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German-Polish Transborder Learning: Symmetries and Asymmetries in Language Acquisition and Bilingual Education in the Frankfurt (Oder)-Ślubice “Border Twin Town”

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1. Introduction

When analyzing the phenomenon of bilingual education the focus is mostly on migrants, ethnic minorities or binational families living in a certain country. Above these, the discussion concentrates on the efforts of society in regard to multilingual education. This paper aims to analyze the phenomenon of bilingual education from a slightly different perspective, namely the border location. Borderlands create a unique opportunity in the field of language learning. Especially in so-called “border twin towns” or “border split towns,” where the free movement of people is an everyday practice and the processes of social and linguistic diffusion take place widely, there is space for unconventional and creative transborder educational policy and praxis.

Referring to the transborder cooperation, several theories reflecting the interspatial phenomena taking place in borderlands should be mentioned. Soja (2005), Perera (2007), Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) focus on the interspatial dimension of borders, understood as places of transition or hybridity, zones of emergent space and temporality creating new worlds different from the interiors. These concepts convincingly reflect the process of language and cultural contact, but also other interactions taking place in the borderlands, which form a space between cultures.

As presented in Figure 1, Frankfurt (Oder) and Ślubice “twin town” lying roughly in the middle of the border, along the important Berlin-Warsaw transport route, has developed, both according to the author’s long-lasting observations and a recently conducted research,¹ a method of education of the neighbor’s language made possible mostly thanks to its border location.



Figure 1: Location of the Frankfurt (Oder)-Słubice “border twin town” (marked with a star)

The following analysis will answer the question of how the municipalities located in border regions create and implement their language policies in a period of globalization and the unquestioned predominance of English as the global “lingua franca.” Linguistic relations in borderlands, especially these of the symmetry or asymmetry of language contact in terms of language choice, seem to be a question of power relations. This paper will also try to define language-power relations in the German-Polish borderland.

Firstly, selected border theories, focusing on the processes of amalgamation and hybridization and border asymmetries will be presented, providing a theoretical basis for further analysis (sections 2 and 3). Secondly, foreign language education regarding the contemporary language policies and language asymmetries in Germany and Poland will be discussed (sections 4 and 5). Next, the transnational policy of the Frankfurt (Oder)-Słubice “border twin town” in all educational stages will be reviewed and the findings will be concluded (sections 6 and 7).

2. Syncretism, Amalgamation, Hybridization – the Uniqueness of Borderscapes

Trying to define the social, linguistic, political and economic processes taking place in territories divided by geopolitical borders that in some regions are significantly permeable

(especially in the European Union, where the Schengen Agreement ensures EU members four freedoms²) one notices that the clear division and ascription of space, and also the factors involved in the creation of these processes, is very difficult.

Toyota (2007: 91) claims that borders are not neutral demarcation lines. They mirror the boundaries between the countries and, at the same time, they visualize who or what belongs or does not belong to the nation-state. Soja (2005: 33) stresses the dual nature of borders. On the one hand, borders contribute to the bordering processes (by their nature they deal with dichotomies: ours and theirs – inclusion and exclusion), on the other hand, they have a transgressive character (enabling syntheses and amalgamation, leading to syncretism and hybridization). Both explanations point to the dichotomy of the category of border, focusing on its bi- or even multi-dimensional character and making it possible to use it alternately with the terms borderlands and border areas. Mezzadra and Neilson understand borderlands as unique places that are involved in the creation of new worlds, places of transition (2013: 30). Perera writes about *borderscapes*, instead of borderlands or border regions. Borderscapes are zones in which “different temporalities and overlapping emplacements as well as emergent spatial organizations” take place (Perera 2007: 206–207).

The idea of borderlands as places of transition and hybridization can be, in my opinion, implemented to understand the processes taking place in border zones, where all the phenomena are local, but at the same time happen on the supranational level. Transnational cooperation regarding local policies, education, administration and also languages often overlaps, or even shows the features of hybridization.

3. Border Asymmetries and Language Relations

The impact of a border on the relations between two neighboring territories operates mostly asymmetrically. This is a result of several factors following from differences in the economic, political, cultural and linguistic potentials of the two countries or regions. While analyzing border relations one has to take into consideration the size of the location (compared to the neighboring location), its economic and industrial power (resulting often from different GDP levels, different service sectors, different levels of unemployment, etc.), its cultural heritage as well as the status of the language spoken.³ It is important to underline that these factors influence the interactions that take place on several levels: national or even supranational, local and intrapersonal (involving the engagement of federal/national powers, local authorities and inhabitants of border regions). The interplay of these actors influenced by the above-mentioned factors defines the power relations (among them also language relations) between two neighboring countries, regions or locations (Jańczak 2017: 150).

The difference in the average gross salary between Germany and Poland is 3:1,⁴ which means that German inhabitants of the borderland have much greater purchasing power than the Poles living on the other side. This results in the development of the service sector on the Polish side. Whereas, unemployment levels are much higher in German border towns than in the Polish ones (i.e. in Frankfurt (Oder) compared to Słubice).⁵ The fact that Polish restaurants, shops, barbers and doctors are frequently visited by German customers leads to the necessity of communication with Germans for many Polish inhabitants of the borderland.

4. Foreign Language Education in Germany

Foreign language education in Germany starts in most states in primary school, in the third educational year,⁶ and in six states (among them also Brandenburg⁷) from the first educational year (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013a: 5–6).⁸ Schools secure two hours of obligatory foreign language class per week, mostly English or French (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013a: 27–31).

Data from the Federal Statistical Office shows only the numbers of students attending foreign language lessons at secondary education level.

Total	Foreign language									
	English	French	Spanish	Latin	Ancient Greek	Russian	Italian	Turkish	Other	Total
Vocational school	1,367,687	70,990	126,816	2,117	142	13,682	4,820	840	13,843	1,600,937
High school	7,221,431	1,495,193	416,997	652,129	10,991	111,185	51,464	50,862	90,428	10,100,680
Total	8,589,118	1,566,183	543,813	654,246	11,133	124,867	56,284	51,702	104,271	11,701,617

Table 1: German statistics of obligatory foreign language education (first foreign language) for the secondary level in reference to the school type – number of students, 2015/2016, source: Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden (2017), edited by B. A. Jańczak

As presented in Figure 2, the leading position of English is indisputable.⁹ Almost 8.6 million German students at secondary level attend English classes, followed by over 1.5 million attending French classes. Polish is not present at all in the given statistics and was included in other languages.¹⁰

The foreign language preferences are also confirmed by the statistical data at the local

level. According to the Statistical Office of Berlin-Brandenburg, 237,467 students attended schools in Brandenburg in 2016/17.¹¹ Of those, 193,939 students (57%) learned English and only 1,224 students, or 0.5% learned Polish as a foreign language.¹² According to other sources, the number of students learning Polish is higher and reached 2,530 students (1%) in 2017.¹³ The difference in statistics may be a result of taking into consideration (for the latter number) other forms of language learning than regular classes.¹⁴

The qualification of foreign language teachers is not equal across all states, but usually it takes place in three stages: studies, teaching practice and advanced training. There is the possibility of qualifying in the field of bilingual education, which is especially important for teachers working in bilingual and binational educational institutions (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013b: 8).¹⁵ In Germany, bilingual education takes place using CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)¹⁶ and respectively the EMILE (Enseignement d'une Matière par l'Intégration d'une Langue Étrangère) method.¹⁷

According to the self-assessment of the young Germans tested, 76.7 % claim to be able to communicate in English and 21.7 % declare the same for French (Statista 2015), this self-confidence might be verified by high scores on the English Proficiency Index.¹⁸

Altogether, according to many cited reports and statistics, the German educational system in regard to foreign language teaching seems quite effective, which is probably a result of the long-term strategy of multilingual education and the high standard of teachers' education, which are both paramount for a decent standard of education.

5. Foreign Language Education in Poland

In the public school system children start their foreign language education by the age of six.¹⁹ Until 2017 most primary schools in Poland offered only one foreign language as an obligatory subject (Załącznik 1 do rozporządzenia Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 7 lutego 2012 r. – Annex 1 to the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of February 7, 2012). The teaching of a second was dependent on school policy, local policy and access to funds.

After the introduction of the educational reform in 2017, all primary schools have to secure the education of two foreign languages (the first one through the whole of primary school education and the second one from the seventh educational year).²⁰

The Polish statistics for obligatory and optional subjects for different foreign languages clearly demonstrate an asymmetry in the languages offered between Poland and Germany.

The table below (Figure 3) presents the numbers of students attending compulsory and optional foreign languages courses on every stage of the Polish education system. English is the leading language in Poland, too. Over 5.5 million students learn English, of which 5

million learn it as an obligatory subject.²¹ Second place, according to the number of students attending, goes to German with over 1.8 million students. German takes the leading position as second foreign language (apart from kindergartens where English is still the leading foreign language). As an optional subject taught in schools German is offered to 272,727 and English to 32,644 students (CIE – Centrum Informatyczne Edukacji 2017).

Institution	Foreign language – compulsory								
	English	French	Spanish	Latin	German	Russian	Italian	Other	Comp. Total
Kindergarten	531,210	914	497	–	8,538	214	316	3,956	545,645
Primary School	2,193,272	4,928	6,891	–	101,552	3,487	753	2,218	2,313,101
Junior High School	1,040,878	34,093	39,261	417	739,639	69,168	4,921	519	1,928,896
Vocational School	107,816	353	–	–	48,712	8 039	25	48	164,993
High School	617,644	54,739	45,924	8,357	296,350	52,619	14,345	914	1,090,892
Technical School	497,372	15,180	6,359	–	396,137	46,592	1,481	1,099	964,220
Compulsory Total	4,988,192	110,207	98,932	8,774	1,590,928	180,119	21,841	8,754	7,007,747
Foreign language – optional									
Institution	English	French	Spanish	Latin	German	Russian	Italian	Other	Optional Total
Kindergarten	540,504	2,526	2,284	–	14,357	446	1,029	5,104	566,250
Primary School	19,683	7,456	8,265	–	134,374	20,225	570	303	190,876
Junior High School	10,540	6,746	7,020	665	106,156	16,203	581	330	148,241
Vocational School	145	–	–	–	280	–	–	–	425
High School	1,164	3,755	4,239	5,687	16,490	5,643	785	681	38,444
Technical School	1,112	1,358	1,015	–	15,427	4,082	264	71	23,329
Optional Total	573,148	21,841	22,823	6352	287,084	46,599	3,229	6,489	967,565
Grand Total	5,561,340	132,048	121,755	15,126	1,878,012	226,718	25,070	15,243	7,975,312

Table 2: Polish statistics for obligatory foreign language education (first foreign language) in reference to school type – number of students, by 30.09.2016, source CIE (2017), edited by B. A. Jańczak

The general tendency to choose English as the first and German as the second foreign language

confirms the data collected in the Lubuskie Region.²² In this region, 159,706 students attended school in 2016/17,²³ of whom 100,095 students (63%) learned English²⁴ and 69,597 students (44%) learned German²⁵ (CIE 2017).

The report from the Institute of Educational Research presents some problems concerning foreign language education in Poland. A test made in junior high schools shows the indulgence of the Polish educational system. The very limited offer of foreign languages gives students almost no choice of language education. The overwhelming dominance of English as an obligatory subject (as a continuation of primary school education), followed by German lessons (from junior high school education), make up the core of most school curricula.²⁶ According to the report, schools do not engage in international cooperation, with less than 17% of examined schools declaring cooperation. 25% of students claim that their teachers of foreign languages speak Polish with them, but only 10% of teachers confirm this (IBE – Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych: BUNJO – Badanie uczenia się i nauczania języków obcych, 2015).

The data for 2012/2013 shows that there are 70,000 foreign language teachers working in Polish schools, of which 65% are English teachers and 27% German teachers (Paczuska, Szpotowicz 2014: 201f.). According to Paczuska and Szpotowicz (ibid.), teacher recruitment policy in foreign language education is often still a matter of coincidence – especially in public schools. CLIL teachers are either teachers of respective subjects with some knowledge of the language they teach, or philologists after a course (mostly of “postgraduate diploma studies”) in the subject.

To teach in primary school one has to obtain a first diploma degree: bachelor of a given language (Paczuska and Szpotowicz 2014: 201). The question needs to be asked, whether three years of study can prepare a future teacher to teach in a creative style, using audiovisual materials and various methods. The most common form of teaching is still traditional teacher-centered teaching (ibid. 207) and the main opportunity for Polish students to talk in the foreign language is in conversation with the teacher (ibid. 209).

Against a background of Polish foreign language education having to deal with many systemic difficulties, a border location enhances opportunities for transborder cooperation and bilingual language acquisition. One has to remember that the exceptional location creates additional options to support primarily the acquisition of the neighbor’s language. Raasch emphasizes the role of linguistic-cultural competence in the acquisition of border competence. An important issue thereby is “clever language acquisition and appropriate language teaching” (Raasch 2008: 14). In the border regions, Raasch recommends the acquisition of the neighbor’s language rather than another language. The regional policy should support “lingua culturalis

instead of (cultureless) lingua franca” (ibid.).

6. Transnational Bilingual Educational Policy of the Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice Borderscape

Frankfurt (Oder) (58,000 inhabitants) and Słubice (18,000 inhabitants) is a “border twin town,” which functioned as a single organism till the end of World War II, after which point the border between Germany and Poland was redefined and the eastern part of the city became Polish.²⁷ During the communist period the borders were closed²⁸ and watched closely by Russian soldiers garrisoned in Frankfurt (Oder), as well as Polish troops garrisoned in Słubice.

After the collapse of the communist system, the two cities started the long journey towards establishing a new dimension of neighborly relations, laying the foundations for transborder cooperation. At present Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice enjoy intense cooperation in most fields of local policy,²⁹ also in education. A big step towards the reinforcement of German-Polish educational cooperation was the re-establishment of the Viadrina European University in Frankfurt (Oder) and the creation of Collegium Polonicum in Słubice.³⁰

During the last 25 years of working out common educational strategies, an awareness of the importance of knowing the neighbor’s language has developed, and its acquisition became one of the most important goals for the local authorities.

Though there is still a great asymmetry regarding the numbers of border inhabitants learning the neighbor’s language, both Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice are trying to implement wise educational policies to promote the language acquisition of the local lingua culturalis. The transborder policy, relying on transnational cooperation in education, starts with early childhood education, and is continued through all the educational stages.

6.1 Kindergartens – Support of Early Language Acquisition

Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice started their cooperation in support of the early acquisition of the neighbor’s language at the beginning of the new millennium.³¹ It is interesting that at the level of early education the asymmetry of the language offer seems to be reversed. There are over 30 kindergartens in Frankfurt (Oder) and six in Słubice (of which four are public).

According to the author’s latest research into foreign language education,³² only one of four public and one of two private kindergartens in Słubice offer German lessons.³³ The Polish public kindergarten offering German lessons was intended to be binational and bilingual. This institution was established in Słubice in September 2014.³⁴ Although the kindergarten is binational, in the first years of operation it was not possible to realize the plans for bilingual education, due to the fact that the children from Frankfurt (Oder) either have Polish origins,

or are binational – so, in both cases they speak Polish. The kindergarten which was meant to provide bilingual education (being prepared to take care of children in both languages), to date provides one hour of German as regards foreign language education.

Amongst the 30 kindergartens located in Frankfurt (Oder) seven offer an early acquisition of Polish in the form of partial or total immersion. All of these institutions have at least one Polish speaking teacher.³⁵ The oldest and most experienced institution amongst all the bilingual kindergartens in Frankfurt (Oder) is “Eurokita” that was established in 2000. 20 Polish and 36 German children have the opportunity to play and learn together. The nursery-school teachers are native German and Polish speakers using the “one person – one language” method (cf. Ronjat 1913), and therefore speaking each one’s own mother tongue.³⁶ Most of the nursery institutions in both cities provide English courses.

The high number of nurseries offering Polish as a foreign language implies the rising interest in Polish by the German inhabitants of the borderland, but to some degree it is also a response to the many children of Polish origin (living in Frankfurt (Oder) or on the Polish side) attending German kindergartens (often with the goal of the child acquiring bilingual competence).

6.2 Languages Offered in Schools – New Cooperation Strategies

The analysis of the languages offered in schools in the Frankfurt (Oder)-Ślubice border area indicates both the dominant role of English as the first foreign language and the asymmetry of education in the Polish and German languages offered in both countries. In both German and Polish public primary schools, there is only one compulsory language offered to the students to the end of their sixth educational year.³⁷ Several primary schools on both sides of the Oder River have frequent transborder cooperation, but in most of the cases, German and Polish lessons are optional classes, financed from project funds, or from resources of the municipal councils.

In Ślubice, German language classes are provided in one public and in both non-public/private schools.³⁸ In these institutions, the number of German classes varies from 1–5 hours per week. In Frankfurt (Oder), Polish is provided as an optional course in one of nine primary schools. The number of classes varies from one to four hours per week during the whole educational cycle. In some other schools there is also an offer of Polish constituted as a working group (AG – Arbeitsgemeinschaft) that is not included in the regular school curriculum. The offer varies from year to year due to the lack of stable financial support.

The asymmetry in the teaching the neighbor’s language is apparent from the level of junior high school education,³⁹ where in both countries the second foreign language is

guaranteed in teaching curricula.⁴⁰ All types of secondary schools in Słubice offer German in their curricula.⁴¹ The majority of Frankfurt (Oder) secondary schools⁴² teach French, Spanish and in some cases, Russian classes as an optional second language.

Even though the statistical data on foreign language education in Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice show there is still a lot of dormant potential to be used in strengthening the general language policy in favor of the acquisition of the neighbor's language, especially on the German side, for several years there has been strong transborder cooperation between two secondary education schools. For over ten years, Karl-Liebknecht Gymnasium⁴³ from Frankfurt (Oder) and the Junior High School no. 2 from Słubice have cooperated in the Latarnia-project which has resulted in a special CLIL offer for students of both schools. In 2005 the implementation of a new cooperation strategy between these two institutions began. The major aim of the project was not only the integration of German and Polish students, but primarily the introduction of bilingual (German-Polish) education in the form of content and language integrating learning. The Polish Junior High School no. 2 and Karl-Liebknecht High School have worked for almost ten years to attract the interest of young people (11–14 years old) to the neighbor's language and culture. The first year of cooperation (7th form) is devoted to meeting the German and Polish students. They participate in common projects, excursions and festivities. In addition to this, they take part in a joint school trip. In the next two years, the German and Polish classes are divided in two equal groups, and every week half of the German and half of the Polish class (12 and 12 students each) meet to participate in joint courses. The courses in math, art, music, sport and social sciences are offered in Słubice or in Frankfurt (Oder) on a rotational basis,⁴⁴ and always in the language of the school where the lesson takes place.⁴⁵

The idea and implementation of this project show the educational possibilities given by the extraordinary location “in-between” two countries, educational systems and languages, in the syncretic space. They demonstrate the uniqueness of the school cooperation, aiming at bilingual language education in a borderscape.

6.3 Higher Education Across Boundaries

The history of higher education in the Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice “border twin town” is both relatively short and long at the same time. The academic tradition of Frankfurt (Oder) University refers to the Alma Mater Viadrina functioning in Frankfurt (Oder) 1506–1811.⁴⁶ In 1992 the Viadrina European University was re-established. From the beginning of its functioning, the university was intended to be an international institution, enabling German, Polish and other students to exchange European ideas on an academic level. Thanks to the

international profile of the university, and its location on the Polish-German border, many Poles started their studies in Frankfurt (Oder).

The real transborder cooperation at university level started in 1998 with the establishment of Collegium Polonicum, a joint educational institution of the Viadrina European University (Frankfurt (Oder), Germany) and Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań, Poland). Collegium Polonicum, located in Ślubice (on the Polish side), is the scene of cooperation between German and Polish researchers, working together on common research projects, but also teaching German, Polish and other students in joint degree programs, e.g. German-Polish law, intercultural communication, intercultural German philology.⁴⁷ The fact that German and Polish students taking part in joint degree programs are studying in two main languages (German and Polish)⁴⁸ creates a unique possibility for the acquisition of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (cf. Cummins 1979) in the neighbor's language.

7. Conclusions

Living in borderlands not separated by solid boundaries gives the inhabitants a unique opportunity to choose and use the local potential of the two countries (e.g. country of permanent residence, country and language(s) of education, shopping places, etc.) without the necessity of losing one's own culture, origin or identity. Borderlands, or borderscapes are places of transition, zones where different ideas grow thanks to political, cultural and to some degree also linguistic emergence.

Under certain circumstances, borderlands with permeable frontiers may create a special opportunity for bilingual education. Due to the location, "border twin towns" in particular are places with plenty of possibilities for the support of bilingual teaching. Although there are many "border twin-towns" in the world, and especially in the European Union, dealing with the question of local language policy, the German-Polish case seems unique in many ways.⁴⁹ Unlike most of other cases, the German-Polish border region established a transnational cooperation despite linguistic and population discontinuity. The lack of minorities living on the other side of the border and the very short time of cooperation after the collapse of the communist system might have led to a policy of indifference. However, Poles and Germans managed to overcome historical prejudices and implement a successful policy in the border cities reinforcing the neighbors' language, thereby leaving behind many cities that have been cooperating for years in other locations. For these reasons this paper demonstrates well how to deal with border asymmetries and how to create cooperation in disintegrated or newly established border regions.

Though the statistical data demonstrates the unquestioned asymmetry in the acquisition

of German and Polish on both sides of the border,⁵⁰ the transborder cooperation of the Frankfurt (Oder)-Słubice “border twin town,” concerning education and support for the acquisition of the neighbor’s language as a lingua culturalis of the Euroregion, demonstrates the existence of a long-term vision in the field of transborder education. Even if German and Polish are not the first foreign languages taught in Frankfurt (Oder) and Słubice, both towns provide for their acquisition and invite their inhabitants to participate in bilingual education on almost all educational levels.⁵¹ Beginning with the early immersion programs offered by the kindergartens in both towns, bilingual education can be continued thanks to the common educational projects at secondary level or at university. In this particular transborder form of cooperation, the concept of the educational borderscape emerges.

The German-Polish borderland has further potential to strengthen transborder educational cooperation, e.g. by introducing regular exchanges of German and Polish teachers. This form of cooperation, albeit demanding the implementation of bilateral legal regulations, would certainly contribute to the further development of the neighbor’s language acquisition.

Notes

- ¹ Some findings analyzed in this paper, especially concerning regional educational policy, refer to the data collected during the research on language contact and usage taking place on the Polish side of the German-Polish border. The research project was conducted 2014 in eight Polish border towns/villages (with over 1,000 inhabitants) with directly located neighboring German towns/villages. The reexamination of school curricula in Frankfurt (Oder)-Słubice location took place in May 2017.
- ² The free movement of goods, capital, services, and labor.
- ³ These seem to be the most important, but are not all the factors influencing border relations.
- ⁴ Data from the World Bank shows that the average gross salary in 2016 was USD 42,070 per capita in Germany, and USD 12,421 per capita in Poland, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=PL-GR-PT-DE-EU> (29.01.2018).
- ⁵ In August 2017 there were 15,772 (27%) persons registered as unemployed in Frankfurt (Oder) and only 503 (2.5%) in Słubice (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, PUP Słubice).
- ⁶ Children aged 9–10 years.
- ⁷ More cf. Ministerium für Bildung Jugend und Sport, Land Brandenburg, <https://mbjs.brandenburg.de/bildung/allgemeinbildende-schulen/grundschule/grundschulzeit.html> (19.09.2017).
- ⁸ These are the last available, recommended reports published by the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013a, 2013b). Due to the fact that educational affairs are governed by federal states the reports (referring to the educational data in the whole of Germany, i.e. in the field of foreign language education) are not disclosed every year.

- ⁹ English is also the first choice regarding the numbers of pupils learning it in primary schools which is shown in the last available report of Statistical Federal Office Wiesbaden published 2010. Pursuant to the data 94% of third year pupils attended English as an obligatory subject (Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden, 2010). The high numbers of pupils attending English and French in the secondary schools result from the continuity rule (similar to Poland) according to which the obligatory language chosen in the primary school has to be continued in the secondary school (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013a: 7).
- ¹⁰ See column “Other.”
- ¹¹ Brandenburg is the region neighboring Poland, where Frankfurt (Oder) is located.
- ¹² Statistischer Bericht B I 8 – j / 16. Fremdsprachenunterricht an allgemeinbildenden Schulen im Land Brandenburg Schuljahr 2016/2017 (2017: 4).
- ¹³ Cf. MOZ: Mehr Brandenburger Schüler lernen Polnisch, 20.06.2017 <http://www.moz.de/artikel-ansicht/dg/0/1/1582665> (27.06.2017), RBB: Mehr Polnisch an Brandenburger Schulen, 20.06.2017 <https://www.rbb-online.de/panorama/beitrag/2017/06/mehr-brandenburg-schueler-lernen-polnisch.htm> (27.06.2017)
- ¹⁴ Many schools offer Polish as a second or even third, optional foreign language, giving courses in the form of additional classes or working groups (AGs).
- ¹⁵ Bilingual education is understood as providing courses (other than foreign language lessons), in one or more foreign languages.
- ¹⁶ More about CLIL cf. Marsh (1994).
- ¹⁷ More about the concept in Germany see Kultusministerkonferenz (2013b: 3–5).
- ¹⁸ In 2015, Germany ranked 9th in regard of English proficiency and Poland 10th, cf. EF English Proficiency Index, <http://www.ef.pl/epi/> (20.09.2017).
- ¹⁹ According to the law on education, six-year-old children must attend pre-school (Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 2016 r. Prawo oświatowe – The Act of 14 December 2016 on Education law, Art. 31.4) and seven-year-old children must attend school (ibid. Art. 35, subarticle 2). But for the preschooler the language education starts already in kindergarten. According to the core curriculum for pre-school education, the compulsory learning of a modern foreign language covers pre-school children (in the school year 2015/2016 five-years-old, 2016/2017 four-years-old and older, and since 2017/2018 three-years-old and older) (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 30 maja 2014 r. – Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of May 30, 2014). In many private kindergartens and schools several languages can be offered at the same time (treated as an optional extra).
- ²⁰ In the school year 2017/18, primary school education has been prolonged from the 6th to the 8th form, leaving out the junior high school education. Junior high schools will be abolished in 2019. The Polish legal ordinance from the Ministry of National Education sets the total amount of foreign language classes in the first three years of education in primary schools at 180 hours minimum (making on average two hours/week over three years). From the fourth year, the amount of first language classes increases to three hours/week (450 hours minimum over the following five years).

The educational plan for the second foreign language foresees 120 hours over the last two years of primary school education (which usually means two hours/week). In high schools there are two foreign languages offered either at an amount of 600 hours (mostly three hours of the first foreign language at the basic level and two hours of the second one per week) or 780 hours (four to five hours of the first language at the extended level and two hours of the second one per week) for four years. Additionally, bilingual schools or classes get 330 hours of a first foreign language for four years – additional three hours per week (Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej, Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji 2017: 28–29).

- ²¹ The numbers refer to children and adolescents attending kindergartens or the most popular types of schools. The education in special types of schools i.e. music schools or art schools as well as education of adults is not the subject presented in this statistical data.
- ²² Lubuskie is the region neighboring with Germany, in which Słubice is located.
- ²³ The numbers refer only to the main types of schools (primary school, junior and high school, technical and vocational schools).
- ²⁴ Of whom 95,707 as an obligatory subject.
- ²⁵ Of whom 60,145 as an obligatory subject.
- ²⁶ As early as 20 years ago, Stasiak underlined the dominance of English as a foreign language subject in the Polish school system – especially in the bigger cities (Stasiak 1997: 77).
- ²⁷ In 1945 Poland lost its eastern provinces and got the eastern German territories, Pomerania, Lebus Land and Silesia as compensation. The new border was located on the Oder and Neisse Rivers (Wąsowski 2009: 15–17). Consequently, most of the former inhabitants of the newly ascribed territories were resettled from East to West. The resettlements removed almost all people of German origin from the new lands of western Poland.
- ²⁸ With the exception of the decade from 1972–1981.
- ²⁹ This cooperation concerns not only local policies, it applies also to the cooperation of non-governmental organizations and citizen's groups working together. One of these initiatives is the creation of the city Słubfurt (<http://www.slubfurt.net/>, 21.09.2017).
- ³⁰ More about the Collegium Polonicum's role in subsection 6.3.
- ³¹ Thanks to the initiative of researchers working at Viadrina University and Adam Mickiewicz University, a project "Early start in the neighbor's language" started at the end of 2004. Over three years, four kindergartens from Frankfurt (Oder) and four from Słubice have benefited from educational support in the acquisition of the neighbor's language. The teachers were students, native speakers of German and Polish, who transmitted the language through play, using a partial immersion method (Bień-Lietz and Vogel 2008: 23–41). Unfortunately, after the project ended, language lessons had to be reduced and made to fit the new financial rules. In consequence, the immersion programs disappeared from Polish kindergartens.
- ³² The language offer in the kindergartens changes very often, due to the fact that the immersion programs and additional language hours are often financed from project funds that expire after the

financial period.

- ³³ All the kindergartens offer English lessons (even additionally to German). One of the private kindergartens offered an early immersion program three years ago, but for the last two years it has only had one hour of German as a foreign language.
- ³⁴ The opening of the binational kindergarten was said to be a great success of the transborder cooperation when one considers the differences in (the very restrictive) German and (more liberal) Polish legislation. According to several interviewed Heads of Educational Departments of Polish municipal councils, the German educational legislation (different for each federal state) makes the creation of common German-Polish educational institutions (mostly schools) in Poland impossible so far. The location of a common kindergarten on the Polish side might be understood as the first step to change this asymmetric situation.
- ³⁵ Data received in interview with Katrin Becker, responsible for the neighbor's language acquisition in the Frankfurt (Oder)-Ślubice Cooperation Center in June 2017.
- ³⁶ Eurokita, www.eurokita.de (04.07.2017).
- ³⁷ As explained in sections 4 and 5.
- ³⁸ The non-public schools try to attract parents with the opportunity to acquire two foreign languages (German and English) and a high number of language hours. There are five primary schools in Ślubice (three public and two non-public).
- ³⁹ From this school year, from the 7th form.
- ⁴⁰ The first foreign language is usually, but not always, English.
- ⁴¹ Both of Ślubice's junior high schools offer at least two hours of German per week, the high school a maximum of five hours, also the technical and vocational schools provide German teaching in their curricula.
- ⁴² Four of five.
- ⁴³ The Karl-Liebnecht school is one of the institutions located in the German-Polish border area with a binational profile. Since 1992 a group of Polish pupils aiming to study in Germany has a possibility to attend regular classes in the school. The entrance examination for these pupils is organized by the Polish high school from Ślubice. The whole education takes place on the German side in German language and ends with a German final secondary school examination.
- ⁴⁴ Because of the division of both classes into two there are two mixed groups that cooperate, each twice a month.
- ⁴⁵ Lantern-project, <http://liebnecht-gymnasium.de/schulprofil/latarnia-projekt.html> (15.07.2017).
- ⁴⁶ European University Viadrina. http://www.europa-uni.de/pl/ueber_uns/portrait/geschichte/meilensteine/index.html (20.05.2017).
- ⁴⁷ The graduates of such double-degree programs receive a degree from either university (the German and the Polish one).
- ⁴⁸ Additionally, there is a broad offer of courses in other languages: Spanish, English, etc.
- ⁴⁹ To name just a few: Giurgiu Ruse (Romania-Bulgaria), Strasbourg-Kehl (France-Germany),

Gorizia-Nova Gorica (Italy-Slovenia), Laufenburg (Baden)-Laufenburg (Germany-Switzerland), Ottawa-Quebec (Canada Ontario-Canada Quebec).

- ⁵⁰ That is the outcome of several factors, amongst them the different language offer but also the economic situation on both sides of the Oder River. This fact must result in significant differences in communicative ability between Germans and Poles (the Poles having indisputably far greater skills in their neighbor's language).
- ⁵¹ Even more importantly, unlike in many other cases, the implementation of the language policy works bidirectionally. The main aim of the transborder local educational policies should be by now convincing greater numbers of the border region inhabitants to use this exceptional opportunity to learn the neighbor's language.

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Polsko-niemieckie nauczanie transgraniczne – symetrie i asymetrie w akwizycji języka i edukacji dwujęzycznej na przykładzie „granicznego miasta bliźniaczego” Frankfurt nad Odrą-Słubice

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Polsko-niemieckie nauczanie transgraniczne – symetrie i asymetrie w akwizycji języka i edukacji dwujęzycznej na przykładzie „granicznego miasta bliźniaczego” Frankfurt nad Odrą-Słubice

Analizując problematykę edukacji dwujęzycznej warto pochylić się nad wyjątkowością pograniczy, które wydają się stwarzać niepowtarzalną okazję dla wsparcia edukacji językowej. Szczególne możliwości posiadają w tym zakresie “miasta bliźniacze” lub “podzielone”, gdyż w wielu z nich wolny przepływ ludzi, a co za tym idzie znaczna dyfuzja językowa, są powszechnym zjawiskiem. Miejsca te, ze względu na swój wyjątkowy charakter, tworzą przestrzeń dla niekonwencjonalnej, transgranicznej polityki oraz praktyki językowej.

Pochylając się nad współpracą transgraniczną nie sposób pominąć najważniejszych teorii wskazujących na między- bądź transprzestrzenny charakter pograniczy. Istniejące teorie podkreślają międzyprzestrzenny wymiar pograniczy, rozumianych jako miejsca przejścia i hybrydyzacji, strefy kreacji czasu i przestrzeni, tworzące nowe światy. Te teorie zdają się kompleksowo ukazywać wyjątkowość pograniczy oraz przekonująco odzwierciedlać zachodzące na nich interakcje, w tym również procesy kontaktu językowego i kulturowego.

W kontekście powyższych rozważań teoretycznych artykuł ten poświęcony został analizie edukacji dwujęzycznej na granicy polsko-niemieckiej, na przykładzie dwumiasta Frankfurt nad Odrą i Słubice. Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań, jak również wieloletniej obserwacji autorki, można stwierdzić, iż nawet w obliczu predominacji języka angielskiego jako języka globalnego, miejsce to stara się stworzyć zbalansowaną lokalną politykę wspierającą edukację języka sąsiada. Wyjątkowe rozwiązania w zakresie edukacji dwujęzycznej implementowane we Frankfurcie nad Odrą i Słubicach są możliwe głównie ze względu na graniczne położenie tych miejscowości.