasingly difficult to work with them.*

Rose: *First, students do not know what will prove useful to them. [...] There is a significant discrepancy between what you think is useful and what students find useful.*

Violet: *...I watch these 20-, 30-year-old kids...*

I perceive the imprint of a postfigurative culture in each of these statements. Kalina believes that it is the students' job to follow her instructions – whether they find the material or task interesting or not, they should be constantly attentive in class. Rose demonstrates an 'I know better' attitude, i.e. being able to better judge the relevance of the issues at hand. She suggests that students, being presumably less experienced or simply younger, are unable to do so. And finally, there is the statement by Violet, who calls 20- and 30-year-old students *kids*, while she herself has recently passed the age of 45. The age difference here is not so significant as to warrant such terms. Nor does the word *kids* seem to be used in a friendly way, especially since elsewhere Violet mentions the need to discipline some of the students. Therefore, I perceive in the 'interwords' of this statement an approach characteristic of postfigurative culture.

The cultures described by Mead (1978) can be understood and interpreted in today's world of liquid modernity as a kind of process. The transition from postfigurative, through cofigurative to prefigurative culture may be construed as analogous to the process of human development – from the stage of a child learning from his parents, through youth, during which one looks for role models outside the immediate family – among people of one's own age, to adulthood, when one becomes an independent and autonomous participant in the world, explaining it to his parents (Kurek, 2013). Therefore, to call young but nonetheless adult people "kids" is, in my view, seeing them through the lens of a postfigurative culture, i.e. not as partners, but rather as those who are ordered to listen, observe and obey the rules put in place by their parents (elders), conformistically assimilating everything.

The statements of my interviewees also contained themes of cofigurative culture, although there were far fewer of these. The most interesting in terms of the purpose and focus of the research were those noted at the teacher level.

As noted by Mead, in a cofigurative culture "the dominant model for members of society is the behaviour of peers" (Mead, 1978, p. 65). Learning can be seen as a social process, constituting the sharing of reflections or the exchange of experiences between employees (Illeris et al., 2011). The narrators' statements also contained elements that referred to these themes. Jasmine focused the most attention on relationships in the working environment.

Jasmine: *I also talk to my colleagues who are in the same line of work, and I think I am able to learn more from them, pick up some things or exchange some insights. [...] As I discuss things with my colleagues, we recognise that even though the salaries are what they are and probably not much is going to change in this respect, I do not think many of us would dare [...] to change jobs in any way at this point in our lives.*

Violet: *There were very few [resources] at the time. [...] We were at the stage of creating our own resources and I remember that Ania was a big help for me because she had accumulated quite a bit of these resources.*

Jasmine mentions that whenever she encountered a problem, e.g. with a language for specific purposes, she looked for solutions among her colleagues and exchanged insights with them. Similarly, Violet points out that she collaborated with a colleague to complete or create her own teaching resources. In the second part of the statement, Jasmine refers not so much to the work itself, but to the life situation in which both she and her colleagues found themselves. What we have here is a kind of replicated experience – a reassertion of a similar life situation, similar choices and the validity of potential decisions.

Jasmine's narrative contains one more important and characteristic element, which is also present in the narratives of the other teachers (Rose, Laura, Kalina) – it is the use of the personal pronoun 'we' and of verb forms corresponding to the first-person plural (in my opinion, this form constitutes a potential platform for cofiguration).

When looking for manifestations of prefigurative culture, also referred to by Mead (1978) as 'the culture of mysterious children', I experienced the most surprises. When starting the research, I assumed that the FLSP teachers' workplaces would be conducive to the development of this culture, so I would find many examples of it in the narratives. Even during the research, I was convinced that the numerous instances of learning from the students (especially the expertise) provided evidence of a prefigurative culture. At a certain point, however, I began to doubt whether the situations cited in the narratives are definitely about it. Is there cultural transmission from young to old in a university setting; is there even room for it? Margaret Mead writes: "Indeed, today, as in the past, everything is managed by elders. Partly for this very reason, they do not realise that the conditions for a new dialogue with a new generation do not exist. It is something of a paradox that the very teachers who once were able to establish close contact with successive generations of students are now convinced that the gap between generations cannot be bridged, and that their

dedication to the students was rejected by the young when they refused to learn according to the old rules" (Mead, 1978, p. 126). I find confirmation of this in Laura's and Dahlia's statements.

Laura: *It used to be that they wanted to talk a bit with me. Just like that, even after class, somewhere in the corridor. Well, but I was really only a few years older than them, and now they no longer want to, because I am much older, so it is actually not fun for them anymore.*

Dahlia: *I think there are very few things about people [...] that interest me that much anymore. It happens, but a lot less. I suppose I have just heard about more things by this point. I used to approach students with great curiosity; I used to learn a lot of things, but now, I think to myself, it just does not interest me anymore, all the things they can tell me.*

Rereading the narrators' statements, I found more and more examples of the absence and/or non-existence of prefigurative culture. One of these was Rose's aforementioned story of how, when the student questioned the polite forms discussed, she referred to the answer key in the book. She did not engage in discussion, she did not allow for a different way of understanding social relationships. Yet, it seems that this particular situation could have been used specifically to delve into the world of young people and their understanding of relationships with others, relationships in a new environment. This could have been an opportunity to build a better understanding between the students and the teacher. In this case, however, this did not happen.

Other opportunities for the young to present their understanding of the world, to try to help the elderly find their way in an increasingly difficult everyday life, also tend to go unused.

Kalina: *I do not get involved in any discussions with students; I mean, yes, some subject-related discussions, but no personal ones.*

Rose: *I could learn a lot from her* [the student].

The postmodern world is evolving very fast, the changes are almost instantaneous, and they constantly surprise people (this issue was presented in Chapter 2). Even young people cannot get used to this fluidity, and it is especially difficult for people who were born shortly after World War II (sometimes referred to as boomers). Their ideas about the future are far from what it might look

like – their own past and their understanding of it have not prepared this group for what the future actually brings. It seems that the only way to improve this situation is to build interpersonal relationships with young people. Admittedly, it has already been pointed out in this dissertation (when discussing the 'work content' category) that the narrators give autotelic value to conversations, but a conversation must involve a two-way relationship – postfigurative culture can exist in parallel with prefigurative culture. It is not enough to talk to broaden one's understanding; for a 'dialogue without an arbiter' (Rutkowiak, 1992a) to take place, one must allow others to speak (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2008a). "In order for me to be a real participant in the cultural world, I need the culture of the other person. I cannot limit myself to allowing them to be different. Indeed, I must somehow bring their culture, their values and their truth into the sphere of my own thinking. To enter into an inner dialogue with this other culture and with this different way of thinking. It is not just about tolerating something different, but also about understanding that I cannot be myself without the other" (Bibler, 1982, p. 187, as cited in Ogrodzka-Mazur, 2012, p. 33). In other words, in order for prefigurative culture to emerge, a reflexive approach is needed, a critical view of my own culture, of where I am, of the world in which the other lives. This requires one to open up to this 'other' world – there is a need here for the cross-border and transcendental crossing that Lech Witkowski (1990) wrote about. It is about learning that enhances one's understanding of the world and cultures in which, or on the borderline of which, we function; while this may not be entirely prefigurative, it is a step in that direction.

The possibilities for social interaction in the workplace, as presented using the categories of different cultures according to Margaret Mead's typology, show that in a workplace such as a university or FLC there is space for each of these cultures to occur. They clearly enhance the opportunities for learning in working life, albeit with different intensities. Due to the conformist nature of the relationship between old and young and the closure to change, it seems that postfigurative relationships are least conducive to human development in general. They do not require reflection, but rather unreflective acceptance of things as they are. In contrast, cofigurative and prefigurative cultures are more open, allow for diversity and are thus more conducive to co-teaching and co-education.

The Stresses and Strains of the Work

This is the last of the elements of the technical-organisational learning environment in working life, as highlighted by Illeris. In the case of teachers, both stress and hardship often lead to professional burnout. Some of my interlocutors mentioned it openly; others only referred to some of its

symptoms, without indicating the condition. Regardless, I decided not to dwell on the subject. Instead, I addressed the issue of salary, which was raised by virtually all the interviewees, who typically initiated the theme in question themselves. The statements show that salary levels have been an unsolvable problem for years, affecting the functioning of the teachers on an individual level, as well as being socially relevant.

In this case, I would like to first present the statements of the study participants and indicate the research categories with which I interpret the words of my narrators.

Kalina: *They* [students] *take note of what kind of car you drive; they judge you by how much money you have, it is very sad. I think if we made a lot of money, this would give us much more prestige. [...] People completely disregard who a person is, what they must be capable of, and that is very sad... it is painful, as is the way the teaching profession is perceived in general. I read a post, quite a long one, by a man who estimated that a teacher works 18 hours a week. He did not even add like, I do not know, 5 hours for us to do anything, and it is so outrageous, this idea that we do all sorts of things at home rather than sit at the office. You can explain it to people all you want, but it just does not help. It is more prestigious to be some sort of secretary, well... to fill in some paperwork, than to be an academic. To them, that is simply a nobody [...] Although I hope that not everyone sees it that way.*

Rose: *Many of my colleagues feel that they are nobodies on the job market. And it is a matter of this sort of profound financial humiliation, is it not? When you push people into this kind of poverty or deprivation group, so to speak, you are inevitably driving them lower. [...] I was at a conference the other day and I think that is where teachers came together before a strike [...], I looked at them and I thought it was a really downtrodden profession and it showed. [...] When you go to a conference where there are doctors, and you see well-dressed gentlemen, well-dressed ladies, so in a completely different form, in a completely different guise. And you look at a group of teachers, and it is a completely different group of people, even though what we are dealing with is also a vital good for a person, because the good of my pupil's education comes right behind their health. And everyone just feels like you are a slacker, that you get the entire summer holidays off and you do not do anything.*

Lily: *The financial conditions are not exactly satisfactory either, and that is such a pain for teachers, that they are just doing something important, something that is at the core of how society works. Still, excuse me, but the salaries are just laughable.*

The statements of my interviewees show not only that they feel financially undervalued, but also that this fact evokes very strong emotions. The narrators point to the low prestige of their profession, the unappreciation of the work they put into teaching and learning; they speak of financial humiliation, of living in deprivation, of being depressed, of the prevalent image of the teacher as a slacker who has two months of holidays a year and who works 18 hours a week. Despite such an unfair social perception[5], they simultaneously have a sense that what they do is of high value, that they are doing something good for society, that the qualifications and competencies required to do their job are by no means common or easy to obtain – not everyone can do their job.

My narrators thus portrayed a certain conflict which, "being a reaction to injustice, disrespect or contempt, has its ultimate source in negative experiences that limit individuals' ability to develop an integrated identity" (Bobako, 2012, p. XXVIII), which is the basis for "human flourishing and self-fulfilment" (Bobako, 2012, p. XXVIII). Referring to self-identity work, Axel Honneth argues that recognition relationships are the intersubjective conditions[6] in which such an individual identity can emerge (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b). The three areas of recognition that Honneth develops in his theory are the family, the law and the economy. Table 17 summarises the most important elements characterising these areas. Its last column contains the questions that Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2020) used when analysing teacher narratives. From the point of view of my research, this reference is only apparent in the third area (economy), as this is where I situate the meaning of my interviewees' statements.

5 This significant gap between how highly teachers value their work and how low their salaries and public perception is described in two studies by Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2016b; 2020). It can be understood as a 'denial of recognition'. The findings from my research seem to coincide with Nowak-Dziemianowicz's analyses presented in her work *Szkoła jako przestrzeń uznania* [School as a space of recognition].

6 In this context, intersubjective is understood as "something that arises and exists as a consequence of certain relations or interactions between acting subjects" (Bobryk and Horecka, 2015, p. 207).

TABLE 17. AXEL HONNETH'S RECOGNITION THEORY

Areas of recognition	Overview	Achievement of recognition	Possible questions about recognition
Family (love, care)	A person needs to feel that someone cares about them, that they are accepted as they are, that they have the right to be themselves, to self--determine, to be authentic.	– self-confidence, – understanding one's own needs.	Are the needs of teachers recognised and met?
Law	A person needs to have a sense of being a free and autonomous citizen, a mature person (legally and morally).	– self-respect	Do teachers have rights and autonomy to make moral judgements and assessments?
Economy (social cooperation)	A person needs to feel that their work is recognised by others, that their contribution to the good of the community is valued, and that they are shown respect because of these achievements.	– self-worth, self--esteem.	Does the remuneration reflect the value of recognition? Are there any other means to express social proof of recognition?

Source: own elaboration based on Nowak-Dziemianowicz, M. (2016b). *Walka o uznanie w narracjach. Jednostka i wspólnota w procesie poszukiwania tożsamości*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej. Nowak-Dziemianowicz, M. (2020). *Szkoła jako przestrzeń uznania*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN. Michalak J., Koncepcja uznania i jej pedagogiczne znaczenie. *Annales: etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, No. 10 (2).

Nowak-Dziemianowicz's (2020) research has shown that the fight for a salary increase is, on the part of the teachers, a demand for recognition that their work is a value and an asset they contribute to society. If there is a belief in the realm of economics that "a thing is worth what someone is willing to pay for it", and the only means of recognition is the value expressed by money, then teachers have a right to expect their salaries to increase.

While my narrators did not take part in the strike, it is clear from their words that they, too, are confronted with expressions of a lack of recognition – in their case, social cooperation in the area of economy, as highlighted by Honneth, does not take place at all. According to Kalina, people do not appreciate who she is, nor do they value the qualifications she needs to have to do her job as a teacher – her work is therefore not seen as an asset that is her individual contribution to the community. Moreover, not only does my interviewee fail to notice any respect for her, but she also has to struggle with the way her job is often reduced to 18 hours a week "by the blackboard". Even though recognition is not just "a possibility, a kind of intersubjectivity, an ethical project. It is also often a deficit in our relationships with others" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b, p. 63), my interviewees do not feel that the money they earn is a "solidarity response" to their work. Instead of recognition, they feel humiliation because the financial aspect adds to the low prestige of themselves and their work.

The presented elements of the technical-organisational dimension of workplace learning create a kind of framework of both opportunities and constraints (Illeris et al., 2011). Despite their real, physical and tangible nature (as opposed to the less tangible socio-cultural learning environment), they elicit varied reactions. It is apparent at this stage already that the social level of the work environment is in a constant relationship (albeit a multifaceted one) with the individual level of Illeris' (2011) concept. As noted at the beginning of this subsection, some of the categories intertwine and interrelate with each other, creating a kind of educational objectivity for my narrators[7].

The main aim of this subsection is to show the world of my protagonists and try to understand their narratives. Nonetheless, I am aware that some of the themes taken up leave a certain deficiency – a deficiency of analysis, of reference to a wider social context, of a more explicit indication of the aforementioned objectivity and socio-cultural practices (Dobrołowicz, 2016). This is the subject of the next chapter.

The Socio-Cultural Learning Environment in Working Life

The second vertex of the triangle proposed by Illeris (2011), as described in Figure 4, is the socio-cultural learning environment in working life. Illeris distinguished three elements that constitute it: communities of work, political communities and cultural communities.

Communities of work

One concept describing the foundations underlying the socio-cultural learning environment in working life is the situated learning theory by Etienne Wenger and Jean Lave (2008), from which the concept of community of practice is derived. It is construed as "a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretive support necessary for making sense of its heritage. Thus, participation in the cultural practice in which any knowledge exists is an epistemological principle of learning.

7 Here, I construe objectivity according to Ernesto Laclau (2005). At this point, I will expand the quotation from this author, as cited in Chapter 2, to include a significant element: "By discourse [...] I do not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which relations play the constitutive role. This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it. Thus 'relation' and 'objectivity' are synonymous. (Laclau, 2005, p. 68, as cited in Szkudlarek,2008a, p.127).

The social structure of this practice, its power relations, and its conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning" (Wenger and Lave, 2008, p. 98).

Yet another, more succinct take on a community of practice is to say that it is a community of people who share a concern or passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better through shared commitment (Wenger--Trayner, 2015). Communities of practice can thus be considered as a certain meta-concept, analytically consisting of three (possible) distinctions (labour, political and cultural communities), but at a certain level of generality referring to the social practice of people who work in a given organisation or have a similar profession. Importantly, a community of practice "is not the same as work teams, subject teams or other group forms of small task force cooperation" (Kędzierska and Maciejewska, 2014, p. 85). It is distinguished by a number of characteristics like spontaneous emergence, informality and impermanence; involvement that stems from the shared experiences of practitioners at work; collaboration between workers learning from each other, improving together; emergence around issues and problems that are important to them (Kędzierska and Maciejewska, 2014, p. 85).

Following these findings, the concept of a community of practice will be the central idea of my reflections and the development of the research material. The questions I will be asking in developing the research material will be whether such communities exist at all; if so, based around what issues; what my narrators' attitudes to them are; and what, if anything, they take away from them. "Framing a community of practice as delineated by an internally complex system of relational forms of participation by the 'actors' within it who share practices, customs, artefacts, symbols, conventions and history, including the history of practice, clarifies learning on the one hand and broadens it on the other" (Gołębniak, 2021, p. 163). Learning (more or less conscious and intentional) is thus intrinsic to participation in a community of practice.

Table 18 lists the themes occurring in the interviews, which concern the three types of communities mentioned by Illeris (2011). I have highlighted those that I will examine in detail.

As noted by Illeris (2011), **learning in communities of work** can encompass the issue of how to do the job better and more efficiently; it can address the development of personal and emotional bonds between employees, and it can also stimulate creativity and become a source of new solutions.

TABLE 18. COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE IN THE NARRATIVES

Community type	Practical representation of communities	Examples of statements
communities of work	**– collaborative textbook writing;** – sharing resources; – solving language problems; – bonds/friendships/ mutual affection; – helping each other.	**Jasmine:** *In the end, I felt satisfaction, though I make no secret that I would not have managed to push myself to do it alone. [...] Well, I did not feel competent enough to write such things, but my friend here really motivated me.*
cultural communities	– teaching FLSP vs. teaching a general foreign language; **– academic teacher vs. English teacher.**	**Laura:** *I did not particularly want to teach in a school because I thought that with some large group of young people I might find it... it might, for example, be difficult to control them and, in general, I would be pushed to do some corridor duty, some, I do not know, tutoring...*
political communities	**– the narrative of 'us vs. them';** – fighting for one's rights; – student surveys – a form of control.	**Rose:** *They assign them* [students] *to us, and we see that actually they should be one class higher or lower... But there is not much we can do about it. We have to take them as they come... We are being pushed into something from which there is pretty much no way out.*

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

As already mentioned, teachers of language for specific purposes often struggled with the lack of textbooks or resources designed for learning a given specialisation. Virtually every one of my interviewees admitted that early in their careers (20–30 years ago), no publishers on the Polish market offered anything that they could use.

> **Violet:** *The main problem [early in my career] was the lack of a database of resources. There are now many, many more great publications on the market. Indeed, as I observe publishers, they have very much started to focus on language for specific purposes and are starting to move away from General English. As I look at textbooks today, it is shocking how wide a variance there is. For beauticians, for virtually every professional group, there are plenty of these resources.*

Over the years, with the development and popularisation of LSP teaching, more and more publications began to appear on the publishing market on different specialisations, as indicated in Chapter 3. Today, it is possible to teach and learn from textbooks for nurses, doctors, as well as IT, HR, PR, hospitality and airport management specialists, just to name a few, released by renowned Polish and foreign publishing houses.

Malvina: *It seems to me that we are seeing an increase in the number of textbooks for teaching languages for specific purposes. Ten years ago, I certainly did not observe such a trend. There were more general textbooks.*

The aforementioned rise of publishing houses in the last few years has coincided with the activity of many teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes who have decided to make an effort to develop textbooks. As many as four of my narrators have authored textbooks on ESP: Malvina, Jasmine, Lily and Kalina. Each of them worked on publications together with colleagues, so these titles were not proprietary but always prepared as part of a team with many years of experience in the profession. Importantly, my interlocutors undertook this effort out of their own accord (though sometimes with encouragement) and not under pressure from their supervisor, which is why I treat such activity as a community of practice rather than the work of a top-down working team set up to carry out a specific task. "The phenomenon of how a community of practice works is concealed in the assumptions about the learning process itself, which is treated as a process of social participation. Knowledge, as argued by Wenger and Lave, resides in the social relations between people, and the learning process is part of the activities and social interactions of the people participating in the practice" (Kędzierska and Maciejewska, 2014, p. 85). My interviewees highlighted the fact that they made the effort to prepare the textbooks together with their colleagues. By sharing responsibilities according to their preferences and discussing the publications, they made them a collaborative creation.

Kalina: *We had it all divided. We did a good job in choosing the team because each of us was responsible for something different.*

I do not perceive the writing of textbooks by my interviewees as the only manifestation of a community of practice. Indeed, it was rather an effect or outcome of working in a community rather than the main purpose of constituting it. Wenger (Ciepiela, 2014) distinguishes four categories of community membership. These are full membership, peripheral membership, marginal membership and outsider membership, which refers to the degree of a person's involvement in a particular community, their action at some particular time. From this perspective, I construe my narrators' participation in the creation of textbooks as at least a temporary transition to full membership in a community of practice. Wenger (Rozkosz, 2017) also identifies three dimensions of practice: mutual engagement, shared enterprise and shared repertoire. The first of these dimensions is understood as "engaging in something that is relevant to that

community and that is consistent with our competencies and takes into account the competencies of others" (Rozkosz, 2017, p. 109). The writing of FLSP learning textbooks fulfils this premise, as the end result is beneficial to all involved in teaching and learning, the task is carried out by people who are competent to do so, and the product of their action is intended for those who are to acquire the relevant competencies.

As I outline below, the textbook authors have gained more than 'just' a completed project in the form of a publication. Table 19 juxtaposes what my narrators said before they undertook the task and what they said after they had finished the work, when they had the result in their hands. The table with the statements does not contain names to prevent the possible identification of the interviewees.

TABLE 19. EMOTIONS ABOUT WRITING A TEXTBOOK

Emotions before writing a textbook	Emotions after writing a textbook
I would not have managed to push myself to do it alone. *I did not feel competent enough to write such things, but my friend here really motivated me.* *There will be something to show for it.* *The motivation was [...] that after so many years of teaching such a course, I felt competent enough to know my way around this subject.* *Along with the co-author, we noticed that there was still a niche in the market.* *No such textbook was available.* *We felt that we already had sufficiently broad and deep knowledge to be able to create something like this.*	*A cool thing.* *A niche item on the Polish market.* *It works well – students appreciate it too.* *In the end, I felt satisfaction.* *I used my years of experience here.* *I was able to separate some content that students need from what they would not necessarily require.* *It was good that we did that.* *It would mainly work well for independent work, exactly for people who want to expand their knowledge gained in class.* *[The textbook] is much better than some of the exercise books we've used over the years.* *I did my best not to make it boring.* *This book is, I think, it could be really, really useful to someone.* *It was the best decision.* *This is something that is my own, that I have created.* *I know what the intention of each exercise was.* *I work better because I can feel it.* *I am now considering a second edition.*

Source: own elaboration based on the research material (narratives of Jasmine, Malvina, Kalina and Lily).

The statements that show the narrators' emotions before writing a textbook are twofold. Some of them express confidence in themselves and their competencies, indicating an action dictated by intrinsic motivation and resulting from a thoughtful, reflective approach to their work. As the academic literature suggests, intrinsic motivation and its sources stem from the subjectivity, individuality and autonomy of the teachers (Sujecka-Zając, 2018). On the other hand, some statements reveal an external motivation to act, a lack of or little confidence in one's competencies and a need for encouragement to take action.

In contrast, the statements made by my narrators after writing a textbook are much more homogeneous. They express satisfaction with the action taken, pride in the results of their work, as well as self-appreciation. Yet, a question arises: Are these merely emotions of satisfaction or something more? Can one venture to say that these emotions point to the narrators having learned something through this experience? And if so, what?

It seems to me that it is possible to interpret these emotions, this change that has occurred in them, through the lens of developing a sense of self-efficacy and agency (see Werbińska, 2017; Boyd, Szplit and Zbróg, 2014; Gabryś-Barker, 2017), which is defined "as an individual's in his or her own ability to organize and implement action to produce the desired achievements and results" (Bussey and Bandura, 1999, p. 691, as cited in Chomczyńska--Rubacha and Rubacha, 2007, p. 29).

When researching teachers, Rubacha (2000, p. 153) operationalised the sense of agency in his study into several subcategories, such as positive self-esteem, a feeling of self-efficacy and self-trust. These are the very emotions and feelings experienced by my narrators after writing a textbook. It is also important to note that agency is additionally a building block of autonomy, a manifestation of human subjectivity (Kosiba, 2011). My narrators drew attention to this – they mentioned that they were able to make autonomous decisions about what content to include in the textbook and which to omit, and to use their experiences. To produce something that, as one narrator puts it, *is my own, that I have created*, it was necessary to take a reflective look at one's abilities and skills.

Researchers also point to an additional value that is a sense of efficacy and agency, which is extremely important in the context of the community as such, as well as the community of practice. The success of one person's action, especially when it is an important Other at the centre of the community of practice (or, to use Wenger's terminology, a full member), provides some point of reference for those who remain on the periphery of that community, and can have an additional activating effect. "People observe the success and effectiveness of others, especially significant others. They begin to believe, as their peers, that they too are capable of similar conduct. They thus learn to form positive judgements about themselves by observing the successes of others" (Rubacha, 2013, p. 76). It follows that, in a community of practice, the actions of individuals for the benefit of that community are not only positive in a general sense, but can also have a real impact on other community members, including those in loose, sporadic or even discontinuous contact.

I presented the first element of the socio-cultural learning environment in working life through the category of community of practice in which some

of my narrators function. As shown above, a community of work can develop into a community of practice, and in the case of my narrators, the element that defined this community was the experience of writing textbooks together. This was a source of valuable learning opportunities, not only for the teachers themselves, but also for others who make up a particular community of work or community of practice.

Cultural Communities

Before proceeding to what my narrators said about cultural community, I would like to dwell for a moment on the concept of community itself. Synthesising its various definitions, one can conclude that community is distinguished by:

- some sense of unity, resulting from similar ways of thinking or perceiving the world or specific phenomena, experience;
- a sense of being together through social belonging;
- convergent practices and shared memory;
- its peculiar history (story), providing a context of reference (Szymański, 2017, pp. 80–81).

Community is important to the individual because, as Alasdair MacIntyre argues, its narrative is woven into the narrative unity of human life (MacIntyre, 1996). "The narrative unity of our lives according to this author is always based on the narrative unity embodied in the individual human life. The unity of our moral life is given by the questions, which are present in it and interdependent, about what is good for me, what is good in the individual dimension and in line with how I can attain this good in my life" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b, p. 42).

Just as one needs the story of the community in which one participates to consolidate one's identity, the teaching community and its accompanying narrative are important for defining teacher identity. Whether one shares the community's values or distances oneself from them, the community is a point of reference at the very least. As MacIntyre (1996) puts it: "What I am, therefore, is in key part what I inherit, a specific past that is present to some degree in my present. I find myself part of a history and that is generally to say, whether I like it or not, whether I recognize it or not, one of the bearers of a tradition" (MacIntyre, 1996, p. 395).

Being aware of the complexity of the concept of community, I adopted a certain simplification in my research. Namely, I assumed that teachers constitute a professional community, which – depending on the subject of my research – can be broken down into smaller elements (e.g. a community of physics teachers or primary school teachers). Historical or social elements can unite a community.

Teachers, regardless of where they work, are united exactly by social perception and a similar history, including, for example, the 2019 strike, which – regardless of individual perception – was a community-relevant event.

Another community is that of academia, formed by members of academia – both academic teachers and students. "Traditionally, academic education has been seen as introducing a young person to a world of spiritual and ideological achievements, a cultural heritage, guarded by the academic community of *universitas* – a community of professors and students" (Sajdak, 2013, p. 125). The markers of its distinctiveness are the ethos of the university, present in the general consciousness, its distinctive rituals (such as the awarding of the title *doctor honoris causa*), its symbols (togas worn by the university authorities) and the historical exclusivity of its studies. During his lecture on the occasion of being honoured with the title of *doctor honoris causa* at the University of Gdańsk, Jerzy Brzeziński (Sieroń-Galusek, 2017) listed elements of the academic ethos, such as the value of autonomy, freedom, democracy, truth and pluralism. These are also the values espoused by Jacques Derrida (2015), who wrote about an unconditional university – one that is not afraid of questions, research, conclusions, as well as one that is free and is a place of critical resistance to "all the powers of dogmatic and unjust appropriation" (Derrida, 2015, p. 18).

In characterising academia, however, it is difficult not to mention the phenomenon of the marketisation and instrumentalisation of the world of the college and university – one could even venture to claim that the marketisation of higher education has appropriating power. This trend seems to be particularly evident among non-humanities disciplines. The introduction of parameterisation, points or indicators (e.g. *impact factor*) does not serve to build an academic community; indeed, it does quite the opposite: it induces an unhealthy rivalry, which aims to conduct research that is incompatible with the interests of the researchers, but related to the subject of the grant being pursued (Sławek, n.d.). These problems cut across all academic disciplines and thus become the legacy of the academic community and an intrinsic part of its history.

The description of the two communities – the teaching/school community and the academic community – is intended to provide a cultural background to which my interviewees referred to in the interviews. Drawing on the interviews, the remainder of this subsection attempts to answer the question of which of these two communities (perhaps both or neither) university teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes identify with.

In the case of the teacher/school community, I noticed quite quickly that I would not be able to divide the statements into those expressing belonging

and distinctiveness. I only found narratives in which distancing from this group was declared. Table 20 presents the themes taken up by the study participants.

TABLE 20. DISTINCTIVENESS FROM THE TEACHER-SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Themes of distinctiveness taken up	**Examples of statements**
the distinctiveness of the work objectives/content	**Rosalia:** *You will not have to shout repeatedly "Please be quiet" and the work will not be about shushing; it will be about imparting knowledge.* **Violet:** *I also worked in a general secondary school for one or two years, and I find the amount of paperwork overwhelming, with the teaching itself being secondary.*
personal distinctiveness	**Rose:** *I was at a conference the other day and I think that is where teachers came together before a strike [...]. I looked at them and I thought it was a really downtrodden profession and it showed.* **Dahlia:** *There are some children-like students, a lot more, there are a lot more of those mentally immature students who treat their studies like just another lesson, like the ones at school, and they talk to me like I am a schoolteacher, and that is terrible.*
the distinctiveness of the teaching content	**Kalina:** *But I cannot imagine holding the same classes all the time, and in high school, unfortunately... You can have a first class, a second class, four classes, well, and do basically the same thing over and over again.*
the distinctiveness of working conditions	**Jasmine:** *We work very irregular hours, not like in schools; I typically go out for 5 or 6 hours from 8:00 a.m., until, more or less, 2:00, 3:00 or 4:00 p.m.*
the distinctness of competencies	**Kalina:** *Well, what is the difference between us, it is just that she teaches in some high school... and we earn the same money, it is unfair. Come on, really, we are dealing with another kind of people, with university students who know more, it is also more stressful, more demanding, so it should be appreciated somehow differently.*

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

As can be seen from the words quoted, my narrators distance themselves very much from schoolteachers. In interpreting the statements, I categorised them into five groups. The first, concerning the distinctiveness in terms of the content and objectives of the work, there were mainly themes related to the difficulties of teaching children and adolescents and their behaviour. Some of the study participants (Kalina, Dahlia, Violet, Rosalia) had worked in a school in the past and also remembered the overwhelming bureaucracy from that time. While she had not worked in a school and had deliberately chosen to work at a university, Laura is certain that she would not have been able to function in a school setting: she recalls with horror the need to "control the class", the breaktime hallway duty and possibly being "forced" to become a class teacher.

It is also worth quoting Rose, who believes that university is indeed an exclusive place, privileged over education at lower levels.

Rose: *I think we are in a very privileged position [...]. When it comes to teachers [...], whether at our university or universities in general, it is a privileged place for a teacher to work. However, they are dealing with a selected group [...] I mean students, who have already been pre-selected in some way. We are not dealing with a whole cross-section of society at a difficult time [...] it is much harder work and much more grassroots-like. In this respect, we are already in a position where someone has already pre-selected a group for us, and we are dealing with a group that actually knows what it wants.*

I described the second group of motifs indicative of distinctiveness as personal; it is included in Table 20. This category refers to two levels – the teacher level and the student level. The former is referred to by Rose, who clearly distances herself from the teachers who took part in the strike, i.e. those working on the lower rungs of the educational ladder. She refers to this group as "they". Thus, she does not consider herself as belonging to it; she does not speak of a common group, but distances herself from it.

Also emphasised was the separateness of school and university students. As Dahlia says, some university students act immaturely and talk to her as if she were a schoolteacher, which she considers improper behaviour (and there are more and more of them, as per her account). Here, Dahlia makes a clear separation between the school and university contexts and between schoolteachers and herself – a university teacher. Distinctions are also noted on the grounds of educational content and working conditions, which seem more favourable at FLCs. Kalina sees school work as constantly repeating the same thing, and in another theme (regarding competencies) she points out the higher demands placed on those working in academia. Additionally, she emphasises that working with university students, whose knowledge is already deeper, is much more stressful than working with pupils at school.

The vast majority of the statements made by the survey participants are downright negative towards schoolteachers. It is apparent that there is a lack of a sense of community here, even though their education and qualifications are the same: the vast majority of my narrators have a master's degree, which is also likely held by most foreign language (English) teachers in primary or secondary schools. However, teachers are not united by a similarity of experience that could become the basis for building and feeling a membership in one community. There is no narrative unity of teachers' lives and no common heritage (history) that MacIntyre (1996) wrote about. This is by no means an isolated trend – as noted by pedeutologists, "teachers do not constitute a homogeneous community. [...] The in-group specificity of constructing worlds leads to their hermeticity,

their closure to other worlds" (Malinowska, 2013, p. 91). Further, as shown by research on organisational cultures among teachers, cultures of individualism and Balkanisation (leading to separation) seem to be dominant (Kędzierska and Maciejewska, 2014, p. 88). My interviewees also focused only on the differences, leaving out any potentially common elements.

The second community I discussed with the research participants is the academic community. Indeed, this is a community in which my narrators participate by virtue of their work at the university. However, it is worth determining whether this is a "real" cultural community or merely a superficial one.

In seeking an answer, rather unusually, I will start with a certain bitter diagnosis arising from research on university cultures. "In spite of the rapidly differentiating and indeed polarising qualities of the people of contemporary academia, who are presented here only roughly and non-exhaustively, I cannot help being convinced that all of them, although standing in such different positions, yearn for academic friendship, which would imply an idea contrary to the notion that friendship is today anachronistic.

This longing, if it exists at all, may be rooted in tradition and derives from a nostalgia for academia as a community of learners and teachers – admittedly, one by no means always mutually compatible in cognitive and personality areas – but nevertheless persevering in discussions, disputes, debates and dialogues aimed at reflection around the broadest sense of "being-in-the-world", if in an attempt to universalise we allow ourselves to define this theme and ethos using M. Heidegger's words. Today's desire for academic friendship corresponding to this line would involve building human relationships for the sake of the dream and the orientation towards a return to its former content and form" (Rutkowiak, 2010, p. 55). Other research by Jarosław Jendza (2020) shows that the university is a heterogeneous workplace – one that is sometimes unfriendly and does not offer equal opportunities and possibilities.

Similar sentiments were shared by the research participants. The previous section shows that most of them feel like they are at the bottom of the system within the university structure, which significantly affects their sense of ontological security at work. Furthermore, most of the organisational decisions are taken far away from them, away from their specific place of work, often without any consultation with them, causing them to experience 'emotion labour' (Benesch, 2001, 2017)[8].

8 The next category, political communities with a dominant 'Us/Them' narrative, is also saturated in meaning similarly to cultural communities. A sense of distancing, non-coherence, division and separateness is quite evident here.

During my literature research as well as research with teachers, I came across a statement that proved to be crucial in the context of my research. It made me realise that a problem that I thought was local, which only appeared once in the statements of my narrators, was nevertheless a global issue. One of the participants in Hanna Kędzierska's (2012) research on the careers of teachers says namely: "[...] it turned out that without language you do not move. I am from the generation in which language, of course, was taught at university, but 'God forgive those who taught us', because languages were treated as a fifth wheel [...]" (Kędzierska, 2012, p. 232).

The metaphor[9] of the "fifth wheel" is used whenever describing something unnecessary, redundant or undesirable or someone who gets in the way or otherwise obstructs something. "Just as a wagon stands more stable and rolls better on four than on five wheels, so, too, in certain matters it is better to stop at fewer elements and in certain activities at fewer helpers" (National Cultural Centre, n.d.). Of course, one may note that this is only a subjective assessment. However, if it is perpetuated over the years, repeated in different messages and different contexts, then such a hegemonic account becomes objectivity (Laclau, 2005) – not spoken explicitly, but hidden behind the mask of metaphor. As Laclau argues, "the rhetorical devices themselves – metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, catachresis – become instruments of an expanded social rationality, and we are no longer able to dismiss an ideological interpellation as merely rhetorical" (Laclau, 2005, p. 12). The metaphor is thus as valid and objective as the social reception it describes.

Interestingly, the "fifth wheel" metaphor was also used by my narrator in the following context:

> **Laura:** *My colleague often says that back in the day, when she told her thesis supervisor at her master's seminar that she would like to work at a university, to teach lectures, she was told "oh, then you will always be the fifth wheel". That is what she said to her.*

Being "fifth wheels", are my interlocutors, teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes part of the academic community? If we were to take the metaphor purely technically – they are (after all, they are part of the metaphorical cart).

9 Metaphors are often used as a linguistic tool to facilitate communication; they are employed to attempt to present a phenomenon in a comprehensible way, to give it a deeper meaning, to link it to different experiences (Kotowska, 2015). In research and its interpretation, metaphors can be interpreted through such approaches as constructivist-interpretivist and radical-critical to uncover or bring about "demystifying power relations and social positioning" (Jendza, 2020, p. 164).

However, from a cultural standpoint, they are not part of the community; they are a superfluous element and even a kind of ballast. In the narratives of the research participants, I found no reference to a shared history with other academia staff or to a shared narrative. It is therefore fair to conclude, without claiming the right to generalise, that my interviewees function at the intersection of the two aforementioned cultures – school and academia. They do not form a community of practice in either of them, or even other kinds of teams aiming for any kind of support. Instead, there is a noticeable lack of a sense of unity, a lack of common reference and shared social belonging.

Political communities

The final element of this level in Illeris' (2011) theory concerns the political communities that can form in the workplace. These are formed around struggles of control (direct and indirect), power, status or influence in working life. Control can relate to such contested elements as the various processes at work, but also to employee engagement and loyalty. Illeris (2011) also mentions several potential areas of learning in working life that are related to political communities. These include learning solidarity and collective action, norms, as well as understanding and seeing one's work as valuable not only for/in the organisation in question, but also in the wider social context. Additionally, because of the political (critical) rationale, this category is also linked to learning to resist.

Peter McLaren argues that "actions of resistance always co-occur with relations of domination and subordination, and the researcher's task is to identify the most hidden, ambiguous forms of resistance (including forms of indifference, passivity)" (Bielska, 2013, p. 48). Following this line and bearing in mind that the world is a linguistic construct, as well as that we create our world and make sense of it through language, resistance can also be expressed in the way we talk about something. It is not a question of resistance expressed loudly, of protest at demonstrations, but of the way we linguistically construct our social world and ourselves immersed in it on a daily basis. A resistance that is quiet but nevertheless audible, one expressed in a linguistic dissociation from the power and system of which the individual is a part, but with which he or she does not agree or identify.

It is precisely this kind of resistance that I found in the narratives of the research participants. This element was already present in the earlier categories I described, but it deserves special mention in the context of political communities. Its manifestation, common to my interlocutors, was the introduction of a significant division between 'Us' and 'Them' – and this was regardless of whether the comments related to increasing numbers in the groups or, for example, to increasing "paperwork".

Violet: *They started to increase the number of people in our groups; they were making these groups big, and the comfort of work was poor at that point.*

The phrase "they started to increase" suggests that this was not a change planned from within, but imposed from outside. Some unspecified 'They' (likely the university or ministerial authorities) decided so, and 'We' had to comply. I believe this 'They–We' opposition expresses my narrators' resistance to practices that are both oppressive to them and to the students. By using the form 'They', my interviewees indicate the existence of the Other, which is a condition of resistance. "Referring Alain Touraine's thesis, resistance can be understood as a collective action that presupposes the existence of an actor (the subject of this action) whose interests are different from the aspirations of the dominant subject and the social field that constitutes the context of their interactions" (Bielska, 2013, p. 36).

Iris Marion Young, as cited by McLaren (2015), identified five faces of oppression against various minorities and underprivileged groups. According to her, these are exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (McLaren, 2015, pp. 55–57)[10]. To understand my narrators' voice of dissent, their statements are best considered in the category of powerlessness. Although Young (1992) refers in this case to the division between professionals and non-professionals, this division, it seems, can be understood quite broadly: it can include, for example, full-time employees vs. those without full-time employment, the highly specialised vs. the unspecialised, white-collar workers vs. blue-collar workers, the educated vs. the uneducated. Furthermore, in a less radical form, this category can be applied to the situation inside the hierarchical structure that is academia. In academia, some have academic titles and others have degrees, some hold higher degrees than others, and so on.

Below are more examples of the use of the 'They-We' opposition.

Violet: *In the extramural studies, even if they [students] wanted to choose another language, dean's groups would simply not be created, so, as if by force, they lumped them together, so to speak, into a single bag saying: "English!", and we were supposed to do something about it.*

10 In this respect, based on Young (1992), I interpret the term oppression as a systemic and structural phenomenon that is irreducible because it is one of the basic elements of the construction of society, rather than an action attributable to specific tyrants. This is a vital critical finding, as it points to the constant presence of oppression, even in democratic systems. Where there is power, there is also oppression; where knowledge treads, oppression follows.

Rosalia: *Then it turned out that even those optional offers could not be made anymore, and then it turned out that they could just overhaul curricula overnight and reduce the amounts in the courses, giving scarcely any language hours.*

Malvina: *Also, the promotion path is significantly restricted at the university. [...] Our promotion path is closed. We are teachers, and we can stay teachers for the rest of our lives, regardless of seniority, regardless of our development.*

Kalina: *They now require us to conform; we are expected to complete a lot of surveys, but we do not have the required conditions at all...*

As you can see, my narrators apply the 'They-We' optics in very different contexts, such as the organisation of studies, professional development, funding and development support, and bureaucratisation at the university. However, the excerpts of all the statements presented have a common denominator. It is precisely the need to conform. 'They' mandate something, introduce something, change something, and 'We' have to comply.

I also notice in the statements another form of oppression, categorised by Young (1992) as marginalisation. It is construed not only as a difficulty faced by certain social groups when trying to work, but also as a restriction of the rights and freedoms of dependent people by blocking the use or development of their resources. "If justice requires that every person have the opportunity to develop and exercise his or her capacities, finally, then marginalization is unjust primarily because it blocks such opportunity to exercise capacities in socially defined and recognized ways" (Young, 1992, p. 187). Meanwhile, as some of my interviewees point out (e.g. Malvina), the promotion path is either closed or very restricted for them. The position of teacher is a frozen one – you can start your university career at this level and remain there all the way until retirement[11].

The marginalisation experienced by my narrators is a systemic element – in the current polish law "Act on Higher Education and Science" (Act of 20 July 2018), often referred to as the Constitution for Science, the position of

11 I must point out, however, that the situation described by Malvina is not an experience common to all my interviewees. Some of the narrators did not speak about promotions at all, whereas Dahlia talked about clear criteria for the promotion of teachers to lecturer and senior lecturer positions at her university. However, Dahlia was referring to positions that existed before the enactment of the "Act on Higher Education and Science" in 2018. In the 2005 Act, Article 110 on academic teachers lists the positions of full professor, associate professor, visiting professor, assistant professor and assistant lecturer in the group of research and teaching staff, as well as the positions of senior lecturer, lecturer and teacher or instructor in the group of teaching staff (Act of 27 July 2005).

language teacher (*lektor*)[12] is no longer listed in the section on academic teachers. Article 116, concerning academic teachers, only mentions professor, university professor, assistant professor and assistant lecturer (Act of 20 July 2018). Only in the next section (Article 116(4)) is it stated that the university statutes may additionally specify other positions along with the necessary qualification requirements. The term 'language teacher' itself appears once in the entire Act (Article 127(2)(4)) and refers to the annual number of teaching hours. It reads as follows: "(4) up to 540 teaching hours for the teaching staff employed as language teachers or instructors, if the statutes of the higher education institution provide for such a position".

Language teachers certainly did not disappear following the entry into force of this Act – those who had worked in such positions remained in university structures, and the requirement to educate students in a modern language still applies. Nonetheless, removing language teachers from the list of academic teachers and leaving it to the arbitrary decision of the university senate and the rector to create such a position has implications. It is a step towards commercialisation, an expression of corporate logic and a depreciation of didactics and the humanities. At STEM universities, as well as natural sciences or science faculties, foreign language classes are sometimes part of limited humanities and 'humanising' blocks. For universities that are struggling financially, savings by outsourcing the delivery of language classes to external schools is an option that could lead to the closure of FLCs.

As argued by Michel Foucault, individuals subjected to the pressure to conform to some prohibition (or in the case of my narrators, to orders, compulsion and marginalisation) develop forms of expression termed 'techniques of the self' (Bielska, 2013). As noted by Ewa Bielska citing Foucault, "techniques of the self allow individuals, through the use of their own resources and capitals or the resources and capitals of others, to make modifications to the context of their own functioning (e.g. represented interpretation of social reality, behavioural styles, lifestyles, etc.) in order to achieve the goal they have set themselves. Through the indicated technique, individuals influence themselves" (Bielska, 2013, p. 33).

This is how I understand the type of resistance employed by my narrators. Unable to oppose the changes introduced, they have to submit to top-down decisions, and when their needs (including developmental needs) are marginalised, they employ linguistic resistance. It consists of dissociating verbally from

12 In Polish, the term 'lektor' is used to refer to a foreign language teacher at university.

these decisions, separating from them, establishing a certain barrier between the narrators and these decisions.

The socio-cultural level of theory contained in the study of learning in working life by Illeris et al. (2011) demonstrated the heterogeneity and multidimensionality of my narrators' situations. The three types of communities described, labour, cultural and political, appeared to range from a strong community of practice in the labour dimension (in which some of my narrators were so deeply immersed that they chose to write textbooks together), to a community of people who were cutting themselves off or had been cut off from the teaching or academic communities, to a political community, which was essentially non-existent in my narrators' statements.

I would like to emphasise even more strongly that the results of the analysis refer only to what the interviewees communicated at a particular point in their lives. This is of particular importance in the case of communities of political practice, which are mainly formed in a moment of strong oppression, causing a collective response and action. The statements of my narrators indicate the existence of this oppression and illustrate a specific way of relating to it. This relationship does not have emancipatory power, but seems to have the potential to develop in that direction.

The socio-cultural working environment and its technical-organisational variant together form the social basis of the environment in which FLSP teachers function. All the knowledge that originates there constitutes their knowledge of the world. As in the previously described dimension, some elements signalling the possibility or necessity of a critical view of the intersubjective cultural world in which my narrators function can also be observed in the one currently analysed.

Teachers' Narratives 'About Themselves'

The previous two subsections present and analyse the social level of the narrators' working environment. The final part of Illeris' (2011) triangle of learning in working life is the individual level, focusing on the learning potential of individuals. However, presenting, describing and analysing the individual level brings with it a certain difficulty, as it requires finding a way to portray the individual not only as a case study, but also to include and show in the description and analysis the individual learning potential discussed. Indeed, Illeris emphasises that "employees' learning at the workplace is dependent on their experience from their previous life course" (Illeris et al., 2011, p. 40), highlighting the importance of three elements, namely **social background**, **education** and **work experience**,

where learning takes place. Together, these elements form a kind of biographical trajectory of learning (Illeris et al., 2011).

As regards the individual dimension, the research aims to identify and describe the problems and constraints that may stand in the way of teachers' conscious transgression of their professional role, as well as the supportive, cohesive elements of teachers' efforts in their process of transgressing their professional role, the normative provisions of the role and the construction of the individual dimension of the role.

As in the case of the study of narratives about the world, here, too, I was guided in the presentation and analysis of the research material by questions such as:

1. What emotions and experiences accompany the teachers in relation to the changes taking place?
2. What aspects of their day-to-day work do the teachers find most difficult, and what aspects do they find most challenging?
3. How do the narrators deal with them?

Social background

I will begin my exploration of the individual level of theory with the broadest element, the social background. Illeris (2011) distinguishes two main ways of understanding social background and its relevance to an individual's life course. The first is concerned with the experience of social structures with which the individual interacts or has interacted, while the second focuses on the development of the individual's identity and life history in their active interaction with the social environment. However, postmodern life contexts mean that social background and social experience are no longer as easily transmitted between generations as they once were. More and more professions are disappearing and old values and norms are not always compatible with the today's reality. There may be some misunderstandings caused by 'habitus', as defined by Pierre Bourdieu (2008). He defines this term as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu, 2008, pp. 72–73). Habitus, then, is a category that links an individual's past to their present, as it is "that presence of the past in the present which makes possible the presence in the present of the forth-coming. It follows that, insofar as the habitus contains its logic (lex) and dynamics (vis), it is not mechanically subordinated to external causality, and

that, contrary to mechanistic immediacy, it allows for a certain freedom vis-à-vis a simple and direct determination by the circumstances that occur" (Bourdieu, 2006, p. 301, as cited in Zalewska-Bujak, 2017, p. 45).

The concept of habitus seems extremely relevant in the context of lived experience, being one of its building blocks. Being aware of their occurrence and discovering or uncovering their origins can be extremely helpful in the process of understanding an individual, or, as in my case, the study participants. It is important to remember, however, that in a concept that focuses on the individual's potential derived from their social experience, the focus is directed towards learning in working life. Still, it is not about the intentional transfer of social practices to the work setting, but about the confident use of one's resources and an individual's latent potential; in other words, "being a good learner is not just a matter of learning a few techniques such as mental maps or speed reading or the Denison method. Rather, it is about the whole person: their attitudes, values, self-image and relationships, as well as their skills and strategies" (Wollman, 2013, p. 107).

This approach to human potential, as well as learning potential, means understanding it as a certain background (particular and biographical) built and accumulated throughout life (including through the habitus created), and expressed 'here and now' through "a particular kind of individual's self-knowledge, judgements, perceptions and self-esteem, created in the process of social interaction, in the dialogue with the Other and with the Otherness, which shapes the individual's life orientation" (Cudowska, 2014, p. 20).

The concept used to analyse the narrators' statements in the context of social background is exactly the category of life orientations according to Agata Cudowska (2004; 2014), more precisely, the category of creative life orientations. "I see life orientations as a descriptive, dynamic, processual category. It is a complex phenomenon on an interpersonal as well as an intrapersonal level – within the choices made by a person at different periods of their life. The basis for its definition is the individual's attitude to existential values. It is, therefore, a relatively stable, but also evolving set of views and beliefs about the needs, aspirations and life goals of an individual in the area of their most esteemed values. Life orientation is thus a resultant of many factors: life experiences, scope and type of knowledge, motivation, ability to act, personality type, cognitive style, evaluative and valuation attitudes and, finally, environmental factors" (Cudowska, 2004, p. 129).

This definition fits in with the social background level described by Illeris (2011) as the first of the three elements of an individual's level and potential in the concept of learning in working life. Life orientations are – like habitus,

although in a slightly broader context – a reflection of an individual's past in their present. They can be used to understand and interpret the social experience that builds an individual's learning potential.

Cudowska (2019) situates the concept of creative life orientations on several levels: "1) ontological, formed by the philosophy of dialogue and the metaphysics of orientations; 2) psychological, expressed in humanistic psychology, the psychology of creativity and the psychology of culture; 3) pedagogical, built by the narrative of creativity pedagogy and emancipatory theory, as well as 4) psychological-pedagogical, the core of which are theories of everyday creativity and the concept of assistance in creation" (Cudowska, 2019, p. 134). A multidimensional view of creative life orientations shows that creativity can 'emerge' or be practised at different levels.

The creative attitude or life orientation is an element that has come up several times in the analysis of my research material. In this dissertation's section on technical and organisational work environment, which explored the values given to work by my narrators, the manifestation of the creative attitude was the conversation and the meanings given to it. The statements made it clear that it was an expression of creation, the creation of an open attitude, a kind of practice of relationship. "The Other and I, like the Other for the Other, we form a dialogical relationship; we enter into relations, we create a space of experience, a community of experiences and actions. Truth can no longer be reduced to logical judgements but becomes a certain way of being human in relation to the world; it consists in the possibility to act, to engage and to take responsibility for the common good. These categories construct a narrative of creative life orientations as one of the possible ways in which the idea of *homo explorens* is fulfilled in everyday life" (Cudowska, 2014, pp. 43–44).

Decision-making, described within the same work environment, was also a manifestation of creative life orientation, which I interpreted in terms of knowledge and the interests constructing it in the breakdown proposed by Habermas (1995). The creative character is fulfilled in reflective-type knowledge; it appears to a lesser extent in understanding-type knowledge with practical interest. In contrast, conservative life orientations, being at the opposite pole to creative life orientations, are expressed in instrumental knowledge with technical interest. At the point defined as the opportunities to use qualifications at work, which was analysed in terms of competencies, the desired creative life orientation is fulfilled in the dimension of personal qualities and attitudes. Finally, in the dimension of community of practice, which was examined in terms of the socio-cultural working environment, one can note the narrators' deep

creative involvement in the creation of resources and textbooks on the subject taught. As is once again evident, the different elements of Illeris's (2011) theory are intertwined: their connections are clear not only at the social level and in the knowledge of the world that is created based on it. The relationships that arise between the levels are also apparent at the initial stage of examining the individual level.

The above examples from the previous analyses mainly show a creative attitude in relation to the various elements of the teacher's work and the forms of their presence in the working environment (technical-organisational and socio--cultural). Nevertheless, Cudowska notes, without diminishing the importance of such creativity, that the idea of the teacher as a creative employee "is essentially secondary to situating creativity in the ontological, axiological and psychological sphere of the teacher's personality, which, in the light of contemporary epistemology, falls within the dimension of the transformative intellectual" (Cudowska, 2004, p. 213). Therefore, Cudowska (2004; 2014) proposes a vision of contemporary person as the 'seeking person' (*homo explorens*), which according to her is a transgression of the metaphors used by Bauman (1994, 1996) to describe the types of individuals living in the period of postmodernity/liquid modernity.

The word 'seeking' refers to the idea that modern humans are indeed condemned to seek their world, their place in it and, ultimately, to seek to "build/rebuild/expand" themselves. This means that individual is constantly on the move and, unable to stop, has to face successive changes. "For being on the road means experiencing constant change, passing, as if losing present time, because on the road either we have already passed something, and it is receding into the past, or we are heading towards something, and it is already the future" (Cudowska, 2004, p. 264).

Further, it must be noted that Cudowska (2014) considers life orientations on a continuum, emphasising the opposition between creative and conservative orientations. Yet, in between them, she also places ambiguous orientations of 'undecided' people. In her research, Cudowska (2014) used her own Creative Life Orientation Preference Scale. In contrast, I will focus on interpreting the statements of my narrators relating to themselves as human beings, individuals who are part of the world, who discuss their expectations for the future, their motives for choosing a teaching career, their passions (if raised), their ways of managing adversity, their emotions towards the ongoing social changes, as well as their life outside teaching. Table 21 summarises the ways of understanding the concept of creative life orientation.

TABLE 21. CREATIVE LIFE ORIENTATIONS – ONTOLOGICAL PLANE

Plane	Understanding
Ontological	– the idea of the seeking person – the active, subjective role of the individual, as well as conscious decision-making and taking responsibility for it; – an attitude conditioned by such qualities as curiosity, concentration, commitment, experiencing the 'Self', accepting conflicts and opposites, believing in the reality of one's experience; – perceiving oneself as a thinking, knowing and reality-transforming individual, experiencing one's activity and being aware of its creative role; – self-awareness, which enables self-determination, creating one's own unique lifestyle.

Source: compiled based on Cudowska, A. (2014). *Twórcze orientacje życiowe w dialogu edukacyjnym. Studium teoretyczno-empiryczne* (pp. 25–27). Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie Trans Humana.

Therefore, my analysis does not aim to pass judgment or to say whether and to what extent my narrators are creative or not. Rather, it intends to indicate the various forms of life orientations – both creative and conservative – adopted by my interviewees. This content is collected, categorised and shown in Table 22.

TABLE 22. LIFE ORIENTATION THEMES IN THE NARRATIVES – ONTOLOGICAL PLANE

Category	Examples of statements – creative life orientations	Examples of statements – ambiguous/conservative life orientations
motives for choosing the teaching profession	**Lily:** *I think that this is it, that this is my role in this life; this is also a task that suits me. [...] I knew quite early on that I wanted to be a teacher.*	**Kalina:** *I think it was not my plan for life... I do not know if I had a plan in the first place.*
expectations for the future	**Dahlia:** *I am in such a small institution; I work there 2 times a week for a couple of hours at a time and I thought to myself that if I retired or lost this job I probably would not come back to teaching, or I would try something else, find something in a new profession.*	**Laura:** *The main goal is just to work quietly like that until retirement... Well, right now I am not interested in anything like promotions, research papers... Teaching is satisfying enough for me here.*
self-awareness, awareness of own preferences	**Violet:** *I do not like to lock myself into something and work using the same material for a dozen years because I would just die, so again, I need some challenges, I need something all the time.*	**Rose:** *I do not know what the recommendations are at the moment... just that kind of thing, I guess, right? To avoid taking control, but rather to help the student.*

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

I categorised the statements of my narrators, in which I found manifestations of life orientations on the ontological plane, into three groups: the first concerns the motives for choosing a teaching career, the second relates to expectations for the future, and the third contains a variety of less thematically identical elements, through which life orientations were also revealed.

Jasmine, Lily, Malvina, Rose and Violet presented an 'intentional model' of career choice in their narratives.

Malvina: *I think it was my lifelong dream; since I was a little girl. [...] I can say that my profession is my vocation, my mission, so it was not a random choice, and it is a profession that I willingly took on, I am happy to do it, and I would like to do it for the rest of my life.*

Rose: *I have always enjoyed teaching.*

Violet: *I had my first teaching experience as early as the end of high school and I was already teaching at that point. I was actually teaching right at the end of high school; at university, I was doing tutoring all the time, the informal kind, but I have been teaching almost forever, I feel.*

Lily (quoted in Table 22) compares being a teacher to her role in life, Malvina to a vocation, a mission, Rose – like Jasmine – indicates that she has been satisfied with her choice from the very onset of her career, and Violet feels that she has been teaching forever. Notably, in the case of Rose and Violet, teaching traditions were present in their family homes (their mothers were teachers), hence the context of teaching, school and education is deeply embedded in their biographies as well as social experience.

In my view, the intentional model of career choice exemplifies creative life orientations. Kazimierz Obuchowski (1993) recognises the intentional act as one of the most important elements of the concept of the 'Subjective Self', which enables an autonomous attitude towards reality. The source of decisions is the human being, who independently makes decisions and accepts their consequences, transforms reality and finds their place in it. This is also the case with my narrators. It was not coincidence, fate or the unavailability of other options that were behind their choice of profession – it was motivated by their own intentions, convictions or consciously shaped way of life.

I place the statements by Dahlia, Kalina, Laura and Rosalia at the opposite extreme. Below are quotes from their narratives.

Dahlia: *I guess I did not think I was going to teach this, but I suppose I did not consider what I would like to do after university, so what happened afterwards was generally related to the fact that I did not know what I wanted to do at all because I largely just could not get my act together.*

Laura: *We all studied to be teachers, because there was no choice at the time... If you studied English Philology back in the day, you were immediately qualified to teach.*

Rosalia: *I became an English teacher by chance. I never wanted to teach at a school [...] so by complete accident I became a high school English teacher, yes.*

Dahlia and Kalina (the latter's statement can be found in Table 22) present a similar attitude regarding their studies and career choices, wondering if they had any plan at all at that point in their lives. Laura states that there was no other choice than teaching after studying philology, while Rosalia openly admits that she began to teach at a school by chance.

In these narratives, the study participants presented an accidental model of taking up teaching, which points to ambiguous and conservative life orientations. At the same time, relying on chance, random events, institutions or some 'higher force' to decide on a life path exemplifies the standard in question – the psychology of adaptation to a given situation, the external conditions of one's being, as well as mechanical adaptation (Sajdak, 2013). Nevertheless, I would like to emphasise that all participants in the study, regardless of their life orientation, declared satisfaction with their place in life at the time of the interview. They all spoke of satisfaction with teaching, emphasising its different aspects like contact with young people (Rose), didactics (Laura), building relationships (Jasmine), learning support (Malvina) and learning new things (Dahlia).

Life orientations are not a fixed construct that, once developed, remains unchanged throughout an individual's life. Conversely, Cudowska (2004) points to the processual and dynamic nature of this category. "Life orientations are thus necessarily changeable and develop gradually as the individual acquires new life dispositions" (Cudowska, 2004, p. 129). Living in the context of postmodernity, the possibility to meet and dialogue with the Other (for teachers, this is their everyday life) – all this means that, from the beginning of professional life, orientations can change as a result of interaction with others, with other worlds, new interpretations and meanings given to one's experience, and as a result of developing personality and autonomy, as well as becoming embedded into one's professional role. This is what happened in the case of several of my narrators.

Having pursued a teaching-oriented career from the very outset, which I interpreted as an expression of a creative life orientation, Jasmine presents a different attitude towards the future.

Jasmine: *I am less and less inclined to believe that things will change for the better here. No, I do not see it happening, but it is just related to these problems that I see... Well, but I also do not hope for too much, I would not like to change my job, well, because I actually like it, it is just what bothers me all the time, what I have been saying all this time...*

When discussing her negative expectations for the future, Jasmine only draws attention to the technical aspects of her job. She neglects the personal aspect, even though she has previously strongly emphasised a pro-developmental attitude towards being a teacher. She does not place herself in the role of a subject influencing the world – conversely, she attributed the possibility of modifying it solely to external factors. Thus, this is not a manifestation of a creative life orientation but rather a conservative one. I perceive this change in Jasmine's attitude (even though I am aware that this is but one possible interpretation) as another manifestation (effect) of the oppression discussed in the previous section. Subjected to oppressive practices that constitute an irreducible systemic element (Young, 1992), she has lost her autonomous voice, limiting her expectations to a change in the technical-organisational working environment. Jasmine says: *I actually like it, it is just what bothers me...* indicating that the only way for her to influence the world of work is to resign from her current job and find a different one. She has thus internalised powerlessness and marginalisation, situating the possibilities for change not in herself but in the external environment.

Let us now proceed to a second (different) example of a change in life orientation based on Dahlia's narrative. As she says, when she started university, she had no vision of what she would do; teaching was not in her plans. She relied on the 'course of life' and thus became a teacher. I interpreted her statement as part of a conservative life orientation. Yet, I interpreted Dahlia's narrative of her expectations for the future as a manifestation of a creative attitude. While she is highly satisfied with her job, with the stability she has gained thanks to it, her thinking about the future is not confined within the walls of this particular institution: she considers retraining and becoming a psychologist. Alongside her work as a teacher, she has developed other passions, which, as

she says, she ursues after hours; she has completed a degree in psychology and also sees her future in this field[13].

In summary, I presented the category of social background from the perspective of my interviewees' motives for choosing their life paths and their expectations for the future, analysing them in terms of the life orientations they expressed. This category, framed as presented above, shows the development of professional identity in active interaction with the social world, through which, as emphasised, it can change. "Every participant in social life has their own 'career', a career of social relationships, a social biography, which can be conceptualised as a sequence of identity transformations" (Hałas, 2006, p. 256); in interactionist sociological thought, it is permissible to use the terms 'role' and 'identity' interchangeably when both concepts refer to "the processes involved in participation in interaction rather than to the social structure or organisation of the personality" (Hałas, 2006, p. 250). Such transformations can result in a change of life orientations from creative to conservative and from conservative to creative. Thus, there is no guarantee of constancy in the process of creating one's own roles, but there is a constant process of becoming, of transformation, of striving for the intangible[14].

Educational experience

Another element that Illeris (2011) draws attention to in the concept of learning in working life is the **educational experience**. An individual's experience of education can influence attitudes to learning in adulthood, including workplace learning. For those individuals who, for various reasons, have not pursued higher education, workplace education and the many forms of adult education available provide a second chance to do so. However, by virtue of their role, teachers must have completed higher education. My reflections will therefore take a slightly different route to that proposed by Illeris (2011), but keeping in mind the individual potential for learning in the workplace and in working life.

13 Interestingly, Jasmine also mentions her interest in psychology. Although she did not pursue a degree in this field, she stresses that if she had not been a teacher, she could have become a psychologist. She sees some similarities between the two professions. Jasmine says: I think you have to be a good psychologist in this job and elsewhere: being a psychologist is somewhat fascinating for me. Maybe it is just that I like this direct contact with the given person and I like to break certain things down, to look for some cause-and-effect relationships. Teachers' work with other people goes far beyond imparting knowledge, beyond helping them learn and ensuring that the course objectives or syllabus are met. Working with the other person is precisely a human-to-human encounter, with endless possibilities to develop it.

14 I would like to emphasise that this is only my interpretation (and, importantly, not an evaluation) of the words of the study participants, and it only relates to what they revealed in their narrative, what they shared with me as the researcher. I am aware that this is a small slice of their lives, and my understanding and conclusions about their life orientations relate only to these slices.

The category of educational experience is a well-known concept in andragogy, "because it describes the potential of the adult, their learning capacity, and in several ways at that" (Jurgiel-Aleksander, 2013, p. 15). Alicja Jurgiel-Aleksander considers it from three possible points of view: as an element of human action in the socio-economic system, as an element naturally inherent in a person's being in the world from childhood to old age, and as a way of engaging the individual (the adult human being) in social practices (Jurgiel-Aleksander, 2013). The questions I will try to answer in the analysis that follows are how the participants in my research learn, what competencies they develop in the various activities, what limitations they perceive in the various forms and, finally, what meaning they give to their educational activity, their own education. Table 23 lists all the learning activities undertaken by my narrators, as per Philip H. Coombs' breakdown (Malewski, 2010).

TABLE 23. THEMES OF FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION IN THE NARRATIVES

Type of education	Elements mentioned in the narratives	Narrators
formal	– doctoral studies; – PhD (extramural mode); – postgraduate studies; – studies in the UK.	Dahlia, Rose, Violet, Malvina, Rosalia
non-formal	– teaching workshops; – LSP workshops; – conferences; – textbook presentations; – dance courses; – language course.	Jasmine, Malvina, Kalina, Rosalia, Laura, Dahlia, Rose, Violet, Lily
informal	– internet; – books (textbooks); – foreign language literature; – videos; – internet forums; – social media; – the course of work.	Laura, Kalina, Jasmine, Rose, Malvina, Violet, Lily

Source: own elaboration based on research material.

As Malewski (2010) writes, formal education is associated with educational and higher education institutions that confirm the qualifications held through certificates, diplomas, titles and degrees awarded. Non-formal education is any organised learning activity outside formal education, whereas informal education is learning initiated and performed by an individual on their own, as well as "learning as a result of other activities – at work, while performing household chores, pursuing extra-professional interests, etc. (learning outcomes

are then the added value of activities that an individual generally undertakes for purposes other than learning)" (Stęchły, 2021, p. 8).

In the earlier stages of the presentation of the research material and its analysis, it was emphasised that most of the study participants had no exposure to a language for specific purposes prior to their work at the university. Not a single one of them had received training or taken part in any form of education in this area, and only one of them had such experience once she had started work. This corresponds to the results of a 2018 Catapult survey of 560 teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes in more than 15 European countries. It found that 70% of LSP teachers start working with a language for specific purposes without any prior training, and 41% have not received any specific LSP training (Zourou and Torresin, 2019)[15].

When discussing the category of possibilities for using qualifications in the work, I focused on knowledge competencies, showing that working in FLCs requires both specific qualifications and competences. Moreover, teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes need to acquire not only the language of the specialisation, but also the knowledge associated with it, as the two cannot be separated (Mamet, 2002). Still, they do not acquire this knowledge through formal education[16] and rarely as a result of non-formal education either – only two of my narrators had minor exposure to LSP elements during formal and non-formal education. The vast majority of expertise is acquired through informal education. One of the more tangible reasons for this is the scarcity of training in this area (Zourou and Torresin, 2019).

Józef Kargul states that "a person's education is always related to their actions, their activity, hence the areas of education coincide with the fields of their life activity" (Kargul, 2005, p. 8) and with professional activity. The vast majority of the educational activities undertaken by my narrators – and for some the only one they mentioned – were thematically related to their work, to the need for further education to meet the job requirements, to gain promotion or to maintain the position (which I describe in more detail in the work experience category).

Each interviewee emphasised that preparing for classes with students involves not only gathering language teaching materials and planning various activities,

15 However, it must be recognised that languages for specific purposes (not only as specialisations, but also in terms of didactics) are starting to appear in the curricula of students in various philological studies. An analysis of 2019/2020 academic year philology curricula from 22 Polish universities showed that the LSP offer is extensive (Gajewska et al., 2020). What remains problematic is that these "activities, however, are not standardised – they vary in both the number of hours offered and the nature of the classes" (Kic-Drgas and Woźniak, 2022, p. 118) at different universities.

16 Only one of my interviewees obtained a doctoral degree (in health sciences), but this was after many years of working with specialist medical language.

but above all learning the content to be taught. The teachers' development in this respect is mainly done through informal education. My interviewees learn from the textbooks they then use to teach, read academic articles in the given field and use online resources, be it government or company websites, blogs, social media posts or YouTube videos.

Jasmine: *I make no secret that this was probably the first textbook I learned from as a teacher, as far as specialist medical language is concerned. [...] To this day, when I tell stories, make some introductions in class, I know that I use fragments that I have somewhere in my memory, learned by heart.*

While the participants in my study did not take up this theme, teachers taking part in other surveys pointed to the discomfort due to the short time between the assimilation of knowledge and the moment when it has to be presented to the students. "One of our lecturers had a sense of falsehood: «I only learned a word yesterday, and today I am already teaching it to others»" (Gajewska--Skrzypczak and Sawicka, 2016, p. 55)[17]. In particular, teachers may experience such feelings early in their careers, when the amount of knowledge they need to acquire is considerable. As my narrators gain experience, however, their knowledge grows, their confidence increases and strategies for dealing with difficult situations emerge.

Dahlia: *Now I know that the only way is just to be well-prepared.*

Undoubtedly, financial issues are an important constraint for undertaking pro-development activities. The topic was taken up by Malvina, Laura, Rose and Jasmine.

Malvina: *For those who would like to develop in this direction, [...] this involves expending one's own private funds, without reimbursement. In fact, even conference fees are not reimbursed. [...] Trip and accommodation costs are extra expenses, and if the conference fee is not reimbursed, it makes it so that... well, we either pay for further education with our own money, with our own funding, we self-study online, or we do nothing.*

17 In the quoted statement, I perceive the term "word" as a symbol, a key word referring to knowledge.

The costs of some forms of non-formal education, such as attending conferences or specialist translation courses, are often too high for my interviewees. When not formally required to do so, narrators eschew such forms of professional development in favour of those that are free of charge, or in favour of various forms of informal learning.

Jasmine: *Conferences are mainly for me to demonstrate to my employer that I am improving my education. And in fact, everything that you really need, you do yourself, on your own.*

Only a few of my interviewees referred in their narratives to an educational experience not directly related to their work. Having various passions outside of teaching, they pursue various educational forms, both non-formal and informal, for example, learning various massage techniques, developing interests in social platforms, engaging in psychology, literature, pursuing various artistic activities (dancing, singing), sporting activities, learning other languages. While not directly related to their work, these activities influence them and therefore contribute to shaping who they are.

Lily: *This carries over from one thing to another. Sometimes there is a skill that is part of an activity that we do not realise at all, but it carries over into a specific activity, so I am convinced that what I do outside of work also influences it, makes me the kind of person I am and not another.*

Malvina: *Then this thought came up: "OK, how can this also be translated into the classroom; how can this be used specifically in medical English?". It definitely emanated from an enormous passion of mine, a fascination with the subject...*

Both Lily and Malvina have been reflective in the excerpts cited, pointing out the relevance of non-formal and informal education experiences to their work. Both perceive some kind of usefulness or similarity of this experience in/for their work, or even try to actively use some elements of it to enrich their teaching practice. Still, as Stephen D. Brookfield (2017) points out, it is also important to develop this form of education continuously. This is not only to express with one's life the ideas of lifelong learning or to enrich one's teaching practice, but also not to forget what it is like to be a learner and, to use Tadeusz Sławek's (2021) term, to increase one's chances of finding one's way to 'unlearn'. "In answering what this unlearning is supposed to be about, one must say that it has nothing to do with forgetting or simply discarding curricula. On the contrary, unlearning

means entering more deeply into what these programmes recommend to critically evaluate these recommendations" (Sławek, 2021, p. 83). Moreover, increasing the understanding of one's partners in the learning and teaching process, one can build a plane of understanding (agreement) that facilitates collaboration for both teachers and students (Tabor and Majewska-Kafarowska, 2006).

The last theme I would like to discuss in the context of formal, non-formal and informal education is the issue of the implicitly expressed notion of habitus – the conviction that knowledge gained in formal education provides more certainty than knowledge gained in non-formal and informal education. Habitus is, in my view, immersed in the historical way of seeing education as exclusively formal. Of course, non-formal and informal education have always existed, but they only gained importance with the postmodern debunking of the myth of one truth, one knowledge, or as a consequence of the emergence of this trend.

The self-confidence, the certainty of her knowledge gained through formal education, is most vividly represented by Rose, who teaches Polish as a foreign language in addition to English. She therefore acts as a native speaker of Polish, but has also completed postgraduate studies in this area.

Rose: *I feel more confident... Well, it is not just a language that is my native tongue [...]. I am a philologist, and it is not like every native speaker has it, but we are philologists. And I learned how to teach Polish as a foreign language because I did postgraduate studies in this area.*

As one can see from the quoted excerpt, Rose feels confident in her knowledge; she is also likely confident in her skills as well as in herself thanks to her postgraduate studies.

Another notable statement was made by Dahlia.

Dahlia: *And I do not lie to them that I am going to teach them physics and chemistry, I just use these resources.*

Dahlia uses the word "lie" when referring to teaching a foreign language for specific purposes at a university of technology where science issues are discussed. The word "lie" has a variety of definitions – the relevant one being this is an act "of a conscious, deliberate, intentional [...] nature; lying is not so much about inconsistency with the absolute truth as it is about inconsistency with the beliefs of the liar, which themselves, after all, need not be true" (Stępniak, 2013, p. 114). From this perspective, it is important to say that Dahlia does not

refer in her statement to lying as a conscious and intentional act, but to the part of the definition that speaks of "inconsistency with the beliefs of the liar".

These beliefs, in the context of my research and in this particular case, are the same as knowledge.

Both Dahlia's statement and the previously quoted passage about teaching just-learned words make it clear that both teachers feel that their training does not correspond to the area of the topics covered in class, and that the skills they have acquired in the field are not yet broad enough to give them a sense of security. As in the case of Rose, they are reassured by knowledge confirmed by a diploma, certificate, title or academic degree, which is socially recognised as more important than knowledge acquired non-formally or informally. I believe this is why lecturers opt for various forms of formal education, mainly postgraduate studies (Przybył, 2022).

To summarise the analysis of the narrators' experiences of formal, non-formal and informal education, it is worth quoting one of them. She stated that "a lot of teaching does a teacher good" – whereby "teaching" in this context should be construed as broadly as possible, i.e. as teaching, unlearning and, finally, learning.

Work Experience

The final element of the theory in its individual dimension is **work experience**. The various experiences that are gained during one's career construct the individual meanings given to work as well as one's professional identity, and influence one's attitude towards learning opportunities at work or taking on new challenges. The development of this identity is, as Illeris (2011) argues, the result of socialisation into work and socialisation at work, and given the social context of postmodernity (if only the frequent changes and the need to reflexively respond to them), this is a challenge that individuals face very often.

I analysed the careers of my narrators using the typology of teaching careers developed by Hanna Kędzierska (2012). Nonetheless, it is important to note that Kędzierska (2012) researched and developed the career types of schoolteachers. As there are differences between language teachers employed in schools and those working in tertiary education in terms of their promotion opportunities, I will start by presenting these differences (Table 24). Only in the next step will I indicate the placement of my narrators' careers within the scheme developed by Kędzierska (2012). I would then like to examine their careers in terms of the meanings the narrators themselves give to them.

TABLE 24. CAREER PROGRESSION – FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Categories	School foreign language teacher	LSP teacher in higher education	
		teaching post According to the 2005 Act	teaching post According to the 2018 Act
possible positions/ promotions	beginning teacher nominated teacher certified teacher	– teacher – lecturer – senior lecturer	– language teacher (if decided by the university) – assistant – assistant professor (after obtaining a doctoral degree)
promotion criteria	clearly defined in the Teacher's Charter	no provisions in the Act; promotions depend on decisions of individual university authorities	

Source: own elaboration.

As presented in the table above, foreign language teachers working in education have clearly defined promotion levels, which are common for all types of schools (Act of 5 August 2022). The criteria are clearly indicated in the polish Teachers' Charter, and the possibility of promotion applies to all teachers, regardless of what subject they teach. The issue of the positions available to language teachers at universities, as well as the possibility of promotion, was addressed in the previous subsection: until 2018, the law provided for such positions as language teacher, lecturer and senior lecturer. In FLCs, it was customary for language teacher to be an entry-level position. After gaining experience, it was possible to be promoted to lecturer or senior lecturer (Dahlia's narrative)[18]. The new 2018 Act introduced new positions and eliminated the positions of lecturer and senior lecturer. It was left to the discretion of individual universities to create the post of language teacher[19].

Returning to the main theme, Kędzierska (2012) identified four main types of careers for teachers. These are the 'construction', 'anchor', 'patchwork' and 'dead-end' careers – the names were taken from research by Markieta Domecka and Adam Mrozowicki (Domecka and Mrozowicki, 2008). Within

18 Still, it is evident from the statements of the study participants that promotions at some universities were blocked or only possible after obtaining a doctoral degree (Malvina's narrative).

19 It is worth mentioning that the problems regarding promotion opportunities for LSP academic teachers are by no means an exclusively Polish issue. Quantitative studies have diagnosed difficulties in obtaining promotion in all the countries in which they were conducted (Spain, Sweden, Italy, Norway, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Germany). In Germany, France, Italy and Spain, promotion was virtually impossible (Räisänen and Fortanet-Gómez, 2008), although, of course, the degree of difficulty varied from country to country. In another case, as cited by Julie Dearden (2018, p. 323), some English teachers at a university in China were "asked" to undertake doctoral studies in a field other than foreign language to avoid dismissal; this was because their skills – related solely to teaching English – were deemed insufficient.

the individual career types, Kędzierska (2012) identified their subtypes to more precisely distinguish their differentiating elements. My research does not focus on the interviewees' careers, and this glance at them is only intended to serve as a signpost in understanding the professional experience of the study participants and to establish its meaning. With this level of generality, it is nevertheless possible to see the specificity of my narrators' employment (with its various nuances). I will therefore focus on the career stages of my narrators during their time at university.

At the time of their interview, most of the interviewees were employed full-time at a medical university, university of technology or physical education university (Malvina, Jasmine, Rose, Kalina, Lily, Laura, Dahlia), with two having had such experience in the past (Violet, Rosalia). For the former, their current job was the first or second full-time job they had undertaken. Laura, Kalina, Rose and Jasmine clearly express their intention to remain in a particular entity or university until retirement. The activities they undertake are mainly aimed at consolidating their position in the employment structure. Dahlia and Malvina note that they would be able to change their jobs if the conditions were to deteriorate, with Malvina only considering teaching and Dahlia allowing for a possible career change. Lily did not refer to the institution where she is employed, but only to being a teacher, which she sees as a kind of mission to be fulfilled in her life. Violet and Rosalia used to work full-time at FLCs, but their positions were downsized. Violet has become a sole proprietor and continues to teach a foreign language, including for specific purposes, and Rosalia was looking for a full-time job, but not at an FLC, at the time of the interview. All interviewees were simultaneously doing a variety of additional paid work – freelancing at other (mainly private) universities and language schools, as well as giving private lessons, and translating texts.

An overview of the careers of the study participants (as well as the presentation and analysis of the interviews so far) indicates that they are rooted in the culture of real socialism rather than in a democratic and market-based culture (Sztompka, 2010). My interviewees (Malvina, Jasmine, Rose, Kalina, Lily, Laura) have worked in one place throughout their entire careers[20], following the 'school-work--retirement' model, which prevailed in the previous political system and was characterised by stability and job security. In a democratic and market-based system, job security is no longer guaranteed (Kędzierska, 2012). As early as the era

20 According to the typology proposed by Michael Huberman (Day, 2004; Tabor, 2008), four of them were in the experimental stage (7th to 18th working year), one was in the stabilisation stage (19th to 30th working year) and one was in the disengagement stage (after the 31st working year).

of the second industrial revolution, work had become a determinant of "the way people live, act, and develop, as well as the basis for judging people in everyday interpersonal interactions" (Kwiatkowski et al., 2007, p. 53). As a result of successive industrial revolutions, there have been times of anxiety about employment and its complete loss without long-term guarantees (Kwiatkowski et al., 2007). In this new reality – as shown when discussing the 'Planning' element of the 'Division of work' category within the technical-organisational work environment – entities such as FLCs are often seen as a cost: their future is uncertain, which disrupts the security (including ontological security) of the narrators.

Further analysis of career paths reinforces the idea that narrators working in FLCs, or having had such experience in the past, pursued anchor-type careers. Their characteristics include:

- orientation towards the preservation of known and developed practices;
- striving to maintain a status quo with regard to professional position/ life situation;
- limited planning opportunities;
- small range of possible positions and activities;
- school-work-pension employment model;
- rootedness in the workplace;
- causing a feeling of having to be subordinated, having one's career path blocked, being entrenched in the organisation;
- building on social capital, taking the professional position achieved as a basis;
- viewing one's position as the peak of one's ambitions, especially by those "with tattered professional biographies" (Domecka and Mrozowicki, 2008, pp. 140–144).

It was my intention to observe work experience from the individual level by reference to the stage of employment at university. However, it is difficult to get rid of the conviction that the anchor career type is a kind of interrelationship between the job position and the individual in it. It is the technical and organisational as well as the socio-cultural working environment at the university that to a large extent determines or predisposes one to a specific career. Thus, the above diagram contains elements of the description and conclusions of the technical-organisational working environment, such as limited planning opportunities, blocking career advancement (promotion) and the small range of attainable positions and activities. It should therefore be acknowledged that a kind of alternation between the elements of the working environment together with the performance of an individual working in a given environment and

in a given position collectively create a career of one kind rather than another. It is the position that triggers and determines its specific type, and the people working in a particular position adaptively fit into its implementation.

Jasmine: *You have to be doing something; you have to show that you are doing something. Because from the point of view of assessment or possible dismissal later on, you will be able to show that you have done some work.*

Jasmine's words illustrate the actions she takes not out of a desire to develop, but to have arguments when being evaluated or, in the event of lay-offs, to gain an advantage over others. These actions are thus triggered by the demands of the position and aimed at maintaining the status quo at work. In contrast, the following excerpts from Violet's and Rosalia's narratives show that treating certain elements of the job as immutable for too long can cause feelings of stagnation.

Violet: *I can honestly say that if we are talking about our personal feelings, after 11 or 12 years I had a feeling of over-stabilisation, that is, that I somehow stopped developing as a teacher; in fact, our syllabus and what we were working with, despite the fact that we were constantly looking for new interesting things or some resources, became a bit of a closed loop. We could not come up with many new things here; it started to bother me a little at some point.*

Rosalia: *Of course, if you have been teaching about the same doses of medication or forms of administration for 16 years, it becomes dreadfully boring at some point...*

A long career in one job, at one university, can not only cause stagnation, but also be a source of conviction that the individual is not capable of transitioning to another job or career. In an interview with the Onet.pl, Aneta Krycińska, a teacher who quit her job at school and creator of the "Baba od polskiego" ['the Polish teacher' colloquially] blog, describes this phenomenon as follows: "Anyone who gets bogged down in school can become convinced that with their teaching skills they cannot count on a good job and decent salaries" (Karpiuk, 2022, 15 July). Even though Krycińska refers to the situation at schools, Kalina has similar feelings about her university job.

Kalina: *I do not see any profession... that I could do. [...] I hope that I will be given the opportunity to, I do not know, to teach here for a while longer at least.*

Dahlia has a different attitude to the full-time position at the FLC. Her situation is different, as she has only been working at the university for eight years. She views anchoring herself in a full-time job very positively. She has finally attained the stability she did not have for years while working under contracts for specified work and contracts of mandate, as well as freelancing, and running her own business.

Dahlia: *I got a full-time position and now I am, thank God, already in a lecturer's position, which means I have 12 working hours, but they always have me working more, so they kind of want more; there is always a workload, even related to things outside of teaching.*

Most of my narrators presented an adaptive attitude to the demands of a career in a given position; however, I found elements of a construction career in one case. As noted by Domecka and Mrozowicki (2008), construction career is most associated with intentional action. It involves attempts to actively model or modify the career, with planning that goes beyond the given position and its structural limitations. Individuals pursuing this type of career display such characteristics as "ambition, willingness to take risks and innovation" (Domecka and Mrozowicki, 2008, p. 147).

Malvina: *The only possibility to advance at our university was to do a PhD. [...] It was like finding a path for some development. If my development path was effectively closed so that I was a teacher and there were no chances for promotion whatsoever, I would probably leave the university after some years of work because I would just feel discouraged, weary.*

Malvina tried to make some plans for the future while at her university. She did her PhD to gain a promotion, but this is not, in her mind, merely instrumental. For her, pursuing a PhD is part of her personal development path, the result of her interests and further research. Instead of adopting an adaptive attitude to what the position offered, Malvina tried to make a difference, undertaking to construct her career. Malvina was not the only person with a PhD among the narrators, but she was the only one to refer to this stage of her career.

A review of my narrators' work experience in relation to university work showed that their careers are strongly linked to the position they hold. It has its limitations, to which the narrators either adapt by choosing the anchor career type (which seems to be inherent in the position of language teacher), or they make efforts to revise them by trying to construct their careers. The analysis of

work in FLCs shows that it is not based on strict rules – it could even be said that those employed receive contradictory signals. On the one hand, the work model is rooted in the previous system, as it offers the possibility of employment until retirement, while on the other, the free market has left its mark on the promise of stability.

Teachers on the 'I–world' Relationship

As shown in the previous chapters, my narrators find themselves in a field of interaction between three forces, in the technical-organisational, socio-cultural and individual dimensions. In the first two, society provides them with knowledge about their world, and the individual level is the source of knowledge about themselves. These elements are in a certain relationship with each other, a constant interaction; they are at the same time subject to constant change and susceptible to constant interactions as well as processes of exchange. Between them, the teachers find or build their unique places. It is here, based on reflection, that they create their identities (professional roles). This is also where their individual professional role prescription is modified, and the interaction (underpinned by interactional role theory) becomes a signpost on the map of pulsating categories. My interpretation of this part of the teaching experience, i.e. the analysis of the relationship between the social and individual worlds of the narrators, will address the final aim of my monograph. I will focus on understanding how my narrators respond to the challenges of postmodern culture in the context of their professional roles.

The cognition map will be delineated using the following questions:

1. What actions do the narrators take in response to the challenges of postmodern culture?
2. How do they understand, perceive and feel about their professional role as university teachers of English for specific purposes today?
3. What threats and opportunities do they see for their roles?

Professional Role – A Multi-Level View

This stage of the research analysis seems the most difficult for several reasons. First, there is no reference to ordering elements, like in the case of the concept by Illeris et al. (2011). Second, it is a necessary, conclusive stage to gain a complete overview of the situation, or indeed to symbolically close the research process. Third, this stage requires not only reference to the research material, but also to the earlier

analysis presented in the subsections *Teachers' Narratives 'About the World' and Teachers' Narratives 'About Themselves'*.

To maintain the order of the dissertation, certain elements are needed to organise the message; as such, entering into a kind of dialogue with theory, I will refer to the interpretation of the problem presented in the subsection *Professional Role Prescription – Between Convention and Interaction*. I would like the theses and framings contained in that subsection to provide a starting point for the considerations in this one.

The first way of capturing the 'I–world' relationship of the study participants will involve an overview **from the teachers' level**, i.e. changing the normative perception of the professional role prescription and replacing it with their own axiological-normative prescription. In this formula, it is thus a transition from a pre-conventional, through conventional to a post-conventional stage in teacher development. According to Robert Kwaśnica (2003), the process of teachers' professional development consists of the development of practical-moral and technical competencies (it should be remembered that they are rooted differently), which leads from "the stage of entering the professional role, through full adaptation in this role, to the stage of creatively transcending it and replacing the role prescription with a personal identity, i.e. knowledge about oneself and one's own duties, which gives awareness of oneself as a person" (Kwaśnica, 2003, p. 306).

Although the definition I have quoted is clear, the fulfilment of this process in practice is conditioned by individual factors, which results in certain limitations. People may cross their boundaries in different ways and places. Development is not measured by a uniform scale, and let us not forget the cyclical rather than linear nature of development and the processual nature of autonomy with which the post-conventional stage is identified. I also feel a certain discomfort or burden of responsibility because I, as a researcher, may also have a different perspective than the narrators on what is already post-conventional and not yet conventional, what is a purely autonomous activity and what is an institutionalised pattern. Can the emergence of questions about one's own justifications of a role be considered a transition between the last two stages, or is it only the practical implementation that is such a transition, or does one always precede the other? Does autonomy have to manifest in every element of teaching duties (the way of teaching, the way of interacting with students, the attitude to mistakes), or can it, once present in one of them, be considered representative of the whole? Nevertheless, I do not interpret the questions posed and the sense of responsibility for the proposed solutions as a shortcoming of the research and deliberations undertaken, but rather as a deepened awareness of the importance of one's task.

Being a teacher involves finding your own way, which leads to autonomy, to treating yourself subjectively. In an educational world that is increasingly geared towards technical competencies and the instrumental use of knowledge, my interlocutors are finding reasons for practical-moral competencies and treading their own paths towards autonomy through:

- conversation (technical-organisational learning environment – work content),
- knowledge, which becomes a driving force for action and leads to emancipation (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions),
- competencies training in specialised knowledge (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for using qualifications in the work),
- opening up to the post-/co-/prefigurative nature of the educational experience (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilites for social interaction),
- going beyond the missionary nature of the teaching vocation and claiming social recognition in the economic field (technical-organisational learning environment – the stresses and strains of the work),
- participating in communities of practice (socio-cultural learning environment – communities of work),
- creative life orientations (learning potential – social background),
- individual informal learning (learning potential – education),
- transcending career boundaries (learning potential – work experience).

Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2014b) justifies that emancipatory knowledge, practical-moral knowledge, is "an attempt to make sense of one's own activity, to search for meaning and explanation for it" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014b, p. 187). Such knowledge leads to transcending role prescriptions. In his definition of post-conventional development, Kwaśnica (2003) also claims that to go beyond role prescriptions is to see yourself as a human being (Chmiel, 2014, p. 114); however, one may add that it is necessary to perceive students themselves as human beings. Therefore, both conversation (in the sense of dialogue) and openness to understanding in a post-/co-/prefigurative culture have the power to change, to understand, and are a way of acting and being in the world. As remarked by Jasmine in her statement about the student whose mother became ill and died:

Jasmine: *[A]nd at that moment the rules and regulations cease to matter to me, I look at him or her as a person with a problem. And then, the rest of it, the whole teaching process... well it is not that important to me...*

A relationship that is built through conversation is about opening up to the other person, trying to understand them, but not only that. "Our task – in addition to all the other tasks of an educator, including an academic one – is to find ourselves in the space of pedagogical content and experience. By asking about yourself – and this presupposes listening to yourself, including in terms of how you do that – you learn to ask about the Other, or vice versa: you ask about the Other, but in doing so, you open yourself up to questioning yourself, to looking at yourself differently" (Przanowska et al., 2022). As such, engaging in conversation may be (though, of course, it need not be and is not always) a possible way of transcending the conventional view of the teachers as transmitters of knowledge, interested only in curricular content.

Seeing knowledge not only as an instrument needed to technically tame the world but to build relationships (to broaden one's understanding of reality), to practise reflexivity (in action, on action and for action) and to stimulate reflection, to look critically, or to see knowledge as one's strength, is part of the post-conventional development of practical-moral competencies. When Lily says: *I just have a good opinion of myself as a teacher. I believe I am a good educator, a good teacher, not a perfect one because there are mistakes, we all make them, but...*, and Malvina adds: *I have tamed this uncertainty*, referring to expertise, substantive knowledge, then, in my opinion, the narrators signal a transgression of certain foundational structures; they communicate their own identification with values, their empowerment in understanding their role.

"Every profession requires specific competencies. They define its distinctiveness" (Kwaśnica, 1990a, p. 296). Although Kwaśnica (1990a) uses these statements just before discussing the two types of competencies common to all professions (related to interpretation and implementation), I would like to dwell on the two sentences quoted. Teachers require similar competencies regardless of where and with whom they work; however, it is precisely where and with whom they work that determines the extent to which they use these competencies – after all, teaching in a primary school is a different experience than teaching in a university. The most important difference between FLSP teachers and those teaching general language is precisely the issue of the language and expertise in which they operate. Indeed, they are not specialists in medicine, robotics or law; they are not afraid to say "I do not know", nor are they afraid to ask about something they are unsure about and, moreover, some of them recognise the value

of this approach, as such a relationship values the students and makes them co--responsible for their education. It is this expertise that makes it necessary for the study participants to change the convention of the teacher's professional role prescription, in a transition from expecting teachers to be omniscient experts towards a different, personal, individual understanding of the meaning of their role and their place in the educational structure.

My narrators' immersion in areas of expertise is also a reason for changing conventions in other areas of work, a reason for creating their own justifications of the creative tasks they undertake. Both participating in communities of practice and undertaking the writing of textbooks for the study of FLSP is an expression of giving expertise an individual and personal dimension; it is "develop[ing] one's own personal concept of understanding educational reality and one's own ways of acting in this reality" (Kwaśnica, 2003, p. 308). This also applies to the attempts made by some of my narrators to expand their expertise.

The final element I interpret as reaching a post-conventional stage of development is related to transcending (and sometimes only attempting to transcend) career constraints (largely in anchor careers) and, what seems crucial, claiming social recognition in the economic field – in line with Axel Honneth's theory (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020). The canon of expectations towards teachers has historically associated teaching with missionary tasks, with the need to feel a calling, with love for children and with selflessness. Piotr Stańczyk (2008) calls this phenomenon the 'alibi of low pay' – "it [occurs] as a complex of meanings together with selflessness, which is the meaning of teachers' work and the content of their professional identity, and results in the declared establishment of the student as the goal of all activities undertaken by teachers in the workplace" (Stańczyk, 2008, p. 285). In my research (albeit involving an incomparably smaller group of participants), none of the interviewees took up the theme of low pay in such a context. Most of them spoke negatively of the low wages earned while carrying out such a socially vital task as education. In this respect, I will once again quote Rose's words.

> **Rose:** *[T]he good of my pupil's education comes right behind their health, so why... is it impossible to earn a decent living from it, to just have a normal salary and a normal life? [...] And everyone just feels like you are a slacker, that you get the entire summer holidays off and you do not do anything...*

Perhaps my narrators' attitudes towards the postulated selflessness of teachers are influenced by their different place of employment and the different type of educational partner (university rather than school students). In general, however,

I am inclined to conclude that it is the mission and vocation that constitute a kind of habitus that holds this professional group hostage. Therefore, I interpret the liberation from the bonds of these notions, which constitute the 'alibi of low wages', as an expression of autonomous thinking about one's profession and even one's vocation, as it was the main motive for entering the profession for some of the narrators.

The quoted and discussed excerpts from the statements show that transgressing the role prescription has multiple facets, and can show itself in the diverse areas of being a teacher – in the relationship between the social and individual dimensions, and between the individual and social dimensions of being in the world. In my view, this interpretation also shows that 'becoming a teacher' is a cyclical process, and as such, the post-conventional stage, once reached, is not given forever, as it is not a closed set of elements. The work of teachers, especially FLSP teachers, involves frequent change of various elements of the work. Malvina, who started teaching another language for specific purposes after working with one for years, felt this was a major challenge.

> **Malvina:** *This is simply, quite possibly, also a big challenge for me because I had no idea that such a profession existed at all... And I am discovering a lot of things myself in this first year because I am also a student now. I certainly still feel very incompetent, insecure.*

The need to absorb new knowledge forced her to assume the position of a learner and caused her to feel incompetent. A change within an element of the work therefore meant that she had to find her way in a new (slightly altered) reality. Such changes are not only a necessity, but also an opportunity to reassess one's place.

A second way of understanding the problem under study, which ties in with the approach described above, is **from a paradigmatic level**. This involves a certain shift from a positivist view of the role, which expresses a scientistic, static, pre-modern and structural vision of the individual and society, to an interpretivist, constructivist perception of role, underpinned by the interactional role theory, construed as that which expresses the understanding (aspiration to this understanding) of the (post)modern man immersed in the (post)modern world.

Social or global change is accelerating. The increasing risk of new threats and the deepening uncertainty of tomorrow are becoming a daily reality. In such circumstances, being guided by principles rooted in the positivist paradigm is becoming increasingly unwarranted. "At the ontological level, positivism appeals to a realist concept of social reality, thus assuming the existence of

an objective world external to the researcher" (Zbróg, 2019, p. 71). In the post-positivist paradigm, "reality is assumed to exist objectively but is only imperfectly captured due to the complex nature of phenomena and the limitations of human intellectual mechanisms" (Zbróg, 2019, p. 72). It is only the interpretivist and constructivist paradigm that allows for the plurality of realities, social worlds that exist as long as individuals create it, "and not as objectively accessible and shared external structures" (Zbróg, 2019, p. 75).

A different perception of reality and social worlds determines a new view of knowledge – what it is, what insights it provides, what it tells us and what we can read and understand from it. A different paradigmatic background defines the individual and their tasks, roles and life goals differently; it also defines the Other differently, with regard to their understanding and duties. This situation, even simply by virtue of the multiplicity of approaches to reality and the coexistence of diverse expert systems (Giddens, 2012), prompts the search for understandings in post-traditional theories.

The elements in the narratives of the study participants that point to the need for a paradigmatic shift in the perception of the professional role of FLSP teachers, its prescription, the language of its description and justifications, are as follows:

- allowing the Other to take the floor, i.e. a shift from the traditionally perceived teacher-to-student knowledge transmission to a bipolar structure: a transmission from teachers to students and from students to teachers (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions, possibilites for social interaction),
- a "plurality of truths" – knowledge comes from different sources, as evidenced by technological change, showing the co-occurrence of knowledge (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions),
- a new type of student – Generation Z at universities (technical--organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions, possibilities for social interaction),
- the specialisation of education – a shift away from humanistic education towards instrumental, technical, for-profit education (technical--organisational learning environment – division of labour, work content),
- the decline of authority (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions).

The depicted changes in social reality, as captured in the narratives of my interviewees, are a representation of the postmodern context. As shown in the previous subsections, transmissive knowledge transfer is virtually

impossible in the particular situation of FLSP teachers, and they are aware of their limitations. Even though they are aware of this and have established their place in this relationship, finding an appropriate position in the face of constraints, a certain dissonance is made apparent here (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions). I interpret it as a contradiction to the image of a teacher historically rooted in the positivist paradigm, which is so far detached from the reality experienced by my interviewees that it does not provide any support, but rather creates problems. Change, after all, cannot be explained by the need for constancy and diversity by homogeneity.

The postmodern changes that, in my opinion, force a modification of the teachers' job description also concern their educational partners. Most of the young generation, which has been present in universities for some time, belong to Generation Z.

Lily: *When I started working, the students were.... let us say more polite, so much more disciplined, so used to sitting at the desk* (laughs)*..., so to speak, and to listening to what the teacher says, to following it. There were, I think, none of these attempts to question or doubt or ask uncomfortable questions.*

Malvina: *It is impossible not to notice this change in the students, who are a generation that has now been functioning practically from an early age with the Internet, yes, with access to knowledge at any time, in any place.*

Rose: *We have encountered a generation that learns in a different, disparate way. This does not necessarily require books anymore. This includes various other sources and simply, this... for them, this written form is just... they listen. This is where I definitely see differences in the way students assimilate the material... And surely in their being a bit assertive.*

The changes in the students, as noticed by my interviewees, are another argument for recognising that the requirements for teachers must not come (only) from the "past social order. The social context has changed; no one today needs people who are identically prepared, identically thinking and equipped with stereotypical, repetitive, routine rules of conduct. Yet, schools continue to 'produce' exactly this kind of people" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014b, p. 32). While Nowak-Dziemianowicz's (2014b) words refer to school students, they equally apt to capture the essence of the teachers' work and, going one step further, the essence of the paradigm behind it.

FLSP teachers navigate areas of expertise in which they are not experts. However, they are surrounded by experts with whom they share and co-create knowledge, which itself is subject to a certain "co-ownership". This is a change that requires the use of a different language of description and a different understanding than that used in the traditional positivist view. Looking at knowledge from an epistemological level, it is in the anti-positivist (interpretivist) position that knowledge is constructed "in everyday communicative relations, and it is accessible to research through experiencing the world; each person interprets everyday life and gives meanings to its various objects; [...] it has a changeable, social character, and includes not only certain and explicit beliefs, but also ones that are variable, dynamic, unstable and not necessarily true, since its truthfulness may be determined by different premises depending on the perspective one adopts" (Zbróg, 2019, p. 69). This is why the interpretivist paradigm seems more appropriate for describing and attempting to understand the work of teachers.

The presented summary of postmodern changes noted by my interviewees shows that a paradigmatic shift in the description of this profession is a direction that, in my opinion, is correct and necessary. Schools, universities and research communities must not close themselves off to change, pretending that it does not apply to them. Nor can the description of reality proceed only in the direction of explaining how the world works (indeed, with such a multiplicity of worlds, their diversity, as well as postmodern changes, this seems impossible). Rather, it is necessary to shift towards trying to understand the contexts in which teachers function, to discover the prevailing mechanisms, to explore the meanings given to them. This will free us from normative overload – instead of focusing on describing what teachers should be like, the focus ought to be on what they are like, what conditions they function in, as well as what they need to develop and to facilitate student development.

The issues under study can also be examined from a glottodidactic level, which emphasises the linguistic and didactic dimension, namely the shift from teaching a general foreign language at university to teaching a language for specific purposes, which can also be understood as an expression of postmodern change. In a critical account of the emergence of a language for specific purposes from a general language, gaining the status of specialisation, Sarah Benesch (2001) draws attention to the hegemony of English and, by implication, the privileged position of some cultures over others, or even symbolic violence. Regardless, the dominant discourse entrenches the role of the language for specific purposes by emphasising its usefulness to help the individual succeed in later work. "The professionalisation of language education, which has been visible in recent years (including in philological faculties), is clearly orienting the learning

process towards specific skills required in a professional environment. Language learners want to master foreign languages to use them in practice in their future professional work, thereby establishing foreign languages as the key to success in the labour market" (Sowa, 2018, p. 123).

The second important trend in the description of the FLSP is its duty--imposing attitude towards the market. Indeed, it is the market that indicates what kind of employees it needs and what their qualifications and competencies should be. "With enterprises increasingly often becoming philologists' workplaces, the conscious planning of the career path of philology students is also supported institutionally. There is now a strong emphasis on the cooperation of higher education institutions with external stakeholders (known as the third mission of HEIs), so that HEIs can more closely and accurately adjust their curricula to the needs of the labour market" (Gajewska et al., 2020, p. 12). The above trend does not only apply to philological faculties. Neoliberal policies are certainly not insignificant either, as they have been increasingly expanding and influencing various elements of the work of LSP teachers in universities, or even more broadly, language education as a whole.

The changes concerning the teaching of foreign languages for specific purposes at universities, their rationale, purpose and other distinctive features raised by the study participants are summarised in the items below:

- Instrumentalisation of foreign language learning (technical--organisational learning environment – work content, possibilities for making decisions):
  - tailored to the professional needs of the learner (lost humanistic dimension),
  - fast courses – fragmented experience,
  - multiple specialisations (multiple discourses, diverse knowledge) – personalised educational experience,
  - anchoring of FLSP in universities.

- Emotion labour caused by the marketisation of education (technical--organisational learning environment – division of labour (decision--making):
  - increasing the number of people in student groups,
  - reducing the hours allocated to a subject (by as many as 20 h per learning cycle),
  - increasing the hourly workload of language teachers,
  - no proficiency-based division of students within a group.

- Identity of the FLSP teachers – between expert and partner, between school and academia (technical-organisational learning environment – possibilities for making decisions, possibilities for using qualifications in the work, socio-cultural learning environment – communities of work, cultural communities, learning potential in working life – education).

The instrumental approach to FLSP learning has already been addressed several times in this dissertation, and it has also been noted how the narrators pointed to a belief about the usefulness of FLSP, as well as treating it as a tool to facilitate future work. The above-mentioned elements (characteristic of FLSP courses) also show a certain parallelism to postmodern change. Focused on the professional needs of students, FLSP courses lose their humanistic dimension to some extent, which is particularly evident in technical, natural and medical studies. Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John (1998) include the use of methodology underlying the operation of the discipline in which the language is used among the three core features of LSP teaching. In non-humanities subjects, this can be difficult for teachers who have graduated in humanities subjects. In some dimensions, languages for specific purposes have thus become a product – with specific skills, competencies and vocabulary to be learned, as set out in the syllabus. Below is what Rose had to say about this issue.

Rose: *Because, on the one hand, an FLSP course has to be practical, but we must not forget that if we are teaching a humanising subject, I will not call it a humanities subject, but a humanising one, some non-sales and non-marketing content should be presented. It is not like we are going to plan one hundred per cent of the course to be useful to the student... Because I have heard all the time that, on the one hand, we teach them how to speak so that they make a good impression at a job interview, and on the other, we teach them how to do it. [...] I would say that this humanistic aspect is also a certain aspect of life. It is not like we are only preparing [students] for strictly marketing-oriented life situations. Because, at that point, we lose a very important thing.*

Rose signals the danger of focusing too much of education on professional functions. She believes that when we focus only on professional language, "we lose a very important thing" – it is about the loss of the humanities, the loss of the human being, of the relationship with them, despite the significant emphasis on communication that applies in the case of FLSP courses.

Nevertheless, conversation, communication or dialogue can either be an exchange of information or the building of relationships.

Another crucial element that, from a glottodidactic standpoint, demonstrates the difference between an FLSP course and a general language course, is its short--term nature. FLSP courses delivered at universities last from 20 to a maximum of 120 hours. Language is approached on a task-oriented basis, which also implies the separation of many language types. Each profession can have its own course and textbook tailored to its needs. I see both as co-occurring with postmodern change, or possibly as a response to postmodern change. Bauman (2011) notes that the permanence of knowledge (its long-term effect and nature) is no longer a benefit, and expectations tend to move towards quick experience, with rapid access to knowledge (concrete, tangible, clearly defined), preferably acquired without much effort. Further, people living in liquid modernity desire individualisation rather than homogeneity as common features, shared experiences (Bauman, 2011). FLSP courses provide both a rapid and personalised experience.

The changes observed by the study participants, to which they must adapt, also result in their 'emotion labour' (Benesch, 2017). This causes them to perceive their role only in instrumental terms and leads to confusion and a sense of redundancy in the learning process. An overly broad adaptation to the working conditions seems disempowering and conservative, whereas going beyond the schema, beyond the instrumentality inflicted by the subject guidelines enables creative and active performance, as well as learning from others (unlearning).

When discussing knowledge (the technical-organisational learning environment – the possibilities for making decisions), I showed that it can be treated in an instrumental, reflective and emancipatory manner. In the former case, the teachers felt insecure, lacked a sense of agency and felt confined by the subject syllabus as well as the selected textbook. On the other hand, when knowledge became reflective and emancipatory, there was room for self-confident action, for autonomy of trying, for sharing knowledge, for agency and for openness to the new and the unknown.

In earlier excerpts, I have also shown quite extensively the specific context of the work and construction of the professional role of the FLSP teachers, which distinguishes this group from other foreign language teachers. However, there is no consensus in the literature in terms of distinguishing this group. Some researchers advocate the use of the term "ESP practitioner" (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998), and it is also sometimes stated that "the development of methodology in this area has not resulted in a canon of principles for their teaching. However, certain distinctions can be found in the didactics of language for specific purposes" (Przybył, 2022, p. 140). Still, one may take the fact that such a canon

has not yet been created, and that there are only some distinguishing features, as a good sign, with the hope that this will ensure that FLSP teachers will not feel pressure to conform to predetermined requirements, but will rather seek their own justifications for action.

The last approach I mentioned (subsection *Professional Role Prescription – Between Convention and Interaction*) is to present the issue of professional role prescription as seen **from the level of the Other**. In this case, attention is directed to the canon of social expectations that my narrators experience and the individual meaning they give to these expectations. This framing will be discussed in the next chapter, in an attempt to critically examine the relationship between the narrators' social and individual environments.

Thus, I have presented three different equally valid approaches, which not only in theory but also in practice (or rather in the combination of these two dimensions) show that the category of professional role is pulsating (Rutkowiak, 1995a). Although I have tried not to use postulative language to describe teachers in this dissertation, it should be made clear here that:

- teachers *must* be described using the language of different theories,
- this description must be multidimensional, much like their work,
- it must remain unclosed, because teachers will never experience this closure,
- it must be communicative at the level of practice-theory or theory--practice, because teachers move between theory and practice, creating their theories and modifying practice in relation to theory,
- it must be relational in nature, as it is in a network of relationships between the students, the other teachers and the direct and indirect superiors, the law, knowledge and the subject taught by teachers,
- it must also be discursive, since the number of relational links cannot be predicted and assumed in advance, and finally,
- it must be narrative, because "[n]arrative research in pedagogy makes it possible to understand the surrounding world and the people in it" (Krawczyk-Bocian, 2019, p. 17), as well as the relationships between them.

5

The Professional Role of Female Teachers of English – A Critical Review Attempt

The previous chapters used the categories of Illeris's (2011) holistic theory and Nowak-Dziemianowicz's (2014b) triad of teacher knowledge to show that professional role is created at the interface between the social (knowledge of the world) and the individual (knowledge of the self) – thus it is the result of knowledge about 'I-world' relations. It is a discursively constructed creation that is constantly at work, pulsating (Rutkowiak, 1995a) and changing as the conditions or elements that constitute it also change. "A particular identity thus becomes an identity only in the domain of a particular social world" (Starego, 2017, p. 293).

Identity is constructed similarly (Starego, 2017, p. 291). Referring to Anthony Giddens' concept of identity, Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2008b) writes that "[t]he interweaving of these dimensions – individual and social – is treated by Giddens as a characteristic of the process of identity formation based on a reflexive project of self-discovery and construction. An individual's identity is created by becoming aware of, describing and understanding what one does and why. The social conventions produced and reproduced in our everyday actions are subject to the reflexive control of the acting person, which is a condition for handling various life situations" (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2008b, p. 189).

Taking this into account, in the last chapter, it is worth taking a critical look at some of the social conventions affecting the professional role of narrators. This is because it raises questions about the legitimacy of a given state of affairs and the reason for these rather than individual justifications given by narrators (Sajdak, 2013). In particular, it is worth examining the role prescription from the perspective of the Other. To this end, the following questions are posed in this chapter, focusing on social prescriptions of professional role and institutionalised patterns in this regard:

1. What professional role prescriptions of academic ESP teachers do the narrators experience?
2. How and to what extent a role prescription derived from world knowledge (from the social world), a prescription understood as "an inviolable canon of social expectations" (Kwiatkowska, 2008, p. 38), is or can become oppressive to FLSP teachers?

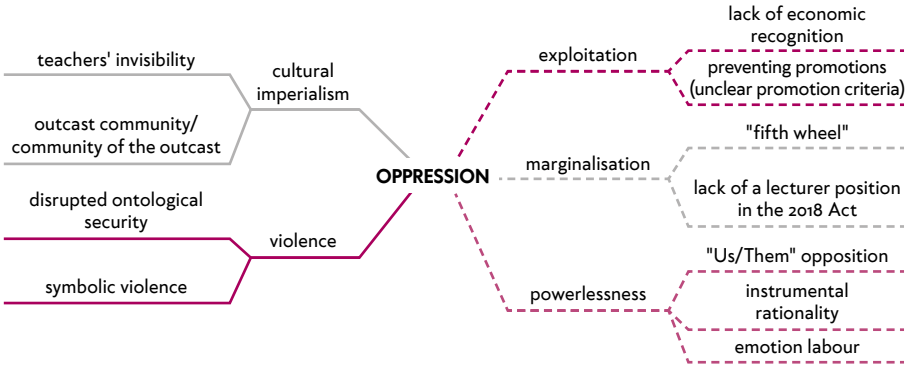
The elements that will enable analysis and a critical view of reality will be found in "dislocations, ruptures, or structural fractures (Laclau, 1990, p. 61), i.e. places/moments where the identification process begins to actualise itself" (Starego, 2017, p. 293). I have noted and defined these most visible "dislocations" in the previous chapter, now I would like to deepen the critical analysis of selected elements using the KRYNAROZ model by Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz,

i.e. the sequence Critique – Narrative – Understanding – Change (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020)[1].

The first step of the critical analysis was the creation of a semantic map[2], enabling the identification of the connections between empirical findings and the theoretical categories that make it possible to link and analyse them. Since a picture of oppression according to Iris Marion Young's (1992) definition emerged quite quickly from the narratives of the study participants, the semantic map included a network of connections between the narratives and the five manifestations of oppression she distinguished: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.

Figure 7 shows the relevant semantic map. It depicts those themes described in Chapter 4 that were most in need of critical examination. Oppression appears here as an irreducible element (for it always exists where there is a hierarchical arrangement), and at the same time as a contribution to an in-depth study of academia. "So let us ask again, what is critical research on higher education? An intervention performed in the context of a crisis in academia. By precisely delineating its contours, they provide an overview of the situation, enabling the identification of productive contradictions, the resolution of which through struggle creates the conditions for and gives the hope of achieving a future horizon that exceeds present limitations" (Szadkowski, 2015, p. 303).

FIGURE 7. THEMES OF OPPRESSION IN NARRATIVES



Source: own elaboration.

1 Through the narratives of the study participants, critique – as a certain disposition of both the researchers and the research material – enables (critical) understanding and the search for existing change. Critical discourse analysis "ascribes to itself 'emancipatory aims' (Fairclough, 2001, p. 125) and defines its identity in terms of 'solidarity with the oppressed' (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 96) (the poor, the socially excluded and those subjected to gender, sexual and racial oppression)" (Starego, 2017, p. 299).

2 The idea came from a project carried out by Tomasz Szkudlarek (2008c).

Young (1992) states that categories such as exploitation, marginalisation and powerlessness mainly refer to structural and institutional relations. **Exploitation** is a "form of domination in which the labor of working class groups is transferred to benefit the wealthy, reproducing and causing class division and relations of inequality" (McLaren, 2015, p. 55). In the case of the university and the place of lecturers in it, identifying the "wealthy" seems difficult only at first glance. Indeed, the narrators mention that their duties as part of their full-time positions include not only teaching (up to 540 hours per year under the Act of 20 July 2018), but also performing unpaid translations for the university and conducting examinations. Moreover, the work does not bring them a satisfactory salary, resulting in a feeling of unimportance in the eyes of society. The blocking of promotions and the lack of uniform rules for awarding them is also a form of institutional exploitation. It seems that the university as an institution may not care about the professional development of this group of employees – with a higher position comes not only a higher salary, but also fewer teaching hours, necessitating the creation of new jobs. Promotions are therefore a cost and the harmonisation of rules is a secondary task: in some units, a senior position could be obtained after a sufficiently long period of work (with this period varying from place to place); in others, promotion was only possible if the lecturer had obtained a doctoral degree. The lack of clear regulations created a sense of injustice.

The second element of oppression according to Young is **marginalisation**. The exclusion of the position of language teacher from the category of 'academic staff' in the 2018 Act on Higher Education is a clear manifestation of this. The exclusion of a group that has always been and continues to be present in academia has symbolically taken away its importance. Ludwig Wittgenstein (2000), in his famous thesis 5.6 "The limits of my language are the limits of my world" (Wittgenstein, 2000, p. 64), notes that it is not only the words in use that are relevant, but also those that are beyond use, beyond discourse, and therefore also beyond the world and not belonging to it.

Further, the exclusion described can also be interpreted more broadly – as an increasing downgrade of the importance of the humanities in favour of technical and instrumental education, which is particularly acute in non-humanities courses. Marginalisation is symbolised by referring to lecturers and the units in which they work as a "fifth wheel" and emphasising the cost-profit opposition. Since costs have to be low and profits high, investments are made in those elements (people) that are potentially profitable – and lecturers, being teaching and not research (or at least teaching and research) staff, do not belong to this group. Meanwhile, in the long term, succumbing to market logic may prove detrimental – it may result in the loss of the university ethos

and hope for change, and make it impossible to ask bold questions (Derrida, 2015). "The university must therefore respect the laws of market economics, but it must not acquiesce to economics becoming the sole regulator of university and social life" (Sławek, 2002, p. 31).

Powerlessness (also construed as submission[3]) becomes apparent in my research in at least two elements: in the specific, verbally expressed resistance (the 'Us/Them' opposition) and in the predominance of market logic over emancipatory logic, which leads to my narrators' 'emotion labour'.

The Us/Them division is one of the many possible manifestations of the subordination of one group to another, and at the same time, it is information that some form of protectionism exists in the given relationship structure (Kopciewicz, 2012). In turn, the aforementioned market logic, also referred to as corporate logic (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020), becomes – including in education – the dominant ideology, even though one aim of critical thinking is "freeing yourself from the oppression of ideology and power" (Mizerek, 2021, p. 59). The danger of thinking (about education) from only one position (Szkudlarek, 2003) – in this case the corporate logic – stems from its high adaptive demands on the individual. This logic is extremely oppressive towards the teachers, as it demands "obedience", submission to the ubiquitous requirement of efficiency, measurable results, cost-cutting, success that everyone must achieve, and belief in various educational myths, such as the myth of equal opportunities (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2020).

The interpretation of FLSP teachers' autonomy – presented earlier in this chapter in the category of 'decision-making opportunities' through Habermas' (1995) knowledge interests – perfectly illustrates how far adaptation, instrumentalisation and technicisation of education are from understanding, emancipation and possible critical reflection. The focus on the instrumental elements of education leads to a feeling of being expendable, to limitations, to fear (of one's own ignorance, of the possible failure of experimentation, of failure), to seeing the world as a threat rather than an opportunity, to closure rather than openness. Ultimately, it leads to the transformation of education into a system for the fulfilment of economic needs, in which the teachers can quite quickly become a "superfluous element".

The next component of oppression is **cultural imperialism**. In the case of language teachers, this is expressed through their non-membership of the community of schoolteachers (effectively making them an outcast community)

3 In the original, Young (1992) uses the word *powerlessness*.

and simultaneous non-membership in the community of university teachers (as a result of which they become a community of outcasts, a "fifth wheel"). Research (Górniak, 2015) shows that as of 2013, language teachers accounted for 1% of full-time academic teachers (FLCs also employed lecturers, who numbered 6%, and senior lecturers, who accounted for 12% of their total workforce). Compared to the 2008/2009 academic year (*Diagnoza stanu szkolnictwa wyższego w Polsce* [Diagnosis of the state of higher education in Poland], 2009), the percentage of language teachers decreased by about 0.7 percentage points (from 1.7%). This may be related to both promotions and a reduction in the demand for their work at universities. The cultural imperialism behind such assessment of the importance of this group to the university is the dominant interpretive discourse (DID), defined as follows by Alain Touraine (2011): "The dominant interpretative discourse is therefore not a set of vaguely associated ideas: it is a weapon to be used against anything that defines social actors as beings whose actions are primarily intended to allow them to assert themselves and to defend their rights." (Touraine, 2011, p. 55). What is at stake, then, is a kind of cultural imperialism that does not encourage the construction of one's subjectivity but, on the contrary, requires submission to the prevailing logic of obedience to the forces of economics.

The final facet of oppression as defined by Young (1992) is **violence**. As a research category in education, it can take the widest variety of forms, from verbal to non-verbal, from institutional to individual, and from symbolic violence to actions that disrupt the ontological security of the individual. Symbolic violence is not easily perceived. In a school setting, it is the students who are most susceptible to it, but it is also used against teachers. "Domination is not, in a direct way, a simple result of the actions of a privileged class, provided with power and coercive capabilities. Rather, it is the result of many complex actions that are born in a network of interlocking necessities" (Zalewska-Bujak, 2017, p. 64). The violence experienced by my interviewees also does not manifest itself in direct actions targeting them with an aggressive intent. Instead, it is the result of a variety of actions that form a sequence of "necessities" – the necessity to comply with the syllabus, to follow the programme, to adapt and to conform – or to evoke a sense of superfluousness and disturbed ontological security through the internalisation of market logic. Violence is thus a vicious circle that is very difficult to break, especially if the teachers feel fear.

The use of the above categories of oppression in the critical analysis of the place of language teachers' functioning allows us to identify the influence of the Other (social expectations) in changing the role prescription of FLC teachers. Expectations on the part of the university institution, which is representative of the system, can be seen as a normative role prescription – a pattern of behaviour

waiting to be internalised by the language teachers, built on processes of oppression, demanding obedience and submission.

However, the FLC teacher's role prescription is also influenced by another relationship: that between the practitioners of the profession and the students, particularly in relation to foreign language for specific purposes and subject-specific knowledge. Referring again to Habermas' (1995) concept of knowledge--constructing interests, it is important to note that these interests are different for students and lecturers. Students treat FLSP as an instrument, a tool to get a job – they need it to be able to work internationally, to facilitate their acquisition of knowledge (information), to develop in a professional context. In this case, work is the medium (vehicle of communication), which enables the mastery of the world of things and the fulfilment of accepted goals (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2014b). For teachers, on the other hand, FLSP is one of the varieties of language, a narrow specialisation treated as a certain (conventional) whole. In their situation, the medium of knowledge (cognition) is language, the interest behind knowledge is practical, and knowledge itself falls into the category of understanding.

The co-occurrence in university reality of the post-/co-/prefigurative cultures discussed earlier raises the hope (possibility) for a two-subject relationship, for the emergence of an interpersonal space (Sztompka, 2016), a space of exchange, a meeting of the above-described discourses, which can influence the professional role prescription. Both groups need to find common ground, as they are, in a way, condemned to do so by being "compelled" to attend classes.

The language teachers interviewed often repeated a highly similar statement – "it depends on the group" – referring to the following:

– the kind of relationship between the group and the teacher (**Kalina**: *It all depends on the group I am working with... even if things are bad on my end, and yet I see a motivated group, then I am quite effective in class afterwards*).

– the way the teacher implements the classes (**Jasmine**: *Are we doing something more, or are we taking the path of least resistance, doing only what is required*)

– the reception of the classes (**Rosalia**: *It also depends on the group, because you know, if the group does not react and we do not have anyone to talk to, then you just get terribly bored during the classes*).

This shows that the meeting of two groups with different interests constituting knowledge can spark thinking and critical reflection. Teachers and student are, as it were, "fighting" with each other for power, the medium of emancipatory knowledge as defined by Habermas (1995). Michel Foucault (Howarth, 2008) argued that knowledge and power are inextricably linked: there is no knowledge that does not create some kind of power relation, and vice versa. Referring to Foucault's statement, Howarth notes: "Discourses are not once and for all

subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (Foucault, 1993, p. 90, as cited in Howarth, 2008, p. 125).

I see opportunities for emancipation, reflection and critical reflection in yet another dimension of the 'game' between knowledge and power made visible in the narratives of my interviewees. As I showed when discussing the category of 'possibilities for making decisions', knowledge gave the language teachers the courage to overcome fear, to experiment, to go beyond the curriculum; it strengthened their self-confidence and confidence in their position. Knowledge thus gave, as well as increased, power over the self, calling for the hegemony of one's own unique 'Self'. Foucault (Pasternak, 2012) wrote about this dimension of power and knowledge in his later publications: "Foucault admitted that he had previously underestimated the role that power over the self, understood as shaping the self, self-fulfilment, working on the self, could play. He discovered that man, after all, does not entirely depend on himself, for he possesses a kind of power over himself and this power constitutes the extent of his freedom. "By exercising the power over himself, man shapes himself and thus establishes himself as a moral subject" (Pasternak, 2012, p. 137).

For the teachers, power over the self is exercised through such means as 'self--knowledge' – a critical and reflective understanding of oneself, one's needs, place, role, identity, subjectivity and identification. However, as Marek Rembierz (2008) points out, it is extremely easy to turn power over the self into power over others – a problem that is particularly close to teachers in relation to their relationship with students. "To gain power over others – as history teaches us – is sometimes much easier than to achieve and retain power over the self. Sufficient will and favourable circumstances (even with relatively small resources) are often enough to bring other people under control to a fairly large extent. Yet, while having power over someone, even legally conferred and decently exercised, it is difficult to retain power over the self to the right degree, for it is difficult not to be seduced by the 'siren song'" of the element of power over others. This is the fundamental ethical challenge for anyone who is to exercise any kind of power over others. The deeper this power is to reach into the human soul and the deeper into the human mind, and at the same time, to affect numerous human communities, the stronger ethically motivated restraining it needs, because the sooner it leads to losing power over the self" (Rembierz, 2008, p. 118).

Applying these words to education, to the relationship between the teacher and the student, losing power over the self for the sake of power over others, for the sake of power over someone else's learning (Męczkowska, 2005), means in fact that the teacher loses their subjectivity and becomes a pawn in the ongoing game of politics in education (Rutkowiak, 1995b) – an intermediary of values that one does not necessarily profess or would like to pass on. It is also an acceptance of being forced "into the role of unreflective performers – officials of knowledge" (Dziemianowicz-Bąk, 2015, p. X).

Conclusions

General remarks

Summarising qualitative research is a significant challenge. Indeed, it is no easy task to make recommendations and observations that apply to a broad population, and to reduce an in-depth analysis to several sentences. Therefore, conclusions are sometimes somewhat conventional and do not fully reflect the experiences presented in the narratives, their studies and analyses. As such, in this section, I will take the liberty of recapitulating the research process and presenting my subjective view of the meanings and significance that university teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes attribute to their work.

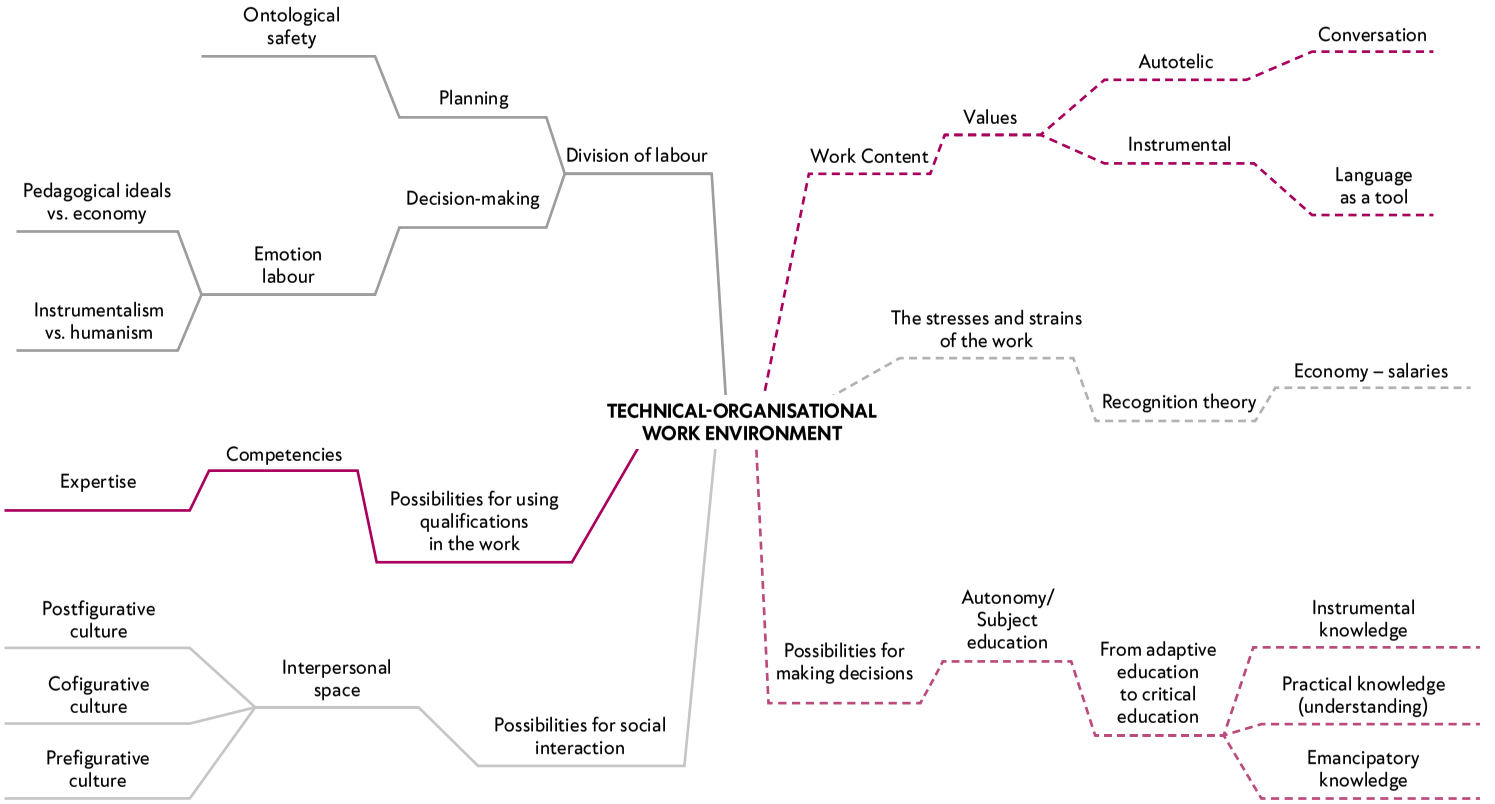
Recapitulation

The presentation, description and interpretation of the narratives are presented in Chapter 4. The chapter in question is devoted entirely to presenting the intersubjective world of the study participants. I sought to capture and understand their knowledge of the world, of themselves and of the 'I-world' relations, using the holistic model of learning in professional life by Knud Illeris et al. (2011), embedded in Mirosława Nowak-Dziemianowicz's (2014b) concept of the triad of teacher knowledge.

The first part of the chapter presents the narratives of teachers about their world, i.e. the technical-organisational learning environment and the socio--cultural learning environment of their professional life. Through the categories used, it was possible to find out the meanings they give to the various elements.

A diagram of the technical-organisational learning environment is presented in Figure 8. Elements such as the division of labour (planning, decision-making), the work content, possibilities for using qualifications in the work, possibilities for social interaction, possibilities for making decisions and the stresses and strains of the work are taken from Illeris' (2011) theory. The remaining categories were established based on the narratives of my interviewees.

FIGURE 8. TECHNICAL-ORGANISATIONAL WORK ENVIRONMENT – SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES



Source: own elaboration.

The category of **division of labour** was analysed at two levels – planning and decision-making. The participants' narratives suggest that their sense of ontological security is lacking or disturbed at work. The teachers lack a sense of job stability, so they cannot, as Anthony Giddens (2012) defines it, bracket questions about the world of things; they cannot suspend questions about this world. The uncertainty of the narrators is also compounded by other phenomena – decisions that are important to them, e.g. on the number of students per group, are made far away from them and are dictated by market logic and instrumental rationality; the requirement for teaching efficiency begins to dominate. The necessity of confronting these phenomena evokes "emotion labour" for my interviewees (Benesch, 2017), which was one of the first indications that power relations in the case of narrators need to be examined separately.

The next category discussed relates to the subjective values given to one's own professional activity (**work content**). The interviewees pointed to both autotelic and instrumental values. Interestingly, the carriers of both values were language and communication. The latter was construed not only as a conversation to achieve subsequent learning outcomes, but also to enable the exchange of ideas, to talk about oneself and to listen to another person. A foreign language (especially a language for specific purposes), on the other hand, was presented primarily as an important instrument that could help learners to succeed at work.

Both types of work-based values are important and complementary from the point of view of instrumental and communicative rationality (Kwaśnica, 2007). However, the narrators drew attention to the disproportion between the two. As they said, communicative rationality, the time for it, and its validity must be constantly strived for, as universities are dominated by the logic of teaching efficiency and the requirement to verify knowledge. Communication unrelated to the transmission of information has been sidelined.

One of the most important categories discussed in the technical-organisational dimension of the work environment was the **possibilities for making decisions**. The participants in my research spoke of their autonomy in various ways, and they also perceived themselves differently in relation to the subjective standard (Obuchowski, 1993) as one that expresses the ability to make decisions, set goals for oneself and pursuing them. The themes covered were organised into the following groups: knowledge, own practice and didactics. They were then analysed while bearing in mind the interests that construct knowledge according to Habermas (1995): the technical interest with instrumental knowledge, the practical interest with understanding-type knowledge and the emancipatory interest related to reflective-type knowledge.

The theoretical part of this dissertation relates these types of knowledge to pedeutological accounts of teaching roles and shows the place of teachers in these accounts. The research part of the monograph has already focused exclusively on the autonomy mentioned earlier. The analysis of the experience of the study participants highlighted the coexistence of approaches. The traditionally perceived roles of the teachers as omniscient experts coexist with the phenomenon of integrating the experience of Others into teaching and the collaborative creation and discovery of knowledge. The syllabus designating the topics to be taught or the range of competencies to be acquired is conceived both as a constraint on teachers' freedom and as a starting point for improvisation or experimentation. Knowledge and ignorance can be intimidating, but can also be seen as an opportunity for further learning. It is noteworthy that the more autonomy and one's own audible 'Self' was present in the teachers' narratives, the more confidence, courage, agency and self-satisfaction emanated from their stories.

As already indicated numerous times, teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes often have a sense of exceeding their competencies in their work because they are confronted with knowledge that they did not obtain in their linguistic studies. This issue relates to the next category in Figure 8, that of **being able to use qualifications at work**. None of the narrators had been exposed to a particular language for specific purposes or specialisation before entering the labour market; indeed, scarcely any of them have taken any course in this area during their employment. To be able to teach foreign languages for specific purposes, teachers undertake further training (usually in an informal way, as discussed in more detail below), because teaching people in a particular profession (future doctors or logisticians) requires different competencies than those expected of teachers of a general foreign language. The difference is so great that – as shown by analysing the socio-cultural working environment – university language teachers do not identify with schoolteachers (where general language is dominant), although they have the same qualifications. Moreover, the former outright reject this community.

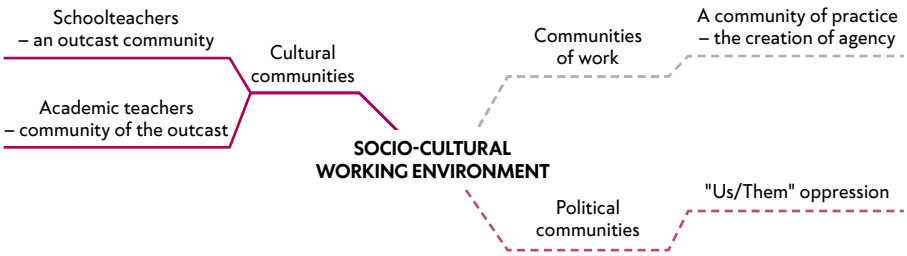
The next element discussed was the **possibilities for social interaction** at work. As the analysis of the narrators' stories showed, they are participants in very particular intersubjective relations, as the cultural transmission is both vertical and horizontal, which means that postfigurative, cofigurative and prefigurative cultures are present in their environments. Teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes deal with people with more subject knowledge than their own, which makes learning from or sharing knowledge with their own students an inherent part of the profession. At the same time, however – with regard to the language itself – the narratives outline a historically conditioned

transmission of knowledge and the position of teachers as omniscient custodians of knowledge.

The final aspect of the description of the technical and organisational environment was the **stresses and strains of the work**. The interviewees clearly experienced a lack of recognition in the economic sphere according to Axel Honneth's concept of recognition (Nowak-Dziemianowicz, 2016b; 2020). This phenomenon was not only expressed through low wages, which lead to impoverishment or result in the need to take on additional employment, but also through the unfair social perception of their work. This is because the often indicated (including in the media) 18-hour working time only covers the time spent "at the blackboard" – it does not account for the many additional tasks that are necessary for a lesson to be taught at all. The dissonance between the importance of the narrators' contribution to society and their remuneration and recognition is also exacerbated by the fact that they themselves see great value in education.

The second key schema to analyse the situation of the narrators (presented in Figure 9) concerns the environment in which they work, operate and, to some extent, live their lives. This is the socio-cultural dimension of the workplace learning environment, in which Illeris (2011) distinguishes such elements as cultural communities, communities of work and political communities.

FIGURE 9. THE SOCIO-CULTURAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT – SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES



Source: own elaboration.

The elements of the socio-cultural working environment presented in the diagram were analysed in search of communities of practice (Wenger and Lave, 2008). From the obtained statements, it appears that the narrators functioned in communities of practice formed within communities of work. In the cultural dimension, invitations to the community of practice were rejected

or not received, and in the political dimension, no community of practice was found. This demonstrates the isolation of the research participants.

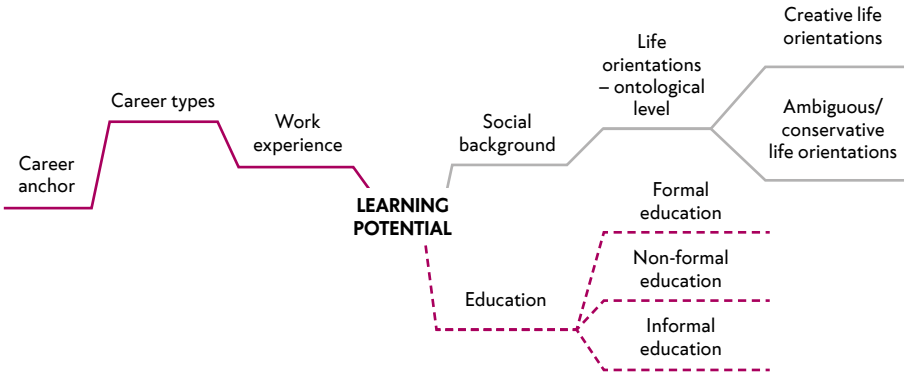
The level of involvement of the teachers in the communities of practice that existed within the communities of work varied. Some of the study participants declared full involvement, which was reflected in the decision to create a textbook for a foreign language for specific purposes. However, as shown, the decision to undertake such a challenge was not always driven by internal motivation. Often, the impetus for action appeared to be the need to prove themselves to their superiors; however, once the textbook was finished, the narrators admitted to having a sense of agency: they were proud of the achieved result and their self-assessment of their competence increased.

The analysis of cultural communities showed that the narrators operated at the interface of (at least) two communities: the teaching community and the academic one, sharing a "heritage of virtue" (MacIntyre, 1996) with each of them, but not belonging to either. Referring to the community of general English teachers employed in primary and secondary schools, the teachers emphasised differences in the teaching content, objectives, working conditions, competence and also personal differences. When analysing the characteristics of the academic community, the FLSP teachers noted that they did not belong to it either. Thus, they feel - and are referred to (Kędzierska, 2012) – as "the fifth wheel of the cart", and language teaching at the university is perceived in a similar way.

The last element analysed in the section of the study devoted to teachers' knowledge of the world was political communities. The result of the analysis further highlighted the impression of the marginalisation of teachers – the profession was removed from the act (Higher Education and Science Act of 20 July 2018) – and showed the compulsion to comply felt by the narrators. The research participants reacted to that oppression by signalling the existence of the "Us/Them" opposition and by distancing from the Other, whose decisions were unfavourable to them. This was another element that indicated the need for a critical approach to the research material.

The second part of the study focused on the narratives of the teachers regarding their knowledge of themselves. According to the implied theory, the individual dimension of learning in professional life consists of social background, education and work experiences. Further interpretation and the categories used in it, as in the previous cases, come from the narrators. The full diagram is shown in Figure 10.

FIGURE 10. ON-THE-JOB LEARNING POTENTIAL – SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES



Source: own elaboration.

To analyse the social background of the narrators their life orientations were examined, adopting the ontological perspective presented by Agata Cudowska (2014). Both creative and ambiguous orientations were identified, as well as behavioural ones, manifested in aspects such as the motives for choosing the teaching profession, the expectations of the future, self-development and their self-awareness of own preferences. It was also interesting to observe the changes that occurred in some of the narrators: creative attitudes turned into ambiguous and vice versa. This is another – apart from changing social roles and identities – sign of the fluidity of the postmodern world.

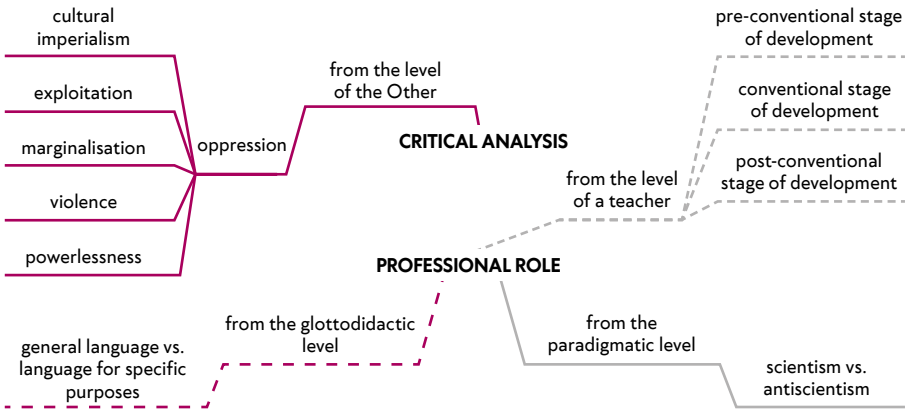
The second element discussed in the research section was the educational experience. This was analysed by considering the activities undertaken by my interviewees to continue their education to meet the requirements of FLSP teaching. The vast majority of these were informal. The narrators also made partial use of non-formal education, while formal education was used only to a minimal extent. One of the reasons for the above is the still limited offer of FLSP courses and their almost total absence several years ago, when my interlocutors started working. When asked about interests outside of work, the narrators mentioned various passions, some of which also influenced their attitude towards teaching roles, their educational partners and the implemented teaching methods.

The last issue discussed in the section devoted to teachers' knowledge about themselves was their work experience. The career scheme of schoolteachers developed by Hanna Kędzierska (2012) was used for that purpose. The analysis showed that the anchor-type career pattern was dominant. The narrators gave their jobs extremely interesting meaning – they indicated university FLCs as the desired and target places for peaceful work, while admitting that this belief was based

on shaky and provisional foundations. On the one hand, employment gave them a sense of stability, but on the other hand, it meant no development opportunities. The driving force behind their actions became the desire to demonstrate some work and achievements to their superiors. Thus, the interviewees showed that it was easy to fall into the trap of conservative adaptation.

The analysis of two dimensions of teachers' knowledge – relating to their world and themselves – concluded the first stage of the research. The analysis of the results provided an insight into the social and individual dimensions of the work of the research participants and enabled to focus on the correlation between those two levels. A summary of the reflections on the professional role of ESP teachers, including the categories of description and interpretation, is presented in Figure 11.

FIGURE 11. PROFESSIONAL ROLE - SUMMARY



Source: own elaboration.

In this section, the change in the teacher's role is discussed first – i.e. the shift from the pre-conventional through the conventional to the post-conventional dimension (Kwaśnica, 2003). It is shown that the narrators valued their activities differently and set the boundaries of autonomy in a different way, some did not refer to that issue at all. The difference between the professional role of the FLSP teachers and traditional social roles is determined by the specificity of teaching in FLCs as well as by the teacher's position in relation to knowledge and educational partners – these two elements make teachers give their position, practice and knowledge a special value. The constantly changing conditions in which the FLC teachers function (new groups of students, the need to expand specialised knowledge, etc.), make the achievement of the post-conventional

stage temporary rather than permanent, and require reflexive re-evaluation and self-development.

In the second approach, the need for a broader qualitative and constructivist view of social and professional roles was indicated. Each paradigmatic approach implies the adoption of a particular vision of society, has different goals and entails various commitments. The postmodern changes observed in everyday life, described and defined scientifically by sociologists, deviate from the scientistic image of reality, and the description from the level of the natural sciences is inadequate for the infinite "social project" of individual in undefined times. Only the sciences that allow for diversity, plurality of truths, multiplicity of worlds, identities and social roles can help to understand the human being, the world and the meanings attributed to it. It is the social interpretive, constructivist and interactional theories that enable the teachers to gain an external perspective on their social roles, treated not as an attack on their authority or on themselves, but rather as a recognition of the voice of the Other, its co-existence independent of our attitude towards it.

The description of teachers working in FLC could not be done by means of scientistic theories also because the professional situation of the ESP teachers differs from that of the general language teachers. Looking at their role from a glottodidactic perspective, the narrators highlighted many characteristics of FLSP courses that changed the approach to teaching – the foreign language is not treated as a whole with a distinctive grammar, style or cultural background but as a subject with clearly defined goals and content. The instrumental approach to a foreign language for special purposes from a glottodidactic point of view dominates over its humanistic dimension.

Another important issue is the identity of the teacher, stretched between being an expert and a partner in the relationship with the students. Contact with the group, who often has more expertise than the teachers, is of a special nature and poses additional requirements. The study participants also felt that dissonance, and focusing primarily on the instrumental dimension of teaching led to a feeling of redundancy and being lost in that relationship. Such feelings were not expressed by the narrators who appreciated knowledge in its humanistic, dialogical, constructivist and emancipatory dimensions.

As noted earlier, in the course of developing the research material, it became clear that the selected issues would require additional critical analysis that was not provided for in the original study plan. The diagram is illustrated in Figure 11, using the Iris Marion Young's classification (1992), who distinguished five types of oppression: marginalisation, exploitation, violence, cultural imperialism and powerlessness.

In their narratives, the teachers indicated the presence of all five. Being at the very bottom of the university hierarchy, the language teachers experienced oppression from the legislator – their position was removed from the list of university teachers found in the act, thus they were excluded, which in the critical analysis can be considered as a manifestation of the marginalisation indicated by Young. An example of unfair treatment is also the lack of clear criteria for promotion (exploitation category), even though under the old act (of 27 July 2005) it was still possible to obtain the position of a senior lecturer – after several or a dozen years of work or once obtaining a doctoral degree.

The above two themes constitute another manifestation of oppression: cultural imperialism. The teachers feel inferior and deprived of importance in the university structures, they believe that they are treated as a cost rather than an asset that increases the value of the university. Cultural imperialism is also expressed in the instrumentalisation of science and education and the necessity to conform to such trends, which provokes resistance manifested in the narrator's use of the "Us/Them" construct. The described situations are perceived by the study participants as violence, although they do not use such a term. The result of violence is a sense of threat to the ontological security of work and may also be symbolic. Some study participants believed in the superfluousness of foreign language in the university curriculum and in the dominance of instrumentalism over the humanistic dimension of teaching. They have accepted this as their narrative, even though it diminished their importance, the importance of their work and their position. They have thus internalised the leading narrative that pushed them to the margins of the academic world.

A final word must be devoted to the research plan used in the monograph, which enabled an insight into the intersubjective world of the narrators. The followed analytical structure, in its basic form, i.e. based on the analysis of knowledge about the world, knowledge about oneself and 'I-world' relations and using a holistic way of approach to the learning process in the professional life by Knud Illeris et al. (2011), can be successfully implemented in research on any professional groups: their workplace, learning, professional life, creation of professional identity or correlations between various aspects of work. The categories that supplement the understanding of the different elements in the model are derived from the meanings given by the participants in each study. Thus, the analytical structure is suitable for descriptive, diagnostic and understanding research – but it can also be used in a critical study, as it helps to notice social injustice, power relations and possible abuses.

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Post Scriptum

The autoethnographic voice of the researcher

To say that there are many reasons for undertaking research may seem an oversimplification. My motivation was twofold. Like the narrators, I am a foreign language for special purposes (English) teacher, employed as a language teacher at one of the medical universities in Poland. Inspired by the otherness of that social space, I've decided to explore it, go beyond my environment and confront it with other places. I assume, following Nowak-Dziemianowicz (2002), that I share the "community of experience" with the research participants (p. 72). The various stories, events and circumstances mentioned by them are familiar to me, although they are not the same as my experience. Therefore, finding answers to the research questions was important both for me and for my narrators, and possibly for other FLSP teachers. The second reason that led me to undertake the research was my desire to obtain a doctoral degree in social sciences, which I achieved thanks to the research on which this monograph is based.

If biographies can be non-obvious (Karkowska, 2018), autoethnography can also be undercurrent and implicit. I am of the opinion that autoethnography does not have to focus on the researcher and showing their experience, which corresponds to evocative autoethnography (Jakubowska, 2017). It can also be indirect in nature. It can be a record of the construction of one's scholarly credo, as was in my case - starting from the period as the ESP teacher, who I am, through the construction of the identity of the social researcher, who I am becoming. "According to Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner, autoethnographers differ «in terms of the emphasis placed on the research process (graphy), the culture (ethno) and the self (auto)», therefore each autoethnography can be placed on the continuum formed on each of those three axes" (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 740, after Jakubowska, 2017, p. 38).

Autoethnography was for me "the starting point of the research" (Urbańska, 2011, p. 35), while working towards my doctoral degree was part of my biographical roadmap and the "end" of a sort of biographical transformation (Kaźmierska and Waniek, 2020, pp. 105–135). Autoethnography was not a study method used in this dissertation and research, but an important issue permeating all the stages, a kind of invisible theme running through all the sections.

Continuing the thought expressed above and using the nomenclature borrowed from the process structures developed by Fritz Schütze (Ślęzak, 2011), I assume the beginning of my research journey to mean an attempt to break away from fulfilling institutional patterns of expectations (or giving them voice), both social, intended for women, and those resulting from my position in the organisation. This need for a break resulted from the dissonance I experienced at the beginning of my scientific path. On the one hand, a long-awaited job appeared, giving

solace and an illusory sense of stability in an unstable world, on the other hand, I deeply felt the different situation of FLSP teachers, resulting from institutional expectations towards them and the existence of traditional role regulations. Achieving stability and following the developmental trajectory set by the organisation was, in my opinion, associated with the risk of routinisation, which I see as the opposite of self-development, self-understanding and understanding others – and I consider these to be crucial in being a teacher. "The basis for isolating that process structure in a biographical narrative is not so much to find the institutional determinants for actions of an individual, but to identify the situation in which they become the basis for the organisation by an individual of their activities in a given phase of life" (Ślęzak, 2011, p. 266). Aware of the above, I made an attempt to look beyond my own experience and the justifications given to it – and decided to participate in a doctoral seminar.

The time spent working on the monograph, its theoretical and research part, and on adequately capturing the experiences of my narrators, was the implementation of a biographical roadmap defined as "ways of experiencing events in life that have their origin in the inner spontaneity of an individual and are linked to an intentional principle of action that allows the individual to freely realise and express their self. It is primarily about autonomous, long-term plans of action related to who the individual wants to be, what they want to achieve and how they intend to organise their life. Their feature is the optimism of the bearer of the biography, emotional but also physical involvement in creating, developing and modifying own plans and a certain attitude towards the future – full of lively expectations and excitement" (Kaźmierska and Waniek, 2020, p. 112).

It was not until I was preparing for my doctoral thesis that I became interested in qualitative research. My previous research and work (diploma and master's degree thesis) fell within the field of glottodidactic quantitative research. Therefore, exploring a new paradigm, its ontological and epistemological justifications, was not only the fulfilment of criteria when applying for a doctoral degree but also the construction of a new identity. As a result, the theoretical presentation of the research issue is an expression of my understanding of the world, making sense of it, trying to find myself and my research position, ontological, epistemological and axiological.

The doctoral dissertation is also associated with my transformation, also called metamorphosis (Schutze, 2012), leading to the creative development of an individual. At this stage, there may be a temporary personality disorder, a sense of misunderstanding and alienation, when it is necessary to reorganise own identity and face the uncertainty that the change entails (Schutze, 2012, p. 158). It is not a completed stage, it is rather a crossroads at which I am standing and which

requires me to make a decision. On the one hand, the role of a foreign language and a foreign language for special purposes teacher is well known to me. I know how to navigate that world and, thanks to the research I have done, it is easier for me to overcome the limitations found there, as well as those within myself. On the other hand, there is the unknown – the new identity of the researcher's self, which demands recognition and the continuation of the initiated journey. The fascination I felt while developing the research gives me wings and courage – it builds agency. It is an opportunity for further exploration of the world and the self. The narrative inquiry I conducted for the first time in my research career was a fascinating experience. Being able to come into close contact with someone else's narrative, trying to grasp and understand the meaning and sense of their words, and looking at them through a chosen pedagogical-sociological lens was a challenging task, but also a creative and rewarding one. The formful aspect required while developing the chapters emerged from the need for a deep understanding of the theoretical issues discussed in the work and from the desire to overcome the dominant scientistic interpretative discourse (Touraine, 2011). It was the departure from a scientistic interpretation of human conduct towards an attempt to understand the social world of an individual that allowed me to notice theories such as interpersonal space (Sztompka, 2016) or symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 2007), scientifically legitimising my world.

I wrote the initial chapters of the thesis in parallel with conducting interviews. The very first interviews made me realise that listening carefully to the spoken word, refraining from non-verbal comments and linking questions to the content of the narrative was a difficult and tiring task. Moreover, as I belong to the social group covered by the research (which is an exemplification of the 'researcher in the world' attitude – Malewski, 2017), I fell into the trap of thinking that my narrators were not relating to the topic in question, answered briefly, instead of delving the issue or did not often say what I wanted to hear. As it turned out when analysing the research material, they were presenting something more important - their stories, their narratives and their experience – they were telling themselves. Allowing the Other to speak and giving their voice an equivalent value to mine was thus a task I had to accomplish, the importance of which I was not aware before.

I would like to devote my last reflection to doubt. Paradoxically, the moments of doubt that accompanied me throughout my work were an important element of the process. Doubts as to the purpose and validity of my research appeared with particular strength in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the remote education introduced at that time, as well as the war in Ukraine. However, I do not look at the moments of doubt as weaknesses. I see them as a natural way of finding

and consciously building meaning, just as one finds and builds the meaning of one's life (Frankl, 2016). To some extent, the research has been the purpose, and perhaps even the meaning, of my life for several years. In moments of doubt, I was helped by a sense of responsibility for the words entrusted to me. I felt a moral obligation to keep the promise I had made to my narrators who had shared their experiences with me. My task was to give validity to their words through the conducted analysis.

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Summary

The monograph is part of the socio-pedagogical directions of pedeutological research carried out in the qualitative paradigm. The aim of the study was to describe the professional role of academic English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers in the context of postmodernity. The author was interested both in how the ongoing cultural changes shift the teaching paradigm towards learning and in how academic ESP teachers respond to such challenges, as well as what problems and limitations may stand in their way of consciously transcending their professional role. In her research, the author used the narrative interview method, and the analysis of the conducted interviews allowed her to address the above research problems. The work consists of five main chapters: a methodological chapter, two theoretical chapters and two empirical chapters, as well as an introduction, conclusions and a post scriptum chapter. In the methodological chapter, the author presents the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the qualitative paradigm, under which the research is carried out, as well as the research method. In the second chapter, the author shows the cultural and social context of postmodernity and the individual immersed in it. The third chapter focuses on the social and professional roles of teachers and presents a glottodidactic perspective on ESP teachers. In the empirical part, in the fourth chapter, the author presents the knowledge of the study participants about their world and themselves using the holistic model of learning in the working life by Knud Illeris and his associates, as well as about "self--world" relations using the author's original interpretation of the professional role prescription. In the next empirical chapter (fifth chapter), the author focuses on a critical analysis, which revealed the oppression to which the participants of the study were subjected. The last part of the work is a "post scriptum" chapter, showing the autoethnographic roots of the research.

KEYWORDS:

- ESP teacher
- learning
- teaching
- foreign language for specific purposes
- learning in professional life
- professional role of teachers
- postmodernity
- narrative research
- critical research

Streszczenie

Monografia wpisuje się w socjologiczno-pedagogiczne kierunki badań pedeutologicznych realizowanych w paradygmacie jakościowym. Celem badań było opisanie roli zawodowej nauczycieli i nauczycielek akademickich języka angielskiego specjalistycznego w kontekście ponowoczesności. Autorkę interesował zarówno sposób, w jaki zachodzące zmiany kulturowe zmieniają paradygmat nauczania na rzecz uczenia się, jak i to, jak na takie wyzwania odpowiadają nauczyciele(ki) języka angielskiego specjalistycznego oraz jakie problemy i ograniczenia mogą stanąć na drodze ku świadomemu przekraczaniu ich roli zawodowej. W badaniach posłużono się metodą wywiadu narracyjnego, a analiza przeprowadzonych wywiadów pozwoliła na odpowiedź na powyższe cele badawcze. Praca składa się z pięciu rozdziałów głównych: metodologicznego, dwóch rozdziałów teoretycznych, dwóch rozdziałów empirycznych, wstępu i zakończenia oraz rozdziału Post scriptum – osobistego odniesienia do prezentowanych badań. W rozdziale metodologicznym Autorka przedstawiła ontologiczne i epistemologiczne założenia paradygmatu jakościowego, w którym realizowane są badania, oraz samą metodę badawczą. W rozdziale drugim zaprezentowała kontekst kulturowo-społeczny ponowoczesności oraz zanurzoną w nim jednostkę. Trzeci rozdział koncentruje się na rolach społecznych i zawodowych oraz prezentuje glottodydaktyczne spojrzenie na nauczycieli(ki) języka obcego specjalistycznego. W części empirycznej, w czwartym rozdziale, Autorka przedstawiła wiedzę uczestniczek badania o ich świecie i o nich samych, wykorzystując do tego holistyczny model uczenia się w życiu zawodowym autorstwa Knuda Illerisa i jego współpracowników oraz opisując relacje 'Ja–świat' w oparciu o autorskie ujęcie przepisu roli zawodowej. W kolejnym (piątym) rozdziale empirycznym zajęto się analizą krytyczną, która uwidoczniła zjawisko opresji, której poddane były uczestniczki badania. Ostatnią częścią pracy jest rozdział Post scriptum, ukazujący autoetnograficzne zakorzenienie badań.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:

- nauczyciel(ka) JOS
- uczenie się
- nauczanie
- język obcy specjalistyczny
- uczenie się w życiu zawodowym
- rola zawodowa nauczycieli(lek)
- ponowoczesność
- badania narracyjne
- badania krytyczne

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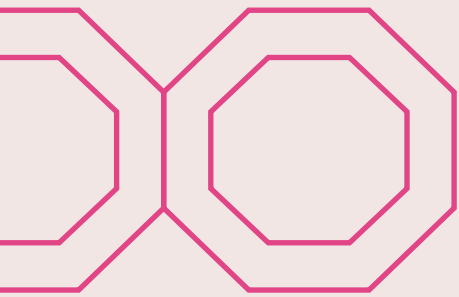

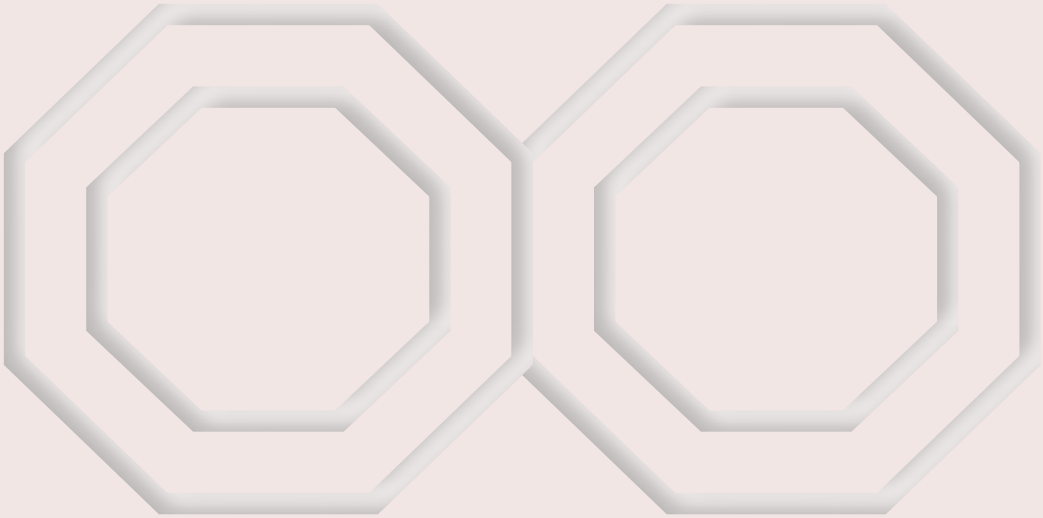

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