же фактор не играет значительной роли, по крайней мере, в том виде, в каком это имеет место в Мексике, поскольку говорить о партийно-политических расхождениях между регионами и центром не приходится. Географическое положение и, прежде всего, «фактор границы» работает достаточно выборочно. В отличие от Мексики, где все северные штаты, граничащие с США, демонстрируют высокий уровень международной активности, субъекты Российской Федерации, граничащие со странами Евросоюза, отличаются достаточно большим разбросом показателей. Так, если Республика Карелия активно развивает трансграничное сотрудничество с прилегающими районами Финляндии и международные связи в целом (в том числе в рамках еврорегиона Карелия) [2], то пограничное положение Псковской области не столь существенно влияет на ее внешние связи.

Следует также подчеркнуть, что большое значение для международной деятельности субъектов Российской Федерации имеет этнокультурный фактор.

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LINGUISTIC BARRIERS IN MODERN DIPLOMACY – THE CASE OF SIGN LANGUAGE

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One of the key elements of diplomacy, regardless of time and space, is language. Diplomacy can even be defined in terms of communication – as a "regulated process of communication" or "communication system of modern diplomacy" [3, p. 75]. But language is not just a communication tool. Language is at the same time a carrier of cultural code which determines its meaning – inaccurate use of it may even lead to serious violation of the diplomatic protocol

and sometimes, also unconsciously, to inaccuracies in the creation and discrepancy in the application of international law (both treaties and soft law instruments) – such cases were noted even in antiquity [3, p. 72]. In the context of international relations, the use of a given language also brings many other additional information: it can be an expression of tradition, etiquette, using a host language may be a way to show respect or when using the third language as a common reference framework is supposed to help to avoid inaccuracies and achieve greater precision when applying certain terms. In a simplified way, it can be said that the basic value of a language in diplomacy is its functionality. "The problem of achieving shared meanings has been central to diplomatic communication throughout the ages" and therefore "there has always been a tendency toward developing a *lingua franca* of diplomacy" [3, p. 72].

Despite its deep historical roots, the evolution of diplomatic languages can be briefly characterizedas a transfer from Latin through French to increasing importance of English. However, that would be true mostly for western countries, where in eastern Asia for example the Chinese would be considered equivalent for Latin as it was understood by the most people. Overall, we may refer to Latin as language of proto-diplomacy, French as a language of classical and neo-diplomacy and English to be the 'court language' of contemporary diplomacy and techno-diplomacy [5, p. 120].

At the advent of post-world wars – world the very concept of *lingua franca* would be first challenged by multilateral diplomacy, mostly due to major international conferences and occurrence of International Tribunals. This led to various solutions such a distinction between official and working languages in the UN.

Later on, 20th century witnessed not only expansion of official languages for multilateral diplomacy, "but also a significant increase in the use of translation of bilateral treaties and other diplomatic texts into the languages of nation-states that were parties to them" [5, p. 120]. Development of technology made it possible to conduct simultaneous interpretation on a great scale. Due to expansion of interpretation possibilities during plenary sessions of international organizations, negotiations and other diplomatic activities could be performed by anyone, whether or not they understood the speaker's language "or even one of the official languages of the organization". This was an end of monopoly of multilingual elites holding diplomatic posts around the world.

It was not only the matter of facilitating communication, the advancement in interpretation and translation technology and methodology gave a rise to so – called "democratization of linguistic communication". A feature often priced by States and as language is often considered extension of national identity and it is easier to encourage integrating when this dimension of sovereignty remains untouched and even exemplified. The best example of such approach is European Union (EU) where official languages are languages of all Member States (MS). Practice of the EU in that regard helps us identify also the disadvantages of implementing such policy. Simultaneous interpretation is

provided in meetings of the European Commission, European Parliament and European Council and all major texts and legal sources must be translated into all of the official languages. Complexity of the problematic related to that solution arose with the growth EU.

As Pigman rightfully notes, today there is a shortage of professionals who can translate and interpret directly between all of the less common languages of the EU, e.g. Maltese to Latvian, now routinely have to be translated via one of the major languages, like English, French or German. And it is long proven phenomena, that intermediate translation weakens the equivalence of the initial and final communicate [5]. The other side of the problem is that, diplomats from countries which official languages are not common, have to use their second or third languages on every day basis. This creates potentially dangerous disproportions between them and diplomats who use their native tongue. That gives French and English speakers extra power advantages in diplomatic interaction.

Understanding the structure of linguistic relations in contemporary diplomacy outlined above is necessary to properly determine the potential status of sign language on the international forum. First however, it is necessary to make some comments about the sign language itself.

Recognition of sign languages as natural languages of the deaf people is a relatively new phenomenon. Recognition as a natural language means that sign languages are equal to any other, phonetic languages used on every-day basis by people without any hearing or speech deficiencies. A proper identification of those languages happened through researches conducted by prominent linguists, independently in various countries, in the late 20th century. For example, in Europe we could name Prillwitz in Germany or Fariss in Poland. However, there are still some common misconceptions in regard to the sign language. Firstly, there does not exist one common sign language for all deaf people, each country has its own national sign language and they vary to the same extend as spoken languages do. To name a few, there are American Sign Language, Русский Жестовый Язык, Deutsche Gebärdesprache, Polski Język Migowy etc. Secondly, those languages are not a visual 'equivalent' of a native spoken language, they are purely independent and have its own grammar rules and other unique features. A system where signs represent letters or phones is in fact so called "manual code for spoken language". It is artificial, based on grammar of a given spoken language and usually used to ease the communication between deaf and hearing persons as for the latter it is much easier to learn. To visualize how non-interchangeable are those two types of communication it is often said that manual codes are for primary users of sign language as Russian language is for Belarusian. In conclusion, it must be stressed that sign language is a fully-fledged tool for communication – and as such could be used in legal, international or any other context.

On the other hand, for its effectiveness, sign language requires a multilevel interpretation and/or translation, both from a given sign language B to a spoken language A, later from a spoken language A to a spoken language of a

particular discourse A' and potentially again into other sign language B'. Such 'chain of translation' would of course differ depending on the participants of the discourse – we could imagine also a direct sign-language to sign-language translation, but from a practical standpoint it is not likely to appear with a significant frequency in diplomatic situations. The most evident disadvantage of the use of sign language would be the danger of multiplication of errors in final translation, as the probability misapprehensions increases with every additional chain of translation. This probability could be referred to as a specific subcategory of a legal risk, especially that it could be calculated in category of its impact on certain state of affairs or even potential costs.

Therefore, the counterargument for thesis on misapplication of sign language in international relations is the variability of translation erroneousness in each situation which may be even lower than the same factor in purely spoken languages situation where as well, many levels of translation can occur or even some very rare languages are used, so that qualified interpreters are unavailable, or their competences are hard to verify. Additionally, impact of technology on modern diplomacy is beneficial accordingly, and maybe above all to the sign languages. There already exist well developed programmes used both for sing language-spoken language translations and sign-language to sign language translation instruments [6].

Still, the issue of costs remains. This was a key problem in the most representative (and likely, the only) case of an access to diplomatic post for a deaf person – the Jane Cordell Case.

Mrs. Cordell lost her hearing as an adult, and it was for this reason that she joined the diplomatic service of Great Britain, where there was a great tolerance for disability. Since 2006, successfully, she has been holding a post of the head of the embassy political section in Warsaw. After the end of the contract she was chosen to become a head of mission in Kazakhstan. Her candidacy was rejected, as British official argued that the cost of providing sign language interpreters for this purpose would be excessive. The dispute was both about the actual costs of maintaining the translators (Mrs. Cordell claimed that the estimated cost was 17,000,000£, while the calculations of the British services were 300,000£). At the same time, Mrs. Cordell tried to show that the employment of additional translators cannot be considered extraordinary, given that for example education of children of diplomats is often paid from public many, and it is of lesser direct significance for the function she performs. Unfortunately, the case has not been resolved in favor of Mrs. Cordell, however, it drew public attention to the problem of possible discrimination of disabled people in public life and international relations. This does not mean that the calculations of the British government were incorrect, but it should be remembered that every such situation should be analyzedon case-to-case basis to avoid aprioristic disproportions in situation of deaf people or even discrimination. Even more importantly, it must be bared in mind that not once

the issue of inappropriateness of sign language or erroneousness of sign language translation was brought up during consideration of that case.

Another, and final example of functioning of sign language in international dimension is the NGO 'The European Union of Deaf" (EUD) which comprises of National Associations of the Deaf. "It is the only supranational organisation representing Deaf people at European level and is one of the few ENGOs representing associations from all of the 28 EU MS, in addition to EFTA countries" [2]. Among the objectives of EUD are the recognition of the right to use an indigenous sign language and equality in education and employment, including equality in public life – also in international dimension. Despite of its status as non-primary subject of international law, EUD is currently the best research object in terms of actual use of sign language in international relations and especially in a few year's its experiences will play a vital role in creating legal and practical solutions for enabling deaf people access to international public life on equal footing.

In summary, it must be stated that as the paper showed the problem of multilateral international relations in terms of language is broader than it its traditionally assumed. Also, the concern on discrimination of the deaf people in particular, and people with various communication disabilities in general, is not artificial one. Although legal considerations, especially in term of the application of the principle of equality play a vital role in delimitation of the structural framework for 'linguistic democracy', what is most needed is the application of practical solutions created with the use of disciplines such as logistics and management to verify risk associated with this phenomena and the proper linguistic background to understand the features and value of unspoken communication.

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