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Anna Sznajder

Perspectives and challenges for Polish educators and their pupils from Vietnamese families in Poland

Introduction

Bilingualism is a result of contact between two different communities, as individuals need to have reasons for being bilingual¹. Often observed in peripheral areas on both side of Polish border (e.g. in Czech Silesia, Eastern Borderlands) where it was developed during centuries, bilingualism in terms of migrant communities from Far East living in central parts of the country is relatively new and formulated since few decades.

In the past Vietnamese migration to Poland was represented mainly by students and researchers arriving to our country in 60-ties and 70-ties as well as mass migration of labour workers (specialized in trade and gastronomy) in 90-ties². For example in 1994 Vietnamese citizens received 978 work permits, in 1995 – 1168, in 1996 – 1025³. According to leaders of Vietnamese community at the beginning of 21st century at least half of their population lived in Warsaw⁴, which could be translated on the number of Vietnamese working in capital city and visible in public space of the town. In 2013 members of Vietnamese community in Warsaw had 10839 permits, whilst in Kraków their number was estimated as 465⁵. In 2007 Vietnamese in Kraków received work permits mainly to work in hotels and restaurants⁶. Those, who decided to work

¹ W. Mackey, *The description of bilingualism*, [in:] *The Bilingualism Reader*, ed. L. Wei, London 2000, p. 26.

² T. Halik, *Migrancka społeczność Wietnamczyków w Polsce w świetle polityki państwa i ocen społecznych*, Poznań 2006, p. 9.

³ Tamże, p. 46.

⁴ T. Halik, E. Nowicka, *Wietnamczycy w Polsce. Integracja czy izolacja?*, Warszawa 2002, p. 24.

⁵ A. Gadowska i in., *Charakterystyka społeczności imigranckich z Ukrainy, Armenii, Wietnamu i krajów MENA, zamieszkujących województwo małopolskie oraz badane społeczności w świetle analizy dokumentów*, [in:] *Imigranci w Małopolsce. Między integracją, asymilacją, separacją, marginalizacją*, ed. E. Pindel, Kraków 2014, p. 9.

⁶ M. Biernath, *Analiza funkcjonowania i integracji migrantów poza województwem mazowieckim: przypadek województwa małopolskiego i Krakowa*, [in:] *Między jednością a wielością*.

and stay in Poland, often have families and children. According to data number of Vietnamese children in primary and secondary schools was constantly growing since mid 90-ties, for example in school year 2000/2001 number of registered pupils was 266, whilst in 2001/2002 – 377⁷. Despite the lack of access to current data, numbers cited above demonstrate the growth of Vietnamese population in Poland and in scope of contemporary research⁸ suggest to expect similar growing trends in the future. The presence of Vietnamese in Poland arises the questions about the future of their children participating in Polish educational system. Constant negotiation between identities of Polish and Vietnamese, also struggle in terms of bilingualism both enriching and constraining the development are example of challenges children have to face during their educational and personal development, even if multiculturalism is recognized, presented and promoted in school handbooks [image 1].

Considering the Polish Vietnamese children as immersed in biculturalism, which allows them to exist and flourish in two cultures⁹, term 'bilingualism' should be introduced as the one accompanying the child's social and personal growth. Bilingualism is defined in literature as knowledge of two languages, where the equal command of two languages is rare, even impossible¹⁰. Bilingual people 'combine a knowledge of their mother tongue with a more or less extensive and active knowledge of the second language'¹¹, use two or more languages in their everyday lives 'simultaneously (e.g., in bilingual families) or sequentially (e.g., in the context of immigration or study abroad)¹², often acquiring and using 'their languages for different purposes in different domains of life, with different people'¹³. Significant benefits of being bilingual include advantages in communication (e.g. relationship with family, communities, language sensitivity), culture and economy, and cognition (e.g. creative and flexible thinking, faster progress in early cognitive development)¹⁴. Benefits overlap with risks and challenges mentioned by Hansegard – a result on his

Integracja odmiennych grup i kategorii imigrantów w Polsce, ed. A. Grzymała-Kozłowska, Warszawa 2008, p. 244.

⁷ T. Halik, *Migrancka społeczność Wietnamczyków w Polsce...*, p. 127.

⁸ A. Gadowska i in., *Charakterystyka społeczności imigranckich...*, p. 49–115.

⁹ H. Innis, *Bilingualism and Biculturalism. An abridged version of the Royal Commission Report*, Toronto 1973, p. 4.

¹⁰ Tamże, s. 4; N.B. Chin, G. Wigglesworth, *Bilingualism. An advanced resource book*, London – New York 2007, p. 3; F. Grosjean, *Studying Bilinguals. Methodological and conceptual issues*, [in:] *Bilingualism and Multilingualism. Critical Concepts in Linguistics*, ed. L. Wei, vol. 2, Abingdon – New York 2010, p. 3.

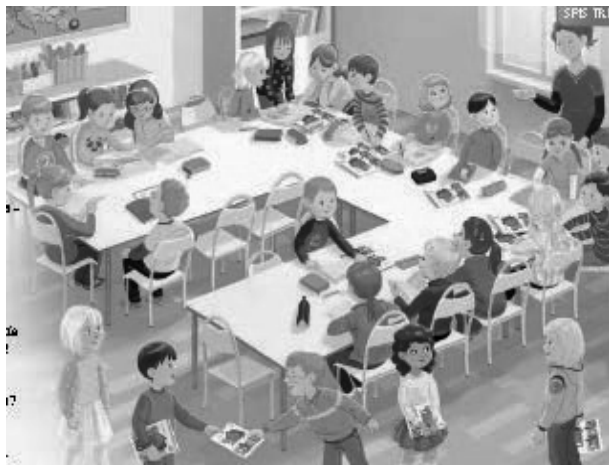
¹¹ H. Innis, *Bilingualism and Biculturalism. An abridged version of the Royal Commission Report...*, p. 2.

¹² A. Pavlenko, *The Bilingual Mind and what it tells us about language and thought*, Cambridge – New York 2014, p. 20–21.

¹³ F. Grosjean, *Studying Bilinguals. Methodological and conceptual issues...*, p. 3.

¹⁴ L. Wei, *Dimensions of Bilingualism*, [in:] *The Bilingualism Reader*, ed. L. Wei, London 2000, p. 22-25.

research to Finnish-minority students in Sweden, which exposed following deficits in language competencies: size of vocabulary, correctness of language, unconscious processing of language, language creation, mastery of the functions of language, meanings and imagery¹⁵. Investigating the role of bilingualism and biculturalism for children development, this paper argues that they both have important role in linguistic skills and identity formation, whilst obstacles and challenges are observable.



1. Pobawcie się w parach w podobny sposób.



Image. 1. Multicultural class as presented in handbooks for primary integrated learning, year 2 by Lorek and Zatorska¹⁶ and by Ludwa¹⁷.

Data and methods

The paper is a result of 10 month commitment in teaching children as a home tutor, who contributed to their linguistic and cultural development. The idea of home tutorials was spread among Vietnamese community and involved also other tutors,

¹⁵ N.B. Chin, G. Wigglesworth, *Bilingualism. An advanced resource book...*, p. 8.

¹⁶ M. Lorek, M. Zatorska, *Nasza Szkoła. Podręcznik do Szkoły Podstawowej Klasa 2. Część 1a*, Warszawa 2015, p. 3–4.

¹⁷ A. Ludwa, *Nasza Szkoła. Matematyka. Podręcznik do Szkoły Podstawowej Klasa 2. Część 1*, Warszawa 2015, p. 34.

who later kindly shared with me their experience. Considering ethical and sensitivity issues which this research include, all examples, interpretations and commentaries presented here should be seen as an attempt to understand the perspective of bilingual speaker in Polish realms with intention to support current educational system in new initiatives. Permission to teach children given to me by parents and encouraged later by school teacher was a step towards building the strategy for better understanding learning needs of Polish Vietnamese and to support their development. All names presented in this study are fictional in order to protect children from stress, harm, emotional and psychological injures.

For this research ethnographic methods were used to collect research data including participant observation, ethnographic journal and notes, experience exchange with other tutors and school teacher during informal discussions. The focus was given to experience of four Polish Vietnamese children from Mały Płaszów district of Kraków, with particular attention to two case studies.

Motivation to write this paper, which should be considered as an introduction to further research project, came also as a reaction for comments heard from local environment pupils exist in. Disadvantage position of living as a child from migrant family is likely to be emphasized by others (colleagues, neighbors, etc.) who considers them as 'strangers', 'not ours', who 'don't belong to our religion', 'lacking the capacity to pick up nuances from Polish language'. Stigmatization is visible also in physical environment of Vietnamese families, including drawing obscene words on front doors of their flats, e.g. 'bitches'. Categorization of pupils as a group of second category is a first step to minimize their development potential and to become a push factor to continue as their parents: with trade or gastronomy. As an answer for social exclusion disappointing scenario includes school and social misbehavior, which may lead towards criminal path.

There are also disadvantages of this research. Possible misinterpretation of the behavior of Vietnamese community could be caused by lack of knowledge about Vietnamese language and culture. Ethnic membership, gender, age and social status are factors which silently operate in the field having an impact on research data¹⁸. Also, adaptation of the role of home-tutor limited ethnographic observation requiring practical solutions for everyday learning difficulties and school program dynamics.

Weronika and Marcin – discussing the case studies

Bi-life of bilingual children starts from their names and finish on constructed by family and society double real and symbolic spaces, where children grow, learn, play. In order to assimilate with majority of the Polish society Vietnamese migrants tend to chose for themselves and their children Polish names, which are used in official public discourse and most of the time in home, whilst Vietnamese names are put on the second place together with surnames. Symbolic violence which happens

¹⁸ R. Holmes, *Fieldwork with children*, Thousand Oaks – London 1998, p. 9.

through existence and interaction with Polish society in terms of names leave Polish Vietnamese with cultural element which decides about the durable connection with Polish language and culture, depicting them from members of Vietnamese diaspora in Europe and indigenous community in Vietnam.

Negotiating the identity happens also through the school-home relations: first place should be perceived as space for being Polish, speaking Polish, interacting with Polish, whilst second appears as its Vietnamese counterpart – means being Vietnamese, speaking Vietnamese and interacting with Vietnamese. It is also emphasized by eating habits: in school children eat usually typical Polish lunch (soups, potatoes with various forms of meat, dumplings, salads, etc.), whilst in home for breakfast or dinner Vietnamese kitchen is served (usually rice and meat, vegetables, salad rolls)¹⁹. Experiencing biculturalism can lead towards extra stress requiring constant awareness for being flexible and adaptive to changing circumstances of everyday life.

Two case studies described in this paper represent two different types of bilingualism: natural and school bilingualism²⁰. Weronika Bao acquires Polish and Vietnamese in home ('naturalistic setting') without any structured instruction benefiting from presence of her elder sister who knows both languages. The school environment creates formal setting – a classroom where Polish language is learned. Instead of that Marcin Ho acquires in home only Vietnamese, whilst in structured setting – school – he can learn and practice Polish language. Obviously, Weronika is more fluent in both languages, which support development of other educational skills, such as accounting, writing, memorizing. Interestingly, Bao found to acquire English language in both speaking and writing more difficult and challenging than Ho, who is very successful in memorizing vocabulary, pronunciation and writing basic forms. The speed of instinctive and natural learning of Polish language in case of Weronika doesn't work in case of English forms, which requires more attention. Here slower Marcin is more successful, as barriers and disadvantages in learning Polish trained him in being careful and patient in learning English.

Learning difficulties of bilinguals at early stage [table 1] are linked to their struggle as bicultural children. Research exposed that children who learn two languages simultaneously go through 'a fusions stage' and have difficulties to control their bilingualism in monolingual environment, which can be observed as 'mixed

¹⁹ During tutorials thanks to hospitality of both families I was served with their delicacies such as: melon and strawberries scattered with salt or candied cherries sprinkled with salt, cardamom and ginger. This experience helped me to understand that dual world in case of Polish Vietnamese children include also learning of tastes and adaptation to cultural norms what is considered as tasty or not for Central-Eastern Europeans. Our conversation about it was continued before Christmas, where families and children expressed their gratitude for home tutorials by occasional gifts: Vietnamese jasmine tea and Vietnamese coffee. These acts can be seen as symbolic connection with country of their parents origin (both children were born in Poland, they are not growing up in Catholic Christian religion), and expose the strength Vietnamese identity is maintained in families through cooking habits and products used in the kitchen.

²⁰ N.B. Chin, G. Wigglesworth, *Bilingualism. An advanced resource book...*, p. 21..

language²¹. The examples from table 1 expose also that into a fusions stage the cultural factor is involved responsible for incorrect forms and content.

Tab.1. Examples of language learning difficulties among pupils observed in writing and speaking exercises.

Mistake	Cause	Exemplary solution
Kukułka wysiaduje jaja w gnieździe	Lack of contextual knowledge related to Polish nature and environment	Discussion over the pictures of the most popular Polish birds about their habits
Pan Bóg to ten pan z rogami	Lack of knowledge related to ethic and religious systems	Reading Pan Twardowski tale with illustration of horny devil creature as a symbol of evil
Czy wie Pani, że będę miał drugiego brata w Wietnamie?	Lack of vocabulary related to members of family	Drawing own genealogy three with family members names and relationships towards pupil
Ja też jestem z dziadkiem i tatą na grzybach	Lack of descriptors for past and present tenses	Memory games to practice simple past tense forms and add them intuitively to the verbs

At the early stage of development bilingual children are under risk of inability to express themselves. In fact, they are bilingual-to-be, enforced to develop their linguistic competences in circumstances of their dual school-home existence. Being at the stage of early development 7–8 years old pupils need a language to communicate with relatives and friends. During tutorials, however, we observed that sometimes children are not able to express themselves either in Polish (with teacher, colleagues, tutor, during written and oral homework) as well as in Vietnamese within their families (especially if adults are working long hours and do not have elders – e.g. grandmother to look after child). Psychological results of being lost between the languages are stress, lack of safety and emotional support, self-doubt, which may become traumatic experience and have consequences in future education. From the other side double reality enhances production of linguistic forms, which from cognitive perspective can be classified as lies. It was observed that on the basis of vocabulary and exercises during tutorials or in the relation to stories we read, child produces sentences which are not true, i.e. describing the situations which have not happened. This unintentional language performance is a result of strong will to express oneself in the conversation. Lack of vocabulary enforces false content in act of communication.

Writing styles of children also expressed being in-between: two of them for some time, whilst writing text in Polish persistently used Vietnamese style characters they learnt from adults in home. Opposite to them in Polish Saturday School in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, where I worked as a teacher for one year, pupils had problem to adapt their raw and simple writing style they learnt in Scottish school to differently

²¹ F. Grosjean, *Studying Bilinguals. Methodological and conceptual issues...*, p. 1–2.

hand-written characters of Polish alphabet. This is one of the examples how dominant everyday learning environment influences on basic skills child gains at the beginning of education and diminishes the role of knowledge learnt in diaspora.

Secondly, bilingual children are aware from one side about their role in the family as future fluent Polish language speakers (which might be seen as a stimuli for learning processes), from the other about the conflict between knowledge of language they are expected to have, and knowledge (if any) of language of their parents. In other words, the hypothesis here is that child needs to symbolically diminish the role of own family in Polish language learning process, trying to avoid learning wrong forms from them, intuitively work out forms of vocabulary and grammar acquisition, which are often 'murdered' by their parents. This may led towards conflicts and separation from family, which members express themselves in broken Polish, usually using simply nouns and verbs in infinitive. Sometimes children serve as translators and mediators between e.g., Vietnamese only speaking members of family – grandparents, which prepare them to their future role in Polish society.

Awareness of own Vietnamese origin as well as growing up among Vietnamese relatives in home stimulate and facilitate Vietnamese language learning, whilst Polish is related more to survival and success in Polish realms. Polish is seen through economic situation of families and their purpose of being in Poland, as one parent expressed 'my child will help me in future with Polish offices, so he has to learn Polish', others recognize benefits of learning language in contact with clients in restaurants or home beauty parlors. During home tutorials we were witnessing the situation where child's linguistic skills were used to encourage potential clients – Poles visiting family to 'have nails done'. This created confusion for child in terms of his or her purpose of learning the language not only for better school performance or contact with Polish friends, but for fulfilling the family expectations and conditions of migrant livelihood. It could be discussed here if it have an impact in the future existence in Polish majority and decides about level of integration and seeing one's place in the society.

This economic motivation in learning Polish in context of children's education is bound together with need of learning the language to communicate with school colleagues as well as for knowledge acquisition in further education and for overcoming the risk of repeating the same class. Learning Polish language is then linked with the constant stress of being on lower position than others, at risk of staying another year at same level in school, with disappointment from family's side. One child expressed her trauma: if she will not learn Polish language and fail to obtain satisfactory grades, she and her parents will be sent back to Vietnam. Tension over learning Polish has some influence of learning motivation and overall performance in school, but it can be questioned if this support better community integration.

Currently, Polish language acquisition happens during official school classes as well as during extra hours secured by school, and by parents in home [table 2]. School does not provide any connection between Vietnamese and Polish language,

which can be seen as a missing element in minority integration. Home tutorials are necessary element of education at this level allowing to complete homeworks and extra tasks, as well as practice skills. In school language is acquired in group and individually, whilst in home exclusive individual education takes place. Home is also place, where two linguistic realities: Polish and Vietnamese are mixed.

Observed during tutorials language learning problems included lack of understanding the vocabulary, which as a result could led towards problems in mathematics or natural sciences homework. Parents could not support children at this stage. As a consequence, accounting related descriptive tasks caused significant problems during tests in the classroom as child did not recognized the metaphorical expressions of addition, deduction, multiplying in exercises. Knowledge of natural sciences can be strongly underpinned by the knowledge about Vietnamese realities child knows from relatives' memories or TV, e.g. crops cultivation, calendar or seasons, which needs to be exchanged by home tutor on Polish counterparts. Teaching bilingual and bicultural children requires then introducing them to the new system of words, signs and meanings, which will support generating meaningful expressions understood by native language speakers.

According to literature 'language repertoire of bilinguals' is fluid and flexible. It depends from their environment and needs for particular language skills, from their contact with both monolinguals and other bilinguals²². Development of bilingualism is linked to participation of child in both Polish school environment, and Vietnamese family's and community's life. Drawing on contemporary theories²³, in future there are two possible scenarios for Polish Vietnamese children in their adult life: becoming balanced bilinguals – full competence in both languages, or dominant bilinguals – where less dominant language becomes subordinate one. The third scenario: limited proficiency in both first and second language is also possible if to consider size of vocabulary, correctness of language, unconscious processing of language, ability to create neologisms, meanings, images. Language skills development depends from further education and future career path. Polish and Vietnamese languages competences decide about cultural identity of Polish Vietnamese pupils.

Tab. 2. Recognized factors supporting bilingual children's integrated learning among pupils from primary school.

Extra hours in school per week to support Polish language	External education to support Polish language	External education to support Vietnamese language
With leading teacher – 1 h in group of 12 (children with reading, writing and speaking difficulties).	Organized: everyday home tutorials with hired educators 1-2 h.	None for this level. Elder children (over 10) take part in Vietnamese language classes by private tutor from their community.

²² F. Grosjean, *Studying Bilinguals. Methodological and conceptual issues...*, p. 3.

²³ N.B. Chin, G. Wigglesworth, *Bilingualism. An advance resource book...*, p. 6–8.

With leading teacher – 1 h in group of 3 (only Polish Vietnamese).	Spontaneous language acquisition: conversation with family's friends and customers; watching movies in TV and internet; reading comics and children's books.	Spontaneous language acquisition: conversation with family and Vietnamese friends; watching movies in TV and internet.
With teacher for Polish as a foreign language – 1h in group of 4 Polish Vietnamese children.	-	Conversation with family members staying in Vietnam via Skype.
With speech therapist – 1h. Individual sessions.		
Conversation with Vietnamese colleagues in Polish and Vietnamese languages on school and family issues; playing together; participating in events for Vietnamese community: birthdays, Children Day, etc.		

Conclusions

To support bilingual development among Polish Vietnamese pupils in Poland current support given by school and private tutors should be continued and developed around cross-cultural and multilingual initiatives. Cooperation between school, private tutors and Vietnamese families is strongly recommended here. Electronic access (ELIBRUS) to pupils achievements, if used on everyday basis, stimulates and improve communication between these three groups allowing to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers in communication. Face-to-face discussion among school teachers and home tutors is necessary element for development of new strategies and approaches to teaching bilingual children. The coordinated system of home tutors (Polish language or Pedagogy students, retired school teachers, etc.) employed within e.g. the school, NGO or Vietnamese Consulate in Poland could significantly improve language learning accompanying to overcome obstacles in other subjects.

Considering the learning setting as an important element in language acquisition, I argue that missing element in Polish Vietnamese pupils education include construction of the space of representation in school for minority. It could be arranged in form of occasional event during school year or as particular space in the classroom, which could reflect upon cultural traditions of Vietnam. It can be represented in class events chronicle. It might be linked to Vietnamese Saturday language classes involving teacher of Vietnamese language. Examples of events organized in Warsaw in 2000-2002²⁴ made visible Vietnamese community in public space of particular parts of the capital. The aim of language education, however, is made the cultures translatable and transferable, allowing deeper insight and understanding between transmitter and receiver.

Experience from Kirkcaldy, Scotland enriched me as a tutor in some ideas based on ethnographic approach engagement to bilingual communities language acquisition. They can be easily transmitted on Polish Vietnamese community which

²⁴ T. Halik, E. Nowicka, *Wietnamczycy w Polsce. Integracja czy izolacja?*, Warszawa 2002.

inherited rich culture from Vietnam and has already some of Polish masterpieces translated in Vietnamese, such as *Pan Tadeusz* by Adam Mickiewicz translated by Nguyen Van Thai as *Cháng Tadeush*²⁵, and from Vietnam to Polish *Antologia Poezji Wietnamskiej od XI w. do XIX w.* by Lam Quang My²⁶. Obviously pupils at integrated learning level are not able to analyze literature texts as it extends far beyond their possibilities, however the awareness of cultural connection between two countries may encourage for better learning and engagement in classes, and for teacher and tutors it create a support for construction bilingual learning settings. Innovative and recent idea is a book for children *Apetyt na Wietnam – Nem*²⁷, which link the realms of Polish Vietnamese with stories of their relatives in Vietnam including elements of culture and basic vocabulary. The book starts from email conversation of two girls: Polish Vietnamese and her Vietnamese relative about the everyday issues, which have a lot in common to situation I observed during home tutorials when children communicate with family in Vietnam using the internet. This book very clearly demonstrates the contemporary context language acquisition happens in: school and home environment is enriched by contact with indigenous languages learnt from tutors – Poland and relatives – Vietnam.

Finally, to overcome obstacles related to observed acts of verbal racism in school towards Polish Vietnamese children I suggest organizing workshops in the classroom, which could more integrate children and support their understanding of pupils with different physical appearance, promote and practically apply strategies of multicultural learning environment exposed in their handbooks. The report written long time ago by Halik and Nowicka²⁸ emphasized that different physical appearance of Vietnamese community in Warsaw was unavoidably mentioned by respondents as characteristic feature of minority living in homogenous Polish society. This observation can be applied to contemporary Kraków's environment, where Vietnamese community becomes more visible in recent years.

The subject of further research could be extended on adult members of Vietnamese community in Poland, who used to learn Polish as children and teenagers in late 90-ties or first decade of 21st century. Studying how bilingualism was maintained, developed or diminished in early adult life (age 25–35) could provide guidance for teachers and educators as well as reveal the factors which shaped knowledge and skills of language users after they completed primary and secondary education in Poland.

²⁵ *Rozmowy z przyjaciółmi*, [in:] *Iskra*, Ciężkowice 2012. p. 18.

²⁶ A. Grabowski, *Jawi się w naszym obcowaniu. Almanach XXV Międzynarodowej Galicyjskiej Jesieni Literackiej*, Kąсна Dolna 2015, p. 98.

²⁷ A. Nowacka-Devillard, *Apetyt na Wietnam – Nem*, Piaseczno 2014.

²⁸ T. Halik, E. Nowicka, *Wietnamczycy w Polsce. Integracja czy izolacja?...*, p. 102–103.

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to reflect upon the results of the educational project among children from Vietnamese families living in Poland, Kraków. By doing so, I intend to propose a framework for further activities that could support children's development in linguistic and cultural sense meanwhile respecting their rights as ethnic minorities and representatives of Vietnamese families successfully accommodated in Poland. Also, I aim to contribute to the debates on what it means to be growing up as an ethnic minority in the 21st century Poland. Education among ethnic minorities is a challenging task, which means constant negotiation between the knowledge to be thought as part of a school program and own experience, skills and knowledge coming from the children's background. To meet formal expectations established by Polish school, tutors need to constantly revise teaching methods and search for new activities. Close cooperation with school and the head teacher is necessary, however

the amount of material and specificity of Polish as a Slavonic language in the case of pupils with Vietnamese background make the education a particularly ambitious task which results are constantly challenged by the school realms and the overall progress of the child. Two case studies reflected upon in this presentation are analyzed from the perspective of ethnographic participant observation. Children and tutors immersing in the context of learning and teaching generate multiple creative ideas, which help in mutual understanding and knowledge transmission. Hence, the identities are constructed on the basis of and connected with culture, customs and traditions of Poland. It supports child's self-understanding in the Polish context, meanwhile it allows for recognizing own identity enriched by the cross-cultural exchange and bilingual experience.

Key words: ethnic minority, education, ethnography, identity, bilingualism

Anna Sznajder – dr nauk humanistycznych (University of the West of Scotland), badaczka niezależna, członkini Polskiego Towarzystwa Ludoznawczego. Interesuje się wyzwaniami edukacji wielokulturowej, etnografią w pedagogice, antropologią starzenia się i starości. Obecnie pracuje nad pilotażowym projektem dotyczącym starości w domach opieki i wyzwaniami zawodu opiekuna.