

## Case Study: Jacek

### *Introduction to sociolinguistics*

There is a student from Poland at the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics in Prague. His mother tongue is Polish; he comes from a small village close to the Czech border. All the members of his family are Polish; they speak local dialect. Jacek's grandparents have basic education only, his parents are teachers.

Jacek studies informatics in Warsaw, in Polish. At school, he learned English and German; he went for a year-long exchange to Great Britain.

In Prague, he speaks English. Generally, he attends courses in English; just for fun, he attends a course History of Jazz which is taught in Czech. He can understand Czech more or less since Polish is similar to Czech; he can read it very well, he tries to speak Czech with people who do not speak English.

Jacek has a Czech girlfriend who does not speak Polish. Originally, they talked English. Now, they switched to a mixture between Czech and Polish which is very funny for them; they use English either when they talk about too complex topics or in public.

1. What can we say about Jack's social identity in Prague? What are the social groups he is a member of? (E.g. men, youth, his original family... up to any narrow and temporary circle). You can add information to the description of the case study if needed (Jacek's interests etc.). List the social groups.
2. Does Jacek express linguistically his membership in these social groups? If so, how? (E.g., specific greetings with other foreign students, speaking Polish at the Polish embassy, speaking high variety of English with teachers...).
3. Jacek may want to show not only that he IS a member of a certain group, but also that he is NOT a part of it. (E.g.: in tram: he has nothing to do with a group of drunken English speaking tourists.) How can he express the denial using some specific linguistic behavior? Give five examples.
4. Sometimes, Jacek needs to show his power against somebody – e.g. that he is educated and the others are not; that somebody strong is standing for him (in any sense); that he could cause problems if not respected. How could this be done linguistically? Give three examples of Jacek's choice of language varieties (i.e. languages, dialects, any way of speaking) in specific contexts.
5. How can be considered the language situation in the course of History of Jazz? What can be the language attitudes of the participants of the current situation? Think of different aspects of the situation (Jacek as a foreigner – as a foreigner from Poland – the role of the teacher – the language skills of other students etc. etc.). Describe three possible constellations of attitudes.
6. Jacek knows several varieties of Polish, as well as his girlfriend knows several varieties of Czech. What might they choose when they communicate in their Czech-Polish language? Why? Do they do that consciously? How is their choice related to the standard of each language? Imagine the situation and describe it.